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New National Jobs Numbers Show Oregon Growing Faster Than Other States, But Tens of Thousands of Jobs Are Still Missing from Bush Tax Cut Promises

New national employment data released today by the Bureau of Labor Statistics show that Oregon is adding jobs at a rate faster than most other states, but still needs tens of thousands of jobs to replace losses since 2001 and to employ the growing working-age population.

According to an analysis released today by the Silverton-based Oregon Center for Public Policy, the BLS figures show that Oregon job growth in May, when the state added 6,000 jobs, was 6th fastest among the 50 states. The Center's analysis shows that since January 2004, employment in Oregon has expanded faster than any other state, growing 1.9 percent, more than double the national growth rate.

"We are doing better than the rest of the nation in creating jobs, but we're nowhere near getting out of the hole," said Jeff Thompson, economist and policy analyst with the OCPP. The Center noted that despite several months of job growth, employment in Oregon and 34 other states remain below job levels from March 2001, when the recession began.

"A jobs recovery has now taken hold, but Oregon and most other states need tens of thousands of more jobs just to catch up to where we were three years ago," commented Thompson.

"While it is growing, Oregon's economy has not only failed to replace all of the lost jobs, but the number of working-age Oregonians has expanded by more than 100,000 since the recession began. These Oregonians need jobs, too, and they shouldn't be ignored when analyzing BLS's monthly job growth news," said Thompson.

According to figures from economy.com, the working age population – people aged 20 to 64 – has expanded 5.2 percent in Oregon and 3.6 nationally since early 2001.

"The economy must provide jobs for these new workers before anyone can honestly claim we have fully recovered from the recession of 2001," said Thompson. "The most recent state Economic and Revenue forecast shows that jobs in Oregon will not return to their pre-recession peak until this time next year, and it will be years after that before employment covers the growth in the number of working-age Oregonians."

“The Bush Administration promised millions of new jobs when they hawked their tax cut scheme called ‘Jobs and Growth’ in 2003. The BLS numbers released today show that the Bush Administration has failed to live up to its promise to unemployed Oregonians. Only Hawaii is on target with the Bush Administration’s Jobs and Growth tax cut promises,” said Thompson.

Analysis by the Economic Policy Institute at www.jobswatch.org shows that Oregon and 48 other states continue to fall well behind job growth promised by the Administration.

The Oregon Center for Public Policy uses research and analysis to advance policies and practices that improve the economic and social opportunities of low- and moderate-income Oregonians, the majority of Oregonians.