

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

October 9, 2020

The Honorable Mark Butler
Georgia Commissioner of Labor
148 Andrew Young International Blvd NE
Sussex Place, Room 600
Atlanta, GA 30303

Dear Commissioner Butler:

As members of the Georgia delegation, we write to express our concerns regarding the significant delays our constituents have faced in attempting to obtain their unemployment insurance (UI) program benefits since April. The Federal-State UI program is critical to preventing those who have lost their job through no fault of their own from falling through the cracks, especially during a period of significant economic downturn and a public health emergency like we are facing today.

As you are well aware, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, unemployment rates hit levels not seen since the Great Depression. While we are relieved that these rates have begun to decline, many Georgians have yet to receive their benefits, or even reliable communications, from the Georgia Department of Labor (GDOL). Throughout the duration of the pandemic, our offices have continued to receive a staggering number of inquiries from our constituents concerning the status of their UI and Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) applications and benefits.

We would like to express our sincere appreciation to the hard-working employees at the GDOL, who are under significant stress and working overtime to process the historic number of claims. However, when constituents' inquiries are not sufficiently addressed by GDOL, they have no alternative but to ask their local, state, and federal representatives for assistance. We understand that some cases have special circumstances that require our help, but Georgians should expect to receive consistent communications from GDOL. As such, we request that GDOL develop a process to inform applicants of the status of their claims in a timely manner.

We, the Georgia delegation, are committed to working with you in order to ensure our constituents facing economic hardship during these unprecedented times receive their unemployment benefits as swiftly as possible. We all have the same goals – we want to ensure all Georgians can keep food on the table and a roof over their heads. We look forward to your prompt response to this letter as well as to the following inquiries:

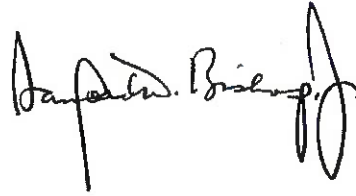
1. Why are individuals who have already been approved for benefits experiencing a delay in receiving their payments?
2. What changes have you made to address the existing backlog of cases?
3. How many Georgians have pending applications, and how long have they been pending?

4. How many Georgians have consistently received their benefits, uninterrupted, on a weekly basis?

Sincerely,



David Scott
Member of Congress



Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.
Member of Congress



Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.
Member of Congress



Lucy McBath
Member of Congress

CC:

The Honorable Brian P. Kemp
