

# Robeson County: Current Economic Picture

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## Unemployment Rate

At the time of writing this document, April 2006, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reported that:

- The overall unemployment rate for the US was 4.7% in March 2006. Figure 1 shows quarter-to-quarter growth in real GDP. Although our GDP grew, the growth rate was rate modest. Figure 2 shows that changes in the US real disposable personal income and spending were also modest.
- The unemployment rate in North Carolina in March 2006 was 4.5 %. We observed a decline of about 0.6% from a year ago this month. Figure 3 shows percentage change in per capita personal income. As we can see that in North Carolina fell in the second quartile with respect to the increase in per capita personal income over the 2004-2005 period.
- The unemployment rate in Robeson County has declined from 7.5% in January 2005 to 7.1 % in October 2005, the latest data available at the date of writing this document.

## Forecasts for Robeson County

Our estimates indicate that over the first quarter of 2006:

- The average unemployment rate will be around 6.02%.
- The average employment level will be around 49320 thousands.
- The average labor force will be around 52463 thousands.

These data indicate that the unemployment rate, level of employment, labor force level is improving. However, we still have one of the highest rates of unemployment in the US.

Figure 1: Real GDP Growth Rate



Figure 2: Real Disposable Income and Consumption Spending

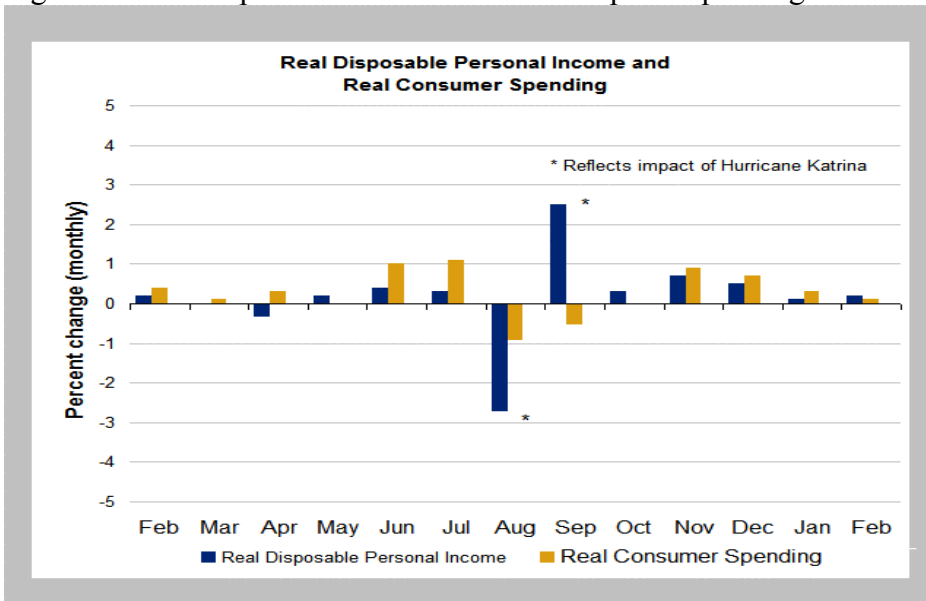
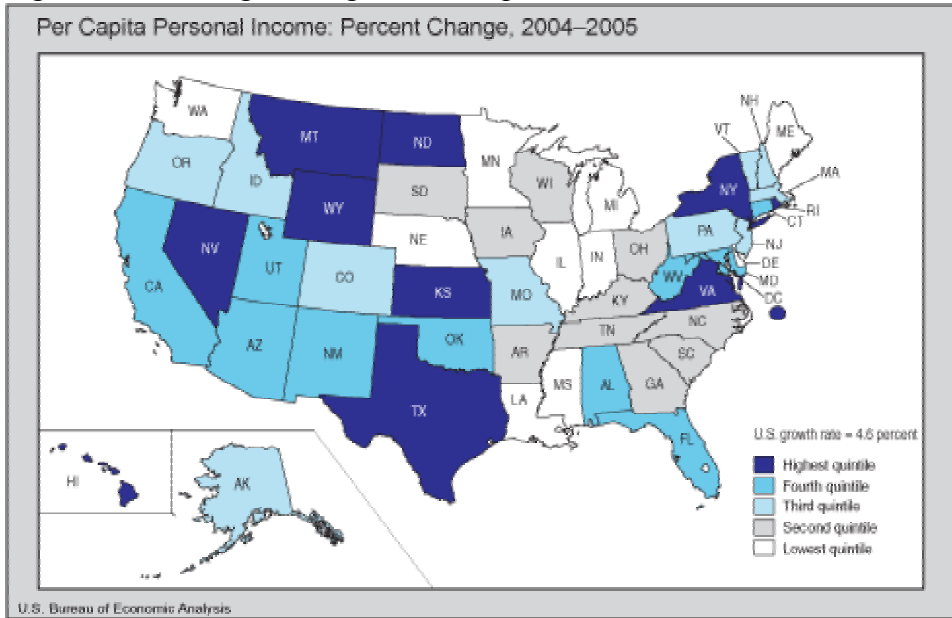


Figure 3: Percentage Change in Per Capita Personal Income



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