

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 20, 2008

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**STATEMENT OF SENATOR EDWARD M. KENNEDY ON SENATE PASSAGE OF
EXTENDED UNEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE**

WASHINGTON, DC— Senator Edward M. Kennedy, Chairman of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, released the following statement on the Senate's passage of extended unemployment benefits. The legislation provides an additional 7 weeks of unemployment insurance to workers whose benefits have expired, for a total of up to 46 weeks, and an additional 13 weeks for jobless workers in high-unemployment states, for a total of up to 59 weeks.

“The Senate was right to act now to provide greater assistance for Americans who can't find work. Today's action is a vital step in repairing the tattered safety net for the millions of families struggling during these harsh economic times. But there is still much to be done, and I look forward to working with our new President and the new Congress early next year to do all we can to heal our stricken economy.”

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