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Federal Economic Statistics: What's Up With The Down Sites?

By: Bill Conerly – October 7, 2013

Last week's monthly employment report was not released because of the government shutdown. I understand that. But I can go to the [Bureau of Labor Statistics data website](#) and download older data. The government is shutdown, but the website stays up. Cool.

What's wrong with the [Bureau of Economic Analysis](#) and the [Census Bureau](#), two other sources of economic data? Their web pages say the website is closed because of the government shutdown.

Conerly Consulting LLC shutdown for two weeks recently, when I was on vacation in Paris. But the website stayed up. It's really easy to keep a website up. Here's how you do it: do nothing. It stays up by itself. However, putting those announcements up on the BEA and Census websites took effort.

I'm not a fan of the government shutdown, but I seriously suspect that BEA and Census are intentionally making life harder for citizens just to be nasty. Maybe I'm wrong. Maybe some non-essential government worker is needed to keep the websites up. However, they did not say so in their announcements. So I stick with my best guess: petty bureaucrats being poorly behaved, playing into the ultra-conservative mindset.

If you are a federal website tender, staying home and surfing the web, perhaps you could spend a few uncompensated moments to explain this in the comments section.

Update: This subject was examined by [Cato Institute's Julian Sanchez](#). His comments are well worth reading.