

**EMBARGOED until
Friday, March 18, 2011**

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	<u>Feb 11</u>	<u>Jan 11</u>	<u>Feb 10</u>
10			
RI Unemployment Rate	11.2%	11.3%	11.8%
U.S. Unemployment Rate	8.9%	9.0%	9.7%
RI Job Count (<i>in thousands</i>)	459.4	456.8	457.2
Highlights:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The February 2011 unemployment rate dropped one-tenth of a percentage point from January. • The number of unemployed RI residents decreased by 1,000 over the month, while the number of employed RI residents decreased by 1,300. • RI-based jobs increased by 2,600 over the month, with Professional & Business Services adding 1,000 jobs. 			

Unemployment Rate Drops to 11.2 Percent

The RI Department of Labor and Training announced today that the state's **seasonally adjusted unemployment rate** for February 2011 was 11.2 percent, down one-tenth of a percentage point from the January rate of 11.3 percent.

The U.S. unemployment rate decreased one-tenth of a percentage point over the month to 8.9 percent.

The number of **unemployed RI residents**—those residents classified as available for and actively seeking employment—decreased by 1,000 over revised January figures, falling to 64,100 in February. Over the year, the number of unemployed RI residents decreased by 3,700.

Due to numerous eligibility requirements, the number of unemployed RI residents differs from the number of **RI Unemployment Insurance recipients**. The average weekly claim load for RI Unemployment Insurance benefits in February was 40,975, up 1,109 (2.8%) from the January average of 39,866, but down 5,430 (-11.7%) from the February 2010 average of 46,405.

The number of **employed RI residents** decreased 1,300 over the January figures, totaling 509,800 in February. This is the first over-the-month decrease in the number of employed RI residents since October 2009. Over the year, the number of employed RI residents is up 3,800 from February 2010, the eleventh consecutive over-the-year increase.

The Rhode Island labor force totaled 573,800 in February 2011, a decrease of 2,400 over revised January figures and unchanged from February 2010 figures. The over-the-month decreases in the number of employed and unemployed residents caused our February labor force to drop.

JOBS BASED IN RHODE ISLAND:

Estimated nonfarm payroll in Rhode Island totaled 459,400 in February, reflecting a gain of 2,600 jobs from the revised January employment figure of 456,800. This marks the first over-the month job gain in Rhode Island since August 2010, when 600 jobs were added to the local economy.

In February, the Professional & Business Services sector added 1,000 jobs, mainly due to job growth in the accounting, tax preparation & bookkeeping services and business support services industry groups. Employment in the Accommodation & Food Services (+700) sector also surged as full-service and limited-service restaurants increased their payrolls from January.

Smaller, but positive gains were also reported in the Arts, Entertainment & Recreation (+300), Construction (+300), Health Care & Social Assistance (+300), Manufacturing (+200), Wholesale Trade (+100), Information (+100) and Educational Services (+100) sectors.

(continued)



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Financial Activities and Government were the only two sectors to report job losses in February, shedding 300 and 200 jobs, respectively. The losses in Financial Activities can be attributed to declines in the Finance & Insurance sector, while Government losses were reported in local and federal government.

Employment in four sectors, Retail Trade, Transportation & Utilities, Other Services and Natural Resources & Mining, remain unchanged.

Over the year, employment was up 2,200 (+0.5%) from February 2010, with job gains reported in seven economic sectors. Professional & Business Services (+1,800), Accommodation & Food Services (+1,600), Retail Trade (+1,400), Wholesale Trade (+800), Information (+700), Manufacturing (+300) and Transportation & Utilities (+100) all reported annual employment gains. Natural Resources & Mining employment was unchanged over the year.

Government (-1,000), Educational Services (-800), Construction (-700), Financial Activities (-700), Other Services (-700), Arts, Entertainment & Recreation (-500) and Health Care & Social Assistance (-100), all experienced job declines over the year.

MANUFACTURING: In February 2011, production workers in the Manufacturing sector earned \$14.96 per hour. The average hourly production wage was up four cents from January 2011 and up fifty-five cents from February 2010. Manufacturing employees worked an average of 38.7 hours per week in February, up six-tenths over the month, and up an hour and a half over the year.

SEASONALLY-ADJUSTED NON-FARM EMPLOYMENT IN RHODE ISLAND					
<i>(in thousands)</i>					
	Feb-11	Jan-11	Feb-10	Net Change From	
				Jan-11	Feb-10
Total Nonfarm	459.4	456.8	457.2	2.6	2.2
Natural Resources & Mining	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0
Construction	15.6	15.3	16.3	0.3	-0.7
Manufacturing	40.6	40.4	40.3	0.2	0.3
Wholesale Trade	16.6	16.5	15.8	0.1	0.8
Retail Trade	48.5	48.5	47.1	0.0	1.4
Transportation & Utilities	10.3	10.3	10.2	0.0	0.1
Information	10.5	10.4	9.8	0.1	0.7
Financial Activities	29.8	30.1	30.5	-0.3	-0.7
Professional & Business Services	54.3	53.3	52.5	1.0	1.8
Educational Services	23.2	23.1	24.0	0.1	-0.8
Health Care & Social Assistance	77.7	77.4	77.8	0.3	-0.1
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	7.0	6.7	7.5	0.3	-0.5
Accommodation & Food Services	43.0	42.3	41.4	0.7	1.6
Other Services	21.4	21.4	22.1	0.0	-0.7
Government	60.8	61.0	61.8	-0.2	-1.0

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 employment figures are 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. The March labor force figures are scheduled to be released on Friday, April 15, 2011.

The RI Department of Labor and Training offers employment services, educational services and economic opportunity 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 on the programs and services available to all Rhode Islanders, please call the RI Department of Labor and Training at (401) 462-8000 or visit the web site at www.dlt.ri.gov.