

In sign of slowdown, private employers cut jobs in November

BY BEN CASSELMAN
NYT News Service

Private employment fell last month, according to payroll processing company ADP, the latest sign of weakness in the U.S. labor market.

Companies cut 32,000 jobs in November, the third decline in four months, ADP said Wednesday. Losses were concentrated among small businesses, which cut 120,000 jobs even as larger firms added employees.

“It is those mom-and-pop, Main Street companies, firms, small busi-

nesses and establishments that are really weathering what is an uncertain macro environment and a cautious consumer,” Nela Richardson, the chief economist at ADP, said in a call with reporters. “I see them as a canary in the coal mine.”

Economists have been watching ADP’s data more closely than usual because official figures from the Bureau of Labor Statistics were delayed by the federal government shutdown. The government reopened last month, but disruptions to the statistical system continue. The November jobs report, which was scheduled for

this Friday, has been delayed until Dec. 16, and the government is skipping the October report altogether.

Still, ADP’s data doesn’t fully replace the official statistics. It measures only the private sector, meaning it does not reflect federal job cuts. And ADP’s client base, though large, isn’t fully representative of the overall U.S. economy.

Other sources suggest the labor market has cooled significantly in recent months but hasn’t taken a sharp turn for the worse. Applications for unemployment insurance have drifted up but

haven’t risen sharply. Data from Revelio Labs, LinkedIn and other sources have shown a slowdown in hiring, but not outright job cuts.

“Everything that we’re continuing to see is showing that the labor market seems to be maintaining its slower but steady overall pace,” said Josh Hirt, an economist for Vanguard, which produces its own measure of employment by tracking sign-ups for corporate retirement plans. “We’re not seeing any further deterioration.”

Concerns about the labor market are a big part of the reason that a divided Federal Reserve is expected to cut interest rates at its meeting next week. In the absence of official numbers from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the weak ADP report could add to those concerns. Still, it is unlikely, on its own, to convince holdouts at the Fed that a cut is warranted.



Prize Home + Garden

Prize Home + Garden is opening a new spot on Kansas City’s Country Club Plaza.

You may have seen his work on HGTV. Now he’s opening a store on KC’s Plaza

BY JENNA THOMPSON
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Replacing the now-closed Moosejaw on the Country Club Plaza is a Kansas City home goods store fit for HGTV.

Several of Steve Rogers’ pieces have, in fact, been featured on the hit show “Fixer Upper,” which ran on the network from 2013 to 2018. Rogers said he’s been supplying antique decor and furniture to home renovation celebrities Chip and Joanna Gaines for about 10 years.

“(Joanna) would buy from me things that they would put in their shows,” he said. “And everyone would be like, ‘That was cool. Where did you get that?’”

Soon, Kansas Citians will be able to purchase pieces directly from Rogers. He’ll be launching retail spot Prize Home + Garden on the Plaza at 439 W. 47th St. sometime this month.

As for the store’s offerings, Rogers said they don’t fit neatly into one category. He travels overseas and around the U.S. to buy pieces from all time periods, all around the world.

“I buy what’s really, really beautiful, and customers trust me for my eye,” he said.

Rogers has made a lot of his business selling to other interior designers besides Gaines, like Am-

ber Lewis (or @amberinteriors on Instagram), Leanne Ford and Kelly Wearstler.

At one time, he had a presence in the West Bottoms during First Fridays — though he moved on after realizing its bargain, thrifty feel was different from his.

Rogers’ other retail store is in Round Top, Texas.

The price range is mid to high, but Rogers’ pieces are one-of-a-kind antiques rather than mass-produced.

When Prize Home + Garden opens, its hours will be 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Mondays through Saturdays and noon to 5 p.m. Sundays.

Rogers said he felt confident in the Plaza’s new owners, which took over the shopping center last year.

“They’re very respectful of the tenants they want to bring,” he said. “They want the streets to be safe and walkable.”

Hailing from Dallas, Gillon Property Group has promised to improve the district to the tune of \$1.5 billion. Their vision includes bringing in new tenants and hundreds of apartments. It could also include asking for tax incentives and building taller buildings.

Other tenants that have recently announced their plans to opens in the district includes soccer-centric store The Current Shop and Vertice Italian.

FROM PAGE 1A

PORNHUB

Coalition, which represents the sex industry, told The Star in September that the nonprofit had “serious concerns” about the rule and its impact on privacy and users’ First Amendment rights.

Stabile framed the policy as too broad and said it could be applied to social media websites, search engines and “any website with any significant amount of content that can be deemed “harmful to minors.”

“There are effective, actionable legislative solutions to keeping minors from accessing adult sites, but asking actual adults to scan their face every time they go online isn’t a viable solution,” Stabile said in an email.

In neighboring Kansas, Pornhub’s website displayed a nearly identical message and appeared to block access as well. Kansas lawmakers approved a new age-verification law that went into effect last year.

A spokesperson for Aylo, Pornhub’s parent company, called Missouri’s rule “haphazard and ineffective” in a statement to The Star on Tuesday. The company argued that the rule would require users to turn over sensitive documents or data to third parties, risking privacy breaches.

“It is disappointing that Missouri officials are referencing our decision as a lack of concern for safety,” the statement said.

“In actuality, we have made this difficult decision because we believe that any law to this effect must ensure minors do not access content intended for adults and preserve user safety and privacy.”

The statement also appeared to suggest that it would have been supportive of a previous version of the rule issued by Bailey, the former attorney general. That version included a “device-based” provision intended to prevent children from accessing devices used for dating apps, gambling or adult content, the statement said.

“Unfortunately, the final Missouri rule removed the device-based provision included by the previous Attorney General,” the statement said. “This change does not protect minors but protects the interests of Big Tech.”

“It’s disheartening,” the company added, “to see the adult industry shamed for taking privacy seriously while tech-aligned stakeholders were accommodated.”

Meanwhile, Hanaway’s office celebrated both the policy and Pornhub’s decision as evidence of Missouri protecting children.

“If a billion-dollar corporation would rather leave Missouri than verify that children are not accessing graphic sexual content, that tells you everything you need to know about its priorities,” Hanaway said. “We are proud to stand on the side of parents, families, and basic decency. Missouri will not apologize for protecting children.”

This story has been updated with a new statement from Pornhub’s parent company.

FROM PAGE 1A

DRUG

as much as 13 times more potent than morphine and is sometimes referred to as “gas station heroin.”

In a previous interview with The Star, Robinson said he got started in the supplements business working for Shaman Botanicals CEO Vince Sanders at one of his CBD American Shaman shops. Sanders then suggested they start a 7-OH brand together, with Robinson owning the company and Sanders manufacturing the product through Shaman Botanicals.

“We were one of the first companies to sell (7-OH) shots,” Robinson told The Star in September.

Robinson said then that his company was continuing to sell 7-OH products despite a July recommendation by the FDA and the Department of Health and Human Services that the Drug Enforcement Administration classify 7-OH as a Schedule I substance alongside drugs like heroin and cocaine. The DEA has yet to act, though, leaving 7-OH businesses in something of a legal gray area.

Sanders, who also received an FDA warning letter in June, continued to sell 7-OH at his CBD American Shaman shops and manufacture it for

other brands through Shaman Botanicals as well. Federal agents visited his facilities at 1501 Iron St. in North Kansas City and 2461 NW Tullison Road in Riverside and issued seizure complaints for all products containing 7-OH.

“Products containing 7-OH are illegal under federal law,” Assistant Attorney General Brett A. Shumate of the Justice Department’s Civil Division said in a news release Monday. “We have seen numerous reports of harmful health consequences in consumers, including children, who have taken 7-OH products. Working with our partners at FDA, we will take action against anyone participating in the illegal distribution of these products.”

7-OH PRODUCTS SEIZED

Court records show that the government is seeking forfeiture of roughly 17,000 units of 7-OH from Relax Relief Rejuvenate Trading. The three brands cited in the complaint — Rize, EDP and Luxx Aura — were also among the products found at Shaman Botanicals.

As in the Shaman Botanicals action, FDA investigators issued deten-



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The 7-OH brand Rize is sold by Relax Relief Rejuvenate Trading and manufactured by Shaman Botanicals, both Kansas City area companies.

tion orders for the 7-OH products, preventing their sale or distribution, and the Justice Department is now seeking court approval to formally seize the items.

Relax Relief Rejuvenate Trading could contest the forfeiture, as could Shaman Botanicals. It is not clear if either company will. Sanders has not responded to requests for comment.

Sanders and other 7-OH sellers have argued that the products are safe when used as directed. They point to research suggesting that, unlike traditional opioids, 7-OH has not caused widespread overdose deaths. Advocates of the drug also say it can serve as an off-ramp from stronger opioids like fentanyl, helping users taper down without experiencing severe

withdrawal.

But growing subreddits like r/quitting7oh tell a different story. There, users describe severe withdrawal symptoms from 7-OH, including nausea, sweating, insomnia, and anxiety, as well as intense cravings that make it difficult to stop using 7-OH. Local rehab centers have also reported a rise in patients struggling with 7-OH dependence, according to a three-part series published by The Star in September.

Missouri Attorney General Catherine Hanaway announced last month that her office had launched a statewide investigation into several 7-OH manufacturers and retailers, including Shaman Botanicals and CBD American Shaman.

BIRTHDAYS: DECEMBER 4

Britannica

Biographical information from December 4 is from Encyclopaedia Britannica. Explore more at [britannica.com](https://www.britannica.com).

Tyra Banks, American model and television personality (b. 1973).

JAY-Z, American rapper and entrepreneur (b. 1970).

Jeff Bridges, American actor (b. 1949).

Albert Bandura, American psychologist (b. 1925).

Francisco Franco, ruler of Spain (b. 1892).

Rainer Maria Rilke, Austrian-German poet (b. 1875).

Wassily Kandinsky, Russian-born artist (b. 1866).

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