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A poster that explains ways to file for unemployment insurance benefits is shown as job seekers look for work at the JobTrain employment office in Menlo Park on Tuesday.

Jobless benefits soon may flow for millions

Will action boost recovery?  
Some say it at least will keep things from getting worse

BY MIKE PERRAULT  
The Desert Sun

Indio resident Scott Mapes, an information technology specialist who has been looking for a job for more than nine months, learned several weeks ago his unemployment claim will end soon.

“And I’ve been wondering how the heck I was going to meet my monthly obligations,” said Mapes, who may have received some relief Tuesday when the Senate cleared the way with a 60-40 vote for 2.5 million out-of-work Americans to start receiving unemployment checks again. “This may give me a little breathing room,” said Mapes, who is among 14.5 percent of the unemployed work force in Riverside County.

The House is expected to pass the bill today and send it to President Barack Obama.

The bill could help boost the economy in the Coachella Valley and elsewhere, said Chapman University economist Esmael Adibi, who compiles The Desert Sun’s quarterly economic index report.

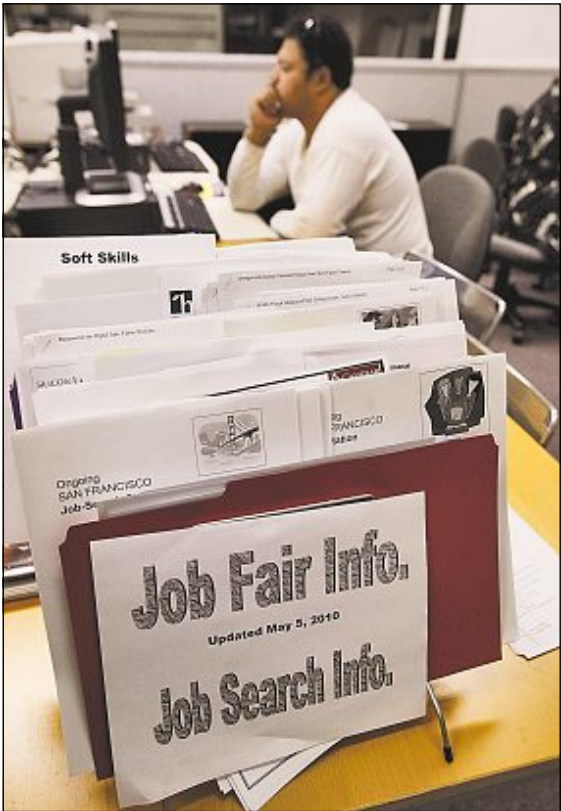
Consumers account for about 70 percent of the economy, so getting money in their hands is important, he said.

“Everybody out there is watching consumers,” he said. “If consumption turns negative, there’s a danger (that) growth will be derailed. That’s what the nervousness is about.”

The Congressional Budget Office says extending jobless benefits, which average nearly \$310 a week, is the most efficient way for government policymakers to stimulate a weak economy: Every \$1 spent on benefits generates 70 cents to \$1.90 in economic growth, the office says.

Without Congressional action, more than 1.4 million claimants in California potentially will lose access to extended unemployment benefits, California Employment

Please see **JOBLESS, A4**



PAUL SAKUMA THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

An unemployed man looks for work at the JobTrain employment office in Menlo Park on Tuesday.

Reaction to legislative action

■ Estimated \$54 billion boost far less than 1 percent of U.S. economy **A7**

■ Republican Senate hopeful Carly Fiorina changes stance on jobless benefits **A4**

Familiar face, fresh start for USC

Southern California is cleaning house in an attempt to rehab its tarnished athletic department, throwing out much of what got the school in severe NCAA trouble. Athletic director Mike Garrett and Reggie Bush’s Heisman Trophy are the first two items to go.

In a letter to school supporters Tuesday, incoming USC president Max Nikias said Garrett will be replaced Aug. 3 by Pat Haden, the former Trojans quarterback who became a successful businessman and a member of USC’s board of trustees. **Story on C1**



Pat Haden

INTODAY'S PAPER

Sports fun on the Web

What’s a sports fan to do during the doldrums of summer? The Internet comes to the rescue with some entertaining time-wasters. **C1**

Advice	D9	Lottery	B7
Bridge	E5	Movies	D9
Classified	E1-10	Obituaries	B8
Comics	D8	Opinion	B9
Crossword	E4	Sudoku	E4

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Kagan clears hurdle

President Obama’s choice for the Supreme Court moves closer to confirmation with Senate Judiciary Committee endorsement. **A2**

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Power 1-0 in playoffs

Palm Springs Power kicks off its three-game playoff series with a high-scoring game, beating the OC Pioneers 9-5 on Tuesday. **C1**

Local preschool program wins temporary stay

Parents of Desert Sands Unified’s youngest students applaud decision

BY MICHELLE MITCHELL  
The Desert Sun

Preschool programs in Desert Sands Unified School District were saved for about a month after the board of education voted Tuesday night to table items that would close the district’s Child Development Center.

The board unanimously voted to delay decision on laying off two teachers and four other preschool employees, which would close the center that serves about 32 students age 3 to 5. The board will reconsider the item Aug. 17.

“Everybody needs to go into this with their eyes open,” board member Donald Griffith said. “If the program is cut, it’s going to be cut in the middle of the year” if the board waits for a final state budget.

“I’m impressed by our board,” said Rosemary Mindiola, who before the vote complained that she and other parents and caretakers were kept in the dark about the possible closure. “This was a big decision and they stood by our kids.”

The recommendation to close the program came from the latest state budget proposal that would cut fund-

ing for this preschool program by 87 percent, giving the district about \$4.50 rather than \$34 per student, Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services Kathy Felci said.

Cutting the program would not save the district any money because it is fully funded by the state, Assistant Superintendent of Business Services Cindy McDaniel said.

If that funding is cut by the anticipated 87 percent and the district funds the preschool program for the whole year, it would cost about \$250,000.

If the program was cut, it would cost single mother Samantha Porter her job, she tearfully told the board.

“If I lose the program, I’m going to have to leave my job because I can’t afford childcare,” she said, explaining that she has no family in the area.

The program allows her to work enough to keep her apartment and has helped her daughter’s education and her attitude.

“She has seen and heard a lot of things that a 3- and 4-year-old should never have to,” Porter told the board. “This program has saved her and saved us.”

Please see **PRESCHOOL, A4**

Police won’t use decoys in lewd-conduct probes

Community outcry over Warm Sands sex sting leads to revised policy

BY MARIECAR MENDOZA  
The Desert Sun

Palm Springs police will no longer use decoys on so-called lewd conduct enforcement operations, an acknowledgement that “there’s a better way to do things,” Chief David Dominguez said Tuesday.

The conduct by undercover decoys during the Warm Sands sex sting operation last summer is a key point of contention in the dispute between police and members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community.

“We want to move forward and make sure we have better lines of communication with the community and better methods of discouraging this criminal behavior,” Dominguez said Tuesday.

The policy changes in dealing with complaints about lewd public conduct in Warm Sands include:



Dominguez

■ Putting more officers in marked police vehicles.

■ Working with business owners and hotel operators to warn visitors about the consequences of

illegal public conduct.

■ Ensuring the Warm Sands neighborhood is well lit and possibly installing lighting triggered by motion sensors.

Mayor Steve Pougnet said Tuesday “the chief’s action items are a step in the right direction.”

The changes in how the police will respond to complaints about lewd public conduct in the neighborhood come a week after the department said it would set up special training for officers in dealing with LGBT policing issues.

Business and community leaders have grown increasingly concerned that the city’s reputation for tolerance has been bruised by the Warm Sands controversy, which includes the revelation that an undercover

Please see **DECOYS, A4**

Poll: Voters favor same-sex marriage

Despite the narrow passage of Proposition 8 in 2008, a slim majority of California registered voters favors allowing same-sex marriage, according to a Field Poll released Tuesday.

The poll’s results — 51 percent in favor, 42 percent opposed, 7 percent undecided — show big differences among age groups, geography and party affiliation. **B1**

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