Comment on what is currently happening to the supply and demand for labor and its effects on wages, union membership, and other labor force–related topics.

Statistics posted on the United States Department of Labor websites highlights some pretty revealing statistics about the state of the U.S. economy. What can be easily discerned from these statistics is that the economy is in a tailspin, wages are down, and the prospect of finding a solid family wage job has gotten increasingly difficult. Matter of fact, there are fewer family wage jobs available than in recent years past. An overview and detailed analysis of the situation can be retrieved from United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Employment Statistics at <http://www.bls.gov/oes/oes_emp.htm#estimates>. Another frightening statistic is that the biggest gains in employment comes in areas that pay the lowest wages. In support of these viewpoints the following information was retrieved from United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics Reports Occupational Employment and Wages May 2010 <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/ocwage.nr0.htm> .

United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics Reports Occupational Employment and Wages May 2010: Retail salespersons and cashiers were the occupations with the highest employment in 2010. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that these two occupations combined made up nearly 6 percent of total U.S. employment, with employment levels of 4.2 and 3.4 million, respectively.

The 10 largest occupations accounted for more than 20 percent of total employment in May 2010. In addition to retail salespersons and cashiers, the largest occupations included general office clerks; combined food preparation and serving workers, including fast food; registered nurses; and waiters and waitresses.

Most of the largest occupations were relatively low paying. Of the 10 largest occupations, only registered nurses had an average wage above the U.S. all-occupations mean of $21.35 per hour or $44,410 annually. Combined food preparation and serving workers, cashiers, and waiters and waitresses were the three lowest paying of the 10 largest occupations, and also among the lowest-paying occupations overall.

Three of the largest occupations were office and administrative support jobs, helping to make office and administrative support the largest occupational group overall, representing 17 percent of total employment. The next largest groups were sales and related occupations and food preparation and serving related occupations, which made up about 11 and 9 percent of U.S. employment, respectively.

The smallest occupational groups included legal occupations and life, physical, and social science occupations, each representing around 1 percent of total employment. Most employment in these two groups came from occupations with above average wages, such as judges, with an hourly mean wage of $50.67; arbitrators, mediators, and conciliators ($31.95); medical scientists, except epidemiologists ($41.69); and physicists ($53.86).

Ownership

Nearly 91 percent of employment in the 10 largest occupations was in the private sector. Among these occupations, the share of private sector employment ranged from 74 percent of janitors and secretaries to nearly 100 percent of retail salespersons and waiters and waitresses. Eight of the 10 largest occupations in the private sector were the same as those in the economy as a whole; stock clerks and order fillers and general and operations managers rounded out the largest private sector occupations.

Five of the 6 largest occupations in local government were education related: elementary, middle, and secondary school teachers, except special education; teacher assistants; and teachers and instructors, all other. These 5 occupations made up about 30 percent of local

government employment. Other large occupations in local government included police and sheriff’s patrol officers, janitors, and firefighters.

Correctional officers and jailers was the largest occupation in state government, with employment of nearly 257,000. Additional large occupations in state government included registered nurses, graduate teaching assistants, police and sheriff’s patrol officers, postsecondary health specialties teachers, and several office and administrative support occupations.

Four occupations specific to the U.S. Postal Service made up about 21 percent of federal government employment. Aside from these occupations, the largest occupations in the federal government included all other business operations specialists, registered nurses, compliance officers, and management analysts.

Regarding union activity there has been an epidemic of anti union activity in the United States that is also feeding into the demise of the great economy as we knew it. Almost every day you can read about billionaire businessmen backing anti union efforts that destroy family wage jobs and workers rights. They use unprecedented amounts of money and political process to accomplish their goals. A prime example would be the exploits of the Koch Brothers, related information Retrieved from DemocracyNow.org <http://www.democracynow.org/2011/2/24/billionaire_conservative_koch_brothers_fund_wisconsin> The effects of these efforts are showing up in various government statistics as Retrieved from United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Economics News Release, Union Members Summary <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/union2.nr0.htm>

The topic of unions has been the center of heated debate for many of years. As with most things some people feel they are necessary and some believe they are not. These are some statistics that were retrieved at United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Union Members Summary, <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/union2.nr0.htm> that will shed some light on the state of union activity in the United States of America.

In 2010, the union membership rate--the percent of wage and salary workers who were

members of a union--was 11.9 percent, down from 12.3 percent a year earlier, the U.S.

Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. The number of wage and salary workers be-

longing to unions declined by 612,000 to 14.7 million. In 1983, the first year for

which comparable union data are available, the union membership rate was 20.1 per-

cent, and there were 17.7 million union workers. As the American economy declines, I think we will see anti-union activity increase and American workers become more vulnerable.