

Jobless Rate Falls Short for Extensions

(AP) — Despite concerns about the economic aftermath of the terrorist attacks, Oregon unemployment nudged up only slightly last month — a tenth of a percentage point — to reach 6.5 percent.

The figure was just short of the number that would kick in an extended 13 weeks of benefits.

Still, the jobless rate for October is at the highest level since 1993, when it also reached 6.5 percent, officials said.

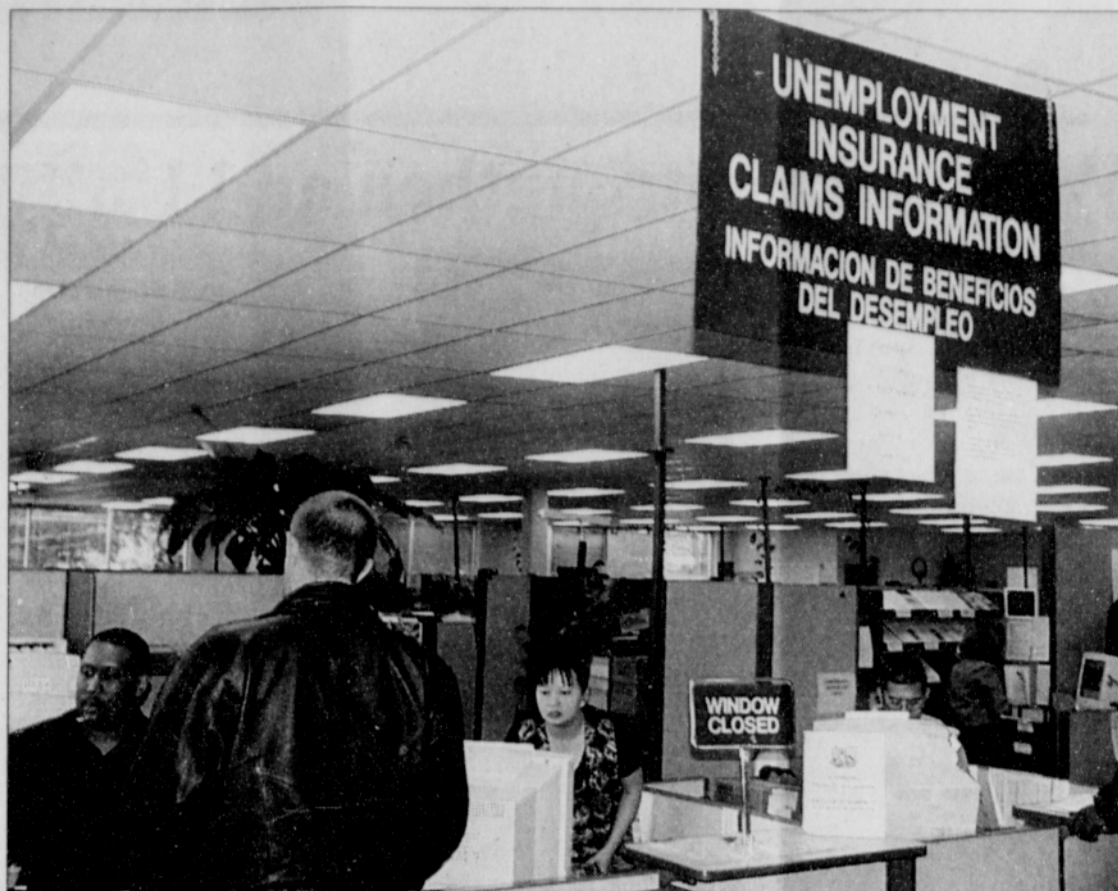
Unemployment was 6.4 percent in September. The rate has risen for eight of the past 10 months after starting the year at 4.4 percent.

Economists and analysts were watching the release of the October figures closely for Oregon after a substantial rise in the national unemployment rate last month.

The U.S. unemployment rate posted a substantial rise from 4.9 percent in September to 5.4 percent in October. Meanwhile at the national level seasonally adjusted total nonfarm payroll employment dropped by 415,000 jobs.

The national and state figures are the first to broadly reflect the impact of the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11.

Last month, 109,500 Ore-



With the worsening economy, Oregon Employment Division workers in north Portland are dealing with more unemployment claims.

nians were unemployed, compared to 75,300 in October 2000 — a 45 percent increase.

Manufacturing jobs declined,

but were higher than average for the time of year. The service industry, which normally expands during the holiday season, was

lagging, officials said.

Government was the only major sector of the economy to add jobs in October.

Future of Human Relations Panel in Doubt

(AP) — Vancouver city officials are undecided about their next move after voters soundly defeated a proposal to form a joint city-county human relations commission.

Last week, voters killed the commission proposal by better than 2-1.

The commission's stated pur-

pose was to embrace diversity and promote racial-ethnic harmony. Opponents argued the commission was unnecessary because existing laws already provide means for investigating human rights complaints and enforcing rights violations.

Mayor Royce Pollard said he

expects it will be some time before the city council discusses the matter.

"I think we need to let it sit for a while," he said. "Then the council can talk about what the approach should be, because the need is still there."

County Commissioner Craig

Pridemore told The Columbian he's not sure what happens now.

The nine-member commission was supposed to concentrate on education and mediation while referring discrimination complaints to the Washington Human Rights Commission for investigation and legal enforcement.

Dropouts Dismal for Oregon's Minority Students

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graduates, Greene said he did not because life prospects for GED earners are closer to those of high school dropouts.

Like dropouts, he said, students who earn a GED are more likely to land in prison, become single parents or rely on public

assistance. They earn a median income of about \$15,000 compared with \$29,000 for those with a high school diploma.

Greene's methods offer a good indicator of graduation rates, but they are not precise and fail to account for numerous variables such as the number of students who take a fifth

year or transfer to community colleges, home schools or private schools to complete their high school education, said Bob Jones, research analyst for the state Department of Education.

Greene says the state's method of calculating a one-year graduation rate fails to convey how many students leave

over the four years of high school. Many states also exempt students who leave school for the military or who go to prison from their dropout counts.

"To report in that way confuses the public discussion. It looks like a small number, and people are less alarmed," Greene said.

Refugees Dinner at All Saints

The refugee resettlement program of Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon, will host the second annual Refugee's First Thanksgiving Dinner on Thursday, Nov. 22 at 4 p.m. at All Saint's Episcopal Church, 4033 S.E. Woodstock Blvd.

The celebration will offer a traditional turkey dinner, live ethnic music along with a free raffle with prizes ranging from new dish sets and blenders, to wool coats and gift certificates. Individuals and families

who have resided in the United States for less than one year are invited to participate.

"In this difficult time for all of us, it is important that refugees still feel welcomed in this country," stated Olga Dedulin, volunteer coordinator. "Thanksgiving is a time to be thankful for what we have and we want to share this tradition with our new members of the community."

For more information, call Olga Dedulin at 503-284-3002.

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