

The shutdown's losers

By [Steve Thorngate](#)

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It's easy for liberals to enthuse about ["winning" the government shutdown](#). It's predictable for conservatives to [act like](#) the whole episode isn't a big deal. It's appropriate for all of us to celebrate the fact that [furloughed federal workers will get back pay](#).

But don't forget all the other workers affected by the shutdown: those who don't work for the feds themselves but don't have anything to do unless the feds are working. There won't be any back pay for them, and the shutdown's political fallout might not be their most pressing concern. Here's [Jim Tankersley](#):

John Anderson lost the government shutdown... "I was living week to week" before the shutdown, Anderson told me. "Now I'm living day to day."

He is a line cook at the American Indian Smithsonian Museum on the National Mall. Anderson is not a government employee. He's a contract worker - the government hires his company to make the food for visitors to the museum. When the shutdown closed the museum, Anderson lost his job. He'll now presumably be able to go back to work, but [unlike federal workers](#), he won't get back pay. And he could use that back pay: Anderson is a divorced father of two who usually brings home about \$350 a week after taxes and child support. His 16-year-old son lives with him in Washington but commutes by bus and train to high school in Maryland every day.

[Read it all.](#)