



Patricia Silverstein Testimony, SB17-055, February 6, 2017

Colorado’s unique modified right-to-work status has supported one of the nation’s most robust economies. Our state has consistently ranked in the Top 10 of job creation, business climate, entrepreneurship, and innovation.

Colorado ranked fifth out of the 50 states for employment growth in 2015, with the addition of 76,700 new jobs or a 3.2% employment growth rate.

Looking back to economic activity since the Great Recession, Colorado employment has increased an average of 1.1% per year from 2008 to 2015 compared with a 0.4% annual increase in employment in unionized states.

Further, average weekly wage growth in Colorado has increased 2.2% per year from 2008 to 2015, which is equal to that of the unionized states.

As Colorado wage growth has kept pace with the unionized states and employment growth has been stronger, the data suggests that a change in the state’s right to work status would not have a positive influence on our economic activity.

Employment Growth

2001-2007: Colorado's average annual employment growth rate of 0.7% per year was nearly twice that of unionized states (0.4%).

2008-2015: Colorado's average annual employment growth rate of 1.1% per year was nearly three times that of unionized states (0.4%).

2001-2015: Colorado's average annual employment growth rate of 0.9% per year was nearly three times that of unionized states (0.3%).

Average Weekly Wage Growth

2001-2007: Colorado's average weekly wage growth rate of 3% per year was 0.4 percentage points lower than that of unionized states (3.4%).

2008-2015: Colorado's average weekly wage growth rate of 2.2% per year was equal to that of unionized states (2.2%).

2001-2015: Colorado's average weekly wage growth rate of 2.6% per year was slightly less than that of unionized states (2.7%).

	<u>Avg Ann Emp Growth</u>			<u>Avg Weekly Wage Growth</u>		
	<u>2001-07</u>	<u>2008-15</u>	<u>2001-15</u>	<u>2001-07</u>	<u>2008-15</u>	<u>2001-15</u>
Colorado	0.7%	1.1%	0.9%	3.0%	2.2%	2.6%
Right to Work	1.3%	0.6%	0.9%	3.7%	2.2%	2.9%
Other States	0.4%	0.4%	0.3%	3.4%	2.2%	2.7%

Sources: Development Research Partners analysis of U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages; National Right to Work Organization.