

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE TUESDAY, OCT. 23, 2007

CONTACT: Mike Owen, 319-338-0773, [ipp@lcom.net](mailto:ipp@lcom.net)

## Iowa Payroll Jobs See One-Month Jump Jobless Rate Holds at 3.9 Percent in September

MOUNT VERNON, Iowa (Oct. 23, 2007) – A 4,100-job spike in September payrolls boosted Iowa’s economic performance heading into the final quarter of 2007 as the unemployment rate held at 3.9 percent for the third straight month.

“Four thousand jobs in one month is a good number. If we could string a few months like that together it would be a good sign for the economy, but it is only one month,” said David Osterberg, executive director of the nonpartisan Iowa Policy Project, which tracks Iowa employment trends.

Payroll jobs grew by 4,100 in September to 1,526,500, led by a 1,500 increase in government employment. It was the third month of the year with growth over 4,000 — but Osterberg noted smaller increases and even declines in other months have kept the overall pace slow.

“It’s more important to look at longer-term trends than one-month numbers alone,” he said.

Coming on the heels of a no-growth month in August, the September numbers leave Iowa’s payroll growth perking along at about 2,000 jobs per month through the first nine months of 2007. While that is well below the average in high-growth years in the 1990s, it leaves the state ahead of its monthly pace for the last nine years.

The unemployment rate climbed to 3.9 percent in July but has held at that level. The rate was 3.6 percent in September 2006.

The nonfarm job number in September was 21,900 above the level of a year earlier.

Besides the increase in government jobs, other notable increases were 900 in leisure and hospitality, 800 in construction, and 700 each in education and health services, and financial activities. The biggest decline was 600 in manufacturing.

The Iowa Policy Project (IPP) is a nonpartisan, nonprofit research and policy analysis organization based in Mount Vernon. IPP reports on job and income trends are available on the web at <http://www.iowapolicyproject.org>.

### *Comparing the pace:*

- Over the last 12 months, nonfarm jobs have risen at an average of about 1,800 per month.
  - Over the first nine months of 2007, nonfarm jobs have grown at a pace of about 2,000 per month.
  - Over the last six months, nonfarm jobs have grown at a pace of about 1,200 per month — the pace for all of 2006.
- For perspective, Iowa nonfarm jobs in the mid-1990s gained by averages from 2,500 to 3,700 jobs in five of six years (1993-95 and 1997-98).