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## Jobs Report: U.S. Added 165,000 Jobs in April

### *Job Growth Encumbered By Sequester*

WASHINGTON, DC—The economy added 165,000 jobs in April, while job growth over the prior two months was revised upward by a total of 114,000. The nation's unemployment rate ticked down to 7.5 percent due to more people finding work, although the percentage of the working-age population in the labor force remains at a three-decade low of 63.3 percent. Job growth was concentrated in professional services, health care, retail and the leisure and hospitality sectors. The public sector took hits, including the loss of federal jobs, and manufacturing and construction and warehousing were stagnant, likely reflecting sequester-induced cutbacks. Despite job growth overall, long-term unemployed workers, who represent 37.4 percent of the unemployed, face daunting odds in finding work and now are being hit with federal unemployment benefit cuts that states have been forced to implement as a result of the sequester.

"The only way to build a strong and sustainable economy is to rev up the nation's job creation engine, but the sequester is causing it to stall. Anyone in Congress who cares about keeping our economy moving in a positive direction should make repeal of the sequester sledgehammer an immediate priority," said **Christine Owens, executive director of the National Employment Law Project**. "We're talking about children kicked out of Head Start, treatment for cancer patients delayed or denied, and job seekers seeing a reduction in the unemployment assistance they rely on to get by. The sequester is beyond bad economic policy. It is immoral, and it should be repealed."

On March 31<sup>st</sup>, 16 states began implementing [sequester cuts](#) to federal Emergency Unemployment Compensation (EUC) benefits for the long-term unemployed, followed by three more states on April 6<sup>th</sup>. Another two states implemented sequester cuts late last month. For the average claimant in these states, the EUC benefit has been reduced by \$39 per week, or \$155 over the course of a month. These are funds unemployed workers would otherwise spend on rent, monthly utility bills or groceries for their families. More broadly, according to White House estimates, the sequester will force 70,000 children out of Head Start, put the jobs of 10,000 teachers and 7,200 special education teachers, aides and staff at risk, and eliminate four million meals from Meals on Wheels.

Last week's quick action by Congress lifting the sequester with respect to air traffic—hence, avoiding the travel delays members otherwise would have faced as they headed home for the recess—shows that nothing about the sequester is immutable, and that Congress is capable of bipartisan action to mitigate its damaging effects when it wants to do so.

"Certainly the real and damaging harm the sequester is inflicting on millions of Americans—especially the most vulnerable among us—is at least as urgent as the delays members of Congress and other air travelers were facing, and as worthy of congressional intervention to remedy," said **Owens**. "For the good of all the American people—not just a few—Congress must repeal the sequester when it returns next week."

*The National Employment Law Project is a non-partisan, not-for-profit organization that conducts research and advocates on issues affecting low-wage and unemployed workers. For more about NELP, visit [www.nelp.org](http://www.nelp.org).*

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