

Washington, D.C. – Today, Congressman Tom Rooney (R-Fla.) and Congressman John Bocchieri (D-Ohio) introduced their second bipartisan job creation bill titled the Back to Work Tax Credit Act which encourages employers to create new jobs by hiring the long-term unemployed. The legislation, which builds upon the HIRE America Act introduced earlier this month by Rooney and Bocchieri, specifically expands the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) to give employers a tax credit for hiring people who have been collecting unemployment benefits for 26 weeks.

“Getting people back to work is job one for me,” said Rep. Tom Rooney. “Florida’s unemployment rate climbed to a staggering 11% last month. Hendry County has the highest unemployment rate in the state with 16.8% and St. Lucie is ranked third with 15.3%. These are unacceptable numbers that demand action. Finding real solutions requires bipartisan action and that is why I have partnered with my Democratic colleague and fellow freshman Rep. John Bocchieri to introduce the ‘Back to Work Tax Credit Act’ to help get people back to work today.”

“With Ohio’s unemployment rate still higher than the national average, the time is now to put Ohioans back to work,” said Congressman Bocchieri. “Though we have a long way to go to rebuild our economy, we are headed in the right direction with the Back to Work Tax Credit Act. This legislation is a win-win for employers and employees because it encourages businesses to hire additional workers, especially those who have been unemployed for many months. This legislation helps struggling employers in our district create new jobs, encourages economic growth, and helps Ohioans who want to work get back on their feet. I am proud we can come together not as Democrats or Republicans, but as Americans, to protect our workers, create economic development, and restore the hope and promise of America.”

“Creating jobs on the Treasure Coast is crucial to economic recovery,” said Stuart/Martin County Chamber of Commerce President Joe Catrambone. “Businesses in Martin County need help to grow and expand allowing them to hire additional employees -- expanding the Work Opportunity Tax Credit is great way to encourage business to expand.”

The Back to Work Tax Credit Act helps people who most urgently need to get back to work by expanding the income tax credit to employers who hire the long-term unemployed. The bill expands the income tax credit to 40% of the first \$6,000 in wages paid for employers who retain new hires on their payroll for at least 400 hours during the worker’s first year of employment.

Earlier this month, Bocchieri and Rooney worked together to introduce the Helping Invigorate and Revive our Economy Act of 2009, also known as the HIRE America Act, to help create jobs for a larger pool of working Americans by expanding the WOTC to encourage employers to hire more employees in general, not just the long-term unemployed.

Currently the Work Opportunity Tax Credit is set to expire on August 31, 2011. The HIRE America Act would make these provisions permanent. For additional information on the current Work Opportunity Tax Credit please [click here](#).

To view Rep. Rooney's floor speech from Tuesday October 28th please [click here](#):