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State Unemployment Rate Declines to 4.4%, New Post-Recession Low

New quarterly data also show 12-month gain of 35,736 private-sector jobs through Dec. '14

MADISON – The Department of Workforce Development (DWD) today released the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) revisions for March and preliminary estimates for April, covering unemployment and employment statistics for the state of Wisconsin. In brief, the estimates show:

- Place of residence data: A preliminary seasonally adjusted unemployment rate of 4.4 percent in April, down from 4.6 percent in March. The 4.4 percent rate is the state's lowest rate since April 2008 and is lower than the national unemployment rate of 5.4 percent in April. Wisconsin's total employment grew by 44,600 year-over-year while the number of unemployed declined by 33,900. Additionally, the state's labor force participation rate of 68 percent outpaced the national rate of 62.8 percent.
- Place of work data: The state added a statistically significant 50,900 total non-farm jobs and 48,500 private sector jobs from April 2014 to April 2015 (seasonally adjusted). Other statistically significant changes include a year-over-year gain of 11,000 jobs and a month-over-month gain of 3,600 jobs in manufacturing, along with year-over-year gains of 8,200 jobs in construction and 4,500 jobs in financial activities. Wisconsin added 5,400 private-sector jobs over the month, and private-sector job totals remain above pre-recession levels.

DWD Secretary Reggie Newson issued the following statement about the new monthly estimates: "The state's unemployment rate remains well below the national rate and its year-over-year decline is significant. Also significant are the year-over-year increases in manufacturing and construction jobs, which further demonstrate our state's economy is strong and continuing to add jobs."

The BLS uses three data sets to measure employment and unemployment:

- **Current Employment Statistics (CES)**: compiled from a monthly survey sent to about 5,500 employers (3.5 percent of Wisconsin employers). CES data has been shown to be volatile and subject to revision.
- **Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS)**: compiled from a monthly survey of 985 households and unemployment insurance claims. Measures the labor force, employment, unemployment, and the unemployment rate.
- **Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW)**: compiled quarterly based on Unemployment Insurance records from some 96 percent of Wisconsin business establishments. Considered by most economists to be the most accurate measure of jobs, the QCEW includes data from almost all employers in Wisconsin.

New Quarterly Job & Wage Data

Today, DWD also released the latest available QCEW figures, which cover the fourth quarter of 2014. Key highlights include:

- A gain of 35,736 private-sector jobs with 17,560 jobs added in three major sectors: construction, manufacturing and professional services.

(more)

- A 6.5 percent gain in construction jobs (+6,186), reflecting the sector's highest fourth-quarter annual growth rate since at least 2002.
- Total private-sector wages increased by 5 percent in the fourth quarter of 2014 over the same quarter in 2013, including a 10.7 percent jump in construction wages during this time.

Secretary Newson issued the following statement on the new QCEW figures:

"Under the first four years of Governor Walker's leadership, Wisconsin gained back almost all of the private sector jobs it lost during the four years before he took office. This reversal from steep loss to solid gain is a testament to our state's pro-business climate, job creation policies and commitment to proven talent development programs."

Wisconsin this week received the BLS' sign-off on the state quarterly data covering the fourth quarter of 2014. The BLS will incorporate the data in its next QCEW release scheduled for June 17, 2015. Information about the QCEW, including data through 2014 third quarter, can be accessed through the BLS website at <http://bls.gov/cew/>. DWD will post the fourth-quarter data on its WORKnet site in the coming days.

Other indicators of the state of Wisconsin's economy include:

- Average Initial Unemployment Insurance (UI) claims for the first 19 weeks of 2015 dropped to the lowest point since 1995, and the annual average weekly continued UI claims are at their lowest levels since 2000.
- [Department of Financial Institutions](#) new business formation: The number of new business entities formed in Wisconsin in the first four months of 2015 grew by 4.1 percent compared to same period in 2014. As of April 30, 2015, new business filings totaled 14,669, compared to 14,093 in the same period in 2014.
- [Chief Executive Magazine](#) recently ranked Wisconsin the "12th Best State for Business" in its annual survey of CEO's, an increase of two spots over the 2014 ranking, and a significant increase since 2010, when the state ranked 41st.

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Wisconsin Employment and Unemployment Report
MARCH – APRIL 2015

1. REVISIONS TO ESTIMATES FROM MARCH 2015

| Place of Residence Data | Seasonally Adjusted | | | Not Seasonally Adjusted | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------|-----------|--------|-------------------------|-----------|--------|
| | Prelim | Revised | Change | Prelim | Revised | Change |
| CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE | 3,110,200 | 3,110,000 | -200 | 3,074,400 | 3,073,800 | -600 |
| LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE | 68.4% | 68.4% | 0.0% | 67.6% | 67.6% | 0.0% |
| EMPLOYMENT (1) | 2,965,900 | 2,965,600 | -300 | 2,907,400 | 2,906,700 | -700 |
| UNEMPLOYMENT | 144,300 | 144,400 | 100 | 167,000 | 167,100 | 100 |
| UNEMPLOYMENT RATE | 4.6% | 4.6% | 0.0% | 5.4% | 5.4% | 0.0% |
| U.S. Unemployment Rate | 5.5% | 5.5% | 0.0% | 5.6% | 5.6% | 0.0% |
| Place of Work Data | | | | | | |
| NONFARM WAGE & SALARY | 2,885,700 | 2,885,800 | 100 | 2,832,400 | 2,832,400 | 0 |
| TOTAL PRIVATE | 2,471,000 | 2,471,000 | 0 | 2,408,800 | 2,408,700 | -100 |
| GOODS PRODUCING | 584,500 | 584,200 | -300 | 564,900 | 564,600 | -300 |
| NATURAL RESOURCES & MINING | 4,400 | 4,400 | 0 | 3,900 | 3,900 | 0 |
| CONSTRUCTION | 109,600 | 109,300 | -300 | 94,500 | 94,200 | -300 |
| MANUFACTURING | 470,500 | 470,500 | 0 | 466,500 | 466,500 | 0 |
| Durable Goods | 283,800 | 284,000 | 200 | 281,800 | 282,000 | 200 |
| Nondurable Goods | 186,700 | 186,500 | -200 | 184,700 | 184,500 | -200 |
| SERVICE PROVIDING | 2,301,200 | 2,301,600 | 400 | 2,267,500 | 2,267,800 | 300 |
| PRIVATE SERVICE PROVIDING | 1,886,500 | 1,886,800 | 300 | 1,843,900 | 1,844,100 | 200 |
| TRADE | 428,300 | 427,800 | -500 | 415,900 | 415,400 | -500 |
| TRANS., WAREHOUSING, & UTILITIES | 102,400 | 102,500 | 100 | 100,200 | 100,300 | 100 |
| INFORMATION | 48,900 | 48,900 | 0 | 48,400 | 48,400 | 0 |
| FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES | 154,200 | 154,200 | 0 | 152,800 | 152,800 | 0 |
| PROFESSIONAL & BUSINESS SERVICES | 309,200 | 309,500 | 300 | 301,100 | 301,400 | 300 |
| EDUCATIONAL & HEALTH SERVICES | 434,100 | 433,500 | -600 | 435,300 | 434,700 | -600 |
| LEISURE & HOSPITALITY | 270,400 | 271,200 | 800 | 253,000 | 253,700 | 700 |
| OTHER SERVICES, except Public Admin. | 139,000 | 139,200 | 200 | 137,200 | 137,400 | 200 |
| GOVERNMENT | 414,700 | 414,800 | 100 | 423,600 | 423,700 | 100 |
| Federal Government | 28,800 | 28,800 | 0 | 28,700 | 28,700 | 0 |
| State Government | 98,600 | 98,600 | 0 | 102,100 | 102,100 | 0 |
| Local Government | 287,300 | 287,400 | 100 | 292,800 | 292,900 | 100 |

2. MONTHLY ESTIMATES FOR APRIL 2015

| Place of Residence Data | Apr-15 (P) | Mar-15 (R) | Net Change | Apr-15 (P) | Mar-15 (R) | Net Change |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|------------|----------------|----------------|------------|----------------|
| CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE | 3,096,000 | 3,110,000 | -14,000 | 3,056,100 | 3,073,800 | -17,700 |
| LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE | 68.0% | 68.4% | -0.4% | 67.1% | 67.6% | -0.5% |
| EMPLOYMENT (1) | 2,959,200 | 2,965,600 | -6,400 | 2,923,000 | 2,906,700 | 16,300 |
| UNEMPLOYMENT | 136,800 | 144,400 | -7,600 | 133,100 | 167,100 | -34,000 |
| UNEMPLOYMENT RATE | 4.4% | 4.6% | -0.2% | 4.4% | 5.4% | -1.0% |
| U.S. Unemployment Rate | 5.4% | 5.5% | -0.1% | 5.1% | 5.6% | -0.5% |
| Place of Work Data | | | | | | |
| NONFARM WAGE & SALARY | 2,889,500 | 2,885,800 | 3,700 | 2,869,500 | 2,832,400 | 37,100 |
| TOTAL PRIVATE | 2,476,400 | 2,471,000 | 5,400 | 2,443,300 | 2,408,700 | 34,600 |
| GOODS PRODUCING | 589,700 | 584,200 | 5,500 | 578,000 | 564,600 | 13,400 |
| NATURAL RESOURCES & MINING | 4,200 | 4,400 | -200 | 4,000 | 3,900 | 100 |
| CONSTRUCTION | 111,400 | 109,300 | 2,100 | 104,900 | 94,200 | 10,700 |
| MANUFACTURING | 474,100 | 470,500 | 3,600 | 469,100 | 466,500 | 2,600 |
| Durable Goods | 285,700 | 284,000 | 1,700 | 283,400 | 282,000 | 1,400 |
| Nondurable Goods | 188,400 | 186,500 | 1,900 | 185,700 | 184,500 | 1,200 |
| SERVICE PROVIDING | 2,299,800 | 2,301,600 | -1,800 | 2,291,500 | 2,267,800 | 23,700 |
| PRIVATE SERVICE PROVIDING | 1,886,700 | 1,886,800 | -100 | 1,865,300 | 1,844,100 | 21,200 |
| TRADE | 427,700 | 427,800 | -100 | 419,700 | 415,400 | 4,300 |
| TRANS., WAREHOUSING, & UTILITIES | 103,200 | 102,500 | 700 | 101,100 | 100,300 | 800 |
| INFORMATION | 49,200 | 48,900 | 300 | 48,600 | 48,400 | 200 |
| FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES | 154,200 | 154,200 | 0 | 153,800 | 152,800 | 1,000 |
| PROFESSIONAL & BUSINESS SERVICES | 309,300 | 309,500 | -200 | 307,700 | 301,400 | 6,300 |
| EDUCATIONAL & HEALTH SERVICES | 435,900 | 433,500 | 2,400 | 437,500 | 434,700 | 2,800 |
| LEISURE & HOSPITALITY | 269,300 | 271,200 | -1,900 | 259,100 | 253,700 | 5,400 |
| OTHER SERVICES, except Public Admin. | 137,900 | 139,200 | -1,300 | 137,800 | 137,400 | 400 |
| GOVERNMENT | 413,100 | 414,800 | -1,700 | 426,200 | 423,700 | 2,500 |
| Federal Government | 28,900 | 28,800 | 100 | 28,900 | 28,700 | 200 |
| State Government | 97,500 | 98,600 | -1,100 | 102,500 | 102,100 | 400 |
| Local Government | 286,700 | 287,400 | -700 | 294,800 | 292,900 | 1,900 |

*Differences in total may occur as a result of rounding. (1) Includes Labor Market Disputes (P) = Prelim; (R) = Revised **Blue** changes are outside margin of error.
Source: Local Area Unemployment Statistics and Current Employment Statistics programs, Bureau of Workforce Information and Technical Support.

Cautionary note to users: Revised methodological procedures mandated by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) force individual state estimates of employment into closer alignment with the national estimate. This change results in larger month-to-month employment change for the states and the information reported by DWD.

3. HISTORY OF REVISIONS OF ESTIMATES FROM PLACE OF WORK SURVEY

| | TNF | | | Private | | |
|----------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| | Prelim | Revised | Change | Prelim | Revised | Change |
| January 2015 | +600 | +5,000 | +4,400 | +300 | +4,500 | +4,200 |
| February 2015 | +14,900 | +13,000 | (1,900) | +13,600 | +11,800 | (1,800) |
| March 2015 | (4,300) | (4,200) | +100 | (5,000) | (5,000) | +0 |
| April 2015 | | | | | | |
| May 2015 | | | | | | |
| June 2015 | | | | | | |
| July 2015 | | | | | | |
| August 2015 | | | | | | |
| September 2015 | | | | | | |
| October 2015 | | | | | | |
| November 2015 | | | | | | |
| December 2015 | | | | | | |

Note: Prelim = original month-over-month change. Revised = updated month-over-month change. The "Change" column represents the difference between the prelim month-over-month change and the revised month-over-month change.

4. LATEST QUARTERLY DATA: CENSUS OF EMPLOYMENT AND WAGES

| | 2013 Employment* | | | 2014 Employment† | | | Dec-Dec Change | |
|--|------------------|-----------|-----------|------------------|-----------|-----------|----------------|---------|
| | Oct | Nov | Dec | Oct | Nov | Dec | Number | Percent |
| TOTAL | 2,759,489 | 2,760,254 | 2,753,124 | 2,796,262 | 2,802,815 | 2,789,315 | 36,191 | 1.3% |
| <i>Total Private</i> | 2,371,803 | 2,370,987 | 2,364,380 | 2,406,478 | 2,405,198 | 2,400,116 | 35,736 | 1.5% |
| Natural Resources & Mining | 31,223 | 28,989 | 27,050 | 32,029 | 29,900 | 28,098 | 1,048 | 3.9% |
| Construction | 106,689 | 103,759 | 95,530 | 111,159 | 107,981 | 101,716 | 6,186 | 6.5% |
| Manufacturing | 455,304 | 455,441 | 455,579 | 461,506 | 461,310 | 462,131 | 6,552 | 1.4% |
| Trade, Transportation, Utilities (Total) | 517,896 | 528,248 | 532,112 | 520,632 | 531,154 | 534,527 | 2,415 | 0.5% |
| Information | 47,071 | 47,411 | 47,499 | 48,030 | 48,283 | 48,341 | 842 | 1.8% |
| Financial Activities | 147,800 | 147,431 | 147,891 | 144,799 | 144,786 | 145,735 | -2,156 | -1.5% |
| Professional & Business Services | 303,056 | 304,196 | 302,878 | 311,200 | 311,123 | 307,700 | 4,822 | 1.6% |
| Education & Health Services | 404,695 | 405,750 | 406,403 | 407,008 | 408,664 | 410,025 | 3,622 | 0.9% |
| Leisure & Hospitality | 261,114 | 252,231 | 251,163 | 260,266 | 252,040 | 250,815 | -348 | -0.1% |
| Other Services | 84,458 | 84,631 | 85,052 | 83,146 | 82,451 | 83,095 | -1,957 | -2.3% |
| Unclassified | 12,497 | 12,900 | 13,223 | 26,703 | 27,506 | 27,933 | 14,710 | 111.2% |
| <i>Total Government</i> | 387,686 | 389,267 | 388,744 | 389,784 | 397,617 | 389,199 | 455 | 0.1% |

*Data as published by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

†Data as will be published at worknet.wisconsin.gov.

Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages counts are published 6 months after the quarter they describe.

Data from the latest published quarter and a year prior are included here.

LATEST QUARTERLY WAGE DATA

| | Total Wages | | Change | |
|-------------------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|---------|
| | Q4:2013* | Q4:2014† | Number | Percent |
| TOTAL | \$31,011,141 | \$32,507,014 | \$1,495,873 | 4.8% |
| <i>Total Private</i> | \$26,672,957 | \$28,015,644 | \$1,342,687 | 5.0% |
| <i>Total Government</i> | \$4,338,184 | \$4,491,370 | \$153,186 | 3.5% |

Total wages are in thousands (Totals may not equal due to rounding)

*Data as published by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

†Data as will be published at worknet.wisconsin.gov.

Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages counts are published 6 months after the quarter they describe.

Data from the latest published quarter and a year prior are included here.