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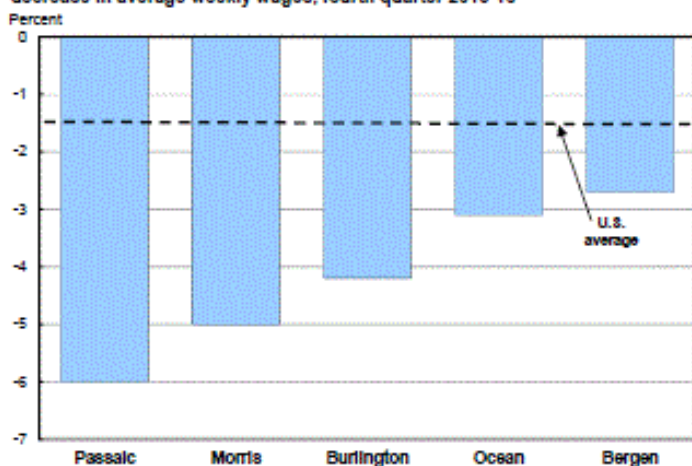
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County Employment and Wages in New Jersey - Fourth Quarter 2016

Wages declined in all 15 of New Jersey’s largest counties from the fourth quarter of 2015 to the fourth quarter of 2016, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. (Large counties are defined as those with employment of 75,000 or more as measured by 2015 annual average employment.) Passaic County had the largest decline, with a loss of 6.0 percent, followed by Morris and Burlington Counties, down 5.0 and 4.2 percent, respectively. (See [chart 1](#) and [table 1.](#)) Chief Regional Economist Martin Kohli noted that Passaic County had the fifth largest wage decline among the 344 largest counties nationwide.

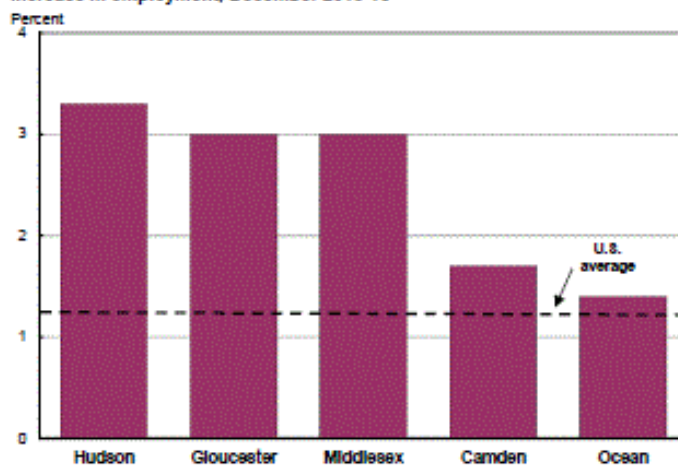
Eleven of New Jersey’s large counties reported average weekly wages above the \$1,067 national average in the fourth quarter of 2016. Average weekly wages in Somerset and Morris Counties exceeded \$1,500.

Chart 1. Large counties in New Jersey ranked by percent decrease in average weekly wages, fourth quarter 2015-16



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Chart 2. Large counties in New Jersey ranked by percent increase in employment, December 2015-16



The largest employment gain among New Jersey’s largest counties was in Hudson, up 3.3 percent. Nationally, employment grew by 1.2 percent from December 2015 to December 2016. (See [chart 2.](#))

Employment and wage levels (but not over-the-year changes) are also available for the six counties in New Jersey with employment below 75,000. Two of these counties had average weekly wages above the U.S. average of \$1,067. Cape May County reported the lowest average weekly wage, \$811. (See [table 2.](#))

Large County Wage Changes

In addition to Passaic County’s 6.0-percent wage decline, eight other large counties in the state had over-the-year wage declines greater than the 1.5 percent national average. The smallest wage declines among New Jersey’s largest counties occurred in Mercer, Essex, and Union Counties.

Among the 344 largest U.S. counties, 290 recorded declines in average weekly wages. McLean, Ill., had the largest wage decrease, down 9.2 percent. In contrast, 48 counties nationwide experienced over-the-year increases in average weekly wages. Clayton, Ga., had the largest over-the-year wage increase (11.3 percent).

Large County Average Weekly Wages

As noted, 11 of New Jersey's large counties reported average weekly wages above the national average. The state's five highest-paying counties—Somerset, Morris, Union, Hudson, and Mercer—ranked among the nation's top 25. Ocean County had an average weekly wage of \$871, the lowest of all New Jersey's large counties, ranking it nationally at 269th.

Nationally, 100 large counties registered average weekly wages above the U.S. average of \$1,067 in the fourth quarter of 2016. Santa Clara, Calif., held the top position with an average weekly wage of \$2,365. New York, N.Y., was second at \$2,212, followed by San Mateo, Calif. (\$2,098).

Among the 243 counties with an average weekly wage below the U.S. average in the fourth quarter 2016, Cameron County, Texas, reported the lowest average weekly wage (\$640), followed by Hidalgo, Texas (\$648), and Horry, S.C. (\$654).

Large County Employment

Employment grew in 14 of the 15 largest counties in New Jersey from December 2015 to December 2016. Seven of the counties had increases equal to or above the national job growth rate of 1.2 percent, led by Hudson (3.3 percent) and Gloucester and Middlesex (3.0 percent each). One large county in New Jersey, Atlantic, had an over-the-year employment loss of 1.7 percent.

Nationally, employment grew in 280 of the 344 large U.S. counties. Williamson, Tenn., had the largest percentage increase in employment with a gain of 5.1 percent over the year. Lafayette, La., had the largest over-the-year employment decrease, down 5.1 percent.

In New Jersey, employment was highest in Bergen (458,700), followed by Middlesex (430,400), and Essex (343,900). Altogether, New Jersey's large counties accounted for 91.2 percent of total employment within the state. Nationwide, the 344 largest counties made up 72.8 percent of total U.S. employment.

Average Weekly Wages in New Jersey's Smaller Counties

Two of New Jersey's six counties with employment below 75,000 had average weekly wages above the national average—Hunterdon (\$1,236) and Salem (\$1,092). (See [table 2](#).)

When all 21 counties in New Jersey were considered, 9 had an average weekly above \$1,150. All of these counties were clustered in northern and central New Jersey. The one county with average weekly wages below \$850 was located at the southern tip of the state. (See [chart 3](#).)

Additional Statistics and Other Information

QCEW data for states has been included in this release in [table 3](#). For additional information about quarterly employment and wages data, please read the Technical Note or visit the QCEW Web site at www.bls.gov/cew/.

Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online features comprehensive information by detailed industry on establishments, employment, and wages for the nation and all states. The 2015 edition of this publication contains selected data produced by Business Employment Dynamics (BED) on job gains and losses, as well as selected data from the first quarter 2016 version of this news release. Tables and additional content from the

2015 edition of Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online are now available at www.bls.gov/cew/publications/employment-and-wages-annual-averages/2015/home.htm. The 2016 edition of Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online will be available in September 2017.

The County Employment and Wages release for first quarter 2017 is scheduled to be released on Wednesday, September 6, 2017, at 10:00 a.m. (ET).

Upcoming Industry Changes to QCEW Data

Beginning with the release of first quarter 2017 data, the program will switch to the 2017 version of the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) as the basis for the assignment and tabulation of economic data by industry. For more information on the change, please see the Federal Register notice at www.census.gov/eos/www/naics/federal_register_notices/notices/fr08au16.pdf.

Technical Note

Average weekly wage data by county are compiled under the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) program, also known as the ES-202 program. The data are derived from summaries of employment and total pay of workers covered by state and federal unemployment insurance (UI) legislation and provided by State Workforce Agencies (SWAs). The 9.9 million employer reports cover 143.7 million full- and part-time workers. The average weekly wage values are calculated by dividing quarterly total wages by the average of the three monthly employment levels of those covered by UI programs. The result is then divided by 13, the number of weeks in a quarter. It is to be noted, therefore, that over-the-year wage changes for geographic areas may reflect shifts in the composition of employment by industry, occupation, and such other factors as hours of work. Thus, wages may vary among counties, metropolitan areas, or states for reasons other than changes in the average wage level. Data for all states, Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs), counties, and the nation are available on the BLS Web site at www.bls.gov/cew/; however, data in QCEW press releases have been revised and may not match the data contained on the Bureau's Web site.

QCEW data are not designed as a time series. QCEW data are simply the sums of individual establishment records reflecting the number of establishments that exist in a county or industry at a point in time. Establishments can move in or out of a county or industry for a number of reasons—some reflecting economic events, others reflecting administrative changes.

The preliminary QCEW data presented in this release may differ from data released by the individual states as well as from the data presented on the BLS Web site. These potential differences result from the states' continuing receipt, review and editing of UI data over time. On the other hand, differences between data in this release and the data found on the BLS Web site are the result of adjustments made to improve over-the-year comparisons. Specifically, these adjustments account for administrative (noneconomic) changes such as a correction to a previously reported location or industry classification. Adjusting for these administrative changes allows users to more accurately assess changes of an economic nature (such as a firm moving from one county to another or changing its primary economic activity) over a 12-month period. Currently, adjusted data are available only from BLS press releases.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: (202) 691-5200; Federal Relay Service: (800) 877-8339.

Table 1. Covered employment and wages in the United States and the 15 largest counties in New Jersey, fourth quarter 2016

| Area | Employment | | | Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾ | | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------|---|---|------------------------------------|--|---|---|
| | December 2016 (thousands) | Percent change, December 2015-16 ⁽²⁾ | National ranking by percent change ⁽³⁾ | Average weekly wage | National ranking by level ⁽³⁾ | Percent change, fourth quarter 2015-16 ⁽²⁾ | National ranking by percent change ⁽³⁾ |
| United States ⁽⁴⁾ | 143,749.9 | 1.2 | -- | \$1,067 | -- | -1.5 | -- |
| New Jersey..... | 4,042.1 | 1.4 | -- | 1,239 | 6 | -1.9 | 30 |
| Atlantic, N.J. | 122.7 | -1.7 | 335 | 885 | 255 | -1.3 | 144 |
| Bergen, N.J. | 458.7 | 0.8 | 211 | 1,289 | 32 | -2.7 | 259 |
| Burlington, N.J. | 208.1 | 3.0 | 39 | 1,077 | 90 | -4.2 | 317 |
| Camden, N.J. | 205.5 | 1.7 | 130 | 1,076 | 92 | -1.1 | 127 |
| Essex, N.J. | 343.9 | 0.9 | 205 | 1,297 | 29 | -0.2 | 60 |
| Gloucester, N.J. | 109.6 | 3.0 | 39 | 918 | 222 | -2.4 | 237 |
| Hudson, N.J. | 260.6 | 3.3 | 24 | 1,355 | 22 | -1.6 | 168 |
| Mercer, N.J. | 252.0 | 0.4 | 250 | 1,346 | 23 | -0.1 | 55 |
| Middlesex, N.J. | 430.4 | 3.0 | 39 | 1,240 | 42 | -2.2 | 223 |
| Monmouth, N.J. | 260.2 | 0.6 | 230 | 1,068 | 100 | -2.1 | 213 |
| Morris, N.J. | 290.9 | 0.1 | 268 | 1,524 | 12 | -5.0 | 332 |
| Ocean, N.J. | 162.5 | 1.4 | 156 | 871 | 269 | -3.1 | 275 |
| Passaic, N.J. | 170.1 | 1.1 | 184 | 1,042 | 113 | -6.0 | 340 |
| Somerset, N.J. | 187.6 | 1.3 | 164 | 1,563 | 10 | -0.7 | 95 |
| Union, N.J. | 221.9 | 1.1 | 184 | 1,362 | 21 | -0.4 | 70 |

Footnotes:

(1) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

(2) Percent changes were computed from quarterly employment and pay data adjusted for noneconomic county reclassifications.

(3) Ranking does not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

(4) Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

Note: Data are preliminary. Covered employment and wages includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs.

Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all counties in New Jersey, fourth quarter 2016

| Area | Employment December 2016 (thousands) | Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾ |
|------------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|
| United States ⁽²⁾ | 143,749.9 | \$1,067 |
| New Jersey | 4,042.1 | 1,239 |
| Atlantic | 122.7 | 885 |
| Bergen | 458.7 | 1,289 |
| Burlington | 208.1 | 1,077 |
| Camden | 205.5 | 1,076 |
| Cape May | 35.4 | 811 |
| Cumberland | 59.4 | 907 |
| Essex | 343.9 | 1,297 |
| Gloucester | 109.6 | 918 |
| Hudson | 260.6 | 1,355 |
| Hunterdon | 47.3 | 1,236 |
| Mercer | 252.0 | 1,346 |
| Middlesex | 430.4 | 1,240 |
| Monmouth | 260.2 | 1,068 |
| Morris | 290.9 | 1,524 |
| Ocean | 162.5 | 871 |
| Passaic | 170.1 | 1,042 |
| Salem | 20.3 | 1,092 |
| Somerset | 187.6 | 1,563 |
| Sussex | 39.3 | 896 |
| Union | 221.9 | 1,362 |
| Warren | 33.6 | 978 |

Footnotes:

(1) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

(2) Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

Note: Data are preliminary. Includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs.

Table 3. Covered employment and wages by state, fourth quarter 2016

| State | Employment | | Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾ | | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------|--|------------------------------------|
| | December 2016 (thousands) | Percent change, December 2015-16 | Average weekly wage | National ranking by level | Percent change, fourth quarter 2015-16 | National ranking by percent change |
| United States ⁽²⁾ | 143,749.9 | 1.2 | 1067 | -- | -1.5 | -- |
| Alabama | 1,932.6 | 0.7 | 901 | 35 | -1.3 | 21 |
| Alaska | 310.0 | -1.9 | 1038 | 17 | -5.2 | 51 |
| Arizona | 2,760.1 | 2.1 | 945 | 25 | -2.2 | 34 |
| Arkansas | 1,205.4 | 0.4 | 827 | 47 | -1.4 | 22 |
| California | 16,923.3 | 1.9 | 1271 | 5 | -0.3 | 4 |
| Colorado | 2,588.6 | 2.0 | 1086 | 12 | -1.5 | 24 |
| Connecticut | 1,685.5 | 0.0 | 1289 | 4 | -3.4 | 46 |
| Delaware | 441.2 | -0.1 | 1055 | 15 | -2.9 | 44 |
| District of Columbia | 760.9 | 0.5 | 1763 | 1 | 0.6 | 2 |
| Florida | 8,538.9 | 2.7 | 942 | 27 | -1.8 | 28 |
| Georgia | 4,349.3 | 2.4 | 993 | 20 | -0.9 | 14 |
| Hawaii | 658.3 | 0.7 | 954 | 24 | -0.3 | 4 |
| Idaho | 691.6 | 3.2 | 800 | 50 | -0.4 | 8 |
| Illinois | 5,947.6 | 0.4 | 1122 | 9 | -2 | 31 |
| Indiana | 3,021.7 | 0.9 | 883 | 38 | -0.9 | 14 |
| Iowa | 1,542.0 | 0.1 | 911 | 33 | -1 | 16 |
| Kansas | 1,384.5 | 0.1 | 877 | 39 | -2.2 | 34 |
| Kentucky | 1,894.2 | 0.6 | 874 | 41 | -1.4 | 22 |
| Louisiana | 1,907.4 | -1.6 | 914 | 32 | -2.9 | 44 |
| Maine | 602.6 | 0.8 | 855 | 43 | -2.1 | 33 |
| Maryland | 2,666.7 | 1.0 | 1169 | 7 | -0.4 | 8 |
| Massachusetts | 3,530.4 | 1.3 | 1352 | 2 | -2.4 | 39 |
| Michigan | 4,283.0 | 1.5 | 1026 | 19 | -1.6 | 25 |
| Minnesota | 2,839.7 | 1.2 | 1062 | 14 | -1.1 | 18 |
| Mississippi | 1,134.0 | 0.0 | 756 | 51 | -1.8 | 28 |
| Missouri | 2,783.2 | 0.9 | 918 | 31 | -1.7 | 27 |
| Montana | 456.5 | 0.7 | 822 | 48 | 0.5 | 3 |
| Nebraska | 972.4 | 0.0 | 876 | 40 | -0.5 | 10 |
| Nevada | 1,307.8 | 2.7 | 924 | 29 | -1.2 | 20 |
| New Hampshire | 656.9 | 1.3 | 1092 | 10 | -4.1 | 48 |
| New Jersey | 4,042.1 | 1.4 | 1239 | 6 | -1.9 | 30 |
| New Mexico | 811.4 | 0.0 | 844 | 45 | -2.5 | 41 |
| New York | 9,332.5 | 1.2 | 1342 | 3 | -2.3 | 36 |
| North Carolina | 4,326.3 | 1.8 | 932 | 28 | -0.7 | 13 |
| North Dakota | 414.4 | -3.2 | 978 | 21 | -4.2 | 49 |
| Ohio | 5,365.6 | 0.7 | 943 | 26 | -2.3 | 36 |
| Oklahoma | 1,587.7 | -1.2 | 864 | 42 | -3.5 | 47 |
| Oregon | 1,860.7 | 2.4 | 970 | 22 | -1 | 16 |
| Pennsylvania | 5,799.8 | 0.7 | 1039 | 16 | -2.3 | 36 |
| Rhode Island | 478.3 | 0.0 | 1027 | 18 | -1.6 | 25 |
| South Carolina | 2,024.3 | 1.8 | 855 | 43 | -0.6 | 12 |
| South Dakota | 419.9 | 0.5 | 828 | 46 | -0.5 | 10 |
| Tennessee | 2,947.5 | 1.8 | 970 | 22 | -1.1 | 18 |
| Texas | 11,974.7 | 1.2 | 1072 | 13 | -2.5 | 41 |
| Utah | 1,415.1 | 2.9 | 910 | 34 | -0.3 | 4 |
| Vermont | 312.6 | 0.1 | 897 | 36 | -2.4 | 39 |
| Virginia | 3,831.6 | 0.6 | 1091 | 11 | -0.3 | 4 |
| Washington | 3,227.9 | 2.8 | 1150 | 8 | 1.7 | 1 |
| West Virginia | 693.1 | -1.6 | 809 | 49 | -2.5 | 41 |
| Wisconsin | 2,842.4 | 0.5 | 924 | 29 | -2 | 31 |
| Wyoming | 265.8 | -3.9 | 894 | 37 | -4.7 | 50 |
| Puerto Rico | 928.2 | -0.3 | 555 | (3) | -1.9 | (3) |
| Virgin Islands | 38.5 | 0.2 | 769 | (3) | -1.8 | (3) |

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Footnotes:

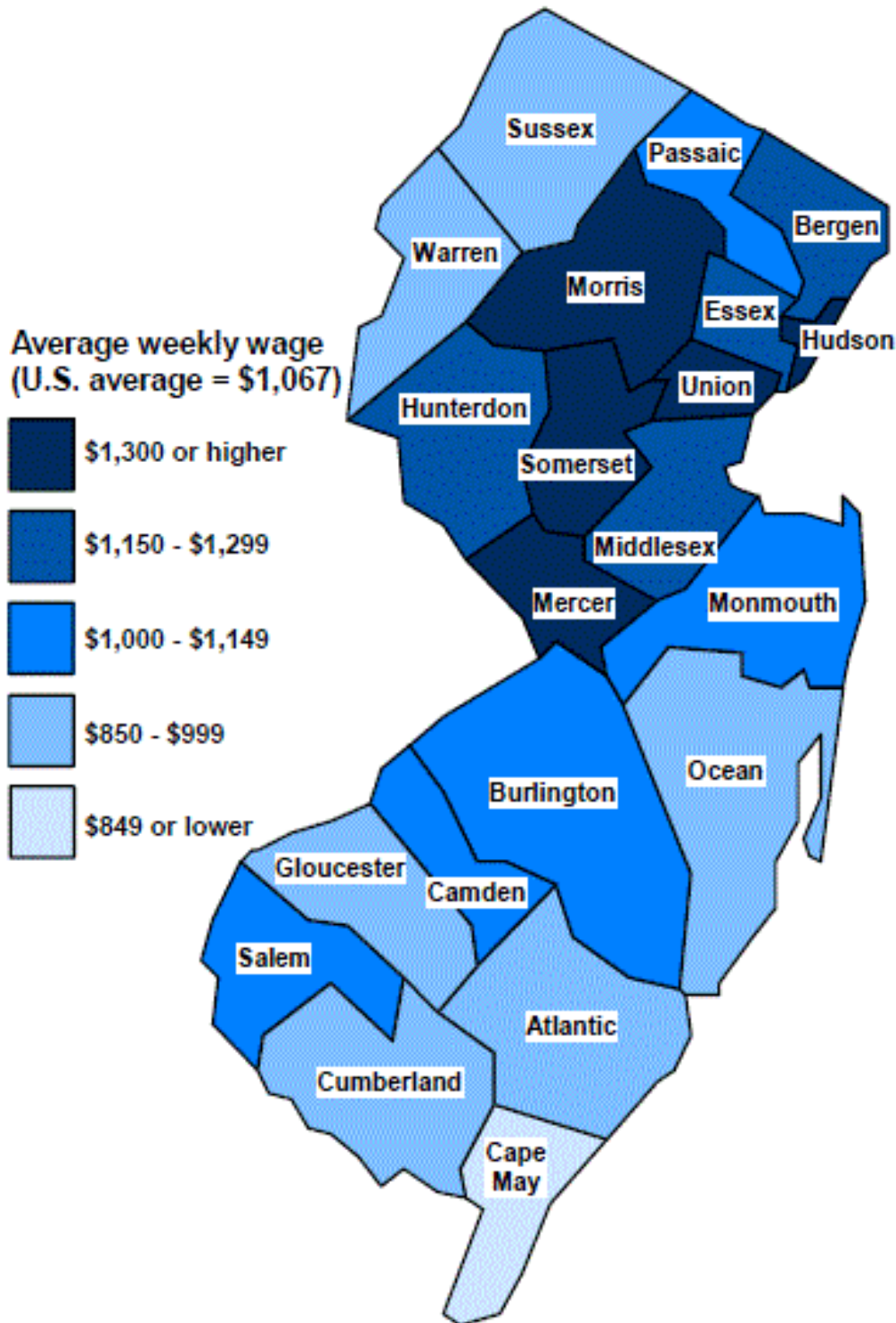
(1) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

(2) Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

(3) Data not included in the national ranking.

Note: Data are preliminary. Covered employment and wages includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs.

Chart 3. Average weekly wages by county in New Jersey, fourth quarter 2016



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.