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VICE CHAIRMAN JIM SAXTON

PRESS RELEASE

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RECENT JOB GROWTH IS MOSTLY IN WELL-PAID OCCUPATIONS

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Contact: Christopher Frenze
Chief Economist to the V.C.
(202) 225-3923
Television & Radio
Contact: Stephen Thompson
Public Affairs Officer
(202) 329-6288

WASHINGTON, D.C. – An examination of employment data for the last year indicates that most of the net increase in employment is in relatively well-paid occupations, Vice Chairman Jim Saxton said today. The employment data classified by occupational categories are published monthly by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS).

Despite assertions by some that most of the recent employment gains are in low wage jobs, occupations that are relatively well-paid account for most of the net increase in employment between June 2003 and June 2004, according to the latest household survey data. Although the data do not prove that every new job is high paying, they do contradict the notion that most of the job growth is in low-paying jobs.

Between June 2003 and June 2004, 71.4 percent of the net increase in employment was in three relatively well-paid occupational categories: management, professional and related occupations (23.1 percent); construction and extraction occupations (36.1 percent); and installation, maintenance and repair occupations (12.2) percent. The earnings in these occupational categories are higher than the median and much higher than the earnings of the typical hamburger flipper. Most of the workers in well-paid occupations have earnings in the middle range or higher.

“These employment figures indicate that most of the new jobs are not at low wage levels, but at higher levels of earnings,” Saxton said. “We have been hearing assertions about hamburger flipper jobs dominating employment for about 20 years now, and it just hasn’t happened. We are not about to become a nation of hamburger flippers. The data show that most of the recent employment gains have been in relatively well-paid occupations,” Saxton concluded.

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