

Illinois Dems Blast Bush on Unemployment Benefits

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WBBM Radio

(Chicago) -- Illinois' Congressional Democrats say the Bush administration is holding unemployed Americans hostage by not extending unemployment benefits.

Representative Jan Schakowsky -- along with colleagues, Rahm Emanuel, Dick Durbin, Danny Davis and Bobby Rush -- slammed the administration for not supporting passage of a 13-week extension of federal unemployment benefits to laid-off workers.

Emanuel says this is election year maneuvering. Emanuel says House Speaker Dennis Hastert and Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist have put up roadblock after roadblock to make sure the issue never comes to the floor for a vote.

Durbin says the Bush administration would be embarrassed because extending benefits would show that the president's economic plan is not working.

The Democrats say over 35-hundred unemployed workers in Illinois are exhausting their state benefits each week and by June 31st, 61-thousand-600 workers in the Chicago metro area will lose their safety net of federal emergency unemployment insurance.