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Statement of

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Nonfarm payroll employment increased by 156,000 in August, and the unemployment rate was little changed at 4.4 percent. Job gains occurred in manufacturing, construction, professional and technical services, health care, and mining. Employment growth has averaged 176,000 per month thus far this year, about in line with the average monthly gain of 187,000 in 2016.

Before turning to the details of this month's report, it is important to note that Hurricane Harvey had no discernable effect on the employment and unemployment data for August. Household survey data collection was completed before the storm. Establishment survey data collection for this report was largely completed prior to the storm, and collection rates were within normal ranges nationally and for the affected areas.

In August, employment in manufacturing increased by 36,000. The industry has added 155,000 jobs since a recent low in

November 2016. Motor vehicles and parts (+14,000), fabricated metal products (+5,000), and computer and electronic products (+4,000) added jobs in August.

Construction employment rose by 28,000 in August, following little change over the previous 5 months. In August, employment edged up among residential specialty trade contractors (+12,000).

Employment in professional and technical services continued to trend up in August (+22,000), in line with the average monthly gain over the prior 12 months.

Employment in health care also continued to trend up in August (+20,000). Within the industry, hospital employment edged up (+6,000). Over the past year, health care has added 328,000 jobs.

In August, employment in mining rose by 7,000, with all of the job growth in support activities for mining. Mining has added 62,000 jobs since a recent employment low in October 2016.

Employment in food services and drinking places changed little in August (+9,000), following an increase of 53,000 in July. Over the year, employment in the industry has risen by 283,000.

Employment in other major industries--wholesale trade, retail trade, transportation and warehousing, information,

financial activities, and government--showed little change over the month.

Average hourly earnings of all employees on private nonfarm payrolls increased by 3 cents to \$26.39 in August. Over the past 12 months, average hourly earnings have risen by 2.5 percent. From July 2016 to July 2017, the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) increased by 1.7 percent (on a seasonally adjusted basis).

Major labor market indicators from the survey of households changed little in August. Both the number of unemployed people, at 7.1 million, and the unemployment rate, at 4.4 percent, changed little over the month. After declining earlier in the year, the unemployment rate has been either 4.3 or 4.4 percent since April.

In August, 1.7 million unemployed people had been searching for work for 27 weeks or longer, accounting for 24.7 percent of the unemployed.

The labor force participation rate, at 62.9 percent, was unchanged over the month and has shown no clear trend thus far this year. The employment-population ratio, at 60.1 percent in August, changed little over the month and has held fairly steady thus far this year.

In August, the number of people working part time for economic reasons, also referred to as involuntary part-time workers, was about unchanged at 5.3 million.

Among those neither working nor looking for work in August, 1.5 million people were marginally attached to the labor force, little different from the prior year. Discouraged workers, a subset of the marginally attached who believed that no jobs were available for them, numbered 448,000 in August, down by 128,000 from a year earlier. (People who were marginally attached to the labor force 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.)

In summary, nonfarm payroll employment increased by 156,000 in August, and the unemployment rate was little changed at 4.4 percent.