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## QuickPoint! – Don't Pop the Champagne on Oregon's Job Numbers

By Eric Fruits, Ph.D.

Oregon is at near full employment. That's good news, but don't break out the champagne just yet. Our fizz may soon go flat. Job growth is slowing. And this year, the number of working-age people moving to the state was lower than predicted. In addition, Oregon is the state with the third highest level of people who want to work full-time but are forced to work part-time because they can't find full-time work.

All of this is troubling. And we're running the risk that our policymakers will make things worse.

Over and over, I'm hearing politicians tell us that because we have full employment, we can afford to load businesses with ever-higher taxes. They say we can afford to mandate expensive paid time off policies. They say we can afford a costly cap-and-trade program. They act as if full employment gives them the freedom to ignore the consequences of their policies.

These reckless policies assume the party will never end. But the party will end someday, and we will wake up with a nasty hangover in the next recession when an army of unemployed struggle to find work in a state that spent the boom years snuffing out employers.

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