

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DECEMBER 31, 1974

Office of the White House Press Secretary
(Vail, Colorado)

THE WHITE HOUSE

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

Today I signed into law H. R. 16596, the Emergency Job and Unemployment Assistance Act, and H. R. 17597, the Emergency Unemployment Compensation Act. These are important measures which provide much needed help to our unemployed fellow citizens.

On October 8, when I outlined to Congress my proposals to fight inflation and unemployment, I pointed out that the Conference on Inflation had made us all aware of the undue burden being carried by those who lost their jobs during this period of worsening economic conditions. I proposed a temporary program to expand unemployment assistance and create jobs.

The Emergency Unemployment Compensation Act provides an additional 13 weeks of benefits to persons who are now covered by unemployment compensation laws. This makes it possible for workers who have lost jobs to receive up to one full year of protection if they are unable to find employment.

Title II of the Emergency Jobs and Unemployment Assistance Act creates a temporary unemployment insurance program for jobless workers not now eligible for payments under any other State or Federal programs, including State and local government employees, farm workers, domestic workers, and others not now covered.

Designed to respond to changing economic conditions, these two programs providing urgent added protection for workers will automatically expand when unemployment is high and contract when it recedes.

Expenditures under existing law of at least \$10 billion are projected in fiscal year 1975 for unemployment compensation. The Urgent Supplemental Appropriations bill which I will sign shortly provides \$2.75 billion for these two new temporary programs to be used as needed for direct aid to workers.

Title I of H. R. 16597 authorizes a temporary expansion of funding for jobs in the public sector. This action provides up to 100,000 new jobs in addition to the 170,000 financed by funds currently available under existing law.

At my request, the Secretary of Labor has already urged the State governors to move quickly in making assistance available to the jobless. The Secretary is also working with the States and localities to develop all available resources for the immediate and effective creation of jobs.

With regard to Title III of H. R. 16596, I believe that its provisions would create an unnecessarily complex and unwieldy administrative mechanism involving program and project reviews by all Federal agencies, regional commissions, and units of general government. I will, therefore, request that the Congress transfer appropriations from this Title to Title I of the Act so that needed employment can be provided as quickly and efficiently as possible.

In sum, however, I commend the 93rd Congress for its action on these two vital measures and am confident that the spurt of cooperation and conciliation which marked their passage will carry over into the new year and the new Congress.

###