

Bush says economy in 'rough patch'

by UPI

KANSAS CITY, Mo. - U.S. President George Bush urged the U.S. Senate to pass an economic stimulus package quickly to help "deal with this period of uncertainty." Commenting on the Department of Labor's report on the lost of 17,000 jobs in January, Bush said, "I think government can take decisive action to help deal with this period of uncertainty." Even though the January unemployment rate fell from the December rate, Bush said, "for the first time in 52 months, we didn't create jobs." Concern has been expressed whether "consumers would lose confidence in our economy," Bush said after touring a Hallmark Cards facility in Kansas City, Mo. "One way to address that issue is to have a temporary, robust tax rebate." The House of Representatives passed a economic stimulus package that includes tax rebates, child tax credits, small-business tax breaks and housing-related reforms. The proposal is in the Senate. "It's very important for the Senate to finish its work quickly," Bush said. "The fundamentals (of the economy) are strong; we're just in a rough patch right now." The stimulus package would "enhance consumerism by giving consumers money and by encouraging businesses to invest," Bush said.

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