



JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE
SENATOR CHARLES E. SCHUMER
CHAIRMAN



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SCHUMER: SLOWEST JOB GROWTH SINCE NOVEMBER 2004 COMBINED WITH WEAK HOUSING MARKET, RAISES SERIOUS CONCERNS

Increased Unemployment Rate, Downwardly Revised Employment Figures for Last Two Months, and Lower Labor Force Participation Rate Indicate Job Growth Must Be a Higher Priority for Administration

Washington, D.C. – **U.S. Senator Charles E. Schumer**, Chairman of the Joint Economic Committee, responded to new jobs numbers from the Bureau of Labor Statistics which indicated that the unemployment rate edged up to 4.5 percent in April, and only 88,000 total payroll jobs were created, the slowest monthly job growth since November of 2004. Non-government jobs grew by only 63,000. Job creation in February and March was also revised down from earlier estimates.

Sen. Schumer said “The slowest job growth since November of 2004, coupled with a weak housing market, raises important concerns about the health of the overall U.S. economy. Job creation needs to be a higher priority for this administration if we’re going to make sure that families can achieve their aspirations and America can maintain its global economic leadership.”

Highlights of today’s employment figures:

- Growth in payroll employment has been modest by the standards of past economic recoveries. Payrolls have grown by 1.4 percent over the past year, and the 12-month pace has been slowing since the start of last year. By comparison, at the same point in the 1990s recovery, 12-month growth in payrolls was 2.2 percent and rising.
- While the unemployment rate has come down from its peak of 6.3 percent in June 2003, April’s 4.5 percent rate is still higher than the 4 percent rate achieved in the expansion of the 1990s.
- Many labor market indicators remain weaker than they were at the start of the 2001 recession in March 2001.

1. The labor force participation rate is 1.2 percentage points lower than when the recession began and the fraction of the working-age population with a job is 1.3 percentage points lower.
 2. One in every six unemployed people – 1.2 million Americans – have been jobless for more than 26 weeks, the maximum number of weeks for receiving regular unemployment insurance benefits.
- Overall, there are 6.8 million unemployed Americans, and 4.8 million additional workers who want a job but are not counted among the unemployed (including about 1.4 million who have searched for work enough to be considered marginally attached to the labor force). An additional 4.4 million people work part-time for economic reasons.
 - The unemployment rate would be 8.2 percent if the figure included those who are marginally attached to the labor force and those who are forced to work part-time for economic reasons.

The Joint Economic Committee, established under the Employment Act of 1946, was created by Congress to review economic conditions and to analyze the effectiveness of economic policy.

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