

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

May 26, 2020

Sharon Hilliard  
Director, California Employment Development Department  
PO Box 826880, MIC 83  
Sacramento, CA 94280-0001

Dear Director Hilliard,

I am writing in reference to the schedule that the Employment Development Department (EDD) released for the Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation program included in the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act.<sup>1</sup> I urge you to provide faster relief to some of the most vulnerable people in the Central Valley – those who have been out of work the longest – in an untenable financial situation.

On March 27<sup>th</sup>, Congress passed the CARES Act, with provisions to increase the amount provided by unemployment insurance and extend it by 13 weeks. Before that, we allocated nearly \$1 billion to bolster state unemployment programs like EDD's and prepare them for the challenging task ahead. We did this with the expectation that the aid would make it into the hands of the people who need it as soon as possible. You recently announced that people whose regular unemployment insurance ran out after July 2018 might not start receiving CARES Act benefits until at least July of this year, and possibly later. This is a delay of more than three months from when the CARES Act was signed into law – Central Valley families can't wait that long.

Day after day, my staff and I have been on the phone with my constituents who are simply trying to make ends meet in the face of the pandemic and stay-at-home policies. They need to pay their bills and feed their families. They need help now without delay. Many constituents have already reached out because they've run out of unemployment insurance and are waiting for the extension to come through, and that number is only going to go up with every passing day. In light of this urgency, please address the following questions:

1. How long will it take for someone to actually receive benefits after they receive their notice to begin the recertification process?
2. How many people do you estimate will be in the "phase 2" group who won't receive their notices until July?
3. What support can my office or Congress as a whole give to shorten the time it takes to distribute these additional unemployment benefits?

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<sup>1</sup> [https://edd.ca.gov/About\\_EDD/pdf/news-20-17.pdf](https://edd.ca.gov/About_EDD/pdf/news-20-17.pdf)

Thank you for the work you do, and for the effort that you and your staff have made so far in this time of crisis. I look forward to working with you in the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Josh Harder". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Josh Harder

Member of Congress