

LETTER FROM SENATORS SENT TO CAREERBUILDER TO DETER IT FROM DISCRIMINATION



A sect of the Senate's Democrats sent a letter to a large website for job hunters this week, asking the website business to stop using help-wanted ads from business that hinder the unemployed from applying to the jobs. Congress says that they have seen many examples of employers advertising its potential jobs on CareerBuilder.com that say those who apply "must be currently employed" to apply. According to the letter by Sens. Richard Blumenthal of Connecticut, Sherrod Brown of Ohio, and Kristen Gillibrand of New York, "It is unreasonable and unfair to assume struggling Americans lost their job because of their work ethic or performance when so many businesses are struggling from financial hardship." Jennifer Sullivan Grasz, a CareerBuilder spokeswoman, said Wednesday that the business got the letter, and says it encourages advertising employers to take "applicants of all backgrounds" into consideration. However, the website's statement quit short of stating CareerBuilder would consider the Senator's request to ban ads that showed discrimination against those presently unemployed. The letter is just the most recent evidence in a new push, primarily headed up by advocacy groups like the NAACP and Democrats, to stop discrimination against the 14 million people who are currently without a job. In his \$447 billion jobs package that did not pass in the Senate last week, President Obama also proposed it to be illegal for businesses with more than 15 employees to refuse to hire the jobless, or to advertise positions that do not allow the unemployed from applying for consideration. Obama's bill, which has upset Republicans, would also allow job applicants to sue if such discrimination exists. Texas Republican Representative, Louie Gohmert, said this on the House floor during September, "That's 14 million potential new clients that could go hire a lawyer and file a claim because they didn't get hired even though they were unemployed." A similar legislation has been proposed by Democrats in the House and Senate that will make discrimination against the jobless illegal. The National Employment Law Project tracked instances where employers don't allow the jobless from applying, revealing some 150 job advertisements in a July report. A researcher for the group found an additional 10 job advertisements from September 30 through October 12 on CareerBuilder in professions ranging from legal services to medical sales, that required only people currently employed would receive consideration for the job. National Employment Law Project policy co-director, Maurice Emsellem, said, "We found this with just a few hours of research, with very little effort. The ads are just one level of the hiring process." Another big web-based job firm, Indeed.com, revealed last month that it would no longer accept advertisers from employers that show discrimination because of employment status. The United States Chamber of Commerce's Executive Director of Labor Law Policy, Mike Eastman, stressed the point that according to the current law there are already severe consequences for employers who discriminate. "It is incumbent upon those who want to change the law to first demonstrate that current law is not working," he stated. "That case has not been made."

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