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BLS Data: Wisconsin Unemployment Rate Drops to 3.4% in March, Lowest Since April 2000

MADISON – The Department of Workforce Development (DWD) today released the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) revisions for February and preliminary estimates for March 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 3.4 percent in March 2017, down a significant 0.3 percent from February and at its lowest rate since April 2000. The rate remains lower than the national unemployment rate, which was 4.5 percent in March 2017. Wisconsin's labor force participation rate increased to 68.4 percent and continues to outpace the U.S. rate of 63.0 percent in March. Both total labor force and employment in Wisconsin remained at an all-time high in March, while the number of unemployed individuals was its lowest since June 2000.
- Place of work data: Based on preliminary data, the state added 25,100 total non-farm jobs and 22,100 private-sector jobs from March 2016 to March 2017. Other significant year-over-year gains include 6,100 jobs in Health Care and Social Assistance.

DWD Secretary Ray Allen issued the following statement: "Today's release shows Wisconsin continuing to experience positive workforce and economic growth under the vision and leadership of Governor Scott Walker. Not only are both total labor force and employment at all-time highs, but our unemployment rate is down to 3.4 percent, its lowest point in 16 years."

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 in their last 30 years. 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
FEBRUARY – MARCH 2017

1. REVISIONS TO ESTIMATES FROM FEBRUARY 2017

| Place of Residence Data | Seasonally Adjusted | | | Not Seasonally Adjusted | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------|-----------|--------|-------------------------|-----------|--------|
| | Prelim | Revised | Change | Prelim | Revised | Change |
| CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE | 3,130,700 | 3,130,900 | 200 | 3,120,600 | 3,121,100 | 500 |
| LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE | 68.3% | 68.3% | 0.0% | 68.1% | 68.1% | 0.0% |
| EMPLOYMENT (1) | 3,013,500 | 3,013,500 | 0 | 2,979,700 | 2,979,900 | 200 |
| UNEMPLOYMENT | 117,200 | 117,400 | 200 | 140,900 | 141,200 | 300 |
| UNEMPLOYMENT RATE | 3.7% | 3.7% | 0.0% | 4.5% | 4.5% | 0.0% |
| U.S. Unemployment Rate | 4.7% | 4.7% | 0.0% | 4.9% | 4.9% | 0.0% |
| Place of Work Data | | | | | | |
| NONFARM WAGE & SALARY | 2,950,800 | 2,950,800 | 0 | 2,897,600 | 2,897,600 | 0 |
| TOTAL PRIVATE | 2,534,100 | 2,534,800 | 700 | 2,469,700 | 2,470,400 | 700 |
| GOODS PRODUCING | 586,500 | 586,900 | 400 | 565,900 | 566,300 | 400 |
| NATURAL RESOURCES & MINING | 4,000 | 4,000 | 0 | 3,500 | 3,500 | 0 |
| CONSTRUCTION | 113,800 | 113,800 | 0 | 99,200 | 99,200 | 0 |
| MANUFACTURING | 468,700 | 469,100 | 400 | 463,200 | 463,600 | 400 |
| Durable Goods | 282,400 | 282,300 | -100 | 278,700 | 278,600 | -100 |
| Nondurable Goods | 186,300 | 186,800 | 500 | 184,500 | 185,000 | 500 |
| SERVICE PROVIDING | 2,364,300 | 2,363,900 | -400 | 2,331,700 | 2,331,300 | -400 |
| PRIVATE SERVICE PROVIDING | 1,947,600 | 1,947,900 | 300 | 1,903,800 | 1,904,100 | 300 |
| TRADE | 437,100 | 437,300 | 200 | 425,200 | 425,400 | 200 |
| TRANS., WAREHOUSING, & UTILITIES | 106,500 | 106,900 | 400 | 104,900 | 105,300 | 400 |
| INFORMATION | 48,300 | 48,200 | -100 | 47,700 | 47,600 | -100 |
| FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES | 153,300 | 153,200 | -100 | 152,500 | 152,400 | -100 |
| PROFESSIONAL & BUSINESS SERVICES | 323,300 | 323,100 | -200 | 316,100 | 315,900 | -200 |
| EDUCATIONAL & HEALTH SERVICES | 449,100 | 448,700 | -400 | 450,500 | 450,100 | -400 |
| LEISURE & HOSPITALITY | 278,200 | 278,100 | -100 | 256,400 | 256,300 | -100 |
| OTHER SERVICES, except Public Admin. | 151,800 | 152,400 | 600 | 150,500 | 151,100 | 600 |
| GOVERNMENT | 416,700 | 416,000 | -700 | 427,900 | 427,200 | -700 |
| Federal Government | 29,200 | 29,200 | 0 | 29,000 | 29,000 | 0 |
| State Government | 99,000 | 99,000 | 0 | 105,300 | 105,300 | 0 |
| Local Government | 288,500 | 287,800 | -700 | 293,600 | 292,900 | -700 |

2. MONTHLY ESTIMATES FOR MARCH 2017

| Place of Residence Data | Mar-17 (P) | Feb-17 (R) | Net Change | Mar-17 (P) | Feb-17 (R) | Net Change |
|--------------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE | 3,137,100 | 3,130,900 | 6,200 | 3,111,100 | 3,121,100 | -10,000 |
| LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE | 68.4% | 68.3% | 0.1% | 67.9% | 68.1% | -0.2% |
| EMPLOYMENT (1) | 3,029,900 | 3,013,500 | 16,400 | 2,995,800 | 2,979,900 | 15,900 |
| UNEMPLOYMENT | 107,100 | 117,400 | -10,300 | 115,300 | 141,200 | -25,900 |
| UNEMPLOYMENT RATE | 3.4% | 3.7% | -0.3% | 3.7% | 4.5% | -0.8% |
| U.S. Unemployment Rate | 4.5% | 4.7% | -0.2% | 4.6% | 4.9% | -0.3% |
| Place of Work Data | | | | | | |
| NONFARM WAGE & SALARY | 2,948,100 | 2,950,800 | -2,700 | 2,902,900 | 2,897,600 | 5,300 |
| TOTAL PRIVATE | 2,535,300 | 2,534,800 | 500 | 2,478,700 | 2,470,400 | 8,300 |
| GOODS PRODUCING | 586,300 | 586,900 | -600 | 569,000 | 566,300 | 2,700 |
| NATURAL RESOURCES & MINING | 3,900 | 4,000 | -100 | 3,600 | 3,500 | 100 |
| CONSTRUCTION | 113,800 | 113,800 | 0 | 100,300 | 99,200 | 1,100 |
| MANUFACTURING | 468,600 | 469,100 | -500 | 465,100 | 463,600 | 1,500 |
| Durable Goods | 282,200 | 282,300 | -100 | 280,000 | 278,600 | 1,400 |
| Nondurable Goods | 186,400 | 186,800 | -400 | 185,100 | 185,000 | 100 |
| SERVICE PROVIDING | 2,361,800 | 2,363,900 | -2,100 | 2,333,900 | 2,331,300 | 2,600 |
| PRIVATE SERVICE PROVIDING | 1,949,000 | 1,947,900 | 1,100 | 1,909,700 | 1,904,100 | 5,600 |
| TRADE | 437,100 | 437,300 | -200 | 425,700 | 425,400 | 300 |
| TRANS., WAREHOUSING, & UTILITIES | 106,300 | 106,900 | -600 | 104,300 | 105,300 | -1,000 |
| INFORMATION | 47,800 | 48,200 | -400 | 47,200 | 47,600 | -400 |
| FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES | 153,600 | 153,200 | 400 | 152,200 | 152,400 | -200 |
| PROFESSIONAL & BUSINESS SERVICES | 326,300 | 323,100 | 3,200 | 318,600 | 315,900 | 2,700 |
| EDUCATIONAL & HEALTH SERVICES | 449,500 | 448,700 | 800 | 451,500 | 450,100 | 1,400 |
| LEISURE & HOSPITALITY | 276,000 | 278,100 | -2,100 | 258,800 | 256,300 | 2,500 |
| OTHER SERVICES, except Public Admin. | 152,400 | 152,400 | 0 | 151,400 | 151,100 | 300 |
| GOVERNMENT | 412,800 | 416,000 | -3,200 | 424,200 | 427,200 | -3,000 |
| Federal Government | 29,200 | 29,200 | 0 | 29,100 | 29,000 | 100 |
| State Government | 95,000 | 99,000 | -4,000 | 101,000 | 105,300 | -4,300 |
| Local Government | 288,600 | 287,800 | 800 | 294,100 | 292,900 | 1,200 |

*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 | +11,100 | +11,100 | +0 | +7,600 | +8,300 | +700 |
| 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.