

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
CONTACT: Mary Liz Burns
May 11, 2011 202-434-2560
media@aarp.org

AARP ‘Deeply Disappointed’ by House Committee Vote to Enable States to Eliminate Unemployment Benefits

Older Workers Face Over a Year of Unemployment on Average

Washington, DC – AARP Executive Vice President Nancy LeMond offered the following statement today expressing disappointment with a House Ways and Means Committee vote on a bill (HR 1745) that could eliminate funds to assist millions of Americans facing long periods of unemployment.

“AARP is deeply disappointed that the House Ways and Means Committee voted today to approve a bill that could lead to the loss of unemployment insurance benefits, especially for the long-term unemployed.

“AARP has repeatedly supported the extension of unemployment benefits to assist millions of workers struggling to find a job under difficult economic circumstances, and this bill could hurt those workers who have been looking for a job the longest, and allow states to use the “savings” to cut unemployment insurance taxes for employers and for related purposes other than paying benefits.

“Loss of the extended benefits program for long-term unemployment would hit older workers especially hard, since the average number of weeks that older job-seekers are unemployed just reached a staggering 53.6 weeks in April. Joblessness that now lasts, on average, over a year is especially difficult for older persons also facing rising health care costs, shrinking pensions, and falling home values.

“AARP will continue to support needed long-term unemployment benefits for jobless Americans and their families.”