



June 14, 2021

The Honorable Larry Hogan
Governor
100 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Governor Hogan,

Your decision to prematurely halt federally-funded unemployment benefits is concerning, and we strongly urge you to reconsider. These funds cost the State of Maryland absolutely nothing and offer essential support for residents struggling to make ends meet during COVID-19. While the American Rescue Plan extends these benefits to September 6th, your decision leaves a two-month gap that Baltimore families cannot bear.

A commitment to equity is an essential aspect of leadership, especially during recovery efforts. Federal programs like unemployment benefits are intended to support vulnerable populations who are disproportionately impacted by the pandemic. However, failing to apply a true equity lens ignores key racial and economic disparities and will likely worsen gaps that already exist.

This decision further overlooks the fact that Baltimore City's unemployment rate is 31 percent higher than the State as a whole. There simply are not enough jobs available for out-of-work Baltimore residents. Consequently, not only will thousands in Baltimore be forced to seek work in hazardous environments that fail to offer living wages, but thousands more will continue enduring joblessness with a weakened safety net.

Lastly, everyone knows that increased consumer spending plays a major role in growing local economies. Hence, unemployment benefits are critical to preserving small businesses and returning Baltimore's economy to pre-pandemic levels.

There is too much at stake to halt unemployment benefits for Marylanders, especially when this support does not cost the State a dime. Maryland leaders have a moral obligation to approach economic recovery efforts with an equity lens and protect families bracing ongoing economic uncertainty.

Senate President Bill Ferguson understands the urgency of this matter, and we support his efforts to find a solution that works in the interests of all Marylanders – workers and employers alike.

Governor Hogan, please consider reversing your detrimental decision to halt federally-funded unemployment benefits. If you refuse to bear in mind the plight of everyday Baltimoreans, we

must call on the Maryland General Assembly to exercise their authority to restore access to these crucial federally-funded programs.

Yours in service,



Mayor
Brandon M. Scott



City Council President
Nick J. Mosby



Comptroller
Bill Henry

cc

Tiffany Robinson, Secretary, Maryland Department of Labor
Bill Ferguson, President, Maryland Senate