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From the Los Angeles Times

California jobless rate soars

The loss of 62,100 jobs pushes the unemployment rate to 11.2%, the fourth worst in the nation.

By Marc Lifsher reporting from sacramento

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California's unemployment rate hit 11.2% with the loss of 62,100 jobs last month, reaching its highest level since the government began keeping systematic records in 1976, the U.S. Department of Labor reported today.

FOR THE RECORD: An earlier version of this article said South Carolina's unemployment rate is 11.2%. South Carolina's unemployment rate is 11.4%.

The jobless rate in March jumped six-tenths of a percentage point from a revised, seasonally adjusted 10.6% in February. The Golden State's economy, which has been shedding jobs for more than a year in nearly all industries, posted the nation's fourth worst jobs picture, behind Michigan at 12.6%, neighboring Oregon at 12.1% and South Carolina at 11.4%.

The national unemployment rate for March was 8.5%, with the Western states, including California, posting the worst results, 9.8%.

California has lost 637,400 jobs in the last 12 months as a recession that officially began in December 2007 continued to deepen. Analysts expect unemployment rates to continue rising at least through the summer even if the state and national economies begin to turn around as a result of President Obama's stimulus program.

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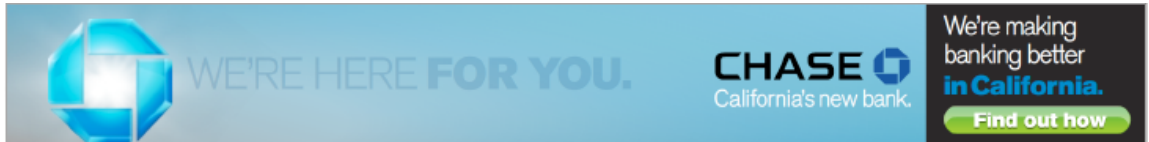
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