

California can help the unemployed be your own bosses

Sign the [Help Unemployed BYOB](#) petition

The federal government set aside \$35 million for states to implement a Self-Employment Assistance (SEA) program and help unemployed become their own boss and start their own micro-business. California has the opportunity to apply for \$5.3 million of that money from the U.S. Department of Labor to initiate, administer, and market a SEA program to help the unemployed who can start their own businesses.

Under the SEA program, unemployed workers will be able to receive or maintain their unemployment insurance benefits while they start their own small businesses – a full-time job in its own right – without having to look for other full-time work. Currently, in California this is not the case.

To get funds to operate SEA, the California legislature needs to pass a bill. California leaders have the opportunity to assist the unemployed to become self-employed, create jobs, and reduce the unemployment rolls – all at the same time. CAMEO is working to make this a reality, but surprisingly there is opposition. The one positive thing legislators can do right now to create jobs through self-employment is to initiate a Self-Employment Assistance Program (SEA).

“We initiated the [Help Unemployed BYOB](#) campaign, because California’s unemployment rate continues to remain high, higher than the national average,” said Claudia Viek, C.E.O. of CAMEO. “If the unemployed can’t find a job, they can create their own. California needs to apply for these federal funds and train the unemployed to become their own boss.”

The [Help Unemployed BYOB-Be Their Own Boss](#) petition campaign was launched to show Governor Brown and the state legislators that California wants this program.

California needs this program. California has had double digit unemployment for more than three years and a persistent, long-term unemployment problem. The percent of long-term unemployed (jobless for 27 weeks or more) as a share of total unemployed in California rose from 19.9% in December 2005 to 44.5% in December 2010. Increase in long-term unemployment has hit all demographic groups in California, but some populations experience more long-term unemployment than on average, including minorities, older workers, educated workers.

Existing companies are not creating enough jobs.

Self-employment must be part of any economic recovery plan for California. Self-employment creates at least one job per start-up that is for the owner, and creates jobs for others over time. Self-employment is a labor market trend; self-employment was more than 25% of wage and salary employment in 2009. Pre-2000, self-employment grew at an average of 1.4% a year; post-2000, self-employment grew at an average of 3.5% a year and is projected to grow at a rate of 7.2% in the next five years.

Please support our efforts and sign the [Be Your Own Boss petition](#), invite 10 or more friends to sign it. Spread the word with Facebook and Twitter.