

PERDUE VIOLATES AGREEMENT



Governor Bev Perdue violated an agreement with the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics and the state of North Carolina during the month of August. On August 18th, at the Rotary Club in Asheville, Perdue mentioned that the state had lost about 11,000 public sector jobs during the month of July. These job loss figures were not supposed to be released until the following day, August 19th, and Perdue made her speech roughly about 12 hours prior to the date in which this data was to be released to the general public. Betty McGrath, the director of the Labor Market Information Division, is the person who made the report about Perdue's violation. The report came after McGrath saw reports in the media of the comments Perdue made about the job statistics. The BLS Regional Director, Janet Rankin, confirmed that Perdue did, in fact, make a violation by making that speech and mentioning information on job statistics that was not supposed to be released until the following day. Rankin would not provide commentary on whether or not a violation could lead to legal consequences. It is also still up in the air as to whether Perdue violated the agreement between BLS with DES or if she broke a federal law that protects that statistical information and date on employment and jobs. The administration for Perdue believes that she has done nothing wrong in this instance. Confidential data is protected by The Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act, which first came about in 2002. This Act protects the privacy and security of data that is given to the government for statistical purposes. A violation of this act can lead to a fine of up to \$250,000 along with five years in prison. Data that is collected and maintained by BLS is under a confidentiality agreement and should not be released early. The press office for Perdue has had an advanced look at the embargoed data since January of 2011. It is even possible that the office was finding out about such embargoed data prior to January 2011. The staff members for Perdue had received the embargoed information at least 24 hours prior to its actual release. The governor and her staff members used this early released data to help the monthly employment press with their reports on job data and statistics. On average, the employment report for the state is typically released on the third Friday of each and every month. It is usually released at about 10 in the morning. Perdue, along with her staff members, do not receive formal briefings but have, in fact, had the job report shared with them at least 24 hours prior to its actual release date.

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