



**For Immediate Release:**

April 19, 2011

## South Carolina's Employment Situation March, 2011

*State's unemployment rate under 10 percent for first time in two years*

South Carolina's seasonally-adjusted unemployment rate dropped to 9.9 percent in March which is the lowest the state has achieved since its all time high of 11.8 percent in 2009.

Since just December 2010 the rate has declined from 10.9 percent to 9.9 percent. This rapid improvement indicates South Carolina's employment situation is on the mend.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) website in February alone, South Carolina experienced the largest month-to-month percentage increase in jobs in the nation followed by California, Delaware, Oregon and Rhode Island. The upward trend in jobs continued in March with 15,700 jobs (not seasonally adjusted). The two main areas of jobs improvement were in leisure and hospitality (10,000) and retail trade (3,900).

Concurrent with the excellent unemployment news, other positive trends are appearing. The average monthly initial claims have dropped from a high of 57,767 in 2008 to a current number of around 21,000. The decrease accelerated between January 2011 and March 2011 as the numbers dropped over 50 percent from 43,201 to 21,185. Likewise, the average weekly payment for state unemployment benefits declined from a high of almost \$21,000,000 in 2009 to approximately \$8,700,000 in April 2011. The numbers have declined steadily since January 2011. Finally, the duration of state benefits being paid has declined from over 17 weeks to 16.4 weeks.

"While our overall labor force continued to shrink in March, we hope the positive news about jobs and declining unemployment will encourage more people to continue to seek reemployment and the services of the SC Department of Employment and Workforce," said Executive Director John Finan. "We currently have over 50,000 available jobs in the state posted."

*\*Note: Employment has risen by approximately 18,126 (compared to March 2010) to an estimated level of 1,939,200.*

*The estimated labor force is 2,151,639.*

**WAGE AND SALARY EMPLOYMENT (Jobs)**  
March - 2011

Jobs by Industry	March 2011	February 2011	March 2010	Net Change From	
				Month Ago	Year Ago
<b>Total Nonag. Employment</b>	<b>1,812,500</b>	<b>1,796,800</b>	<b>1,788,700</b>	<b>15,700</b>	<b>23,800</b>
Natural Resources and Mining	4,100	4,100	4,000	-	100
Construction	75,900	76,000	78,200	(100)	(2,300)
Manufacturing	209,800	209,800	206,200	-	3,600
Trade, Transportation and Utilities	345,800	342,000	340,500	3,800	5,300
Information	25,400	25,600	26,300	(200)	(900)
Financial Activities	97,900	97,600	97,000	300	900
Professional and Business Services	223,100	223,200	204,600	(100)	18,500
Educational and Health Services	219,100	218,000	211,900	1,100	7,200
Leisure and Hospitality	206,500	196,500	200,100	10,000	6,400
Government	337,800	337,200	351,500	600	(13,700)

**UNEMPLOYMENT RATES RANKED BY COUNTY**

Rank	County	Unemployment Rate		
		March 2011	February 2011	% Change
1	MARION	18.9	20.2	-1.3
2	MARLBORO	16.7	18.1	-1.4
3	CHESTER	16.1	16.8	-0.7
4	ALLENDALE	16.0	17.4	-1.4
5	UNION	15.6	16.5	-0.9
6	McCORMICK	14.3	16.1	-1.8
7	BARNWELL	14.2	14.9	-0.7
8	DILLON	14.0	15.2	-1.2
9	CLARENDON	13.9	14.9	-1.0
10	LANCASTER	13.4	14.9	-1.5
11	ORANGEBURG	13.2	14.1	-0.9
12	BAMBERG	13.0	14.1	-1.1
13	HAMPTON	12.9	13.9	-1.0
	YORK	12.9	15.0	-2.1
15	WILLIAMSBURG	12.7	13.9	-1.2
16	CHEROKEE	12.5	13.6	-1.1
17	LEE	12.4	13.3	-0.9
18	CHESTERFIELD	12.3	13.9	-1.6
19	COLLETON	12.2	12.8	-0.6
20	ABBEVILLE	11.6	12.4	-0.8
21	FAIRFIELD	11.1	13.4	-2.3
	HORRY/MYR BCH MSA	11.1	12.9	-1.8
23	GEORGETOWN	10.9	12.0	-1.1
24	GREENWOOD	10.8	11.4	-0.6
25	DARLINGTON	10.7	11.3	-0.6
26	FLORENCE	10.4	11.0	-0.6
27	SUMTER MSA	10.3	10.9	-0.6
28	CALHOUN	9.9	10.5	-0.6
29	LAURENS	9.7	10.6	-0.9
	OCONEE	9.7	10.5	-0.8
31	NEWBERRY	9.6	10.4	-0.8
32	SPARTANBURG MSA	9.5	10.1	-0.6
33	ANDERSON MSA	9.0	9.8	-0.8
34	JASPER	8.8	9.6	-0.8
35	BERKELEY	8.7	9.1	-0.4
36	EDGEFIELD	8.4	8.7	-0.3
	RICHLAND	8.4	8.6	-0.2
38	KERSHAW	8.3	9.6	-1.3
39	PICKENS	8.1	8.6	-0.5
40	SALUDA	8.0	9.4	-1.4
41	DORCHESTER	7.9	8.4	-0.5
42	AIKEN	7.8	8.4	-0.6
	BEAUFORT	7.8	8.3	-0.5
44	CHARLESTON	7.7	8.1	-0.4
	GREENVILLE	7.7	8.1	-0.4
46	LEXINGTON	7.2	7.5	-0.3

**LABOR FORCE AND UNEMPLOYMENT BY LABOR MARKET AREA**

March 2011

AREA:	LABOR FORCE			UNEMPLOYMENT			% OF LABOR FORCE		
	March 2011	February 2011	March 2010	March 2011	February 2011	March 2010	March 2011	February 2011	March 2010
ABBEVILLE	10,747	10,750	11,213	1,244	1,338	1,569	11.6	12.4	14.0
AIKEN	76,390	76,287	77,482	5,959	6,431	6,483	7.8	8.4	8.4
ALLENDALE	3,202	3,193	3,345	513	554	664	16.0	17.4	19.9
ANDERSON MSA	85,624	85,820	85,309	7,726	8,439	10,193	9.0	9.8	11.9
BAMBERG	6,144	6,171	6,397	797	873	992	13.0	14.1	15.5
BARNWELL	8,422	8,404	8,850	1,194	1,254	1,621	14.2	14.9	18.3
BEAUFORT	64,061	63,885	61,462	4,982	5,322	5,691	7.8	8.3	9.3
BERKELEY	80,612	80,186	80,702	7,012	7,310	8,134	8.7	9.1	10.1
CALHOUN	6,587	6,569	6,714	654	688	767	9.9	10.5	11.4
CHARLESTON	174,846	173,998	175,228	13,417	14,157	16,062	7.7	8.1	9.2
CHEROKEE	24,102	24,220	25,274	3,014	3,285	3,883	12.5	13.6	15.4
CHESTER	14,421	14,389	15,231	2,321	2,415	2,994	16.1	16.8	19.7
CHESTERFIELD	18,121	18,231	19,222	2,224	2,526	3,231	12.3	13.9	16.8
CLARENDON	12,718	12,655	12,628	1,774	1,884	1,904	13.9	14.9	15.1
COLLETON	17,284	17,169	16,993	2,113	2,195	2,302	12.2	12.8	13.5
DARLINGTON	30,236	30,465	31,010	3,249	3,436	3,932	10.7	11.3	12.7
DILLON	13,342	13,399	13,646	1,871	2,037	2,195	14.0	15.2	16.1
DORCHESTER	63,999	63,687	64,025	5,085	5,353	5,937	7.9	8.4	9.3
EDGEFIELD	11,069	11,012	11,280	928	954	1,057	8.4	8.7	9.4
FAIRFIELD	10,615	10,805	10,869	1,175	1,447	1,407	11.1	13.4	12.9
FLORENCE	63,037	63,500	63,939	6,582	6,960	7,294	10.4	11.0	11.4
GEORGETOWN	29,947	29,744	29,866	3,250	3,555	3,929	10.9	12.0	13.2
GREENVILLE	222,941	222,708	224,769	17,257	18,126	22,016	7.7	8.1	9.8
GREENWOOD	29,899	29,852	30,854	3,231	3,401	3,859	10.8	11.4	12.5
HAMPTON	7,807	7,791	7,865	1,004	1,086	1,134	12.9	13.9	14.4
HORRY/MYR BCH MSA	130,546	127,668	128,028	14,518	16,493	16,868	11.1	12.9	13.2
JASPER	10,212	10,217	9,785	894	980	988	8.8	9.6	10.1
KERSHAW	29,291	29,432	29,998	2,439	2,814	3,085	8.3	9.6	10.3
LANCASTER	29,655	29,869	31,082	3,984	4,438	5,391	13.4	14.9	17.3
LAURENS	31,994	32,159	32,093	3,095	3,415	3,606	9.7	10.6	11.2
LEE	8,107	8,078	8,319	1,007	1,075	1,155	12.4	13.3	13.9
LEXINGTON	132,429	131,782	134,215	9,501	9,923	11,006	7.2	7.5	8.2
MARION	12,198	12,183	12,517	2,302	2,464	2,620	18.9	20.2	20.9
MARLBORO	11,364	11,421	12,134	1,902	2,071	2,579	16.7	18.1	21.3
MCCORMICK	3,257	3,300	3,395	465	530	569	14.3	16.1	16.8
NEWBERRY	17,919	17,822	18,657	1,724	1,853	2,037	9.6	10.4	10.9
OCONEE	30,462	30,439	31,188	2,951	3,181	3,942	9.7	10.5	12.6
ORANGEBURG	39,285	39,374	41,403	5,175	5,556	6,129	13.2	14.1	14.8
PICKENS	56,671	56,705	57,029	4,568	4,882	5,669	8.1	8.6	9.9
RICHLAND	179,116	177,938	181,865	15,047	15,297	17,421	8.4	8.6	9.6
SALUDA	8,863	8,920	9,062	709	837	889	8.0	9.4	9.8
SPARTANBURG MSA	134,250	134,616	135,196	12,772	13,575	16,015	9.5	10.1	11.8
SUMTER MSA	45,386	45,041	45,349	4,669	4,927	5,434	10.3	10.9	12.0
UNION	11,045	11,088	11,569	1,718	1,835	2,221	15.6	16.5	19.2
WILLIAMSBURG	15,669	15,621	15,749	1,993	2,165	2,385	12.7	13.9	15.1
YORK	112,608	114,188	115,824	14,494	17,115	18,088	12.9	15.0	15.6
<b>Multi County MSAs</b>									
CHAS MSA	319,455	317,872	319,954	25,513	26,821	30,132	8.0	8.4	9.4
COLA MSA	366,901	365,446	372,723	29,525	31,005	34,575	8.0	8.5	9.3
FLORENCE MSA	93,273	93,965	94,949	9,831	10,396	11,226	10.5	11.1	11.8
GRNV MSA	311,606	311,573	313,892	24,920	26,423	31,291	8.0	8.5	10.0
<b>South Carolina*</b>	<b>2,151.6</b>	<b>2,154.8</b>	<b>2,170.0</b>	<b>212.4</b>	<b>219.4</b>	<b>248.5</b>	<b>9.9</b>	<b>10.2</b>	<b>11.5</b>

BM Year 2010

\* Seasonally Adjusted

County data not seasonally adjusted