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Unemployment Rate Unchanged at 4.7 percent

PIERRE, S.D. – The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reports South Dakota’s preliminary seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for January 2011 was 4.7 percent, unchanged compared to the revised December rate of 4.7 percent.

The BLS also recently reported South Dakota had the third lowest state annual average unemployment rate for 2010. North Dakota had the lowest jobless rate at 3.9 percent, followed by Nebraska at 4.7 percent and South Dakota at 4.8 percent.

“South Dakota felt some negative effects as a result of the national recession, but we continue to remain resilient and slowly rebound,” said State Labor Secretary Pam Roberts. “Last year at this time we had an over-the-year loss of 6,100 workers, but this year we show a growth of 3,500 workers.”

From January 2010 to January 2011, preliminary estimates of South Dakota seasonally adjusted nonfarm workers show private sector industries adding the most workers included the educational and health services sector at 1,400 workers; professional and business services at 1,200 workers; and manufacturing at 1,000 workers.

“The number of job openings listed with the Department of Labor also continues to increase as employers resume hiring,” said Secretary Roberts. “There are 7,300 openings listed statewide now compared to 6,500 openings one year ago. I am hopeful this pattern will continue.”

Nationally, the January 2011 unemployment rate decreased to 9.0 percent compared to the revised December 2010 rate of 9.4 percent. The national unemployment rate was higher in January 2010 at 9.7 percent. The South Dakota unemployment rate in January 2010 was 5.2 percent.

An overview of the sub-state labor market and a year in review article of South Dakota’s economy will be released March 4 in the e-Labor Bulletin. This publication and information on workforce services is available at www.sdjobs.org