



Statement on the March 2008 Labor Department Report

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"It's hard to imagine a worse stretch of news for America's workers. Yesterday, the Labor Department reported that more than 400,000 workers newly filed for unemployment benefits, the first time that claims have crossed this recessionary threshold since Hurricane Katrina. And, today, the Labor Department reported that the economy has shed jobs for third consecutive month (a total of 232,000 jobs lost this year, including an 80,000 drop in March)—a stretch that has signaled a recession each time it has occurred in the past 50 years. With the ranks of the unemployed swelling by 16% in the past year and jobs becoming scarcer, the outlook has rapidly darkened for the nation's 7.8 million unemployed with little relief in sight," said Andrew Stettner, Deputy Director of the National Employment Law Project.

"Up until the now the weaknesses of the job market have been overshadowed by the housing crisis, but this week's numbers should refocus policy makers on the threat of major jobs decline. Today's jobs report, combined with yesterday's new unemployment claims, underscores the urgent need for Congress to quickly act to extend unemployment benefits for the nation's jobless workers."

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