

FCC REPORTS EDICION NOCTURNA MARCH 1-15 PART 1

03/01/12

UNEMPLOYMENT LATEST

VO :20

The number of people seeking unemployment benefits fell slightly last week to the lowest point in four years, a further sign that the U.S. job market is steadily improving. A seasonally adjusted 351,000 people sought unemployment aid, down from 353,000 the previous week, the Labor Department said Thursday. That matches the four-year low reached three weeks ago. It's the fewest since March 2008. A four-week average of claims, which smooths out weekly fluctuations in the data, also fell last week, to 354,000. That's also the lowest figure in four years. Applications have fallen steadily since October. The average has declined 14.6 percent since then. When applications drop consistently below 375,000, it usually signals that hiring is strong enough to lower the unemployment rate. Economists expect the government to report another strong month of hiring for February, similar to the average net gain of about 200,000 in the previous three months

TENSIONS RAISE SPECTER OF GAS AT \$5 A GALLON

VO :20

Gasoline for \$5 a gallon? The possibility is hardly far-fetched. With no clear end to tensions with Iran and Syria and rising demand from countries like China, gas prices are already at record highs for the winter months - averaging \$4.32 in California and \$3.73 a gallon nationally on Wednesday, according to AAA's Daily Fuel Gauge Report. As summer approaches, demand for gasoline rises, typically pushing prices up around 20 cents a gallon. And gas prices could rise another 50 cents a gallon or more, analysts say, if the diplomatic and economic standoff over Iran's nuclear ambitions escalates into military conflict or there is some other major supply disruption.

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03/02/12

MISSISSIPPI INMIGRACION LATEST

VO :20

Mississippi Gov. Phil Bryant said Wednesday he supports an immigration-enforcement bill working its way through the state Legislature, and he dismissed critics' contention that it could lead to racial profiling of Hispanics. The immigration enforcement proposal, House Bill 488, awaits consideration in the House Education Committee. The bill says law enforcement officials should check for immigration status when "a reasonable suspicion exists" that a person is in the U.S. illegally. It would ban officers from considering race, color or national origin when making that decision, although Bill Chandler of the Mississippi Immigrants Rights Alliances has said repeatedly that he believes it could lead to profiling. The bill also would require schools to check students' immigration status.

ARIZONA ILLEGAL CROSSING RECORD

KARLA GOMEZ ESCAMILLA. TUCSON, ARIZONA

PKG 2:00

With the new policy of the federal authorities, the people arrested for illegally crossing more than once will be sentenced to punishments more severe. They will be arrested with a criminal record.

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03/05/12

COLORADO SCHOOL GUNS

VO :22

The University of Colorado overstepped its authority when the school's board of regents imposed a ban on the carrying of concealed weapons at its four campuses, the state's Supreme Court ruled on Monday. In overturning the policy, the court said that a concealed carry law passed by the state legislature trumped the school's ban because it did not carve out an exception for the state's flagship university.

SCHOOL BULLYING MINNESOTA

VO :20

Top officials with Minnesota's largest school are welcoming the settlement of two lawsuits over a policy that was criticized for failing to protect students from bullying. Superintendent Dennis Carlson of the Anoka-Hennepin School District told reporters Monday night the district will be working with the U.S. Department of Justice, and that their efforts to combat harassment and bullying related to sexual orientation will result in lasting change. School board Chair Tom Heidemann says district officials will pioneer a new standard in anti-bullying practices. The vote to approve the settlement was 5-1. The district's insurance carrier will pay the students a total of \$270,000.

CREDIT CARD DEBT TAXES

LUIS MEGID / SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

PKG 1:50

Billions of dollars in credit card debt that was charged off during the Great Recession some of it decades old - is coming back to haunt borrowers in the form of unexpected tax bills. Debt that is canceled or forgiven is considered taxable income, something many borrowers don't realize until they receive a 1099-C tax form from their lender. The IRS projects that creditors will send taxpayers 6.4 million 1099-Cs in 2012, up from 3.9 million in 2010.

CA CELLPHONE BAN

VO :21

California's nearly four-year-old ban on drivers using handheld cellphones is saving lives, according to a University of California, Berkeley, study released Monday. The study found that overall traffic deaths dropped 22 percent, while deaths blamed on drivers using hand-held cellphones were down 47 percent. Deaths among drivers who

use hands-free phones dropped at a similar rate. The university's Safe Transportation Research and Education Center examined deaths for two years before and two years after the cellphone ban took effect in July 2008. It found a similar drop in injuries attributed to drivers' cellphone use.

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03/06/12

WISCONSIN VOTER ID LAW

VO :21

A judge on Tuesday temporarily blocked enforcement of Wisconsin's controversial new voter identification law, just weeks before the state's April 3 presidential primary, prompting supporters of the law to vow they were likely to appeal. The law, passed last year by a Republican-controlled legislature, requires voters to present photo identification such as a driver's license at polling places for federal, state and local elections.

HOMELAND SECURITY IMMIGRATION

VO :19

The Department of Homeland Security is finalizing its plan for a biometric data system to track when immigrants leave the United States and will present it to Congress within "weeks," a top department official told a House Homeland Security subcommittee Tuesday. An exit system to track who is leaving the country and when has been sought since before the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. DHS officials, including Secretary Janet Napolitano, have agreed with the need for such a program but have previously said it would be too costly.

TX WARNING MEXICO

VO :17

For the second year in a row, Texas' top law enforcement agency is urging spring break vacationers to avoid all travel to Mexico because of "continued violence throughout the country." Today's alert by the Dept. of Public Safety acknowledges that "the Mexican government has made great strides battling the cartels," and that "many travel to Mexico without incident."

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03/07/12

TOYOTA RECALL

VO :20

Toyota Motors is recalling about 680,000 vehicles in the United States in two separate recalls. One recall involves airbags in pickups, the other is for faulty brake lights in sedans and crossovers. The larger of the two recalls involves almost 500,000 2005 to 2009 Toyota Tacoma trucks. Part of the trucks' steering wheel mechanism may rub against a cable assembly. That could result in a damage to the electrical connection for the driver's airbag module, causing the airbag to be deactivated. If this happens, an airbag warning light on the dashboard will be illuminated and the airbag won't work in a crash.

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03/08/2012

US IMMIGRATION ALABAMA

MARIA ANTONIETA COLLINS. MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA

PKG 2:00

A U.S. appeals court ordered the state of Alabama on Thursday to stop enforcing additional parts of its controversial new immigration law, pending review of a federal challenge to the measure that is considered the toughest in the nation. The U.S. Court of Appeals for the 11th Circuit, based in Atlanta, issued a brief order expanding its initial injunction to include provisions that barred illegal immigrants from obtaining a driver's license and barred courts from enforcing contracts that involved illegal immigrants. The appeals court in October blocked the state from enforcing another key provision of the law that required schools to check the immigration status of children on enrollment.

ARIZONA PINK UNDERWEAR

VO :20

An appeals court has criticized the pink underwear worn by inmates in Arizona's largest county, as federal judges consider the case of a mentally ill man who mistakenly viewed officers' efforts to forcibly clothe him as an attempt at rape. The 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals issued a ruling Wednesday that questions the legal justification in one particular case for Maricopa County Sheriff Joe Arpaio's policy of dressing an inmate in pink undergarments. The court says that dressing inmate Eric Vogel in the underwear appears to be punishment without legal justification. Early on in his nearly 20-year tenure as sheriff, Arpaio won points with voters for making inmates wear pink underwear, housing them in canvas tents during Phoenix's triple-digit summer heat, and banning cigarettes.

POST OFFICE WILL REMAIN OPEN

MARTINA BERLANGA. MIAMI, FLORIDA

PKG 2:00

The U.S. Postal Service said on Wednesday it would suspend a plan to close or consolidate mail processing facilities during the months leading up to the November election to alleviate concerns that voting by mail would be disrupted. The USPS, an independent agency of the U.S. government, is losing billions of dollars annually as customers switch to email and online bill payment and has been hurt by a massive payment to prefund retiree health benefits as well as other liabilities. The mail carrier's officials have warned of annual losses of more than \$18 billion by 2015. As part of a cost-cutting plan, the USPS intends to close or consolidate more than 200 mail processing sites and shutter thousands of post offices.

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03/09/2012

"I'M GETTING ARRESTED" APP AIMS TO HELP UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRANTS

VO :20

A group of pro-immigrant rights activists in Arizona aim to develop a smartphone application that would help immigrants notify friends, family and their attorney if they are detained and arrested during a traffic stop. Arizona was the first state to pass a law to make it a crime to be an undocumented immigrant, leading to an increased crackdown and climate of fear among immigrants. For years, the nonprofit's emergency hotline has monitored cases of possible civil rights violations against Latinos by local law enforcement, provided information about rights, and tracked down missing family members in immigration custody after undocumented drivers are detained. It was Guzman's experience with Respect/Respeto and the increased crackdown on undocumented immigrants by local police using state laws that inspired her friend Todd Landfried, a spokesperson for Arizona Employers for Immigration Reform, to come up with an idea for a smartphone app that could do what the group does and more. The app will allow users to notify family, friends, attorneys and even their consulate when they get pulled over by law enforcement or when they are facing an emergency situation that puts their safety or civil rights at risk.

BANK OF AMERICA FORECLOSURE

ANTONIO VALVERDE. LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

PKG 1:47

Bank of America said Friday it would reduce by about \$100,000 the amount owed by as many as 200,000 underwater homeowners as part of the recently announced government foreclosure settlement with top mortgage servicers. BofA made the commitment as part of a \$1-billion side deal to the \$25-billion foreclosure settlement, said bank spokesman Richard Simon. The principal reductions could eliminate the entire underwater portion of some mortgages that the bank services, with the average reduction expected to be more than \$100,000, he said. By cutting the amount owed on the mortgages, Bank of America could reduce the \$3.25 billion in penalties it faces from the foreclosure settlement by \$850 million. The details of the principal-reduction agreement were first reported by the Wall Street Journal.

MORTGAGE SETTLEMENT

VO:20

March 9 (Reuters) - A previously announced \$25 billion settlement between five major banks accused of abusive mortgage practices and government officials will be filed in federal court on Monday, people familiar with the matter said late Friday. The pact unveiled Feb. 9 is expected to result in payments and other mortgage relief for about one million borrowers, but must first be approved by a judge. Bank of America Corp, Wells Fargo & Co, JPMorgan Chase & Co, Citigroup Inc and Ally Financial Inc agreed to the settlement after 16 months of negotiations with state attorneys general and federal agencies, including the U.S. Justice Department and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

OBAMA JOBS

VO:20

Raising campaign cash in Republican territory, President Barack Obama on Friday hailed a rebounding economy and accused Republicans of banking on voters having "amnesia" about the steps that led to a brutal economic collapse. Bidding for re-election, Obama bounded between a rally-style event in a sprawling Rolls-Royce manufacturing plant south of Richmond, Va., to a pair of Houston fundraisers. Framing the trip: a new monthly jobs report showing employers 227,000 jobs in February, the latest sign that the economy is headed in the right direction. Every month's jobs report is seen as a barometer of the economy and an important factor in the presidential race. The unemployment rate held steady at 8.3 percent, the result of more Americans looking for work as job growth takes hold month by month.

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03/12/12

GAS PRICES

LUIS MEGID / SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

PKG 1:56

The price of gasoline jumped by nearly a nickel over the weekend and is now \$3.80 per gallon. That's the highest ever for this time of year. Pump prices have risen an average 52 cents this year as refineries and wholesalers ass along the higher cost of crude oil. And this month they're getting an additional boost as investors bet that supplies will shrink ahead of the summer driving season.

OBAMA TX VOTER ID

DAVID HERRERA, AUSTIN, TEXAS

PKG 1:37

The Justice Department's civil rights division on Monday objected to a new photo ID requirement for voters in Texas because many Hispanic voters lack state-issued identification. Texas follows South Carolina as the second state in recent months to become embroiled in a court battle with the Justice Department over new photo ID requirements for voters.

SEXUAL ABUSE PREVENTION AT SCHOOLS

ANTONIO VALVERDE / LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

PKG 1:50

LAUSD board members will unveil two resolutions to better protect children from sexual predators in LAUSD schools. The first resolution aims at streamlining the dismissal process for ``certificated (sic) employees engaged in acts of moral turpitude against children." The second is directed at policy changes to make it easier to identify and

take action against employees who abuse children and create a uniform procedure for notifying parents and guardians.

FORD INVESTIGATION

VO :19

Federal safety regulators have launched an investigation into sticky accelerators in more than 1.9 million Ford Taurus and Mercury Sable sedans. The probe includes cars

from the 2001 through 2006 model years. The Taurus and Sable are nearly identical. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration says it has received at least 14 complaints about the problem. No crashes or injuries have been reported.

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03/13/12

CALIFORNIA DRINKING WATER CONTAMINATION

VO :29

Nitrate contamination of drinking water is a pervasive problem in California's agricultural heartland and is bound to intensify in the coming years, according to a University of California, Davis study released Tuesday. The study, ordered by the state Legislature, shows chemical fertilizers and livestock manure are the main source of nitrate contamination in groundwater for more than 1 million Californians in the Salinas Valley and parts of the Central Valley. While nitrate problems have been known for decades, the study offers a comprehensive assessment of how many people are exposed and identifies solutions and costs.

STUDENT LOAN DEBTS

JAIME GARCIA / LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

PKG 1:59

Millions of college students could be in for a shock this summer when the interest rate on a popular federally subsidized student loan doubles unless Congress acts. College students on Tuesday delivered more than 130,000 letters to congressional leaders asking them to stop rates from increasing from 3.4 to 6.8 percent. The rate hike affects new subsidized Stafford loans, which are issued to low and middle income undergraduates. They hope to raise enough awareness to get Congress to stop it.

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03/14/12

GAS PRICES/ BEHAVIOUR

MARIA ROSA LUCCINI, WASHINGTON, DC

PKG 2:00

Gasoline is now above \$4 a gallon in four states and Washington, D.C., as a three-month surge in pump prices continues. According to AAA and other pump-watchers, average gas prices are above the four-dollar mark today in Illinois, California, Alaska and Hawaii, in addition to the nation's capital. Nationwide, gasoline has soared by an average of nearly 54 cents this year.

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03/15/12

MISSISSIPPI IMMIGRANTS

VO :20

Mississippi lawmakers moved closer to enacting legislation to crack down on illegal immigrants in the state, though the proposal does not go as far as neighboring Alabama's law, widely seen as the toughest in the nation and now the focus of a court challenge by the Obama administration. The Mississippi House of Representatives voted early on Thursday to pass the Mississippi Support Our Law Enforcement and Safe Neighborhoods Act by a vote of 68-49. The measure, the latest of several efforts by states in the South and West to enact stringent restrictions on illegal immigrants, now goes to the state Senate, where it is expected to pass the Republican-controlled upper house. Governor Phil Bryant, also a Republican, has spoken publicly in support of the legislation.

NEW ANTI SMOKING ADDS

BLANCA ROSA VILCHEZ. NEW YORK

PKG 2:00

The government has revamped its strategy for getting people to kick the smoking habit, and the new campaign is about to hit TV and radio air waves and billboards, magazines and newspapers. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention will run ads containing graphic, eye-catching images of health problems that can come from cigarette smoking, such as heart surgery, a tracheotomy, lost limbs or paralysis. The \$54 million campaign is the largest and starkest anti-smoking push by the CDC. After aggressive anti-smoking campaigns in the past succeeded in substantially cutting back the percentage of people who smoke, the smoking rate has now stalled at about 20 percent. The CDC hopes the ads will get as many as 50,000 Americans to kick the habit.

SUBARU RECALL

VO :20

Subaru is recalling 275,391 Forester crossovers from the 2009-12 model years because the seat belt in the backseat's middle position may not allow secure installation of a child-safety seat, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. In the affected vehicles, which were built from Nov. 26, 2007, through March 13, 2012, the automatic locking retractor may not meet lockability requirements and may not allow proper installation of a child seat, increasing the risk of injury to a child in a crash. You can find the vehicle's build date on a label affixed to the driver-side doorjamb. The recall is expected to begin April 13. Dealers will replace the rear center seat belt assembly for free.

=====END OF PART 1 =====