

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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OHIO SIGNS AGREEMENT TO EXTEND UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

Additional 13 weeks of benefits available through Ohio Department of Job and Family Services

The State of Ohio entered into an agreement with the U.S. Department of Labor to provide up to 13 weeks of additional unemployment compensation benefits to as many as 280,000 eligible Ohioans through the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS).

“The weakening national economy and high cost of oil continue to hit Ohio’s economy particularly hard,” Ohio Governor Ted Strickland said. “By extending unemployment benefits to Ohioans we have an opportunity to provide short-term assistance as we continue to invest and plan for our state’s economic future.”

Under legislation passed by Congress and signed by the president, workers who had an active unemployment claim on or after May 5, 2007, could be eligible for an additional 13 weeks of federal unemployment compensation benefits. Eligibility criteria for extended benefits will be the same as for the initial 26 weeks of state unemployment compensation benefits.

“We have been planning diligently for this extension,” said ODJFS Director Helen Jones-Kelley. “We’re making final adjustments to the claims processing system to be able to start notifying potential claimants and accepting applications.”

Within the next several weeks, once system adjustments are completed, ODJFS will mail notices to potentially eligible claimants advising them how to file for these additional benefits. More information also can be found at <http://unemployment.ohio.gov> or by calling 1-877-Ohio Job (644-6562) during business hours.

While regular Unemployment Compensation benefits are funded by employer taxes, these extended benefits will be funded by the federal government and thus will have no impact on Ohio’s already troubled Unemployment Compensation Trust Fund.