

AMENDMENT 281 – SAVES TAXPAYERS \$20 MILLION BY STOPPING FEDERAL UNEMPLOYMENT PAYMENTS TO THOSE EARNING MORE THAN \$1 MILLION.

This amendment would end federal unemployment payments to those earning \$1 million or more a year.

As many as 2,840 households who reported an income of \$1 million or more on their tax returns were paid a total of \$18.6 million in unemployment benefits in 2008, according to the U.S. Internal Revenue Service. This included more than 800 earning over \$2 million and 17 with incomes exceeding \$10 million.

In all, multimillionaires were paid \$5.2 million in jobless benefits in 2008.

The median income in the U.S. in 2009 was **\$49,777**, according to the [U.S. Census Bureau](#).

Most Americans do not earn \$1 million a year with a full time job. Others work a second job to help ends meet and don't even earn a fraction of the millionaires' collecting federal jobless benefits.

While jobless millionaires may not report to an office every day to earn their paycheck, their income is significantly greater than most Americans who do.

This amendment would save more than \$20 million every year and more than \$100 million over the next five years as well as takes necessary steps to ensure unemployment insurance is used for its intended purpose - to provide a financial safety net for laid-off workers who are seeking re-employment.

In a federal budget rife with waste, duplication and, sometimes sheer stupidity, giving unemployment benefits to millionaires may take the cake. Ending this practice will save nearly \$100 million and correct a gross injustice against the millions of Americans who are out of work.

This bipartisan amendment is cosponsored by Senators Mark Udall and Jon Tester.

This amendment would simply require those seeking unemployment insurance payments to sign a form certifying the applicant did not earn \$1 million or more in the previous year. The individual's adjusted gross income reported on an income tax form would be the basis for the certification.

The U.S. Department of Labor and the U.S. Government Accountability Office would be permitted to audit the applicants to ensure applicants meet these income eligibility requirements.

Because nothing more than a form would be required (which could be incorporated into states' existing application forms) to enact this amendment, the cost for implementation would be relatively low. There are approximately 394,250 applicants for unemployment payments every week according to a four week average of the latest data from the Department of Labor. That translates into about 20.5 million applicants a year who would sign certification forms. It costs approximately \$42.50 for a box containing 10 reams of 500 pages of paper meaning the total cost for the new forms would be around \$175,000 a year if every applicant signed a certification form.

This is a fraction of the \$18.6 billion paid in unemployment benefits to jobless millionaires and therefore would reap significant savings.