



NOT-SO-SUPER TUESDAY FOR STATE LABOR MARKETS

Voters have cause for concern in “Super Tuesday” states

BY LIANA FOX AND MICHAEL ETTLINGER

“Super Tuesday” on February 5th will mark an important convergence of two important phenomena. It will, of course, be the biggest step yet in selecting the next President, but it will also be the first coast-to-coast election since the nation’s economic troubles became front page news.

One sign of economic trouble is a rising unemployment rate. When the labor market weakens it hurts not just those who are out of work, but also suppresses pay levels for working people from the lowest-paid through middle-income families. Pay raises are fewer and farther between when unemployment is high.

Of the 24 “Super Tuesday” states, 20 have seen their unemployment rates rise over the last six months—with Arizona, Montana, and Tennessee seeing the biggest increases. Over this period, Massachusetts has fared best, with its unemployment rate falling from 4.9% to 4.5%. But, in the face of a troubled national economy, it is unlikely that any state will be able to buck the trend for long. This will, no doubt, be on the minds of voters as they cast their votes next Tuesday. For more economic statistics on the “Super Tuesday” states, see the **Tables** and **Figure**.

FIGURE A

Super Tuesday States
Change in state unemployment rates, June 2007 - Dec. 2007

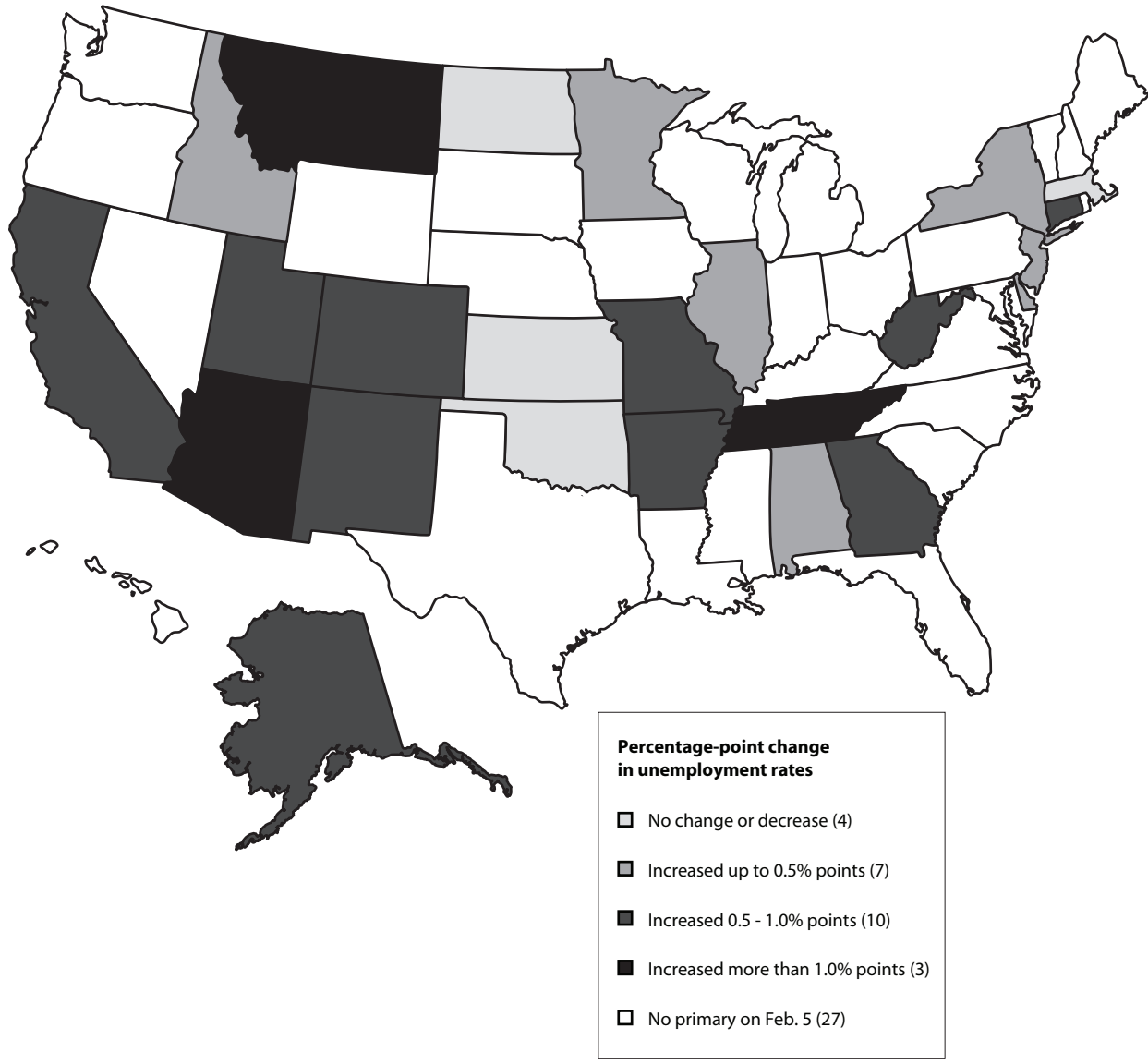


TABLE 1

Unemployment and jobs in "Super Tuesday" states

	Unemployment rate (seasonally adjusted)			Total nonfarm jobs, in thousands (seasonally adjusted)		
	June 2007	Dec. 2007	Percentage-point change	June 2007	Dec. 2007	Percent change
United States	4.5%	5.0 %	0.5%	137,973	138,495	0.4%
<i>Alabama</i>	3.5	4.0	0.5	2,013	2,022	0.4
<i>Alaska</i>	5.9	6.5	0.6	320	317	-0.9
<i>Arizona</i>	3.4	4.7	1.3	2,719	2,720	0.0
<i>Arkansas</i>	5.0	5.9	0.9	1,208	1,208	0.0
<i>California</i>	5.2	6.1	0.9	15,267	15,291	0.2
<i>Colorado</i>	3.5	4.5	1.0	2,322	2,346	1.0
<i>Connecticut</i>	4.3	5.0	0.7	1,700	1,703	0.2
<i>Delaware</i>	3.3	3.8	0.5	440	441	0.4
<i>Georgia</i>	4.3	4.8	0.5	4,158	4,171	0.3
<i>Idaho</i>	2.5	3.0	0.5	655	659	0.7
<i>Illinois</i>	5.1	5.5	0.4	5,999	5,991	-0.1
<i>Kansas</i>	4.6	4.4	-0.2	1,386	1,384	-0.2
<i>Massachusetts</i>	4.9	4.5	-0.4	3,281	3,282	0.0
<i>Minnesota</i>	4.5	4.9	0.4	2,791	2,768	-0.8
<i>Missouri</i>	4.8	5.5	0.7	2,797	2,797	0.0
<i>Montana</i>	2.4	3.6	1.2	449	450	0.0
<i>New Jersey</i>	4.3	4.5	0.2	4,096	4,115	0.5
<i>New Mexico</i>	3.2	3.7	0.5	846	848	0.2
<i>New York</i>	4.7	4.9	0.2	8,695	8,723	0.3
<i>North Dakota</i>	3.3	3.3	0.0	361	361	0.1
<i>Oklahoma</i>	4.5	4.5	0.0	1,573	1,586	0.8
<i>Tennessee</i>	4.1	5.3	1.2	2,803	2,817	0.5
<i>Utah</i>	2.6	3.2	0.6	1,263	1,272	0.7
<i>West Virginia</i>	4.3	4.9	0.6	758	763	0.6

SOURCE: EPI analysis of BLS data.

TABLE 2

Median hourly wages and household income for “Super Tuesday” states

	Median hourly wages (in 2006\$)			Median household income (in 2006\$)		
	2005	2006	Percent change	2005	2006	Percent change
United States	\$14.75	\$14.81	0.4%	47,758	48,451	1.5%
<i>Alabama</i>	\$14.05	\$13.44	-4.3	38,088	38,783	1.8
<i>Alaska</i>	\$17.06	\$17.00	-0.4	58,078	59,393	2.3
<i>Arizona</i>	\$14.55	\$14.44	-0.8	45,734	47,265	3.3
<i>Arkansas</i>	\$12.03	\$12.96	7.7	36,147	36,599	1.3
<i>California</i>	\$15.58	\$15.59	0.1	55,387	56,645	2.3
<i>Colorado</i>	\$16.25	\$15.72	-3.3	52,313	52,015	-0.6
<i>Connecticut</i>	\$17.82	\$17.75	-0.4	62,939	63,422	0.8
<i>Delaware</i>	\$16.05	\$15.40	-4.0	54,220	52,833	-2.6
<i>Georgia</i>	\$14.62	\$14.45	-1.2	47,099	46,832	-0.6
<i>Idaho</i>	\$13.02	\$13.20	1.4	42,802	42,865	0.1
<i>Illinois</i>	\$15.37	\$15.14	-1.5	51,908	52,006	0.2
<i>Kansas</i>	\$13.95	\$13.61	-2.4	44,327	45,478	2.6
<i>Massachusetts</i>	\$16.89	\$17.24	2.1	59,059	59,963	1.5
<i>Minnesota</i>	\$16.31	\$15.91	-2.5	53,730	54,023	0.5
<i>Missouri</i>	\$14.28	\$14.05	-1.6	43,350	42,841	-1.2
<i>Montana</i>	\$12.32	\$12.44	1.0	40,590	40,627	0.1
<i>New Jersey</i>	\$17.65	\$17.99	1.9	63,694	64,470	1.2
<i>New Mexico</i>	\$13.59	\$13.32	-2.0	38,721	40,629	4.9
<i>New York</i>	\$15.51	\$15.78	1.7	51,102	51,384	0.6
<i>North Dakota</i>	\$12.98	\$12.78	-1.5	42,375	41,919	-1.1
<i>Oklahoma</i>	\$12.66	\$13.13	3.7	38,278	38,770	1.3
<i>Tennessee</i>	\$13.02	\$12.94	-0.6	40,149	40,315	0.4
<i>Utah</i>	\$13.25	\$13.27	0.2	49,506	51,309	3.6
<i>West Virginia</i>	\$12.93	\$13.59	5.1	34,549	35,059	1.5

SOURCE: Median hourly wages, EPI analysis of Current Population Survey ORG data.
Median household income, American Community Survey, 2005-06.

TABLE 3

Health insurance coverage in “Super Tuesday” states

	Private-sector, employer-provided health insurance coverage (three-year moving averages)			Percent of total population uninsured		
	2003-05	2004-06	Percentage-point change	2005	2006	Percentage-point change
United States	55.7%	55.3%	-0.5	15.3%	15.8%	0.5
<i>Alabama</i>	56.0	55.4	-0.6	14.5	15.2	0.7
<i>Alaska</i>	51.9	52.2	0.3	17.2	16.5	-0.7
<i>Arizona</i>	52.5	51.8	-0.6	19.6	20.9	1.3
<i>Arkansas</i>	50.1	49.4	-0.8	17.5	18.9	1.4
<i>California</i>	52.9	52.5	-0.4	18.8	18.8	0.0
<i>Colorado</i>	55.5	55.6	0.1	16.6	17.2	0.6
<i>Connecticut</i>	60.3	59.9	-0.3	10.9	9.4	-1.5
<i>Delaware</i>	60.1	59.3	-0.8	12.2	12.1	-0.1
<i>Georgia</i>	55.2	53.4	-1.8	18.3	17.7	-0.6
<i>Idaho</i>	54.1	54.3	0.2	14.8	15.4	0.6
<i>Illinois</i>	59.6	59.2	-0.4	13.7	14.0	0.3
<i>Kansas</i>	60.2	58.3	-1.9	10.3	12.3	2.0
<i>Massachusetts</i>	57.2	55.6	-1.6	9.2	10.4	1.2
<i>Minnesota</i>	61.9	59.8	-2.1	7.9	9.2	1.3
<i>Missouri</i>	59.5	58.8	-0.7	11.7	13.3	1.6
<i>Montana</i>	48.3	48.1	-0.2	15.6	17.1	1.5
<i>New Jersey</i>	56.6	55.3	-1.3	14.5	15.5	1.0
<i>New Mexico</i>	42.9	43.0	0.1	20.3	22.9	2.6
<i>New York</i>	54.2	54.1	-0.1	13.0	14.0	1.0
<i>North Dakota</i>	54.2	53.3	-0.9	11.0	12.2	1.2
<i>Oklahoma</i>	51.7	52.7	1.0	17.9	18.9	1.0
<i>Tennessee</i>	56.3	55.1	-1.2	13.6	13.7	0.1
<i>Utah</i>	50.6	48.7	-1.9	16.4	17.4	1.0
<i>West Virginia</i>	51.5	52.7	1.3	16.9	13.5	-3.4

SOURCE: EPI analysis of Current Population Survey Annual Social and economic Supplements.

TABLE 4

Pension coverage in “Super Tuesday” states

**Private-sector, employer-provided
pension coverage
(three-year moving averages)**

	<i>2003-05</i>	<i>2004-06</i>	<i>Percentage-point change</i>
United States	45.1%	44.1%	-1.0
<i>Alabama</i>	47.7	47.4	-0.3
<i>Alaska</i>	43.1	45.5	2.5
<i>Arizona</i>	38.9	37.7	-1.2
<i>Arkansas</i>	41.1	40.1	-1.0
<i>California</i>	38.8	37.7	-1.1
<i>Colorado</i>	41.9	41.1	-0.8
<i>Connecticut</i>	54.2	51.2	-3.0
<i>Delaware</i>	50.9	50.0	-0.8
<i>Georgia</i>	42.7	40.6	-2.1
<i>Idaho</i>	43.4	42.9	-0.4
<i>Illinois</i>	49.8	48.6	-1.2
<i>Kansas</i>	51.1	48.9	-2.2
<i>Massachusetts</i>	50.4	49.9	-0.6
<i>Minnesota</i>	55.8	54.8	-1.1
<i>Missouri</i>	50.0	49.4	-0.6
<i>Montana</i>	40.1	38.8	-1.2
<i>New Jersey</i>	48.4	45.9	-2.5
<i>New Mexico</i>	36.5	35.6	-0.9
<i>New York</i>	44.2	43.2	-1.0
<i>North Dakota</i>	52.6	51.0	-1.6
<i>Oklahoma</i>	42.1	41.8	-0.3
<i>Tennessee</i>	45.6	43.5	-2.2
<i>Utah</i>	40.1	39.5	-0.6
<i>West Virginia</i>	46.3	47.2	0.9

SOURCE: EPI analysis of Current Population Survey March supplement.

TABLE 5

Poverty rate in "Super Tuesday" states

	2005	2006	Percentage-point change
United States	12.6%	12.3%	-0.3
<i>Alabama</i>	16.7	14.3	-2.3
<i>Alaska</i>	10.0	8.9	-1.1
<i>Arizona</i>	15.2	14.4	-0.8
<i>Arkansas</i>	13.8	17.7	3.9
<i>California</i>	13.2	12.2	-0.9
<i>Colorado</i>	11.4	9.7	-1.7
<i>Connecticut</i>	9.3	8.0	-1.4
<i>Delaware</i>	9.2	9.3	0.1
<i>Georgia</i>	14.4	12.6	-1.8
<i>Idaho</i>	9.9	9.5	-0.3
<i>Illinois</i>	11.5	10.6	-0.9
<i>Kansas</i>	12.5	12.8	0.3
<i>Massachusetts</i>	10.1	12.0	1.8
<i>Minnesota</i>	8.1	8.2	0.1
<i>Missouri</i>	11.6	11.4	-0.2
<i>Montana</i>	13.8	13.5	-0.4
<i>New Jersey</i>	6.8	8.8	2.0
<i>New Mexico</i>	17.9	16.9	-1.0
<i>New York</i>	14.5	14.0	-0.5
<i>North Dakota</i>	11.2	11.4	0.2
<i>Oklahoma</i>	15.6	15.2	-0.4
<i>Tennessee</i>	14.9	14.9	0.0
<i>Utah</i>	9.2	9.3	0.1
<i>West Virginia</i>	15.4	15.3	-0.1

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 2006 to 2007 Annual Social and Economic Supplements.