

For Release:
September 3, 2010

Contact: 785-296-0901
Communications@dol.ks.gov

Kansas labor market on the path to economic recovery

*Secretary Jim Garner gives State of Labor Address;
highlights unemployment, job loss and efforts to fuel recovery*

TOPEKA — Though the Kansas economy suffered greatly in 2009 during the national recession, the state is now on the road to economic recovery, said Kansas Labor Secretary Jim Garner during his annual State of Labor Address Friday morning.

"The conditions we faced in 2009 were in many ways unprecedented," said Garner. "Our state's unemployment rate hit 6.7 percent, surpassing the experience of the major recession of the early 1980's."

The 2009 Economic Report, released today, provides a valuable analysis and collection of data regarding the state's economic condition over the past year. Looking ahead the economic news is definitely more encouraging. After a very challenging 2009, Kansas is seeing improvements in the economy in 2010, with private sector growth and a reduction in the number of layoffs.

"Comparing July 2010 to one year ago, we've experienced actual job growth for the first time since October 2008," said Garner. "We have also seen over-the-year increases in construction jobs four months in a row. The number of initial claims for unemployment benefits has decreased by nearly one third from a year ago. And the state's unemployment rate appears to have reached a plateau, after peaking in July 2009. We find ourselves today coming out of the recession and on the road to recovery."

"While the impacts of the recession hit us quickly and dramatically, recovery is likely to take longer. We need to continue to pursue efforts that put Kansas in the best position to make the most of the recovery," continued Garner.

One big step in that direction was the release of the Kansas Green Jobs Report earlier this year. The report chronicled the results of the first-ever survey designed to determine the extent of the state's green economy based on information collected directly from Kansas employers. The results are encouraging, showing that Kansas has an emerging green economy with more than 20,000 existing primary green jobs and the potential to add more than 10,000 additional jobs by 2012.

In addition, the preliminary results of the 2008-2018 Kansas Occupational Outlook indicate a total employment growth of almost 10 percent by 2018, even with the job losses of the recent downturn. The health care and social assistance industry expects to lead the way by adding more than 37,000 jobs over this period. More information from this year's [State of Labor address](#) and the [2010 Economic Report](#) is available online at www.dol.ks.gov.

###