

LARSON RESPONDS TO DISMAL UNEMPLOYMENT NUMBERS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WASHINGTON, DC -- The unemployment rate hit a 15-year high today at 7.2%, according to a Labor Department report. Congressman John B. Larson (CT-01), Chairman of the House Democratic Caucus, said:

"Today's unemployment numbers are the harshest evidence so far of the severity of our economic crisis. But, for many Americans, it reinforces a reality they are already too well aware of. Addressing the crisis of the unemployed is the top priority of our economic recovery plan. We will provide short term help and long term solutions to this problem. First, we will help those most impacted by the economic downturn by extending unemployment insurance and access to health care. We cannot allow our fellow Americans to suffer while their jobs are slashed and wages cut.

"Our recovery and reinvestment plan must also be focused on creating jobs. Our goal is to save or create 3 million jobs over the next two years -- a far cry from the 1 million we have lost in just the last two months. We must create jobs that stay in America and rebuild our economy over the long term. We need to build new industries like an American energy base and reinforce those that have made our nation great. We need to make America competitive in the global marketplace by training the world's best workforce for the jobs of the 21st century.

"There is no easy path ahead. We have a lot of work to do and more bad news to endure before it is done. But, I have confidence that we can bring our economy out of this downturn and restore pride and integrity to our workforce."

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