

## Jobs & Opportunity Index (JOI), March 2017

### Cash Welfare & Job Losses Overwhelm Employment

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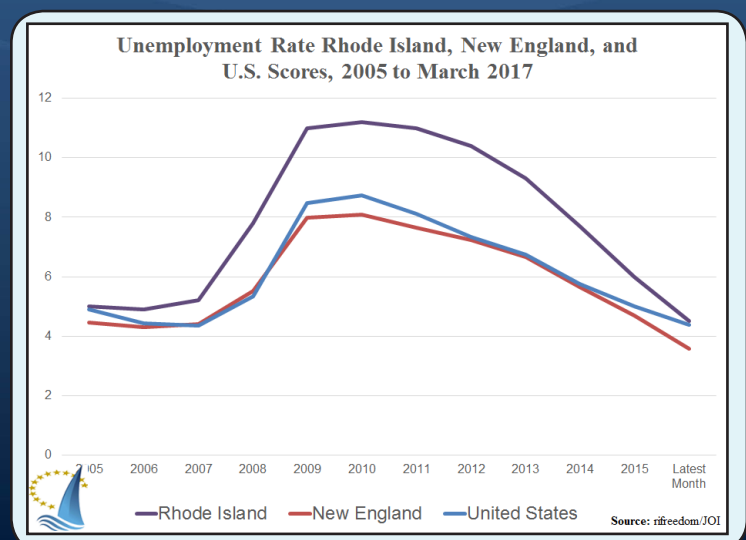
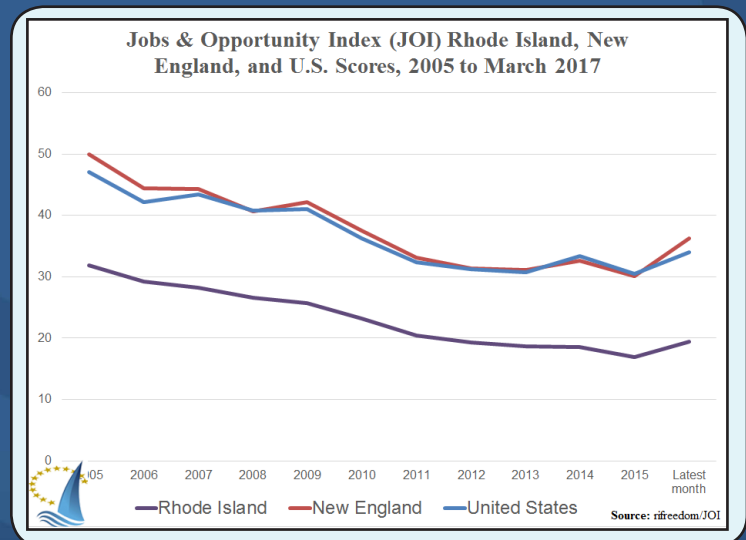
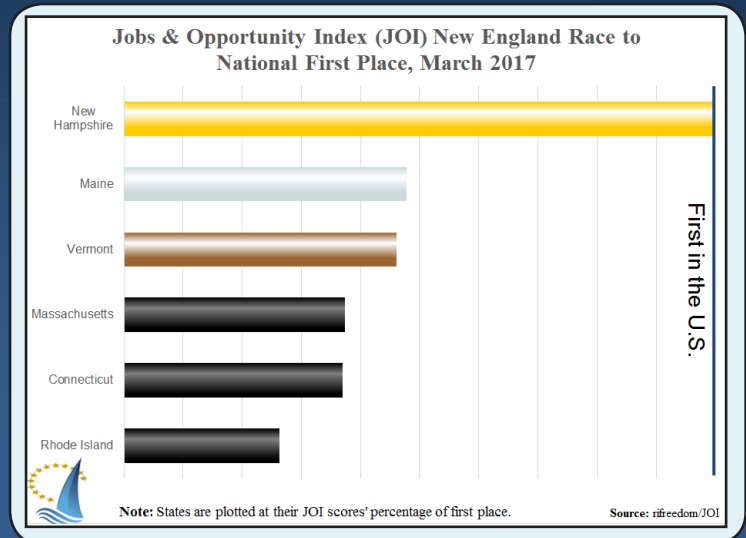
A big jump in Rhode Island recipients of TANF welfare payments led the Ocean State to slip from 41st to 42nd in the Freedom Factor of the RI Center for Freedom & Prosperity's Jobs & Opportunity Index (JOI), although the state's overall rank remained the same.

Seven of the 13 datapoints used for the index have been newly updated. Employment was up a significant 2,871 from the previously recorded number, while labor force rose 1,836. (A surge in these numbers that is later revised away has become an annual pattern.) On the other hand, RI-based jobs decreased by 600. (Note that these are calculated with pre-revision data for the prior month.) Meanwhile, SNAP enrollment decreased by 2,809, but Medicaid enrollment increased 5,478 and TANF (cash assistance) enrollment increased a whopping 3,294 (37.0%) from the previously recorded number from September. This month, new personal income data was also released, showing an increase of \$660 million (1.5%).

The first chart at right shows Rhode Island still in the last position in New England, at 48th in the country. Elsewhere in New England, Maine slipped a rank, to 19th, while Vermont held (once again) at 21st. Connecticut and Massachusetts each moved two spots in opposite directions, thus switching spots. Massachusetts now leads, at 33rd, and Connecticut takes second-to-last in New England, at 35th nationally.

The second chart shows the gap between Rhode Island and New England and the United States on JOI. The Ocean State lost ground against both averages. In keeping with our skepticism of the official unemployment rate, however, Rhode Island made up some ground on the gaps for unemployment rate (third chart). Results for the three underlying JOI factors were:

- **Job Outlook Factor** (measuring optimism that adequate work is available): RI held at 35th.
- **Freedom Factor** (measuring the level of work against reliance on welfare programs): RI fell one spot to 42nd.
- **Prosperity Factor** (measuring the financial motivation of income versus taxes): RI held at 46th.



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	JOI			Job Outlook Factor			Freedom Factor			Prosperity Factor		
	Rank	Trend	Score	Rank	Trend	Score	Rank	Trend	Score	Rank	Trend	Score
New Hampshire	1	👉	73.8	5	👉	6.9	4	👉	8.2	2	👉	9.5
Utah	2	👉	66.3	9	👉	6.5	2	👉	9.6	11	👉	7.8
Wyoming	3	👉	61.4	25	👉	4.9	1	👉	10.0	17	👎	7.5
South Dakota	4	👉	58.2	1	👉	10.0	8	👉	6.8	18	👉	7.3
North Dakota	5	👎	57.8	2	👉	8.4	3	👎	9.5	33	👉	6.3
Virginia	6	👉	50.6	27	👉	4.8	6	👉	7.6	15	👉	7.6
Kansas	7	👉	46.3	15	👉	5.8	7	👉	7.5	26	👉	6.7
Idaho	8	👉	44.5	7	👎	6.7	13	👉	5.5	16	👉	7.5
Iowa	9	👎	43.8	4	👉	7.4	14	👉	5.3	19	👉	7.3
Colorado	10	👉	43.7	14	👉	5.9	16	👉	5.0	7	👉	8.3
Nebraska	11	👉	41.8	3	👉	7.9	5	👉	8.0	44	👉	5.3
Alaska	12	👉	40.4	49	👉	3.7	27	👎	4.2	1	👉	10.0
Montana	13	👉	40.3	18	👉	5.6	22	👉	4.4	4	👉	8.3
South Carolina	14	👉	38.3	32	👉	4.7	31	👎	4.2	3	👉	8.8
Hawaii	15	👉	37.8	17	👉	5.7	26	👉	4.2	9	👉	8.0
Wisconsin	16	👉	37.8	13	👉	6.0	10	👉	5.7	31	👉	6.5
Maryland	17	👉	36.4	16	👉	5.7	18	👎	4.9	20	👉	7.0
Alabama	18	👉	35.7	31	👉	4.7	35	👉	4.1	6	👎	8.3
Maine	19	👎	35.2	23	👉	5.0	25	👉	4.3	13	👎	7.8
Texas	20	👉	34.7	19	👉	5.5	17	👉	4.9	25	👉	6.7
Vermont	21	👉	34.0	6	👉	6.7	24	👎	4.4	29	👉	6.5
Missouri	22	👉	31.8	12	👎	6.0	11	👉	5.6	43	👎	5.5
Nevada	23	👉	31.8	50	👎	3.7	30	👎	4.2	10	👉	7.9
Indiana	24	👎	31.2	10	👉	6.1	20	👎	4.8	36	👉	5.9
Oklahoma	25	👉	31.0	21	👉	5.3	37	👎	4.0	22	👎	6.9
Arizona	26	👉	30.8	40	👉	4.4	40	👉	3.7	14	👉	7.8
Washington	27	👉	29.9	26	👉	4.9	34	👎	4.1	23	👉	6.9
Georgia	28	👉	29.4	41	👉	4.3	21	👉	4.6	28	👉	6.5
North Carolina	29	👎	29.2	29	👎	4.8	23	👉	4.4	32	👉	6.4
Mississippi	30	👎	29.1	43	👉	4.1	45	👉	3.3	8	👉	8.1
Florida	31	👉	28.5	42	👉	4.2	36	👉	4.1	21	👉	6.9
Michigan	32	👉	27.6	36	👉	4.5	33	👎	4.1	30	👎	6.5
Massachusetts	33	👉	27.6	22	👉	5.2	19	👉	4.8	42	👉	5.5
Oregon	34	👉	27.3	34	👎	4.6	41	👉	3.7	24	👎	6.8
Connecticut	35	👎	27.3	45	👉	4.0	15	👉	5.0	38	👎	5.9
New Jersey	36	👉	26.0	37	👉	4.4	12	👉	5.5	45	👉	5.1
Pennsylvania	37	👉	25.9	38	👉	4.4	29	👉	4.2	34	👉	6.1
West Virginia	38	👉	25.1	44	👉	4.1	49	👉	2.7	12	👎	7.8
Tennessee	39	👉	24.7	24	👉	4.9	39	👉	3.8	39	👉	5.9
Minnesota	40	👉	23.7	8	👉	6.5	9	👉	6.5	49	👉	3.7
Illinois	41	👉	23.6	46	👉	3.9	28	👉	4.2	40	👉	5.7
New Mexico	42	👉	23.4	48	👉	3.8	50	👉	2.3	5	👉	8.3
California	43	👉	23.3	47	👉	3.9	44	👉	3.3	27	👉	6.6
Kentucky	44	👉	23.1	28	👉	4.8	43	👉	3.4	37	👉	5.9
Ohio	45	👉	21.2	30	👉	4.7	32	👉	4.1	47	👉	4.9
New York	46	👎	20.9	33	👉	4.6	46	👉	3.3	41	👉	5.6
Louisiana	47	👉	20.3	39	👉	4.4	48	👉	2.9	35	👉	6.0
Rhode Island	48	👉	19.4	35	👉	4.5	42	👎	3.6	46	👉	4.9
Arkansas	49	👉	17.7	11	👉	6.1	47	👉	3.2	48	👉	4.2
Delaware	50	👉	12.2	20	👉	5.4	38	👉	3.8	50	👉	2.8