OREGON HOUSE REPUBLICAN OFFICE

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Key takeaways from state report on "Employment Landscape of Rural Oregon"

Salem, Ore. - A special report issued this month by the Oregon Employment Department highlights rural Oregon's continued battle to recover from the depths of the Great Recession. Below are excerpts of some of the report's key findings:

- After seven years of uneven economic recovery, 17 out of Oregon's 23 rural counties remain below peak employment.
- Rural areas of Oregon have higher unemployment rates and less diverse economies than metro areas. This leaves them more vulnerable to economic shocks and recessions.
- The Great Recession was worse in many rural Oregon counties than in metro Oregon. Nationally, the recession lasted from late 2007 until June 2009, but recovery continues today in many rural counties.
- In order to fully recover from the recession, rural counties would need to add about 7,800 additional jobs, which would take another two years at the current pace of job growth.
- The jobs that have returned in nonmetro counties have been largely low wage, while jobs in high-wage industries remain below pre-recession levels in rural areas.
- Most rural counties face a two-part demographic challenge. A larger share of the rural workforce is at least 55 years old, while the rural population below age 18 shows long-term decline.
- Limited infrastructure reduces options for rural businesses transporting goods to metro markets and increases the difficulty of recruiting new businesses to rural areas.

Read the report in its entirety here.

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