

Unemployment Testimony Senate Commerce Committee

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My Name is Jake Baker. I've been trying to get KDOL on the phone for Over a month. It's left me in a position of feeling helpless, a burden, and in poor health from rationing food. It's like The State of Kansas is Penalizing me during covid like its my fault I can't go to work.

I filed my initial claim for unemployment on December 7th, 2019. I did not receive benefits until the end of January. I've been enrolled with the workforce center and was taking advantage of the programs they had to offer. I have not been able get ahold of my case manager since February. And all classes I had have been enrolled in have been canceled with no resume date in sight.

With no luck finding employment with an establishment, I also have been inquiring as a self-employed contractor in order to find work. I've Been established since 2014 as a small business. Mainly side gig work. Not Very lucrative. Whatever pays the bills.

Then we get hit with all the stay at home orders and that was a game changer. I live paycheck to paycheck. It's not that I have an issue managing money, it's just the amounts coming in are what most consider poverty. I exhausted my regular state benefits on March 28th, 2020. After 16 weeks of unemployment benefits of \$232.

I do not qualify for the 10-week state extension provided by the SB-27 bill. I have had no success applying for unemployment since exhausting benefits because the cutoff date was January 1st, 2020. So because of this bill, I have to wait for the Federal Unemployment extension known as PEUC. For some reason the date for this program keeps getting pushed back.

Now I am being told it won't be until late June. For someone like me, that's my entire federal 13 week extension. I've done everything In my power to find work during covid. My only other option is to move to another State for work because I'm not being heard in my Home state of Kansas where I have been born and raised, and every day the likelihood of that becoming my reality is growing tremendously.

I do my best to stay positive and I always look at the bright side. But I just don't understand why I am being neglected on these issues and why our government isn't making this a priority. I have always supported the State of Kansas until now when I feel like the feeling is not mutual for me.

So this is me, attempting yet again to reach out in hopes of being heard and having these issues addressed. I mean disrespect at all, but I've grown restless with all of this. I do want to thank you for taking the time to read up on my testimony. I think it to be important that all Kansans stick together, no matter the politics.

Let me know if there is anything I can do to help others get their claims. Thanks.

Jacob D Baker