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Unemployment Rate Increases Slightly

PIERRE, S.D. – The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reports South Dakota’s preliminary seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for August 2010 was 4.5 percent, a slight increase from the July 2010 rate of 4.4 percent.

“The total labor force remained stable at 443,000 workers,” said State Labor Secretary Pam Roberts. “Minor changes in the levels of employed and unemployed caused the uptick; however, one-tenth of one percent up or down is not usually significant in a small state like South Dakota.”

The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate had been trending downward for several months. Analysis of changes over longer time periods provides a more stable portrayal of labor force dynamics. Over-the-month changes are variable and subject to revision.

Preliminary estimates of seasonally adjusted nonfarm workers show an over-the-year increase of 4,100 workers in South Dakota, or one percent, from August 2009 to August 2010.

“This job growth is good news for our economy,” said Secretary Roberts. “I hope to see continued growth.”

Private sector industries adding the most workers included professional and business services, manufacturing, and healthcare and social assistance.

“There are 1,000 more job openings listed now than last month,” Secretary Roberts said. “The state Department of Labor has been training and recruiting a quality workforce for employers to fill those positions.”

In August 2009, the South Dakota unemployment rate was 4.8 percent, reflective of the higher level of people looking for jobs. The unemployment rate for August 2008, prior to the national recession, was 3.2 percent.

Nationally, the unemployment rate increased from 9.5 percent in July 2010 to 9.6 percent in August 2010.

An overview of the sub-state labor market and snapshot of South Dakota's economy will be released Sept. 24 in the *e-Labor Bulletin*. This publication and information on workforce services is available at www.sdjobs.org