

NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF  
**Labor & Workforce Development**  
NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

**Acting Commissioner Fichtner Highlights Christie Administration's  
Employer-focused Job Programs at PSEG Power Lunch**

**TRENTON, N.J., February 22, 2017** – Today Acting Commissioner Aaron R. Fichtner, Ph.D. of the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development presented remarks to more than 100 industry and community leaders at the PSEG Power Lunch Panel in Newark regarding the state's efforts to assist unemployed New Jerseyans.

"We are proud of the employer-focused programs that New Jersey has been able to offer to help our citizens return to the workforce, but there is still work to be done," said Acting Commissioner Fichtner. "We will continue to identify ways to develop and connect a skilled workforce to the needs of New Jersey industry."

The New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development also touted its recently-launched Career Connections initiative. Anchored by a highly-interactive website and new partnerships with the state's libraries and community colleges, the Career Connections initiative nearly triples the number of locations where New Jerseyans can access valuable career guidance. The department has trained more than 800 One-Stop, library and community college staff in the new Career Connections approach to ensure that consistent career guidance is available at all locations throughout the state.

New Jersey's unemployment rate is currently at 4.7 percent, equal to the nation as a whole. Last year marked the seventh consecutive year of private sector employment growth. New Jersey has added 281,700 private sector jobs since February 2010, the recessionary low point for private sector employment in the state. New Jersey's labor force participation rate, which measures the number of people employed or actively seeking work, continues to best the national rate at 63.4 percent.

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