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Statement of

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Nonfarm payroll employment rose by 223,000 in April, after edging up in March (+85,000). The unemployment rate was essentially unchanged at 5.4 percent in April. Employment rose over the month in professional and business services, health care, and construction. Job losses continued in mining.

Incorporating the revisions for February and March, which reduced nonfarm employment by 39,000, on net, monthly job gains have averaged 191,000 over the past 3 months. In the 12 months prior to April, employment growth averaged 257,000 per month.

Professional and business services employment rose by 62,000 in April. Over the prior 3 months, job gains averaged 35,000 per month. Services to buildings and dwellings added 16,000 jobs in April, after changing little in March. In April, employment continued to trend up in computer systems design and related services (+9,000), in business support services

(+7,000), and in management and technical consulting services (+6,000).

Employment in health care increased by 45,000 in April and has grown by 390,000 over the past year. Job growth was widespread in the industry in April, with gains in ambulatory health care services (+25,000), in hospitals (+12,000), and in nursing and residential care facilities (+8,000).

Construction employment rose by 45,000 in April, after changing little in the prior month. Employment in specialty trade contractors increased by 41,000 in April, with gains about evenly split between the residential and nonresidential components. Employment declined by 8,000 in nonresidential building construction.

Manufacturing employment was essentially unchanged for the third month in a row. The industry had added an average of 18,000 jobs per month from January 2014 to January 2015.

Mining employment fell by 15,000 in April, with job losses in support activities for mining (-10,000) and in oil and gas extraction (-3,000). Employment in mining has fallen by 49,000 thus far in 2015, more than offsetting the 41,000 jobs gained during 2014.

Average hourly earnings of all employees on private nonfarm payrolls rose by 3 cents in April to \$24.87. Over the past 12 months, average hourly earnings have risen by 2.2 percent. From

March 2014 to March 2015, the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) was unchanged (on a seasonally adjusted basis).

Turning now to data from our survey of households, both the unemployment rate, at 5.4 percent, and the number of unemployed persons, at 8.5 million, were essentially unchanged in April. These measures are down by 0.8 percentage point and 1.1 million, respectively, over the year. Among those unemployed in April, 29.0 percent had been jobless for 27 weeks or longer. Both the number of long-term unemployed persons and their share of total unemployment have fallen over the year.

The labor force participation rate was little changed at 62.8 percent in April and has remained within a narrow range of 62.7 percent to 62.9 percent since April 2014. The employment-population ratio was 59.3 percent for the fourth month in a row.

Among those employed in April, 6.6 million were at work part time for economic reasons, little changed over the month. These individuals, who would have preferred full-time employment, were working part time because their hours had been cut back or because they were unable to find full-time work.

Among people who were neither working nor looking for work in April, 2.1 million were classified as marginally attached to the labor force, about unchanged over the year. 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 756,000 in April, also about unchanged over the year.

In summary, nonfarm payroll employment rose by 223,000 in April, and the unemployment rate was essentially unchanged at 5.4 percent.