



815 16th St., N.W.
Washington, DC 20006
202-637-5137
www.workingamerica.org

For Immediate Release

Contact: Alison Omens 202-637-5083

**Sen. Al Franken, AFL-CIO Pres. Richard Trumka, Talk Jobs, Bank Bonuses with
25,000 Unemployed Workers**

Call sponsored by Working America, AFL-CIO community affiliate

(Washington, Feb. 15) Today, Senator Al Franken and AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka led a tele-town hall with 25,000 unemployed Working America members from across the country. The conversation focused heavily on the jobs crisis and how the government and working people can create good jobs in the short and long term. Franken and Trumka were joined by Chris Owens, Executive Director of the National Employment Law Project (NELP) and Karen Nussbaum, Executive Director of Working America. The call was sponsored by Working America, community affiliate of the AFL-CIO.

Minnesota Senator Al Franken said: "My top priority in 2010 is putting Americans back to work. We need to do more. The idea of a jobless recovery is absurd. A true economic recovery is one that can provide good-paying jobs for middle-class Americans."

"Across the country, I hear stories of people applying for hundreds of jobs, and not hearing back from anyone. I hear a new sense of resignation from people laid off for the first time," said AFL-CIO President Rich Trumka. "Doing nothing is not an option. The labor movement is fighting for an economy that works for everyone."

Over 100 people asked questions, which focused heavily on unemployment, bank bonuses and anger at irresponsible Wall Street practices. Many also asked about the creation of green jobs and the need to stop outsourcing.

Participants signed a petition that calls on the Senate to act on the jobs crisis and create jobs for Main Street.

"I lost my job a year and a half ago and haven't been able to find one since. I've applied for probably 50 jobs and have only gotten called back once," said Liz Freeberg of Circle Pines, Minnesota. "This week I've been hearing that banks are now giving out bonuses. They're not giving out money, not lowering credit card rates, but raising them or raising new fees. What can we do to make sure banks stop taking advantage of us?"

Karen Nussbaum, Executive Director of Working America moderated the call and pledged to support unemployed Working America members and all working people without jobs. "Today's tele-town hall forum is aimed at helping unemployed workers and to discuss jobs and the economy," said Nussbaum. "Working America is at the forefront

of fighting for an economy that works for everyone. We're mobilizing our 3 million members to call on Congress to create new jobs now."

Working America represents 500,000 unemployed workers, out of 3 million members. In the spring, Working America launched a one-stop shop website for unemployed workers who are looking for local and national resources at www.unemploymentlife.org.

Working America will begin a campaign next week against bank bonuses and call on CEOs and Congress to act on curbing excessive compensation. The "Final Notice" campaign will let big bankers know that working people will no longer stand to be their ATMs.

Working America, community affiliate of the AFL-CIO, represents working families to mobilize around economic issues like health care and good jobs. Working America represents 3 million people and is the fastest-growing organization for working people in the country. For more information, go to www.workingamerica.org.

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