

EMBARGOED until 2:00 p.m.
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Media contact:
Michael Healey (401) 462-8090

October Unemployment Rate Drops to 5.3 Percent; Rhode Island-Based Jobs Up 100 from September

The RI Department of Labor and Training announced today that the state's **seasonally adjusted unemployment rate** for October 2015 dropped to 5.3 percent, down one-tenth of a percentage point from the September 2015 rate of 5.4 percent. Over the year, the unemployment rate is down one and eight-tenths percentage points from the October 2014 rate. This is the lowest unemployment rate since August 2007.

The U.S. unemployment rate was 5.0 percent in October 2015, down one-tenth of a percentage point from the previous month and down seven-tenths of a percentage point over the year.

The number of **unemployed RI residents**—those residents classified as available for and actively seeking employment—was 29,400, down 1,000 from the September figure of 30,400. This represents the lowest unemployment level since June 2007. Over the year, the number of unemployed dropped by 9,400.

A total of 7,463 individuals collected Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits in October 2015,* down from 8,866 a year ago. This month, UI claimants accounted for 29.0 percent of the total unemployed.

The number of **employed RI residents** was 527,500, down 600 from the September figure of 528,100. Over the year, the number of employed RI residents was up 15,500 from October 2014.

The RI labor force totaled 556,800 in October 2015, down 1,700 from September 2015 but up 5,900 from October 2014.

JOBS BASED IN RHODE ISLAND: Estimated nonfarm payroll in Rhode Island totaled 483,500 in October, reflecting a gain of 100 jobs from the revised September estimate of 483,400. Over the past three months, Rhode Island averaged a loss of 800 jobs, but added 5,600 jobs over the year. Since the start of the year, jobs are up 4,200. Through October 2015, job growth averaged 400 per month, compared with an average monthly gain of 500 jobs during the same period in 2014.

The Construction sector added 500 jobs in October, its first over-the-month gain in five months. This increase marks the largest job gain in Construction since April 2006, when 700 jobs were added. Construction employment is down 900 jobs from a year ago.

An additional 500 jobs in the Arts, Entertainment & Recreation sector brought the October employment level to 9,400, the highest employment level on record. Since August, this sector added 800 jobs and was also up 800 jobs over the year. Employment in Financial Activities rose 300 from September and is up 200 from October 2014.

	<u>Oct 15</u>	<u>Sept 15</u>	<u>Oct 14</u>
RI Unemployment Rate	5.3%	5.4%	7.1%
U.S. Unemployment Rate	5.0%	5.1%	5.7%
RI Job Count (<i>in thousands</i>)	483.5	483.4	477.9

Highlights:

- The RI unemployment rate declined to 5.3%, its lowest level since August 2007.
- The number of RI-based jobs is up 100 from September and up 5,600 from a year ago.
- The number of employed RI residents decreased by 600 over the month.
- There were 7,463 individuals collecting Unemployment Insurance benefits in October.*

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Five employment sectors added 100 jobs in October. These sectors include; Educational Services, Health Care & Social Assistance, Manufacturing, Professional & Business Services and Transportation & Utilities. The job increase in Transportation & Utilities marks the sector's first job increase in four months, while the job increase in Health Care & Social Assistance marks the first increase in three months. Over the year, employment in Health Care & Social Assistance is down 200.

A loss of 600 jobs was reported in the Retail Trade sector in October, marking two consecutive months of job declines totaling 800 jobs. Since October 2014, Retail Trade employment is down 500. Employment in Wholesale Trade also fell for the second consecutive month, shedding 400 jobs in October, following a loss of 200 jobs in September. Wholesale Trade employment is down 400 from a year ago.

Employment in Accommodation & Food Services, Information and Other Services fell 200 from September, while Government employment fell by 100. The number of jobs in Accommodation & Food Service are up 1,300 since the start of the year, and are up 1,900 from October 2014. Employment in the Other Services sector is still up 500 over-the year, while Government and Information both experienced over-the year drops of 500 jobs.

MANUFACTURING: In October 2015, production workers in the Manufacturing sector earned \$17.49 per hour, up 21 cents from September 2015 but down 51 cents from October 2014. Manufacturing production employees worked an average of 38.9 hours per week in October, down eight-tenths of an hour from September and down an hour and three-tenths over the year.

SEASONALLY-ADJUSTED NON-FARM EMPLOYMENT IN RHODE ISLAND					
<i>(in thousands)</i>					
	Oct-15	Sep-15	Oct-14	Net Change From	
				Sep-15	Oct-14
Total Nonfarm	483.5	483.4 *	477.9	0.1	5.6
Total Private	423.9	423.7 *	417.8	0.2	6.1
Mining & Logging	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.0
Construction	15.3	14.8 *	16.2	0.5	-0.9
Manufacturing	42.0	41.9	41.1	0.1	0.9
Wholesale Trade	16.3	16.7 *	16.7	-0.4	-0.4
Retail Trade	46.7	47.3 *	47.2	-0.6	-0.5
Transportation & Utilities	11.4	11.3 *	11.3	0.1	0.1
Information	8.3	8.5	8.8	-0.2	-0.5
Financial Activities	32.9	32.6 *	32.7	0.3	0.2
Professional & Business Services	63.6	63.5	60.7	0.1	2.9
Educational Services	25.7	25.6 *	24.4	0.1	1.3
Health Care & Social Assistance	80.3	80.2 *	80.5	0.1	-0.2
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	9.4	8.9 *	8.6	0.5	0.8
Accommodation & Food Services	48.3	48.5 *	46.4	-0.2	1.9
Other Services	23.5	23.7	23.0	-0.2	0.5
Government	59.6	59.7	60.1	-0.1	-0.5

Note: October data is preliminary and subject to revision.
**Indicates a revised estimate*

METHODOLOGY: The unemployment figures are based largely on a survey of households in Rhode Island and measure the unemployment status of people who live in the state. Unemployment rates prior to 1976 are not recognized by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics as official since the methodology used at that time is not comparable to today's methods. The establishment of employment figures is derived from a survey of businesses in Rhode Island and measure the number of jobs in the state. Rhode Island labor market information is available at www.dlt.ri.gov/lmi. Additional information on procedures for producing Current Employment Statistics (CES) estimates is available on the BLS web site at www.bls.gov/sae/cesprocs.htm. BLS will be releasing all states' October labor force data and job counts on November 20, 2015. DLT is scheduled to release the November 2015 labor force figures and job counts on Thursday, December 17, 2015, at 2:00 p.m.

ABOUT DLT: The RI Department of Labor and Training offers employment services, educational services and economic opportunities to both individuals and employers. DLT protects Rhode Island's workforce by enforcing labor laws, prevailing wage rates and workplace health and safety standards. The department also provides temporary income support to unemployed and temporarily disabled workers. For more information, please call the RI Department of Labor and Training at (401) 462-8000 or visit the web site at www.dlt.ri.gov.

* Refers to the number of new and reopened claims filed by UI beneficiaries and claims filed by those already collecting UI in the week that includes the 12th of the month.