



*The Commonwealth of Massachusetts*  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**Rep. Smola: Additional unemployment benefits approved for 17,000 MA residents who failed to qualify for Lost Wages Assistance Program**

**BOSTON – Representative Todd M. Smola (R-Warren, Ranking Member, Committee on Ways & Means)** along with their colleagues in the Massachusetts Legislature on Monday, October 26 passed *An Act relative to additional unemployment benefits for the neediest recipients currently excluded from the Lost Wages Assistance program*, which would enhance unemployment benefits for 17,000 people in Massachusetts by as much as \$1,800 each.

The House and Senate approved the payout of additional unemployment benefits to Massachusetts residents who did not qualify for enhanced federal unemployment benefits over the summer. The legislation authorizes an increase to unemployment compensation for every recipient in Massachusetts not receiving at least \$100 in weekly benefits. This enhancement would apply retroactively to approximately 17,000 recipients.

Representative Smola said these additional funds will help individuals and families pay for food, rent and other expenses during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Under the federal Lost Wages Assistance Program, individuals collecting unemployment were provided with an additional \$300 in weekly benefits over a six-week period this summer, beginning at the end of July and running through the first week of September. However, these federal funds were made available only to those individuals who were already receiving at least \$100 in state unemployment benefits. After recording double-digit unemployment figures over the summer, the state's jobless rate dropped to 9.6 percent in September, with 365,400 residents out of work.

The Governor signed the legislation into law on Monday. For additional information please contact Representative Smola at [Todd.Smola@mahouse.gov](mailto:Todd.Smola@mahouse.gov) or (617)722-2100.

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