

Jobs & Opportunity Index (JOI), August 2018

Less for Rhode Island Is More (Unfortunately)

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August brought an apparent improvement in Rhode Island's Jobs & Opportunity Index (JOI) ranking from the RI Center for Freedom & Prosperity, to 46th in the country, largely as a result of decreasing state and local tax revenue. Of the five (of 12) datapoints that were updated for August, four were positive, from JOI's perspective, with a negative for jobs based in the state.

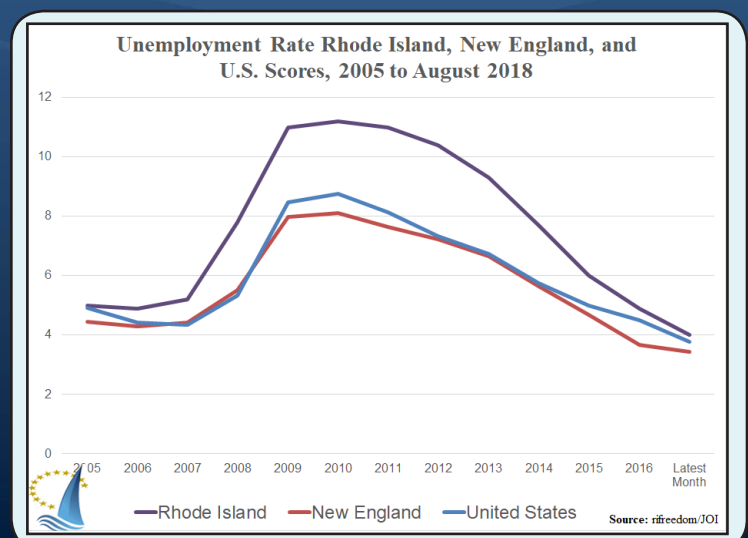
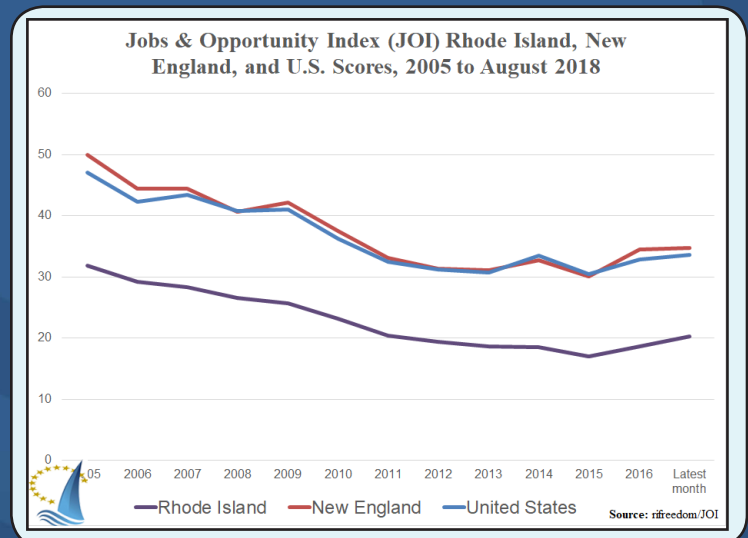
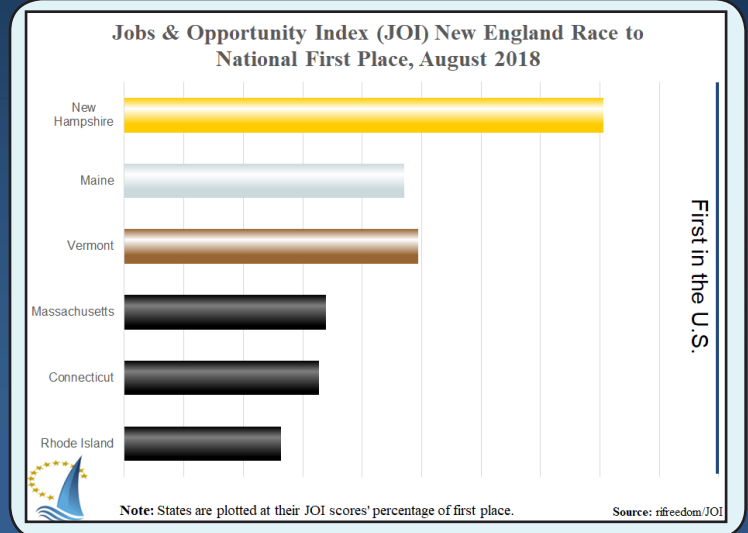
Employment was up from the first-reported number for July by 1,001, while labor force was up 256. The larger growth of employment than labor force translated into a drop of the unemployment rate to 4.0%. The growth in labor force was much smaller, this month, which may be related to the fact that RI-based jobs decreased by 1,900. Back on the positive side, however, was the 1,419 drop in Medicaid enrollment and \$191 million reduction in state and local taxes. This last point may be too early to celebrate. Before next month's JOI report, numbers should be updated for Rhode Islanders' income, and if less income was the cause of the lower taxation, the net effect would not be an indicator of health.

The Ocean State saw no change in any of the subfactors that go into its overall JOI ranking. The jump in place to 46th resulted from New York's falling behind with a drop in jobs and an *increase* in state and local taxes.

The first chart at right shows RI last in New England. New Hampshire leads the region, with 3rd place, nationally. Vermont jumped past Maine, moving eight spots to 13th while Maine moved up only one spot, to 16th; note, though, that this results from Vermont's nation-leading loss in state and local revenue, so income numbers may reverse its progress. Massachusetts held at 35th, and Connecticut fell two spots, to 39th.

The second chart shows the gap between RI and New England and the United States on JOI. The third chart shows the gaps in the official unemployment rate. Results for the three underlying JOI factors were:

- **Job Outlook Factor** (optimism that adequate work is available): RI remained 17th.
- **Freedom Factor** (the level of work against reliance on welfare programs): RI remained 41st.
- **Prosperity Factor** (the financial motivation of income versus taxes): RI remained 47th.



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	JOI			Job Outlook Factor			Freedom Factor			Prosperity Factor		
	Rank	Trend	Score	Rank	Trend	Score	Rank	Trend	Score	Rank	Trend	Score
Wyoming	1	👉	77.1	21	👎	6.1	1	👉	10.0	2	👉	8.9
Utah	2	👉	67.6	4	👉	8.1	2	👉	9.8	12	👉	7.3
New Hampshire	3	👉	62.2	14	👉	6.9	4	👉	8.0	5	👎	8.1
North Dakota	4	👉	56.2	1	👉	10.0	3	👉	8.8	31	👎	6.1
South Dakota	5	👉	48.6	5	👉	8.0	8	👉	6.6	21	👎	6.8
Virginia	6	👉	47.3	20	👉	6.2	7	👉	7.2	19	👉	6.9
Idaho	7	👉	46.3	8	👉	7.4	10	👉	5.7	11	👉	7.4
Kansas	8	👎	46.3	10	👉	7.3	6	👉	7.4	26	👎	6.3
Colorado	9	👉	41.0	9	👉	7.3	15	👉	5.0	17	👎	7.1
Iowa	10	👉	40.2	3	👉	8.2	17	👎	4.9	22	👎	6.7
South Carolina	11	👉	40.1	23	👉	6.0	26	👉	4.1	4	👉	8.4
Wisconsin	12	👉	38.4	12	👉	7.1	11	👉	5.6	27	👉	6.3
Vermont	13	👉	38.1	13	👉	7.0	23	👉	4.3	14	👉	7.3
Nebraska	14	👎	37.9	7	👉	7.5	5	👉	7.5	44	👉	5.1
Montana	15	👉	36.4	26	👎	5.8	37	👉	3.8	6	👉	8.0
Maine	16	👉	36.3	19	👉	6.3	24	👉	4.2	13	👉	7.3
Hawaii	17	👎	36.3	11	👉	7.3	27	👎	4.1	18	👎	7.0
Texas	18	👉	35.4	24	👉	5.9	14	👉	5.1	23	👎	6.6
Alabama	19	👎	35.4	25	👉	5.8	35	👉	3.9	8	👎	7.7
Oklahoma	20	👎	34.5	22	👉	6.1	32	👉	4.0	15	👎	7.3
Alaska	21	👎	34.4	50	👉	3.5	42	👉	3.4	1	👉	10.0
Indiana	22	👉	33.3	6	👉	7.5	16	👉	4.9	34	👉	5.7
Arizona	23	👉	31.8	41	👉	4.9	38	👉	3.8	9	👉	7.6
Maryland	24	👉	31.6	31	👉	5.4	18	👉	4.7	24	👉	6.4
North Carolina	25	👉	31.1	28	👎	5.8	20	👉	4.6	29	👉	6.2
Nevada	26	👉	30.9	45	👉	4.7	31	👉	4.0	16	👉	7.2
Mississippi	27	👉	30.7	40	👉	4.9	43	👉	3.3	7	👉	8.0
Oregon	28	👉	29.3	30	👉	5.5	40	👉	3.6	20	👉	6.9
Georgia	29	👉	28.4	36	👉	5.1	22	👉	4.4	32	👉	6.1
Florida	30	👉	28.1	37	👉	5.0	30	👉	4.0	25	👎	6.4
Missouri	31	👉	27.7	16	👉	6.6	12	👉	5.4	45	👉	4.8
Washington	32	👎	27.6	35	👉	5.1	29	👉	4.1	28	👎	6.2
New Jersey	33	👉	26.8	44	👉	4.8	13	👉	5.3	42	👉	5.3
Michigan	34	👎	26.6	34	👉	5.1	33	👉	4.0	33	👉	6.1
Massachusetts	35	👉	26.2	27	👉	5.8	19	👉	4.6	43	👎	5.2
Tennessee	36	👉	26.1	18	👉	6.4	34	👉	3.9	38	👉	5.5
Minnesota	37	👉	25.6	2	👉	8.5	9	👉	6.2	49	👉	3.7
New Mexico	38	👉	25.4	48	👉	4.4	50	👉	2.3	3	👉	8.4
Connecticut	39	👎	25.2	47	👉	4.5	21	👉	4.5	36	👉	5.6
West Virginia	40	👉	24.3	49	👉	4.2	49	👉	2.7	10	👉	7.5
Pennsylvania	41	👉	24.0	42	👉	4.8	36	👉	3.9	35	👎	5.7
Illinois	42	👉	23.9	39	👎	4.9	28	👎	4.1	39	👎	5.4
Kentucky	43	👉	23.7	15	👉	6.6	45	👎	3.2	40	👉	5.4
California	44	👉	23.3	46	👉	4.7	44	👉	3.2	30	👉	6.2
Ohio	45	👉	21.7	32	👉	5.4	25	👉	4.1	46	👉	4.7
Rhode Island	46	👉	20.3	17	👉	6.4	41	👉	3.5	47	👉	4.5
New York	47	👎	19.9	38	👉	5.0	47	👉	3.1	41	👎	5.3
Louisiana	48	👉	18.8	43	👉	4.8	48	👉	2.7	37	👉	5.5
Arkansas	49	👉	17.4	29	👎	5.8	46	👉	3.2	48	👉	4.3
Delaware	50	👉	14.4	33	👉	5.3	39	👉	3.7	50	👉	3.4