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PA Unemployment Rate Declines to 4.8% in December; Jobs Reach Record High

Harrisburg – Today, the Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry released its employment situation report for December 2015.

Pennsylvania's unemployment rate was down two-tenths of a percentage point in December to 4.8 percent, the lowest rate since February 2008. Pennsylvania's rate fell below that of the United States, which was unchanged from November at 5.0 percent. The commonwealth's rate was down two-tenths of a percentage point from the December 2014 rate of 5.0 percent while the national rate declined by six-tenths of a percentage point over the year.

Pennsylvania's civilian labor force was up 18,000 in December to 6,446,000. Resident employment rose by 31,000 while the unemployment count declined by 15,000.

Total nonfarm jobs were up 9,800 in December to a record high of 5,863,500. Four supersectors added at least 2,000 jobs each. The largest gain was in leisure & hospitality (+3,700), which reached a record high. The largest drop was in construction (-2,500).

Over the year, total nonfarm jobs in Pennsylvania were up 38,000 (+0.7%). All seven of the private service-providing supersectors added jobs from December 2014, while all three goods-producing supersectors and government declined. The largest increase from last year was in education & health services (+14,300), while the largest decline was in manufacturing (-3,600).

Note: The above data are seasonally adjusted. Seasonally adjusted data provide the most valid month-to-month comparison.

MEDIA CONTACT: Sara Goulet, 717-787-7530

Editor's Note: A breakdown of Pennsylvania's employment statistics follows.

Current Labor Force Statistics

Seasonally Adjusted

(in thousands)

				Change from		Change from	
	December	November	December	November		December	
	2015	2015	2014	2015	2015	2014	2014
				<i>volume percent</i>	<i>volume percent</i>		
PA							
Civilian Labor Force	6,446	6,428	6,352	18	0.3%	94	1.5%
Employment	6,139	6,108	6,033	31	0.5%	106	1.8%
Unemployment	306	321	319	-15	-4.7%	-13	-4.1%
Rate	4.8	5.0	5.0	-0.2	----	-0.2	----
U.S.							
Civilian Labor Force	157,833	157,367	156,142	466	0.3%	1,691	1.1%
Employment	149,929	149,444	147,439	485	0.3%	2,490	1.7%
Unemployment	7,904	7,924	8,704	-20	-0.3%	-800	-9.2%
Rate	5.0	5.0	5.6	0.0	----	-0.6	----

Pennsylvania Nonagricultural Wage and Salary Employment

Seasonally Adjusted

(in thousands)

	December 2015	November 2015	December 2014	Change from December 2015		Change from December 2014	
				volume	percent	volume	percent
Total Nonfarm Jobs	5,863.5	5,853.7	5,825.5	9.8	0.2%	38.0	0.7%
Goods Producing Industries	833.3	833.9	840.7	-0.6	-0.1%	-7.4	-0.9%
Mining & Logging	34.5	34.6	37.8	-0.1	-0.3%	-3.3	-8.7%
Construction	231.6	234.1	232.1	-2.5	-1.1%	-0.5	-0.2%
Manufacturing	567.2	565.2	570.8	2.0	0.4%	-3.6	-0.6%
Service Providing Industries	5,030.2	5,019.8	4,984.8	10.4	0.2%	45.4	0.9%
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	1,127.4	1,125.0	1,123.0	2.4	0.2%	4.4	0.4%
Information	84.9	85.4	84.9	-0.5	-0.6%	0.0	0.0%
Financial Activities	321.3	320.2	313.7	1.1	0.3%	7.6	2.4%
Professional & Business Services	772.2	769.8	762.4	2.4	0.3%	9.8	1.3%
Education & Health Services	1,204.9	1,205.2	1,190.6	-0.3	0.0%	14.3	1.2%
Leisure & Hospitality	556.2	552.5	546.2	3.7	0.7%	10.0	1.8%
Other Services	256.8	256.4	255.6	0.4	0.2%	1.2	0.5%
Government	706.5	705.3	708.4	1.2	0.2%	-1.9	-0.3%

For a more detailed breakdown of seasonally adjusted jobs data at the sector level, please contact the Center for Workforce Information & Analysis at 1-877-4WF-DATA, or visit www.paworkstats.pa.gov

Note: January 2016 labor force and nonfarm jobs statistics will be released March 4, 2016.