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CONTACT: DWD Communications, 608-266-2722

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BLS Data: State Unemployment Rate Declines to 3.7%, Lowest Since November 2000

Monthly totals show state gained a significant 11,100 total non-farm and 7,600 private-sector jobs in February

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

- **Place of residence data:** A preliminary seasonally adjusted unemployment rate of 3.7 percent in February 2017, down 0.2 percent from January and at its lowest rate since November 2000. The rate remains lower than the national unemployment rate, which decreased to 4.7 percent in February 2017. Wisconsin's labor force participation rate increased to 68.3 percent and continues to outpace the U.S. rate of 63.0 percent in February. Both total labor force and employment in Wisconsin remained at an all-time high in February, while the number of unemployed individuals was its lowest since January 2001.
- **Place of work data:** Based on preliminary data, the state added 28,200 total non-farm jobs and 21,500 private-sector jobs from February 2016 to February 2017, with a statistically significant gain of 11,100 total non-farm jobs as well as 7,600 private-sector jobs over the month. January 2017 total non-farm jobs were revised up 5,200 and private-sector jobs were revised up 4,600.

"Wisconsin is working," Governor Scott Walker said. "More people are working than ever before in our history, wages are up, and the last time our unemployment rate was this low Tommy Thompson was governor and Bill Clinton was president. This is outstanding news for people all across our state, but there is more work to be done."

DWD Secretary Ray Allen issued the following statement: "Revised numbers show Wisconsin gained 10,400 private-sector jobs in January and preliminary numbers show we added 7,600 private-sector jobs in February, pointing to an excellent start to 2017. Building on this economic progress, Governor Walker's recent budget proposal reinforces Wisconsin's economic and workforce development strategy, which has supported the state's economic growth."

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% 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.

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

- Initial UI claims ended 2016 at their lowest level since 1988. Year 2017 initial UI claims are running at their lowest levels since 1989.

- Continuing unemployment claims ended 2016 at their lowest level since 1973. Continuing unemployment claims in Wisconsin are running the lowest in at least the past 30 years.

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Wisconsin Employment and Unemployment Report
JANUARY – FEBRUARY 2017

1. REVISIONS TO ESTIMATES FROM JANUARY 2017

Place of Residence Data	Seasonally Adjusted			Not Seasonally Adjusted		
	Prelim	Revised	Change	Prelim	Revised	Change
CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE	3,120,000	3,120,400	400	3,094,500	3,095,600	1,100
LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE	68.1%	68.1%	0.0%	67.5%	67.6%	0.1%
EMPLOYMENT (1)	2,998,400	2,998,800	400	2,963,900	2,965,000	1,100
UNEMPLOYMENT	121,600	121,600	0	130,600	130,500	-100
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	3.9%	3.9%	0.0%	4.2%	4.2%	0.0%
U.S. Unemployment Rate	4.8%	4.8%	0.0%	5.1%	5.1%	0.0%
Place of Work Data						
NONFARM WAGE & SALARY	2,934,500	2,939,700	5,200	2,868,800	2,874,000	5,200
TOTAL PRIVATE	2,521,900	2,526,500	4,600	2,459,100	2,463,700	4,600
GOODS PRODUCING	586,100	586,600	500	567,900	568,400	500
NATURAL RESOURCES & MINING	3,900	3,900	0	3,400	3,400	0
CONSTRUCTION	114,400	114,600	200	100,500	100,700	200
MANUFACTURING	467,800	468,100	300	464,000	464,300	300
Durable Goods	281,700	282,000	300	278,900	279,200	300
Nondurable Goods	186,100	186,100	0	185,100	185,100	0
SERVICE PROVIDING	2,348,400	2,353,100	4,700	2,300,900	2,305,600	4,700
PRIVATE SERVICE PROVIDING	1,935,800	1,939,900	4,100	1,891,200	1,895,300	4,100
TRADE	431,200	434,900	3,700	426,700	430,400	3,700
TRANS., WAREHOUSING, & UTILITIES	106,400	106,900	500	104,000	104,500	500
INFORMATION	47,600	47,800	200	47,500	47,700	200
FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES	154,000	154,000	0	152,600	152,600	0
PROFESSIONAL & BUSINESS SERVICES	321,500	321,800	300	312,200	312,500	300
EDUCATIONAL & HEALTH SERVICES	450,400	450,600	200	445,400	445,600	200
LEISURE & HOSPITALITY	273,000	273,000	0	252,400	252,400	0
OTHER SERVICES, except Public Admin.	151,700	150,900	-800	150,400	149,600	-800
GOVERNMENT	412,600	413,200	600	409,700	410,300	600
Federal Government	29,400	29,500	100	29,100	29,200	100
State Government	96,300	96,400	100	95,100	95,200	100
Local Government	286,900	287,300	400	285,500	285,900	400

2. MONTHLY ESTIMATES FOR FEBRUARY 2017

Place of Residence Data	Feb-17 (P)	Jan-17 (R)	Net Change	Feb-17 (P)	Jan-17 (R)	Net Change
CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE	3,130,700	3,120,400	10,300	3,120,600	3,095,600	25,000
LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE	68.3%	68.1%	0.2%	68.1%	67.6%	0.5%
EMPLOYMENT (1)	3,013,500	2,998,800	14,700	2,979,700	2,965,000	14,700
UNEMPLOYMENT	117,200	121,600	-4,400	140,900	130,500	10,400
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	3.7%	3.9%	-0.2%	4.5%	4.2%	0.3%
U.S. Unemployment Rate	4.7%	4.8%	-0.1%	4.9%	5.1%	-0.2%
Place of Work Data						
NONFARM WAGE & SALARY	2,950,800	2,939,700	11,100	2,897,600	2,874,000	23,600
TOTAL PRIVATE	2,534,100	2,526,500	7,600	2,469,700	2,463,700	6,000
GOODS PRODUCING	586,500	586,600	-100	565,900	568,400	-2,500
NATURAL RESOURCES & MINING	4,000	3,900	100	3,500	3,400	100
CONSTRUCTION	113,800	114,600	-800	99,200	100,700	-1,500
MANUFACTURING	468,700	468,100	600	463,200	464,300	-1,100
Durable Goods	282,400	282,000	400	278,700	279,200	-500
Nondurable Goods	186,300	186,100	200	184,500	185,100	-600
SERVICE PROVIDING	2,364,300	2,353,100	11,200	2,331,700	2,305,600	26,100
PRIVATE SERVICE PROVIDING	1,947,600	1,939,900	7,700	1,903,800	1,895,300	8,500
TRADE	437,100	434,900	2,200	425,200	430,400	-5,200
TRANS., WAREHOUSING, & UTILITIES	106,500	106,900	-400	104,900	104,500	400
INFORMATION	48,300	47,800	500	47,700	47,700	0
FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES	153,300	154,000	-700	152,500	152,600	-100
PROFESSIONAL & BUSINESS SERVICES	323,300	321,800	1,500	316,100	312,500	3,600
EDUCATIONAL & HEALTH SERVICES	449,100	450,600	-1,500	450,500	445,600	4,900
LEISURE & HOSPITALITY	278,200	273,000	5,200	256,400	252,400	4,000
OTHER SERVICES, except Public Admin.	151,800	150,900	900	150,500	149,600	900
GOVERNMENT	416,700	413,200	3,500	427,900	410,300	17,600
Federal Government	29,200	29,500	-300	29,000	29,200	-200
State Government	99,000	96,400	2,600	105,300	95,200	10,100
Local Government	288,500	287,300	1,200	293,600	285,900	7,700

*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

Month-Over-Month Changes	TNF			Private		
	Prelim	Revised	Change	Prelim	Revised	Change
January 2017	+200	+5,400	+5,200	+5,800	+10,400	+4,600
February 2017						
March 2017						
April 2017						
May 2017						
June 2017						
July 2017						
August 2017						
September 2017						
October 2017						
November 2017						
December 2017						

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

	2015 Employment*			2016 Employment†			Sep-Sep Change	
	Jul	Aug	Sep	Jul	Aug	Sep	Number	Percent
TOTAL	2,809,787	2,815,552	2,820,647	2,843,119	2,850,892	2,850,133	29,486	1.0%
<i>Total Private</i>	2,471,399	2,476,433	2,444,869	2,503,492	2,503,142	2,470,477	25,608	1.0%
Natural Resources & Mining	31,767	31,956	32,511	32,195	32,265	32,901	390	1.2%
Construction	119,958	119,281	116,638	121,543	121,548	118,935	2,297	2.0%
Manufacturing	474,373	473,595	467,412	470,875	469,734	463,416	-3,996	-0.9%
Trade, Transportation, Utilities	530,433	532,779	531,788	538,823	538,730	534,976	3,188	0.6%
Information	306,021	307,408	304,385	311,305	311,191	306,085	1,700	0.6%
Financial Activities	49,522	49,900	48,954	49,289	49,498	48,381	-573	-1.2%
Professional & Business Services	149,181	148,785	146,788	149,745	149,590	147,794	1,006	0.7%
Education & Health Services	317,788	320,267	316,130	325,726	326,898	324,653	8,523	2.7%
Leisure & Hospitality	412,189	412,984	413,095	422,107	422,457	423,459	10,364	2.5%
Other Services	292,398	293,265	279,581	299,423	298,846	283,501	3,920	1.4%
Unclassified	85,326	84,865	83,522	85,278	84,907	83,969	447	0.5%
<i>Total Government</i>	8,464	8,756	8,450	8,488	8,669	8,492	42	0.5%

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

†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.

QUARTERLY WAGES

	Total Wages		Change	
	Q3:2015	Q3:2016	Number	Percent
TOTAL	\$30,502,958	\$32,782,841	\$2,279,883	7.5%
<i>Total Private</i>	\$26,736,520	\$28,608,614	\$1,872,094	7.0%
<i>Total Government</i>	\$3,766,438	\$4,174,227	\$407,789	10.8%

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

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

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.