

Kansas Spotlight

Kansas ranked fifth best Pro-Business State in the nation

Kansas is the fifth best Pro-Business State in the nation, according to an annual study by Pollina Corporate Real Estate and the American Economic Development Institute. For the fifth year in a row, Kansas has had an overall grade of "A". Its areas of major accomplishment are:

- **Right-to-work legislation**
- **Unemployment insurance**
- **Regulatory environment**
- **Transportation infrastructure**

"This study, and our high ranking, proves that Kansas is a great place to live, work and do business," said Antonio Soave, Acting Commerce Secretary.

Sizewise Worldwide moves global headquarters to Kansas

Sizewise Worldwide has moved its headquarters to Lenexa. The global medical equipment manufacturer has more than 20 years of experience engineering innovative products to meet the needs of bariatric, geriatric, pediatric and standard patient populations, worldwide. The company has 238 Kansas employees and now has two Kansas locations, with one of its largest manufacturing facilities based in Hays.

Businesses Thrive in Kansas



Kansas has traditionally maintained a positive and productive business environment. This was reflected in a recent study done by Pollina Corporate Real Estate, which named Kansas as the fifth best Pro-Business State in the nation. Kansas has ranked in the top 10 for the last decade, evidence that businesses of all sizes continue to thrive in Kansas.

During December's meeting of the Governor's Council of Economic Advisors, Gov. Sam Brownback and business leaders from around Kansas reviewed a report on the Kansas economy that highlighted several key growth areas.

Gross State Product (GSP) captures state economic growth, providing an overview of the performance of the economy. GSP is the value added in production by the labor and property located in the state. Kansas' GSP increased \$4.62 billion, or 3.2 percent, from 2013 to 2014. Annual estimates show, since 2004, Kansas' GSP has remained either higher than or on track with the six-state region. Since 2006, the Kansas GSP growth has been higher than the nation's GSP. In addition, total private establishments in Kansas have increased from 79,516 in 2014 to 81,382 in 2015, or 2.3 percent over the year.

Personal income in Kansas has increased to \$132 billion based on the 2015 Q1-Q2 average. This number is up from last year's personal income of \$130 billion. Kansas' per capita personal income surpassed the region with a per capita personal income of \$45,553, while the six-state region had a per capita personal income of \$44,589. Kansas also outpaced the region by percentage with a 1.5 percent increase versus the region's percentage increase of 1.2 percent.

These positive economic factors portray a stable and profitable business climate in Kansas. Businesses of all sizes and industries call Kansas home and continue to flourish and profit from their prominent and successful location in the Sunflower State.

Kansas Spotlight

Nominations open for 2016 Governor's Exporter of the Year Award

Commerce is accepting nominations for the 2016 Governor's Exporter of the Year Award, which is presented to a single Kansas business for excellence in international trade and marketing. The winner of the 28th annual installment of the award will be announced in June 2016 during Business Appreciation Month. Businesses can nominate themselves or be nominated by other organizations or individuals.

Visit **KansasCommerce.com/Exporter** to learn more about the Governor's Exporter of the Year Award and to download nomination forms.

Kansas Creative Arts Industries Commission issues grant deadlines

The Kansas Creative Arts Industries Commission (CAIC) is currently accepting applications for its two main grant programs. The application deadline is Dec. 30, 2015, with the grant period being from Jan. 31-June 30, 2016. The application deadline is Dec. 30, 2015. To review the application process, as well as program and category specific policies and guidelines

visit **KansasCommerce.com/CAIC**. Applications can be submitted at **Kansascaic.submittable.com**.

Why Invest in Kansas?

From the Commerce Secretary, Antonio Soave



I am very excited to have accepted the position of Secretary of Commerce for Kansas. I am formerly the President and CEO of Capistrano Global Advisory Services, and I am intrigued and overjoyed at the opportunity I will now have to bring my experience and knowledge to the State of Kansas. I look forward to the challenge that Gov. Sam

Brownback has presented to me, and I hope to be able to show current and prospective Kansas business owners why I and many businesses have settled in the Sunflower State.

Some may ask, "Why Kansas?" First of all, it is a great place to raise a family, the people are very friendly, and it's reasonably priced, but that's not all there is to the story. Many people outside of Kansas do not realize that the state is home to some of the largest and most successful corporations in the nation and even worldwide. Some of these businesses are: Spirit AeroSystems (aerospace manufacturing in Wichita), Textron Aviation (aviation in Wichita), Mars Chocolate (food processing in Topeka), Garmin (GPS systems in Olathe), AMC Theatres (Entertainment in Leawood), Hallmark (greeting cards in Lawrence), Dairy Farmers of America (food processing in Garden City), Hostess Brands (food processing in Emporia) and Cerner (healthcare in Kansas City). As we at the Department of Commerce know, and as many Kansas business owners know, the list goes on. Even this substantial list is not all there is to Kansas; it is also a substantial investment. Kansas has a friendly business climate, a top-ranked talent pool, great universities, and wonderful infrastructure.

Kansas has a unique business outlook, as it boasts a wide-range of industries. Kansas is well-known for its sprawling agricultural fields and cattle, as well as for its oil reserves, an aviation sector and a bio-science industry. But it is also a conservative state that prides itself on fiscal responsibility. Kansas was recently named the fifth best Pro-Business State in the nation, according to Pollina Inc. Businesses that choose Kansas can also look forward to the future of technology as Kansas is fast-becoming a high-tech hub. With a population of just over 2.9 million, Kansas packs a heavy economic punch with a proactive legislative and regulatory environment and major advantages in costs, taxes, skilled workforce and major transportation assets. All of this has combined to make the Sunflower State a haven for investment and innovation. All in all, Kansas is open for business. Visit us and find out for yourselves.

Commerce Resource Spotlight

Research Brief

A research brief is a document provided by the Department of Commerce to a business that is considering a move to Kansas. The brief consists of information about Kansas and provides details on useful business tools, from infrastructure to incentive programs that are also available through the Department of Commerce. A research brief is catered to a business' specific needs and information. The contents of a basic research brief are as follows:

- **Market Overview**
- **Costs**
- **Infrastructure**
- **Workforce**
- **Educational and Research Participation Opportunities**
- **Potential Greenfield Sites**
- **Incentive Programs**
- **SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats)**

If you're considering a move to the Sunflower State, a research brief and many other resources and programs may be at your disposal.

To learn more about these opportunities contact the Department of Commerce at (785)296-3481 or go to KansasCommerce.com.

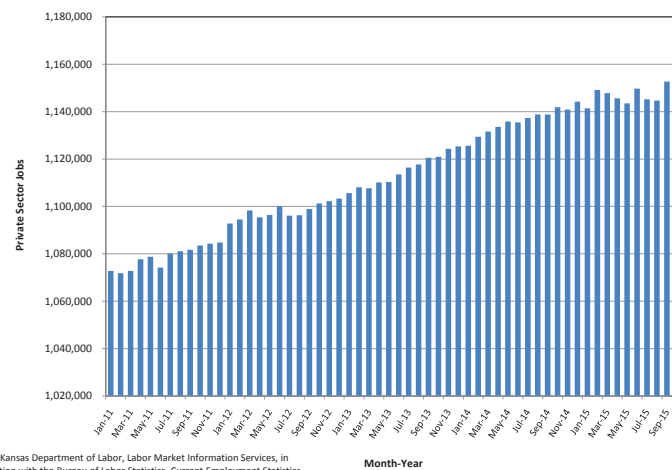
Labor Report

October 2015

The state's October seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 4.1 percent, down from 4.4 percent in September and decreased from 4.2 percent in October 2014.

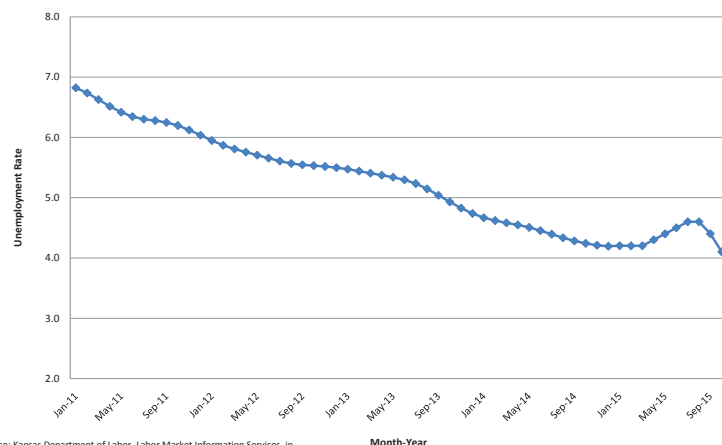
Seasonally adjusted figures show Kansas gained 13,500 private sector jobs since last year, or 1.2 percent. Kansas nonfarm jobs increased by 10,900, or 0.8 percent, since October 2014. Since last month, Kansas gained 2,700 seasonally adjusted private sector jobs, or 0.2 percent. The state gained 2,500 seasonally adjusted total nonfarm jobs since September 2015, or 0.2 percent.

Private Sector Jobs (Seasonally Adjusted)
Kansas
January 2011 to October 2015



The not seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in October was 3.7 percent, down from 3.8 percent in September and down from 3.9 percent one year ago.

Unemployment Rate (Seasonally Adjusted)
Kansas
January 2011 to October 2015



"The state's unemployment rate continues to improve, falling to 4.1 percent in October," said Kansas Labor Secretary, Lana Gordon. "This is the lowest rate Kansas has recorded in more than 14 years."

Kansas Department of Commerce

As the state's lead economic development agency, the Kansas Department of Commerce strives to empower individuals, businesses and communities to achieve prosperity in Kansas.

Under the leadership of Acting Secretary of Commerce Antonio Soave, the Department comprises a variety of programs and services that:

- **Create jobs**
- **Attract new investment**
- **Provide workforce training**
- **Encourage community development**
- **Promote Kansas as a wonderful place to live and work.**

To Find out what the Kansas Department of Commerce can do for you and your business, visit KansasCommerce.com, or for more information contact Nicole Randall at (785) 414-0253 or by email at nrandall@kansascommerce.com.

To connect with us you can also visit our facebook and twitter pages.



New Secretary of Commerce

Appointed by Governor Brownback

Antonio Soave is the former chairman and CEO of Capistrano Global Advisory Services (CGA). In a career spanning more than 20 years, he has helped numerous entrepreneurs and businesses to expand and grow. He previously served as an adjunct professor of international economics and finance at the Walsh College of Business in Troy, Mich., and was an intern in the White House Office of Public Liaison's Department of Foreign Policy and Defense under President Ronald Reagan.

"Antonio's experience working with businesses in a wide range of industries including rail, construction, oil and gas, biotech and manufacturing gives him an excellent understanding of industry needs and how Kansas can help those companies grow and create jobs," said Gov. Sam Brownback. "He brings both enthusiasm for entrepreneurship and solid business experience that will benefit all Kansans."

His wife, Ann, is a native of Ft. Scott. They have four children, Francesco, 6; Maria Bernadette, 3; Gianpaolo, 2; and Anna Maria Faustina, 3 months.

Soave has a Bachelor's degree in international studies from The American University in Washington, D.C., a Juris Doctor from the Detroit College of Law at Michigan State University and a Masters of Law in International Law from the University of San Diego.



Antonio J. Soave- Acting Secretary of Commerce & Jim Lee- President of Lee Aerospace



Appointed by Gov. Sam Brownback, Antonio J. Soave of Overland Park is the Acting Secretary of Commerce.

Soave will join Commerce in December. He replaces Pat George who retired at the end of July. This appointment will require confirmation by the Kansas Senate.