



*“The Voice of Business on Unemployment & Workers’ Compensation”*

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**Unemployment Insurance Advisors Urge Integrity in Unemployment Payments: Warn against State Enactment of Stimulus UI laws to Pay Workers Who Quit Employment**

**WASHINGTON, D.C., March 5, 2009** – The primary national research and consulting organization focused on unemployment insurance today warned against state adoption of the portions of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (HR 1) that would require states to pay unemployment compensation to individuals who quit their jobs.

“As Governors consider whether to support enactment of parts of the stimulus bill that address long term permanent changes to state unemployment benefit eligibility they should not only evaluate whether short term incentive payments are sufficient to cover long term costs, but also whether such changes are sound state policy”, said Douglas J. Holmes, President of UWC – Strategic Services on Unemployment & Workers’ Compensation.

Although a number of the provisions in HR 1 simply extend the temporary emergency unemployment compensation or provide amounts in addition to the weekly benefits that would otherwise be provided to individuals who become unemployed through no fault of their own, one provision, as interpreted by the United States Department of Labor (USDOL) is so vague that it would prohibit the state from disqualifying an individual who quit employment for the illness or disability of a husband or wife, son or daughter of any age, grandfather or grandmother, brother, sister, adopted child, domestic partner, or foster child.

The “illness” or “disability” is defined by the USDOL as any illness or disability that is “a verified illness or disability which necessitates the care of the ill or disabled person for a period of time longer than the employer is willing to grant leave (paid or otherwise)”. The state is prohibited under the US Department of Labor interpretation from requiring verification from a medical doctor in determining the illness or disability.

“Sound state policy dictates that employers and the state unemployment insurance agency be permitted to seek verification of claimed illnesses and disabilities. This is only proper administration and management of the Unemployment Insurance program. We should be striving for meaningful integrity in this system, not relaxed, undocumented and improper verification of medical conditions”, said Holmes.

**UWC – STRATEGIC SERVICES ON UNEMPLOYMENT & WORKERS’ COMPENSATION**

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