

MIDWEST DIGEST

Planned Parenthood Hopes To Expand Soon

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — Planned Parenthood of the Heartland plans to expand its services in Nebraska and Iowa in the near future.

CEO Jill June announced Thursday that the organization's new capital campaign envisions 12 new facilities. They would be in Grand Island, Fremont, North Platte, Hastings, Norfolk and Kearney in Nebraska, and Carter Lake, Clinton, Mason City, Muscatine, Ottumwa and Marshalltown in Iowa.

Planned Parenthood now has 25 facilities in the two states. Four are in Nebraska and the others are in Iowa.

The announcement came during a ribbon-cutting ceremony for Planned Parenthood's new facility in Omaha.

Nebraska Campaign Disclosure Bill Dies

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — A bill designed to close a loophole in Nebraska's campaign disclosure laws has failed to advance, but supporters say they'll try to revive it before the legislative session ends.

Lawmakers fell five votes short Thursday of the 25 needed to push the bill through a second-round vote. The bill died, 20-7, but several supporters were absent.

The legislation by Lincoln Sen. Bill Avery is designed to close a loophole which allows 501(c)(4) groups, like the right-leaning Americans for Prosperity, to attack political candidates without disclosing what they spent.

Omaha Sen. Heath Mello changed his "yes" vote to "not voting" Thursday in a procedural move that could allow lawmakers to consider the bill again. Speaker of the Legislature Mike Flood has the power to restore the bill (LB606) for new debate.

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Economic Stress Eased In Feb.

S.D. Among Economically Healthiest States

BY MIKE SCHNEIDER AND MARTIN CRUTSINGER
Associated Press

Thanks to lower unemployment and fewer bankruptcies, the nation's economic stress edged down in February as all but five states strengthened from January, according to The Associated Press' monthly analysis.

Three states that were hit hardest by the recession and have suffered since — Florida, Arizona and Georgia — enjoyed the sharpest gains in February.

Unemployment declined or remained the same in more than three-quarters of the nation's 3,141 counties and in 43 states, the AP's Economic Stress Index showed. Bankruptcies declined in more than half the counties and in 41 states. Still, foreclosures rose in more than half the counties and in 27 states.

The AP's index calculates a score from 1 to 100 based on unemployment, foreclosure and bankruptcy rates. A higher score signals more economic stress.

The average county's stress score in February was 11, down from 11.2 in January. A year ago, the average score was 11.8. Under a rough rule of thumb, a county is considered stressed when its score exceeds 11.

Economists expect further improvements this

year as employers step up hiring. The unemployment rate fell to 8.8 percent in March, the lowest level in two years. The rate has fallen a full percentage point in just four months.

"The job market is much better now than it has been," said Mark Zandi, chief economist at Moody's Analytics.

Zandi predicts economic growth this year of around 3.2 percent, up from 2.9 percent last year. But his forecast has dimmed from the 3.9 percent growth he had predicted for 2011 at the start of the year, before energy prices jumped.

The AP's index found that the only states not to strengthen in February over January were Maine, Nebraska, New Jersey, New Mexico and Wisconsin. All had higher or unchanged unemployment rates and, except for New Mexico, higher foreclosure rates in February.

The counties with the lowest economic stress in February had large proportions of workers in farming, mining, wholesale trade, information technology, finance and professional jobs, according to the AP's analysis. By contrast, counties with the highest stress had many workers in retail, real estate and support jobs.

Though squeezed by strained state budgets, the counties that are home to state capitals had an average stress score of 10.1 in February, well below the national average. In particular, the counties that are home to the capitals of North

Dakota and Nebraska benefit from economies that are among the top 15 healthiest for counties with at least 25,000 residents.

Hughes County, home to South Dakota's capital, also was among the nation's healthiest, though its population is only about 17,000.

The healthier economies weren't limited to counties occupied by state governments. The four counties that surround Washington, D.C., and include tens of thousands of federal workers, had stress scores significantly lower than the national average.

Alexandria and Arlington counties in Virginia and Montgomery and Prince George's counties in Maryland had an average combined stress score of 6.6.

State capital counties, and those surrounding the nation's capital, are faring better than the rest of the nation despite spending cuts. In part, that's because government still generates many private-sector jobs for law firms, lobbyists and trade associations, said Jim Philipps, a spokesman for the National Association of Counties in Washington.

In addition, "restaurants, hotels and other private businesses that cater to white collar government policy-making centers are more likely to do well, or at least hang on, even in tough times," Philipps said.

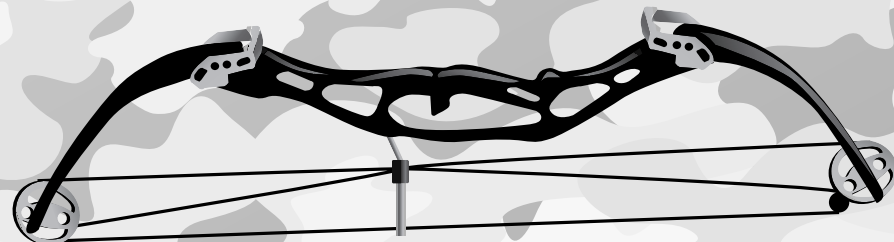
As in previous months, the economically healthiest states were in the Plains and New England: North Dakota (5.21), Nebraska (5.93), South Dakota (6.16), Vermont (6.54) and New Hampshire (7.47).



Yankton Proudly Welcomes Bow Hunting Tournament Competitors & Guests!



Schedule of Events



Friday, April 15th

Manufacturers Trade Show Open..... 1pm-6pm
Check In and Late Registration..... 1pm-6pm

Saturday, April 16th

Manufacturers Trade Show Open..... 9am-6pm
1st Round Unmarked 3D Championship 9am
NOTE: Archers may shoot both 3D Rounds in one day
1st Round First Dakota Classic..... 2pm

3-Star Tour Car Shoot Off following last shooting line

Sunday, April 17th

All Archers will be regrouped for Sunday shooting
Manufacturers Trade Show Open..... 9am-3pm
Final Round First Dakota Classic..... 9am
Final Round Unmarked 3D National..... 2pm
Awards will be presented after the completion of Sunday competition.

First Dakota Classic Competition is open to the public, spectators are welcome, no admission fee. Parking available on Archery Lane. For more information, call NFAA at (605) 260-9279.

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