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DWD Secretary Newson Statement on BLS State Rankings for April 2012 Based on Volatile, Imprecise Monthly Job Estimates

MADISON – Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) Secretary Reggie Newson today issued the following statement in response to today's *Regional and State Employment and Unemployment – April 2012* release by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), which reaffirm that BLS estimates based on a survey of 3.5 percent of Wisconsin businesses are out of line with other indicators showing Wisconsin's economy is headed in the right direction:

“Actual job data as reported by some 160,000 Wisconsin businesses show Wisconsin added 23,321 jobs in 2011, representing a correction by more than 57,200 over the 33,900 job loss that a survey of 3.5% of Wisconsin businesses estimated over that time,” Secretary Newson said.

“One section of today's BLS report claims Wisconsin lost 21,400 jobs between April 2011 and April 2012, while another section **ranks Wisconsin's 6.7% unemployment rate as the 17th lowest in the nation in April 2012.**

“We have a responsibility to correct the record for job seekers and employers who want to be part of a growing economy and want to know the big picture. The bottom line is Wisconsin added jobs in 2011 and is headed in the right direction. More Wisconsinites are working as of April 2012 over the prior year, and fewer Wisconsinites are unemployed. Our unemployment rate is at its lowest point since 2008. You can't have an expanding workforce with more people working, fewer people unemployed, a declining unemployment rate, and a steep loss of jobs at the same time.

“Look beyond the employment statistics and you'll see that our state is also experiencing a decline in unemployment insurance claims, an increase in tax revenue collections and an increase in personal income. These indicators are in line with Wisconsin's declining unemployment rate and they are consistent with the actual job counts for 2011 as reported by about 97 percent of Wisconsin businesses.

“We urge the public to pay attention to the big picture of economic growth, not to rankings that are based on BLS estimates that are volatile, imprecise, unreliable and, frankly, not a reflection of current reality.”

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