

A RESOLUTION

23-23

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

February 5, 2019

To declare the existence of an emergency with respect to the need to amend the District of Columbia Unemployment Compensation Act to provide that a furlough-excepted federal employee is eligible for unemployment benefits during a federal-government shutdown; and to amend the Federal Worker Housing Relief Emergency Act of 2019 to provide protections to employees of the District of Columbia Public Defender Service.

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this resolution may be cited as the “Supporting Essential Workers Unemployment Insurance Emergency Declaration Resolution of 2019”.

Sec. 2. (a) The federal government was partially shut down for over a month due to President Trump’s demand for funding in excess of \$5 billion to build a wall at the southern border of the United States.

(b) Despite the opposition of a majority of Americans to funding the construction of the proposed wall, the President refused to sign legislation to fund the federal government unless it included full funding for the wall.

(c) As a result of the President’s position, the federal government was partially closed, and over 800,000 federal employees did not receive pay.

(d) Federal employees who are deemed essential and are required to continue work during a shutdown are not eligible for unemployment benefits, even though they are not receiving their pay during the shutdown.

(e) The shutdown caused extreme financial hardship for federal employees, their families, and the service providers, including daycare providers, they regularly use, especially for those federal employees who are required to continue working without compensation.

(f) Although the federal government is now open, it is operating under a continuing resolution that expires on February 15, 2019, and another shutdown is possible at that point.

(g) If another shutdown occurs, federal employee who are required to work during the shutdown again will face extreme financial hardship.

(h) The provision of unemployment compensation to these employees during a shutdown will ease the burden on the employees and help enable them to meet their families’ basic needs.

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(i) Immediate legislative action is necessary to be able to provide important financial relief during a shutdown to essential federal employees.

Sec. 3. The Council of the District of Columbia determines that the circumstances enumerated in section 2 constitute emergency circumstances making it necessary that the Supporting Essential Workers Unemployment Insurance Emergency Amendment Act of 2019 be adopted after a single reading.

Sec. 4. This resolution shall take effect immediately.