

DOL PUTS OUT MILLIONS TO HOLD OFF LAYOFFS, PROMOTE JOB SHARING



Layoffs are, for most of us, an absolute last preference. This is the last thing that many of us want to face. Many people have railed against the idea of layoffs, and blamed the president personally for their CEO's decision to value shareholder profitability over loyalty to its workers. The response, from legislatures all over the nation, was the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012, which was designed to help people stay in their jobs as much as possible. This week as part of those efforts a promising announcement **was made**, "The U.S. Department of Labor today announced the availability of nearly \$100 million in grants for states to implement or improve existing short-term compensation, commonly referred to as "work sharing," programs. This funding has been made available through the bipartisan Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012 signed by President Obama in February, which authorized states to set up programs to give employers an alternative to layoffs." So, how is this money set to help stave off layoffs? After all the government is not going to pay your salary, unless you happen to be a civil servant. Well those plans have been **neatly outlined**, "Establishing or expanding work-sharing programs nationwide will help business owners better weather hard economic times by temporarily reducing their labor costs while still keeping their existing skilled employees," said Secretary of Labor Hilda L. Solis. "This program is a win-win for businesses and employees alike." For those of you who are not familiar with the concept a work-sharing program is when, rather than a layoff action, workers agree to cut down on their house significantly in order for two, or more, people to share the duties of one full time job. While some people laud these efforts because they keep more workers in their jobs others find the arrangement less than idea. Workers under a work share are still given a partial unemployment benefit in order to make is for their lost wages. In some cases this kind of compensation can actually cost a state more money and companies are not saved the cost of the management and benefits of those workers. Sadly this kind of help may not be enough for the civil servants who are getting the boot. For those of you who missed out on our **earlier coverage** of the serious job cuts being made to the US Postal Service here is an excerpt that will get you up speed in not time, "Well as it turns out the number of layoffs coming to the workers of The United States Postal Service will not be as bad as the management had initially predicted. On the bright side the service will not be laying off 20,000 people, but that does not mean that the news is all good. The United States Postal Service is still getting ready to cut back on a whopping number of jobs. When the service closes 48 of its mail processing centers of the summer they will be cutting back on about 13,000 workers in the process."

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