

# U.S. Sen. Johnson: Amendment would protect workers during coronavirus emergency

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**WASHINGTON** — U.S. Senators Ron Johnson (R-Wis.), Pat Toomey (R-Pa.), Mike Lee (R-Utah), Ben Sasse (R-Neb.) and Rick Scott (R-Fla.) have [introduced an amendment](#) to the House coronavirus legislation to eliminate job-killing paid leave mandates and instead expand eligibility for unemployment insurance to those who aren't able to earn a paycheck due to coronavirus.

The senators' amendment would:

- Create a Temporary Emergency Federal Unemployment Insurance Program in which states must expand eligibility for unemployment insurance benefits for individuals who cannot work due to the coronavirus;
  - Benefits paid are the lesser of 2/3 an individual's average weekly earnings or \$1,000;
  - Affected workers can receive unemployment insurance benefits for up to 14 weeks;
  - Waive waiting periods for unemployment insurance benefits;
  - Retroactively apply eligibility for these benefits to March 1, 2020;
  - Affected workers will not have to search for work to receive benefits;
- Require the federal government to reimburse states for the full costs of expanding the eligibility that is above and beyond each state's current unemployment insurance law; and
- Require the federal government to reimburse employers who employ fewer than 500 employees and who voluntarily provide paid leave to employees who

cannot work due to coronavirus in an amount equal to the unemployment benefits described above.

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