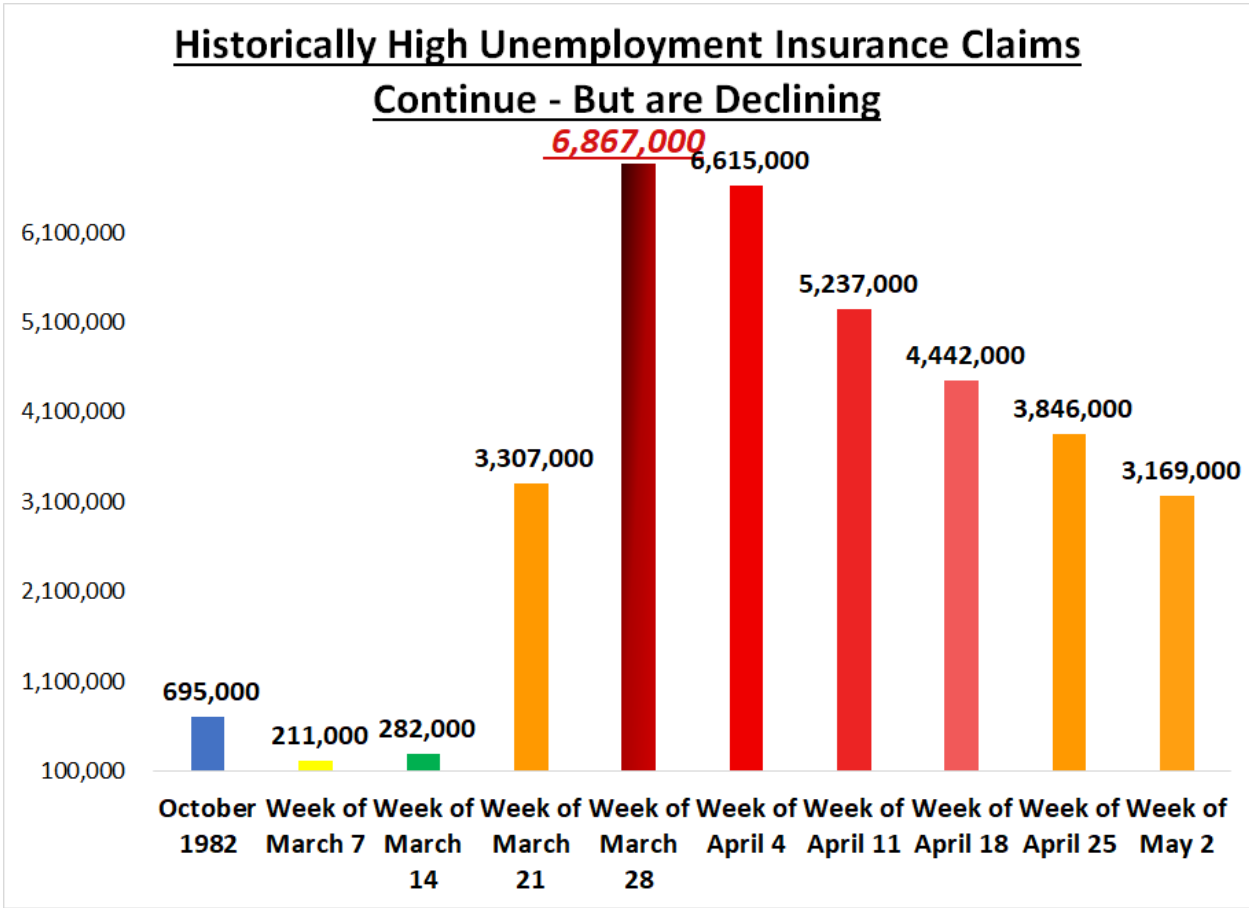


Historically High Unemployment Claims Continue – But are Declining Week to Week

Good news first. Unemployment insurance claims declined for the fifth straight week [according to the Department of Labor](#). The bad news is that almost 3.2 million Americans still claimed unemployment for the week ending May 2.

That was down 677,000 from the prior week and is 3.7 million fewer than the record high of almost 6.9 million claims for the week ending March 28.



In total, just shy of **34 million Americans** have been put out of work since COVID-19 hit in force in mid-March, and the economy went into the Great Pause.

Use this [interactive map](#) to see just how quickly unemployment claims have risen in each state over the past eight weeks.

The labor market remains in freefall, but the slowing of that fall is a slight silver lining. With states easing stay-at-home orders, the worst may be behind us. Unfortunately, it will take some time to repair the damage COVID-19 has inflicted in the labor market. Future economists will look back on this period with awe for the rapidity and severity of the labor market's collapse.

—Curtis Dubay, Senior Economist, U.S. Chamber of Commerce