

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 28, 2021

The Honorable Ron DeSantis
Office of Governor Ron DeSantis
State of Florida
The Capitol
400 S. Monroe St.
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001

Dear Governor Ron DeSantis,

We write to express our concerns with your administration's decision to withdraw the State of Florida from the Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation Program (FPUC) on June 26, 2021, which currently provides an additional \$300 per week in federal support on top of state benefits to Florida's unemployed workers who have been hurt by the pandemic.

It is a myriad of factors that have some businesses struggling for workers—competitive pay, fear of unsafe workplaces, lack of opportunities in chosen fields, and unavailability of child care to name just a few. Unemployment benefits, which in Florida are among the worst in the nation, do not substitute for the dignity and security of a guaranteed salary, and anyone receiving this benefit will still be required to demonstrate that they are actively searching for work.

Florida's unemployment benefits, even with the federal assistance, is not a substitute for a good paying job. According to the Bureau of Labor and Statistics, Florida's average weekly benefit of \$228 when combined with the \$300 federal benefit comes out to \$528 per week—roughly the federal poverty level for a family of four and roughly half the average weekly salary in Florida.¹ Furthermore, these benefits are completely federally funded with no additional cost to our state. Cutting off this program will cost our state hundreds of millions of dollars in federal support that would otherwise be stimulating local commerce since unemployed workers tend to spend benefits quickly on critical needs for their family like food and bills that help them survive.

Our constituents have gone through a terrible year of hardship. So as the State of Florida continues to recover from this pandemic, we hope your administration will use the resources provided by the federal government to assist all Floridians. We appreciate your full and fair consideration of these concerns and your attention on this important matter.

Sincerely,



Lois Frankel
Member of Congress

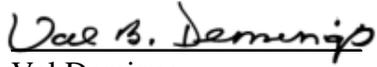


Darren Soto
Member of Congress

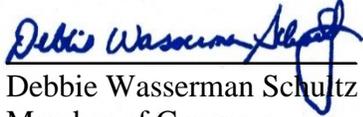
¹ https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_fl.htm#00-0000



Al Lawson, Jr.
Member of Congress



Val Demings
Member of Congress



Debbie Wasserman Schultz
Member of Congress



Theodore E. Deutch
Member of Congress



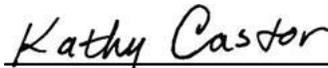
Frederica S. Wilson
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