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Statement of

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Commissioner
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Nonfarm payroll employment rose by 165,000 in April, and the unemployment rate was little changed at 7.5 percent. Over the prior 12 months, job gains averaged 169,000 per month. In April, employment grew in professional and business services, food services and drinking places, retail trade, and health care.

Professional and business services added 73,000 jobs over the month and has added 587,000 jobs over the year. In April, employment rose in temporary help services (+31,000), professional and technical services (+23,000), and management of companies (+7,000).

Employment in food services and drinking places rose by 38,000 in April. Employment in this industry has increased by 320,000 over the year.

In April, retail trade employment increased by 29,000. General merchandise stores and health and personal care stores each continued to add jobs in April. Over the past year, retail trade has added 248,000 jobs.

Health care employment rose by 19,000 in April and by 288,000 over the past year. In April, employment increased by 14,000 in ambulatory health care services, which includes offices of physicians and home health care services.

Employment in construction changed little (-6,000) in April. Job gains in this industry averaged 27,000 per month from October through March. Manufacturing employment was unchanged in April. Employment in other major industries showed little change over the month.

Average hourly earnings of all employees on private nonfarm payrolls rose by 4 cents in April. Over the past 12 months, average hourly earnings have risen by 45 cents, or 1.9 percent. From March 2012 to March 2013, the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) increased by 1.5 percent.

Turning now to our survey of households, the unemployment rate, at 7.5 percent, changed little in April. Since January, however, the rate has declined by 0.4 percentage point. Similarly, the number of unemployed persons, at 11.7 million, was little changed over the month but has decreased by 673,000

since January. Among the unemployed in April, 37.4 percent had been jobless for 27 weeks or more.

The labor force participation rate held at 63.3 percent in April. The rate declined by 0.3 percentage point from January to March.

The employment-population ratio was essentially unchanged in April at 58.6 percent. On net, the employment-population ratio has shown little movement in the past 12 months. Among the employed, the number working part time for economic reasons rose by 278,000 to 7.9 million in April, after falling by 350,000 in March. These individuals would have preferred full-time employment but had their hours cut or were unable to find full-time work.

In summary, nonfarm payroll employment increased by 165,000 in April, and the unemployment rate was little changed at 7.5 percent.