



CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES

# *JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE*

CHAIRMAN JIM SAXTON

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## PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release  
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### STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN JIM SAXTON

Press Release #109-57  
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#### *JANUARY EMPLOYMENT SITUATION*

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – It is a pleasure to welcome Commissioner Utgoff and her colleagues before the Committee this morning to discuss the latest employment data.

The January employment data are good news for American workers. According to the payroll survey, employment increased by 193,000 jobs in January. Since May of 2003, more than 4.7 million jobs have been created.

According to the household survey, employment also advanced, while the unemployment rate fell to 4.7 percent. Over the last year, most of the net increase in employment has been in occupations that pay in the middle range and higher.

The employment data are consistent with other data showing that the economy continues to grow. In 2005, real GDP increased 3.5 percent. Although economic growth slowed to only 1.1 percent in the fourth quarter of 2005, this advance figure is incomplete and may be revised upward. Most forecasters project a rebound of economic growth in the first quarter of 2006.

As an important Federal Reserve policy statement recently noted, “the expansion in economic activity appears solid.” According to the Federal Reserve, the Congressional Budget Office and private economists, economic growth this year will be comparable to the healthy pace set in 2005.

The economy seems to have weathered the recent rise in oil prices quite well, although oil prices have probably had some negative impact on growth. Inflation appears to be contained over the long term, as the Fed recently stated.

In conclusion, U.S. economic growth has been healthy in recent years, and significantly higher than in most other advanced economies. The U.S. unemployment rate also remains below comparable rates in many other major economies. Most economic forecasters expect good economic and employment growth to continue through 2006.

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