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CAUR

CENTER FOR APPLIED URBAN RESEARCH

Review

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ECONOMIC GROWTH INCREASES IN NEBRASKA

Nebraska's gross state product (GSP) was \$26.5 billion in 1986. This was a 3.4 percent increase from 1985 and an average annual increase of 8.4 percent from 1963. (These changes have not been adjusted for price increases that occurred during this period.)

The U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) recently began preparing annual estimates of gross state product by industry for each state for 1963-86. The gross state product is the gross market value of goods and services attributable

to labor and property located in a state. It is comparable to the nation's gross national product, which also is prepared by BEA.

Between 1963 and 1986, Nebraska's production grew an average of 8.4 percent annually, which was below the national rate of 8.8 percent, but slightly above the rate for the seven-state Plains region, in which Nebraska is located. Nebraska's growth in GSP ranked fourth among the Plains states for that period.

(continued on page 2)

GROWTH ALONG INTERSTATE STUDIED

According to David Ambrose and Louis Pol, UNO professors in the College of Business Administration, many researchers think that the most significant population growth in Nebraska has been aligned with the interstate highway system. Studies have shown, however, that several Nebraska counties and towns along the interstate highway have lost population in recent decades, they said.

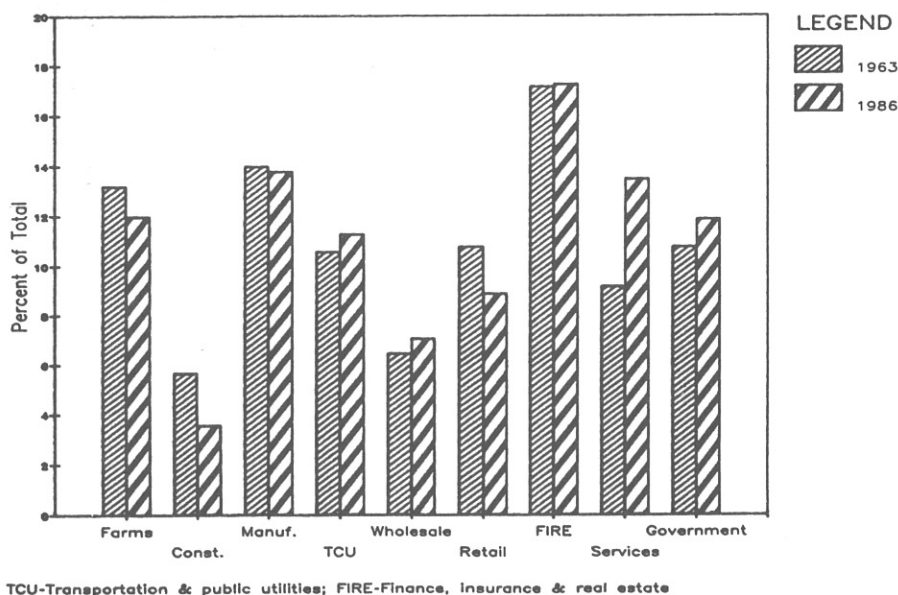
The effect of the interstate system on population growth in Nebraska is the subject of a study being conducted by Ambrose and Pol, which is being funded through CAUR's Urban Conditions Research Program.

"Population Growth of Small Towns and Rural Areas as Influenced by the Interstate Highway System," focuses on three interstate highway systems in the rural Midwest: Interstate 80 in Nebraska and Iowa and Interstates 29 and 35 in Iowa. According to Ambrose and Pol, Iowa is included in the study because some of its interstate system covers areas that were long distances from major highways, while Nebraska's interstate highway was built mainly along the major east-west transportation artery in the state.

U.S. Census of Population and Housing data from 1930 to 1980, population estimates for

(continued on page 2)

Nebraska Gross State Product by Sector, 1963 and 1986



Economic Growth Increases (continued from front cover)

Between 1985 and 1986, there was more variation among the states. Nebraska's rate of growth of 3.4 percent ranked sixth in the region and compared to the regional rate of 5.0 percent and the national rate of 5.8 percent.

For both periods, changes in output differed among sectors in Nebraska. During 1963-86, the fastest growing sector was services, with an average annual increase of 10.2 percent.

Between 1985 and 1986, the sectors showed much more variability, with finance, insurance, and real estate as the fastest growing sector, with an increase of 8.3 percent.

These estimates will be available on diskette at CAUR by December 1988. BEA has more detailed tabulations that are available on magnetic tape and personal computer diskettes.

For more information about these gross state product diskettes and other data, contact Tim Humberger at 554-8311.

Growth Along Interstate (continued from front cover)

1987, economic censuses, and data from the Nebraska and U.S. Departments of Transportation provided the background information for the study.

By gathering data for Nebraska and Iowa counties and towns of a minimum size, Ambrose and Pol were able to examine population change, the presence or absence of an interstate exchange, and other social and economic factors.

"From these analyses, the major forces behind population growth or decline for each decade will be identified and studied to help predict population patterns and better understand Nebraska's prospects for the future," Ambrose said.

The study will be completed by the summer of 1989, and the results will be published by CAUR.

CAUR SAYS GOOD-BYE TO TWO EMPLOYEES

Carole Davis, community service associate at CAUR since 1979, recently accepted a position with the International Studies Program at UNO, where she is special projects coordinator for UNMC's international students.

Publications Manager Gloria Ruggiero will be leaving CAUR soon to join her husband in Washington, DC, where he was transferred recently. Ruggiero has been at CAUR since 1985, and plans to continue her career in the Washington area.

AUTHORS NAMED FOR POLICY VOLUME ON NEBRASKA EDUCATION

The authors for *Nebraska Policy Choices: Education*, to be published in the summer of 1989, have been commissioned and chapters have been identified.

The chapters and their authors are as follows:

- Miles T. Bryant, Educational Administration, Teacher's College, UNL, and Christine Reed, CAUR associate director, "The Link Between Community Development and Educational Growth and Change;"
- Robert Egbert, Center for Curriculum and Instruction, Teacher's College, UNL, and Mary Kluender, Student Information System, Teacher's College Student Services Center, UNL, "Improving Life Chances for Children in Nebraska;"
- Robert C. O'Reilly, Educational Administration and Supervision, College of Education, UNO, and Donald F. Uerling, Educational Administration, Teacher's College, UNL, "Local Control of Education: Myths and Realities;"
- Deana Finkler, Psychology, College of Arts and Sciences,

UNO, and Cordelia C. Robinson, Meyer Children's Rehabilitation Institute, UNMC, "Early Childhood Special Education in the Next Decade;"

- Michael Gillespie, Philosophy and Religion, College of Arts and Sciences, UNO, "Images and Interpretations as Educational Outcomes;"
- Helen Moore, Sociology, College of Arts and Sciences, UNL, "Educational Pluralism and Racism, Sexism, and 'Ableism' in Nebraska;"
- James Marlin, College of Business Administration, UNL, and James Dick, Teacher Education, College of Education, UNO, "Linkages Between Nebraska Education and Nebraska Labor Markets: School-Business Partnerships;" and
- John Hill, Counseling and Special Education, College of Education, UNO, "Academic Differences Between Special and Non-special Education of Youth at Risk."

NEBRASKA POLICY CHOICES: 1988 UNDERWAY

Production of *Nebraska Policy Choices: 1988* has begun. Initiated in 1986, the series relies on university scholars to identify and analyze important policy options for the state.

Topics planned for the 1988 volume are as follows:

- Prison overcrowding in Nebraska
- Delivering social services to children and families in Nebraska
- A look at water sales in Nebraska
- Nebraska's highway system and economic development
- An assessment of state government revenue and expenditure patterns
- Child care policy issues in Nebraska
- Telecommunications policy in Nebraska
- Farm income, government payments to agriculture, and population in Nebraska

THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF SMALL TOWNS STUDIED

"Economic development is likely the result of having some kind of organization with several groups participating, like the Chamber of Commerce or the City Council, and addressing problems over several years," according to David Paulsen, professor in UNO's Department of Public Administration.

Paulsen and B.J. Reed, also of UNO's Department of Public Administration, are conducting a survey to test this idea as part of their Urban Conditions Research Program-funded study, "The Organizational Inventory: Institutional Readiness to Undertake Economic Development."

SPOTLIGHT ON--



Betty Mayhew

but I really don't mind all the people, because I've always enjoyed working with people," she said.

Some of her administrative duties include working closely with CAUR's director and associate director, and supervising the front office staff.

She started at CAUR in 1970 as an interviewer supervisor.

"It was called the Center for Urban Affairs then. We were on campus back then, first in Annex 10; then we moved to the Engineering building; then to Annex 15, the old Storz mansion in 1972; and in 1980, we moved to the Peter Kiewit building."

Mayhew started her long working career in West Virginia, where she taught at the School for the Deaf and Blind. Born in Hastings, Nebraska, to deaf parents, she learned sign language as she learned to talk.

Mayhew learned the work ethic first in Omaha, while babysitting for 10 cents an hour, and later, working at the

The study involves towns with populations between 1,000 and 5,000, and is significant because "cities in this range don't have the professional staff or money to provide full-time effort," Paulsen said.

The questionnaire was sent to 351 mayors, development corporation presidents, and other public and private officials who have an interest in economic development in their communities.

Some of the results of the survey are as follows:

- While 44 percent of the respondents saw their communities' population improve during the past 3 years, only 35 percent thought this was true for the immediate surrounding area.
- Most of respondents (70 percent) thought that businesses have the primary responsibility for economic development.

• Over 90 percent of the organizations responding did not receive funding for economic development from other sources; almost all funding came from private or city sources.

• While 67 percent of the respondents thought that economic development was a very important goal, only 22 percent thought they were winning in their competition with neighboring communities for retail trade, while 22 percent thought they were losing that competition.

"Our study should be able to aid federal, state, and even regional helping organizations to know how and whom to help in economic development," Paulsen said.

Intensive field interviews to supplement the survey will be held in selected cities during September. The study will be completed by November 1988.

Irvington Ice Cream Company on Saturdays in the summer while going to Omaha University.

After moving back to Omaha with her new husband, Richard, whom she met in West Virginia, Mayhew worked for the International Paper Company, as secretary for the plant superintendent.

In 1963, daughter Paula was born, and after the International Paper Company plant closed in Omaha in 1965, Mayhew worked as scheduling supervisor for the Women's Job Corps Center, until its closing in 1969.

To relax, Mayhew and her husband go camping in their 30-foot travel trailer. They bring along their 4-year-old Shih Tzu, Tiesha-Su-Linn, and sometimes their 2 1/2-year-old granddaughter, Alisson joins them.

"Our camper has all the comforts of home. We've been going almost every weekend, except during the winter, for the last 20 years. We belong to the Omaha Fish and Wildlife Club, and camp between Plattsmouth and Louisville along the Platte River. It's a home away from home, a retreat--and there's no phone."

HEALTH LEGISLATION FOR THE UNINSURED STUDIED

About 150,000 Nebraskans do not have health insurance and do not receive government health assistance, according to a recent CAUR report on the medically uninsured.

The report, prepared for the Nebraska Health Futures Foundation, highlights state legislation passed from 1985-87 concerning the medically uninsured.

According to Alice Schumaker, CAUR research associate, reasons for the increase in the number of uninsured persons include fewer workers insured at their workplaces, more single-parent households, stricter Medicaid eligibility limits, more frequent early retirement, and greater reluctance by insurance companies to carry high-risk individuals.

Major legislative areas included in the report are as follows: Creating official programs for indigent care, providing funding mechanisms,

expanding eligibility for Medicaid, and setting standards for minimum care. Funding, especially to hospitals that treat most of these individuals, is the most critical issue for states. Some of the methods of funding include property taxes, hospital assessments, state appropriations, and special excise taxes.

Nebraska's most recent legislation, implemented in 1985, created the Nebraska Comprehensive Health Insurance Pool, for persons who have been refused health insurance by at least two insurance companies. Twelve states now have similar risk pools.

For more information about this report, contact Alice Schumaker at 554-8311.

PLIGHT OF FARMERS ADDRESSED BY SURVEY

Nearly one of every seven farmers or ranchers operating in Nebraska during 1983-87 ceased operation by 1988.

These and other findings are the results of a survey conducted by CAUR for the Nebraska Department of Labor to see how farm operators and farm families

have adjusted to changes in Nebraska's rural economy.

Questionnaires were sent to 5,600 farmers and ranchers to help the Nebraska Department of Labor provide job opportunities, job counseling and job search, and training and retraining services.

The survey also showed that:

- Of those ceasing operation during 1983-87, about equal proportions ceased operation because of "retirement" and "debt/effort not worthwhile."
- Most of the respondents indicated that neither they nor their spouses currently have an off-farm job for pay.
- Over half of those working thought that their farming or ranch-related work skills helped "only a little" or "none at all" in finding their off-farm jobs.
- In making the transition from farming or ranching, the leading government programs used were Job Service, Legal Assistance, and Job Training Services.

A final report based on a more in-depth analysis of the survey's findings will be completed this fall.

For more information, contact Jerry Deichert or Russell Smith at 554-8311.

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