



February 27, 2024

## West Virginia Unemployment Benefits are Once Again Under Attack

*The bill passed the House; Help us stop it in the Senate!*

For the last two years, our union and our allies have fought diligently to defeat a harmful piece of legislation that makes drastic changes to Unemployment Insurance and threatens the security of every worker in the state.

Decades ago, workers fought for, and won, benefits which provide some financial stability during times of unemployment. In a state like West Virginia, that has had historically high unemployment numbers due to extenuating circumstances affecting the state's main industries, cuts to unemployment compensation are especially harmful.

In addition to the Cleveland Cliffs closure we mentioned last week, Appalachian Wood Products has announced it will close. That's 1,800 jobs lost in less than a week!

*"It is simply unimaginable that state lawmakers would consider legislation to reduce the amount of unemployment benefits workers could qualify for, especially considering the devastating news that 1,000 West Virginia workers at Cleveland-Cliffs in Weirton are losing their jobs on top of recent plant and mine closures elsewhere in West Virginia. Legislators should be seeking to help rather than hurt these workers and their families." - District 8 Director, Larry Ray*

Currently, West Virginia does not have a maximum duration of time that a person is eligible to receive unemployment benefits. Instead, it uses a maximum benefit amount to determine how much a worker can receive per year. These current pieces of legislation [SB 840](#) (usw.to/4xf) and [SB 841](#) (usw.to/4xg) would limit and restrict benefits, make 20 weeks the maximum duration of benefits and more to those eligible. West Virginia lawmakers need to do better by these workers.

---

### We have to act fast!

A vote could come as soon as Wednesday. Click [HERE](#) (usw.to/3Li) to find your senator and place a call today.

Tell your senator to oppose any legislative push to cut and/or index unemployment benefits.  
Tell them to reject [SB 840](#) (usw.to/4xf) and [SB 841](#) (usw.to/4xg)

---

Larry R. Ray, Director District 8

For additional questions about this issue or ways to get involved in Rapid Response, contact Chad Conley, USW District 8 Rapid Response Coordinator, at (606)465-6862 or [cconley@usw.org](mailto:cconley@usw.org).