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Kansas' State of Labor: We've Come a Long Way

TOPEKA — Secretary of Labor Jim Garner today charted Kansas' economic progress since 2003 in the annual State of Labor address at the State Capitol.

"Unemployment is down, jobs and wages are up and state revenues are increasing," said Garner. "In short — we have come a long way."

"By bringing together business leaders and policymakers, the Sebelius administration has helped revive the Kansas economy. When compared to 2003, July 2006 data show positive signs for the Kansas economy, including more people working, new jobs and improved wages.

"We must build upon the progress already made and the leadership that has brought us this far," said Garner.

The Labor Department is collaborating with other state agencies to study the nursing occupation and develop a workforce training strategy that will help address the forecasted nursing shortage.

The Secretary also reaffirmed the Department's commitment to workplace safety, noting that establishing a joint culture that creates higher expectations of safer workplaces ultimately works to everyone's benefit. "Safer workplaces mean fewer injuries, fewer work comp claims and lower work comp insurance costs," he said. Kansas continues to enjoy some of the lowest Workers Compensation premium rates in the nation.

Secretary Garner said he will continue to strive to improve service to KDOL customers, the 82,000 employers and the 1.3 million workers in Kansas. He noted the Department is well into a multi-year initiative to modernize the unemployment insurance system in Kansas.

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