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Unemployment compensation bill still badly flawed Even with amendments, it would slash benefits, fall short of full solvency

A bill to overhaul Ohio's unemployment compensation (UC) system remains severely flawed even with amendments that are being set out today by its sponsor, Rep. Barbara Sears. That was the gist of testimony prepared for delivery today by Policy Matters Ohio Research Director Zach Schiller and Policy Liaison Hannah Halbert.

All of the savings for the UC fund in the original bill came from unemployed workers and the bill came nowhere near achieving its own solvency goal, the testimony noted. Its extreme reductions in benefits and access to benefits would take Ohio well outside the mainstream. "Unfortunately, none of these factors appear to have changed with Rep. Sears's proposed amendments," Schiller said.

The fiscal analyses of key provisions in the bill by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services and the Legislative Service Commission showed it would result in a 41 percent reduction in benefits amounting to an average \$475 million a year. None of the elements in those analyses has changed. Nor has the average \$313 million annual tax cut for employers. The bill relies entirely on jobless workers to improve the solvency of the system, now as before.

"This is an unbalanced plan that will not make Ohio's system truly solvent," Schiller said.

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*Policy Matters Ohio is a nonprofit, nonpartisan state policy research institute
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