SENATE RESOLUTION No. 92

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED OCTOBER 8, 2020

Sponsored by:
Senator KRISTIN M. CORRADO
District 40 (Bergen, Essex, Morris and Passaic)
Senator LORETTA WEINBERG
District 37 (Bergen)

Co-Sponsored by:
Senators Testa, A.M.Bucco and T.Kean

SYNOPSIS

Urges Governor and Commissioner of DOLWD to reopen One-Stop Career Centers.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.

(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 10/8/2020)

A SENATE RESOLUTION urging the Governor and the Commissioner of Labor and Workforce Development to reopen One-Stop Career Centers.

WHEREAS, Thousands of unemployment claims are being filed each week due to the coronavirus disease 2019 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, As of September 17, 2020, the total number of workers in the State who applied for unemployment benefits since the start of the pandemic in March is 1.58 million individuals, with 1.38 million of those individuals being eligible; and

WHEREAS, The online unemployment claim filing system is not equipped to handle the unprecedented number of claims being filed, causing delays for eligible individuals being able to receive their benefits; and

WHEREAS, Numerous individuals encountering problems during the filing process are unable to obtain customer assistance from the Department of Labor and Workforce Development because there are insufficient representatives in the department responding to phone inquiries; and

WHEREAS, 30,000 to 40,000 unemployment claims remain backlogged, with individuals relying on unemployment benefits in limbo during this time of uncertainty; and

WHEREAS, While unemployed workers are typically able to receive certain employment assistance from one of the many One-State Career Centers throughout the State, the Department of Labor and Workforce Development has shuttered the centers in response to the coronavirus pandemic; and

WHEREAS, The shuttering of the career centers, which have been closed for months, means the plight of the many unemployed individuals in the State continues to go unaddressed, and the centers could be opened with certain safety protocols so that these individuals in desperate circumstances can be assisted and provided guidance; and

WHEREAS, The failure to reopen these centers and provide assistance to unemployed individuals may result in further economic harm to the entire State; and

WHEREAS, It is fitting and proper for the Governor and Commissioner of Labor and Workforce Development to reopen these centers, as several other businesses and agencies are operating safely, to address the critical needs of unemployed individuals to assist with unemployment and re-employment services ; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED *by the Senate of the State of New Jersey:*

1. This House hereby urges the Governor and the Commissioner of Labor and Workforce Development to reopen all of the One-Stop Career Centers throughout the State to assist with

unemployment and re-employment services, with appropriate safety measures to prevent the spread of infectious disease.

2. Copies of this resolution, as filed with the Secretary of State, shall be transmitted by the Secretary of the Senate to the Governor and the Commissioner of Labor and Workforce Development.

STATEMENT

This Senate Resolution urges the Governor and the Commissioner of Labor and Workforce Development to reopen all of the One-Stop Career Centers throughout the State to assist with unemployment and re-employment services.

Under normal circumstances, these career centers provide assistance and guidance to individuals seeking employment. However, since the start of the coronavirus disease 2019 pandemic, the centers have been closed. At the same time, unprecedented numbers of individuals are filing for unemployment and need assistance from the centers more than ever.

Many of these individuals have already sought assistance from the Department of Labor and Workforce Development with the filing of their unemployment claims, but their calls have gone unanswered. There is a backlog of 30,000 to 40,000 unemployment claims in the department.

The career centers should be reopened to assist these individuals and prevent further economic harm to the State.