



D I S C U S S I N G

Unemployment Insurance Program Integrity



Fraud, waste, and abuse within the unemployment system cost taxpayers billions of dollars and threaten limited resources for the truly needy. Nationwide, nearly 13 percent of unemployment spending is improper, with people who are still working, have moved out of state, are in prison, or aren't even alive collecting benefits. Fraud overpayments cost taxpayers nearly a billion dollars in 2018 alone. With a few simple data checks, states can ensure that those receiving unemployment payments are actually eligible and can protect and restore program integrity, preserving resources for the truly needy and saving tax dollars.

Voters support unemployment program integrity measures, including incarceration crosschecks and checking new hire records.

What messages really move them? These messages work best.

- ▶ To collect unemployment benefits, **an individual must actively be seeking work**, and that cannot be done while someone is in prison.
- ▶ Unemployment fraud **hurts small businesses** that are greatly affected by increased unemployment taxes.
- ▶ **States already have access to the information needed** to verify eligibility for unemployment benefits.
- ▶ Inmates fraudulently collecting unemployment benefits could result in **tax increases on businesses and employers**.
- ▶ Those in jail who collect unemployment benefits are **unlikely to pay back fraudulent payments**.
- ▶ With program integrity measures, **states are able to use federal databases to ensure enrollees aren't receiving benefits in one state while working in another**, or collecting benefits in multiple states at one time.
- ▶ Program integrity would **preserve resources for those who are truly unemployed** and need assistance.

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