



H.R. 6431, *New Opportunities for Business Ownership and Self-Sufficiency (NO BOSS) Act*

Rep. Mike Carey (R-OH)

Background:

- Self-Employment Assistance (SEA) is a voluntary program that offers qualifying unemployment insurance (UI) claimants the opportunity for re-employment through self-employment as an alternative career pathway. **The program is designed to allow unemployed workers the option to create their own jobs by starting a small business.**
- States can pay a SEA allowance, which is identical in amount and duration to what an individual would have received as a regular UI benefit, to help unemployed workers while they are establishing small businesses and becoming self-employed.
- **SEA participants are required to be actively engaged on a full-time basis in self-employment assistance activities relating to the establishment of a business**, including entrepreneurial training and business counseling.
- A state may allow up to five percent of UI claimants to participate and the program is limited to claimants who are most likely to exhaust their weekly benefits (most states provide UI benefits for up to 26 weeks).
- **SEA is underutilized as there are currently only eight states that offer this program to unemployment claimants**: Delaware, Mississippi, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, Pennsylvania, and Rhode Island.

H.R. 6431, *New Opportunities for Business Ownership and Self-Sufficiency (NO BOSS) Act:*

- H.R. 6431 makes changes to **improve state utilization of the SEA program, strengthen accountability and expand eligibility to a larger pool of UI claimants**. The bill increases the participation cap from five to 10 percent and expands eligibility to all UI claimants, not just those determined most likely to exhaust their benefits.
- **The bill adds accountability provisions to require a business plan and market feasibility study** be submitted by the individual and approved by the state.
- The bill also requires participants to **certify self-employment assistance activities to the state agency for approval on a weekly basis**.
- The bill is endorsed by the Center for American Entrepreneurship, the Foundation for American Innovation, Shopify, and the Small Business and Entrepreneurship Council.