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Statement of

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Commissioner
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Nonfarm payroll employment rose by 175,000 in February, and the unemployment rate, at 6.7 percent, changed little.

Employment increased in professional and business services and in wholesale trade but fell in the information industry.

Incorporating the revisions for December and January, which increased nonfarm employment by 25,000 on net, monthly job gains have averaged 129,000 over the past 3 months. In the 12 months prior to February, employment growth averaged 189,000 per month.

Employment in professional and business services rose by 79,000 in February. Within the industry, accounting and bookkeeping services added 16,000 jobs. Employment continued to trend up in temporary help services (+24,000) and in services to buildings and dwellings (+11,000).

In February, wholesale trade employment increased by 15,000, mostly in durable goods. Over the prior 12 months, wholesale trade added an average of 9,000 jobs per month.

Within leisure and hospitality, employment in food services and drinking places continued to trend up in February (+21,000). Over the prior 12 months, food services and drinking places added an average of 27,000 jobs per month.

Construction employment changed little in February (+15,000). Within construction, employment in heavy and civil engineering increased by 12,000 over the month.

Health care employment changed little in February (+10,000) and has shown little movement since November. Within the industry, offices of physicians added 8,000 jobs in February. Employment in hospitals changed little over the month but is down by 10,000 since November.

Employment in the information industry decreased by 16,000 in February, reflecting a decline in motion picture and sound recording (-14,000). Employment in the motion picture industry can be volatile from month to month.

Average hourly earnings of all employees on private nonfarm payrolls rose by 9 cents in February. Over the past 12 months, average hourly earnings have risen by 52 cents, or 2.2 percent. From January 2013 to January 2014, the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) rose by 1.6 percent.

Turning now to our survey of households, both the unemployment rate, at 6.7 percent, and the number of unemployed persons, at 10.5 million, were little changed in February. The number of unemployed persons who had been jobless for 27 weeks or more rose to 3.8 million, or 37 percent of the unemployed.

The labor force participation rate was unchanged at 63.0 percent in February. Over the year, the labor force participation rate has declined by 0.5 percentage point.

The employment-population ratio, at 58.8 percent, was unchanged in February and has shown little movement, on net, over the past 12 months.

Among persons who were neither working nor looking for work in February, 2.3 million were classified as marginally attached to the labor force, down by 285,000 from a year earlier. These individuals had not looked for work in the 4 weeks prior to the survey but wanted a job, were available for work, and had looked for a job within the last 12 months. The number of discouraged workers, a subset of the marginally attached who believed that no jobs were available for them, was 755,000 in February, down by 130,000 from a year earlier.

Severe winter weather occurred in much of the country during the February reference periods for the establishment and household surveys. Information on how weather can affect employment and hours data can be found in Question 8 in the

Frequently Asked Questions section of our news release and on our Web site at www.bls.gov/news.release/empst.faq.htm.

In summary, nonfarm payroll employment increased by 175,000 in February, and the unemployment rate was little changed at 6.7 percent.