

Drivers of the Colorado Economy July 2025



Prepared July 15, 2025

Drivers of the Colorado Economy

Population, Employment, and GDP

Overview

The purpose of this chartbook is to systematically look at the performance and trends of the state's key private sectors. The emphasis is on industries (sectors) that drive employment, GDP, and population growth.

The sectors selected for this analysis make significant contributions to employment and/or GDP. The analysis focuses primarily on sectors with at least 145,000 employees:

- Total employment
- Private sector
- Healthcare
- Accommodation and food services (AFS)
- Professional, scientific, and technical services (PST)
- Retail trade
- Construction
- Financial activities
- Administrative services
- Manufacturing.

In addition, the wholesale trade and information sectors were included because of their GDP contributions.

Analysis

The analysis for each sector focuses on four areas (charts).

Sector Employment Growth (1990 to 2025). The purpose is to understand changes in sector employment, the employment pattern, whether the sector was a consistent job creator, and how it performed during and after recessions.

Colorado Sector Employment as a Percentage of the U.S. Sector Employment (1990 to 2025). This metric is similar to market share. It gauges when sector employment change is faster or slower than the U.S. For example, during the 1990s, Colorado experienced robust population growth, and its employment increased at a faster rate than the U.S. In early 1990, it was 1.4% of U.S. employment and increased to 1.7% by 2020. By the end of 2005, Colorado employment was 1.9% of U.S. employment.

Short-term Change in Employment after the 2020 recession (April 2021 to current). This section focuses on the short-term. Factors that were considered were: time to return to employment peak before the recession, comparison to the 2012 to 2019 average, YOY change in employment, and 12-month rolling average of the YOY change in employment.

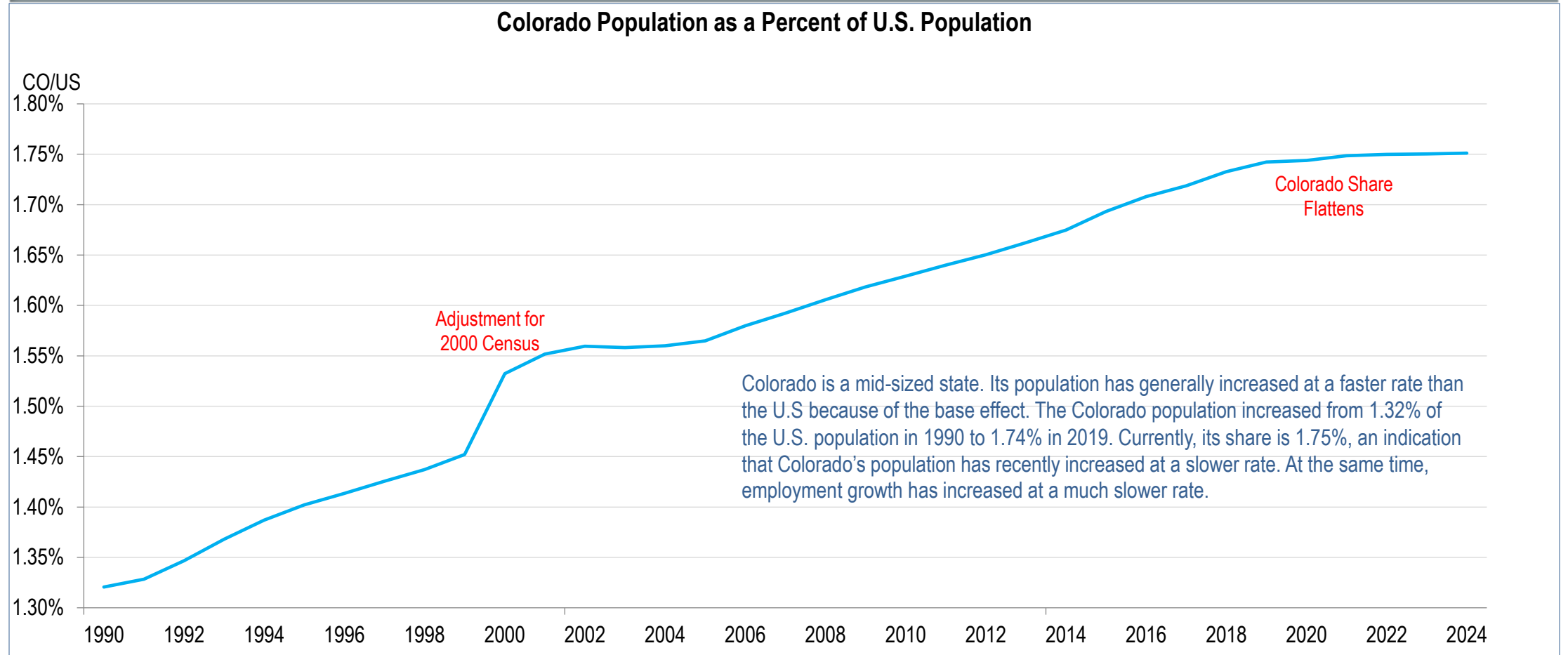
Change in GDP (not adjusted for inflation - 1990 to current). The share of the GDP and its total value determine the impact the sector has on the economy.

Macro View for Colorado

Driving the Economy Challenges and Opportunities

- The Colorado economy does not operate in an orderly manner, nor does it operate on a calendar system. The various sectors and subsectors have different factors that establish their challenges and opportunities.
- For the better part of the last two decades, the size of the Colorado labor force has been constrained by a population that is increasing at a decelerating rate. The decline is a result of lower fertility rates, more deaths, and reduced net migration.
- Many factors impact changes in population, such as quality of life, active/outdoor lifestyle, quality education system, and a robust economy. There are also less desirable factors such as congestion, excessive business regulations, taxes/fees, and high housing costs.
- At present, Colorado's economic growth is led by the following large sectors with strong location quotients: PST, information, and AFS. Smaller industries include extractive industries and AER. Industries based on GDP include: Financial activities, healthcare, information, and wholesale trade are key contributors to Colorado's GDP. In addition, the government sector is important to the economy, but not necessarily a driver.
- During the 1990s, the state supported the development of enabling technologies such as materials, electronics, communications, software, coatings, lasers, sensors, and semiconductors. These enablers are essential components for Colorado's robust economic clusters, such as aerospace, quantum technology, biosciences, and advanced manufacturing.

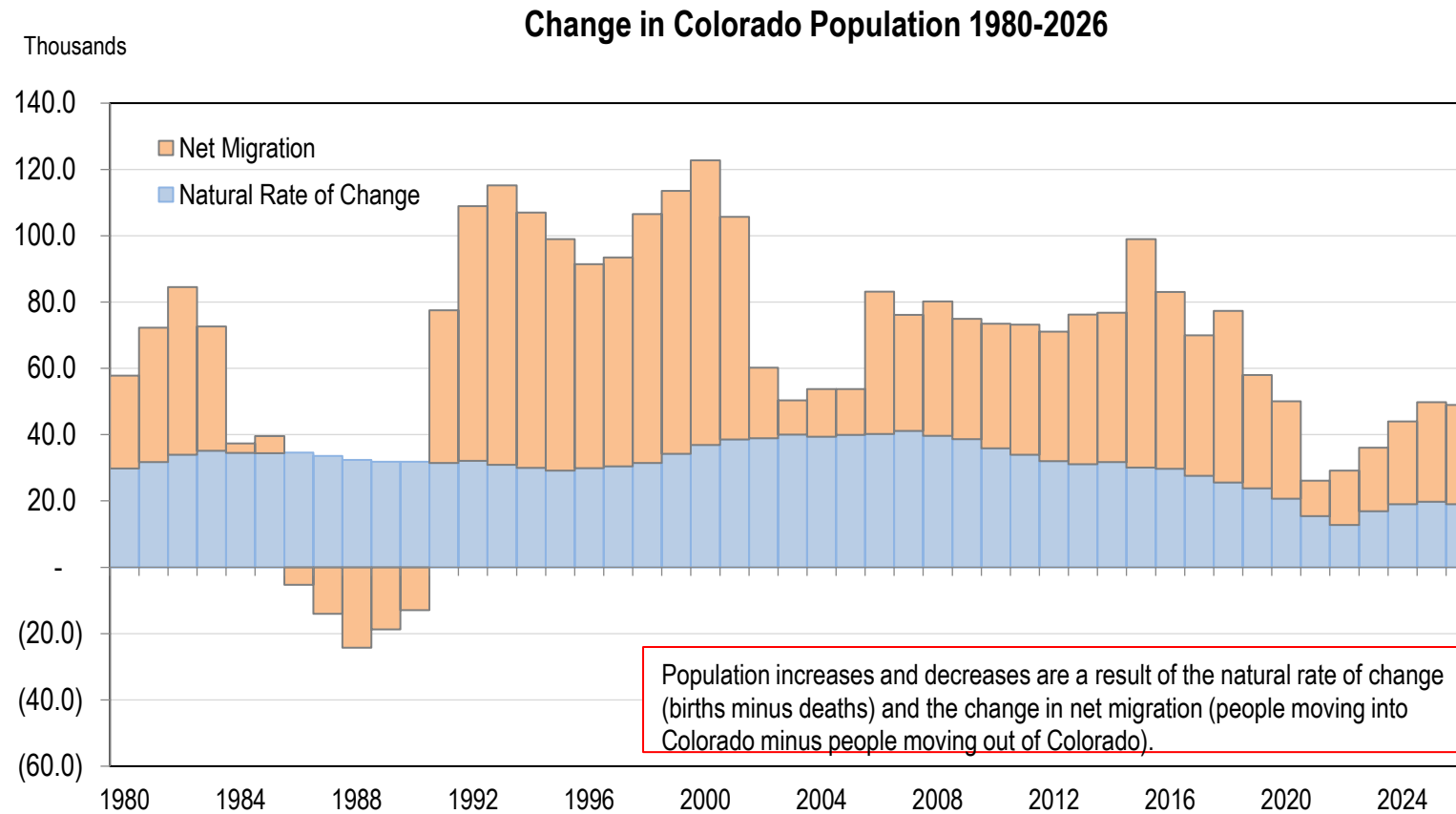
Colorado Annual Population as a Percent of U.S. Population



Source: BLS, S.A. cber.co.

Colorado Population

Components of Change



Components of Change

Since 2000, the population of Colorado has increased at a decreasing rate. There have been higher death rates, lower fertility rates, altered migration patterns, pandemic-related policies, and the aging of the baby boomers. In 2020 and 2021, significant population changes occurred.

In 2025, there will be increases in net migration (30,000) and the natural rate (19,800). The total gain of 49,800 moves the population to 5,970,100 in 2025. It will be 6,019,100 in 2026.

The growth rate from 2021 to 2025 is the lowest since the late 1980s. During that period, there were five years of negative net migration.

Colorado GDP by Major Sectors

Colorado GDP (Millions), Percent of Total		
Industry Sector	GDP 2024 (Millions)	Percent of Total
PRIVATE SECTOR		
Financial Activities (FA)	\$118,438	21.4%
Prof., Scientific, and Tech, Services (PST)	\$61,339	11.1%
Healthcare and Social Assistance (HCSA)	\$33,362	6.0%
Construction	\$32,976	6.0%
Retail Trade	\$31,633	5.7%
Information	\$31,631	5.7%
Wholesale Trade	\$30,429	5.5%
Manufacturing	\$28,705	5.2%
Accommodation and Food Services (APS)	\$22,005	4.0%
Administrative Services	\$16,120	2.9%
Transp., Warehousing, and Utilities (TWU)	\$26,329	4.8%
Extractive Industries	\$15,918	2.9%
Other Services (Personal)	\$12,961	2.3%
Mgmt. of Corporations/Enterprises (MCE)	\$11,455	2.1%
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation (AER)	\$8,877	1.6%
Education (Private)	\$4,503	0.8%
Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishing	\$3,185	0.6%
TOTAL PRIVATE SECTOR	\$489,868	88.5%
TOTAL GOVERNMENT	\$63,455	11.5%
TOTAL COLORADO GROSS GDP 2024	\$553,323	100.00%
Source: BEA, cber.co, Note: GDP is not inflation adjusted.		

The analysis also focuses on sector contributions to Colorado's GDP.

The private sector contributes approximately 88.5% to 2024 GDP.

The top two sectors account for almost one-third of the 2024 GDP.

The next six sectors have similar GDP values, \$28.7 billion to \$33.4 billion. Their total is slightly more than one-third of the 2024 GDP.

The other nine private sectors contribute 22.0% to the 2024 GDP.

The government sector GDP is 11.5% of the 2024 GDP.

Colorado Employment by Major Sector

Colorado Private Employment (000s), Percent of Total

Industry Sector	May 2025 (000s)	Percent of Total	Location Quotient 2024	Jobs Added 2011 v 2024	CAGR
PRIVATE SECTOR					
Healthcare and Social Assistance (HCSA)	345.4	11.54%	0.79	102.2	2.5%
Accommodation and Food Services (AFS)	296.7	9.92%	1.11	71.6	1.9%
Prof., Scientific, and Tech, Services (PST)	293.2	9.80%	1.44	122.4	3.7%
Retail Trade	272.3	9.10%	0.93	37.9	1.0%
Construction	184.5	6.17%	1.18	71.5	3.3%
Financial Activities (FA)	177.0	5.92%	1.02	34.1	1.4%
Administrative Services	151.6	5.07%	0.89	24.8	1.1%
Manufacturing	150.6	5.03%	0.63	24.9	1.2%
Wholesale Trade	113.9	3.81%	0.98	26.2	1.7%
Information	76.0	2.54%	1.38	2.2	0.2%
Other Services (Personal)	132.3	4.42%	1.17	39.9	2.4%
Transp., Warehousing, and Utilities (TWU)	119.7	4.00%	0.95	47.5	3.5%
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation (AER)	64.6	2.16%	1.27	18.8	2.4%
Mgmt. of Corporations/Enterprises (MCE)	48.1	1.61%	0.98	18.3	3.3%
Education (Private)	46.4	1.55%	0.62	16.5	2.8%
Extractive Industries	21.9	0.73%	1.87	-2.7	-0.8%
TOTAL PRIVATE SECTOR	2,494.2	83.37%	0.98	656.1	2.1%
TOTAL GOVERNMENT	497.7	16.63%	1.12	93.8	1.4%
TOTAL COLORADO EMPLOYMENT MAY 2025	2,991.9	100.00%		749.9	2.0%

Source: BLS, cber.co. Note that 2010 was the trough of the recession, so the jobs added include the recovery.

The analysis focuses on the private industries above the burgundy line in the adjacent chart.

The top four sectors provide services and account for about 40% of employment.

Two of the second four sectors provide services, and two provide goods. These four sectors account for 22% of total employment.

About 17% of all employees work in state, local, and federal government positions. They provide essential services, ensure public safety, and contribute to the well-being of society; however, government sectors typically do not drive the economy.

Between 2011 and 2024, PST, healthcare, AFS, and construction added 49% of the jobs. The private sector accounted for 87% of the new jobs created.

QCEW Private Industry Size Class Report

QCEW Private Industry Size Class Report - 4th Quarter 2024							
Employment Size Category	Reporting Units	Pct Units	3rd Month Employment	Pct Employment	Total Quarterly Wages	Pct Wages	Average Weekly Wage
0	28,560	12.3%	0	0.0%	\$342,575,065	0.7%	N/A
1-4	126,493	54.3%	218,657	8.9%	\$5,253,283,012	10.2%	\$1,854
5-9	30,843	13.2%	205,224	8.4%	\$3,907,868,706	7.6%	\$1,464
10-19	22,237	9.5%	302,114	12.3%	\$5,431,227,004	10.6%	\$1,384
20-49	16,272	7.0%	489,212	20.0%	\$8,742,185,283	17.0%	\$1,382
50-99	4,984	2.1%	342,090	14.0%	\$6,951,826,916	13.5%	\$1,569
100-249	2,634	1.1%	391,790	16.0%	\$8,444,443,602	16.5%	\$1,666
250-499	583	0.3%	199,519	8.2%	\$4,912,787,996	9.6%	\$1,916
500-999	169	0.1%	112,436	4.6%	\$2,889,194,898	5.6%	\$2,006
1000+	102	0.0%	185,610	7.6%	\$4,440,688,164	8.7%	\$1,906
-	232,877	100.0%	2,446,652	100.0%	\$51,316,080,646	100.0%	\$1,618

Summary by Employment Range

This table describes the number of companies by their employment size categories. It provides the number of companies, employees, and wages for each size category.

89.3% of reporting units have less than 20 employees.

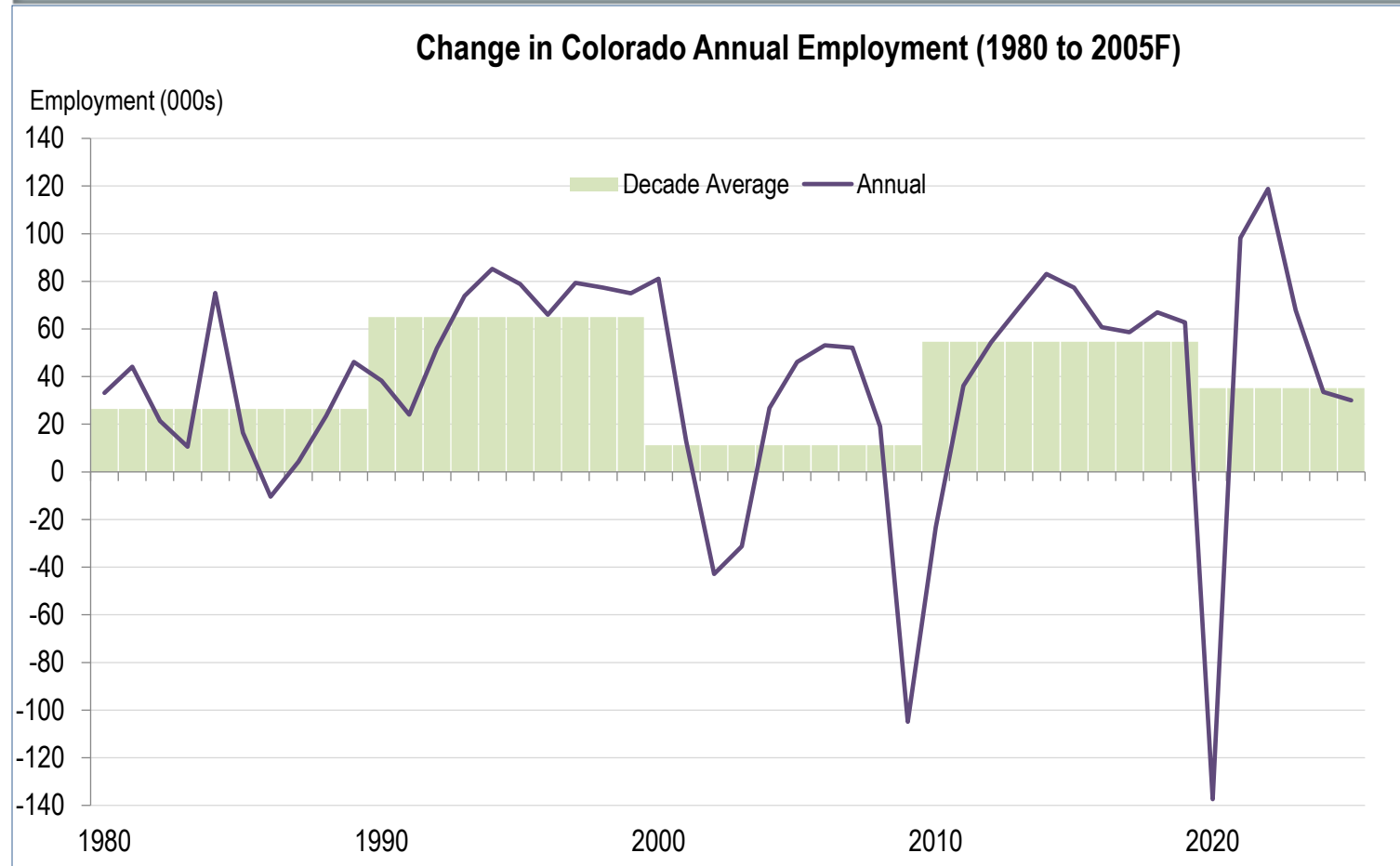
70.4% of employees work at companies with 20+ employees.

70.9% of wages are earned at companies with 20+ employees.

The highest AWW are paid at companies with 250+ employees and 1-4 companies.

Source: <https://cdle.colorado.gov/dlss/labor-market-information-lmi/quarterly-census-of-employment-and-wages-qcew/private-industry>, cber.co

Change in Colorado Annual Employment



Average Annual Change in Employment

The Colorado labor market does not perform in an orderly manner.

1980s

Total Increase 264,300

Average Annual/Monthly Increase 26,430 / 2,202

1990s (The Go-Go 90s).

Total Increase 649,800

Average Annual Increase 64,980 / 5,415

2000s (The Lost Decade)

Total Increase 111,300

Average Annual Increase 11,130 / 935

2010s

Total Increase 545,700

Average Annual Increase 54,570 / 4,547

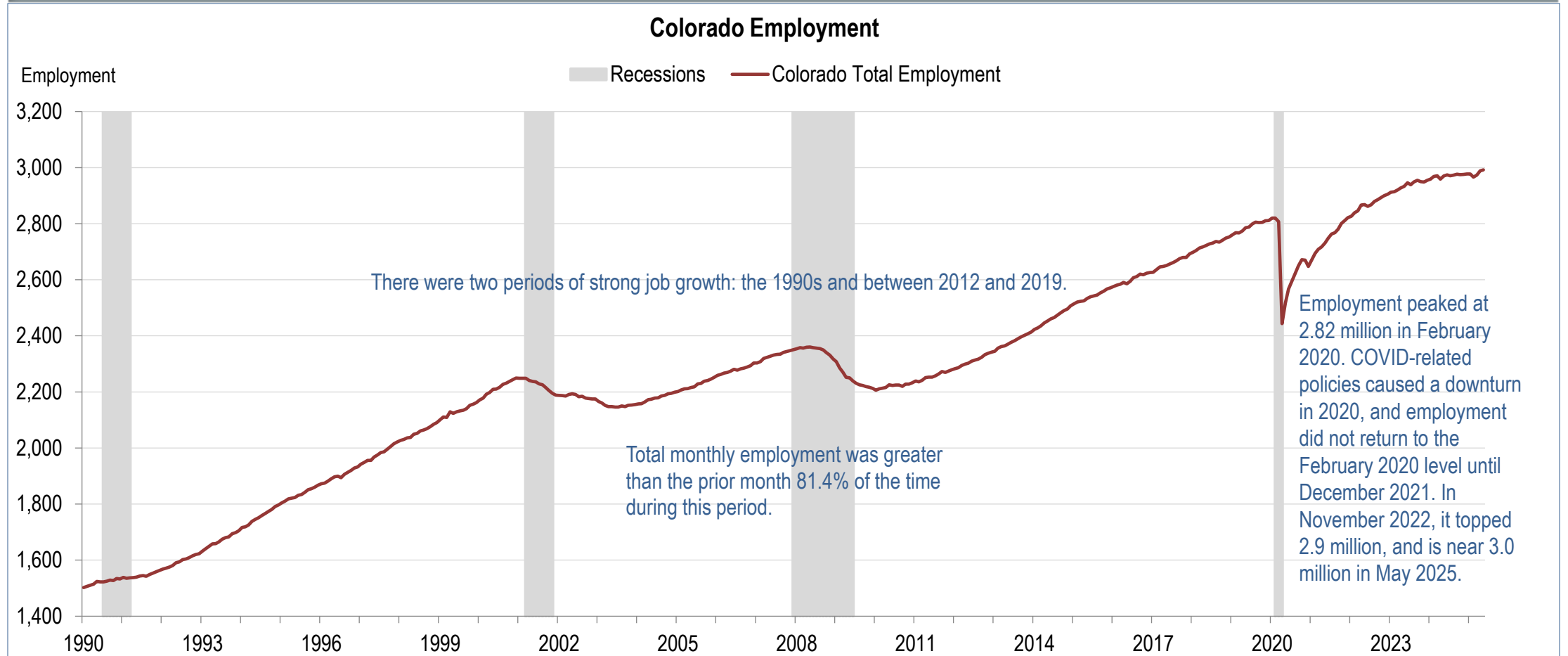
2020s (six years)

Total Increase 210,900

Average Annual Increase 35,200 / 2,930

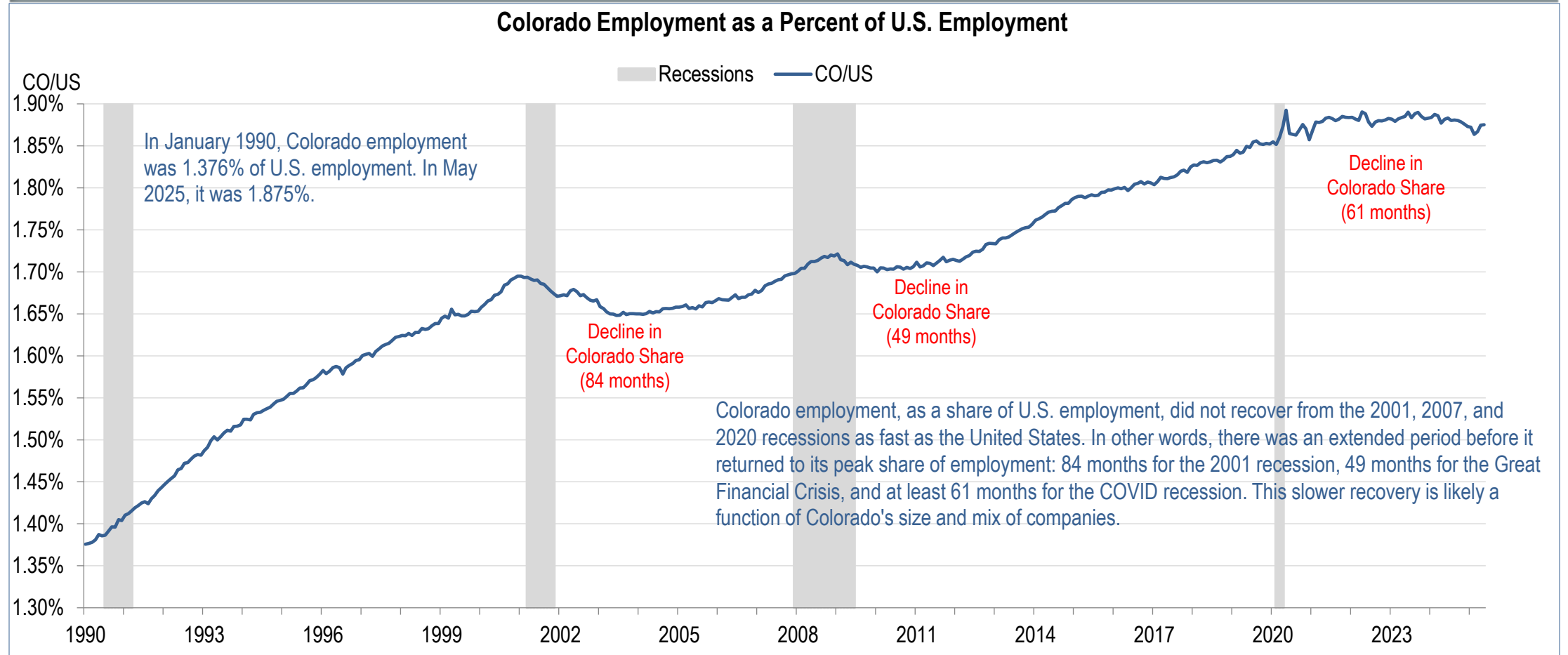
Source: BLS, S.A. cber.co.

Colorado Employment



Source: BLS, S.A. cber.co.

Colorado Employment as a Percent of U.S. Employment

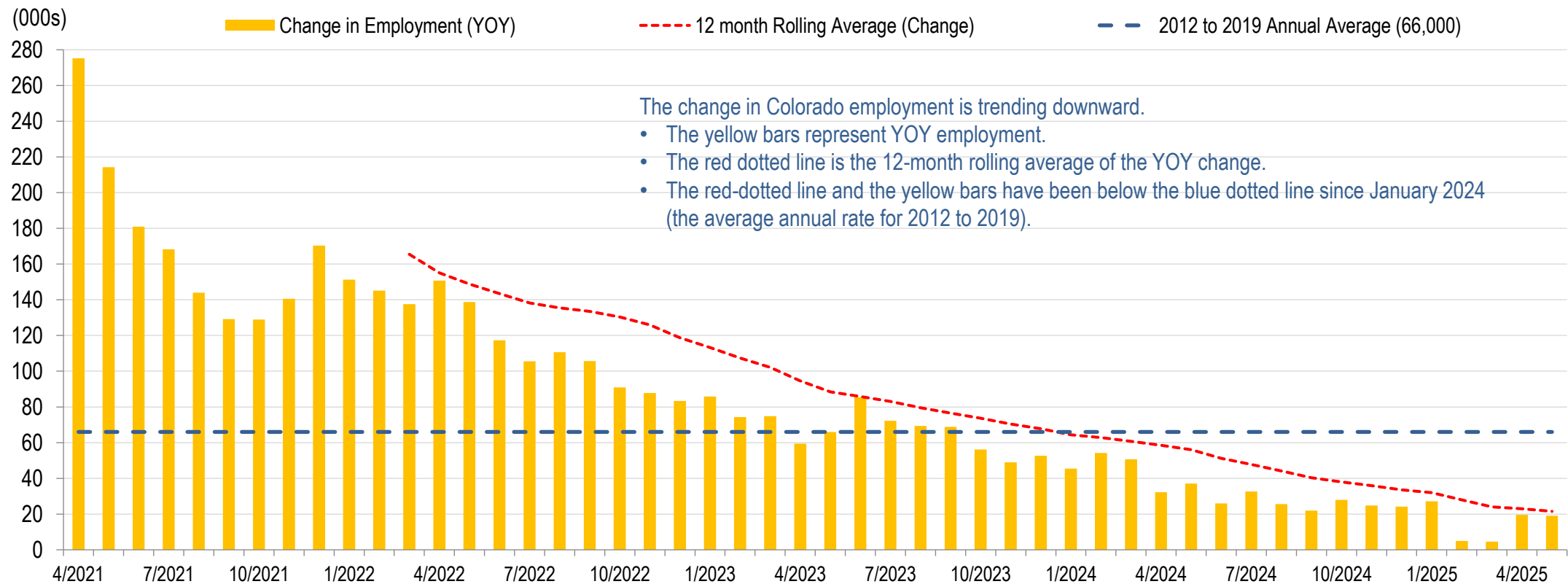


Source: BLS, S.A. cber.co.

Short-Term YOY Change in Employment (Post-COVID)

Colorado Employment

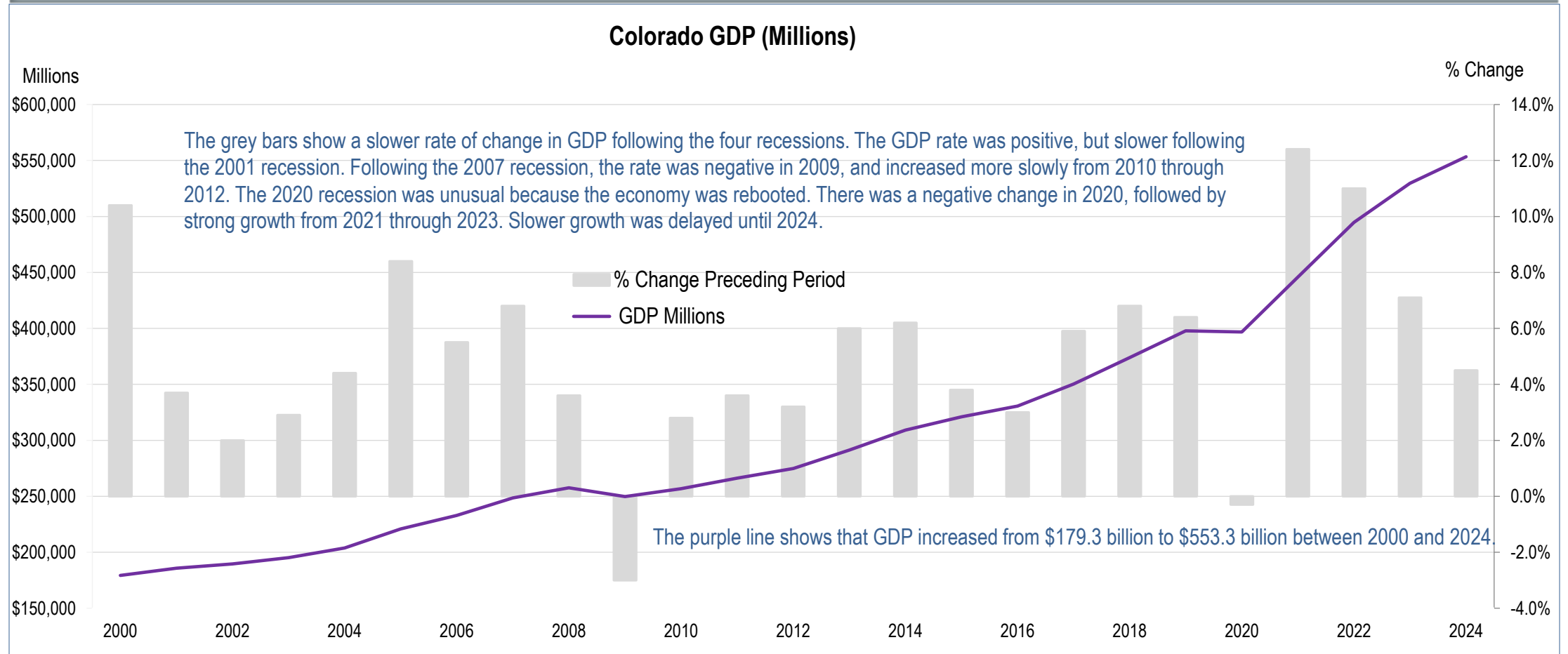
YOY Change in Colorado Employment



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, NSA cber.co.

Colorado GDP

Value and Percentage Change



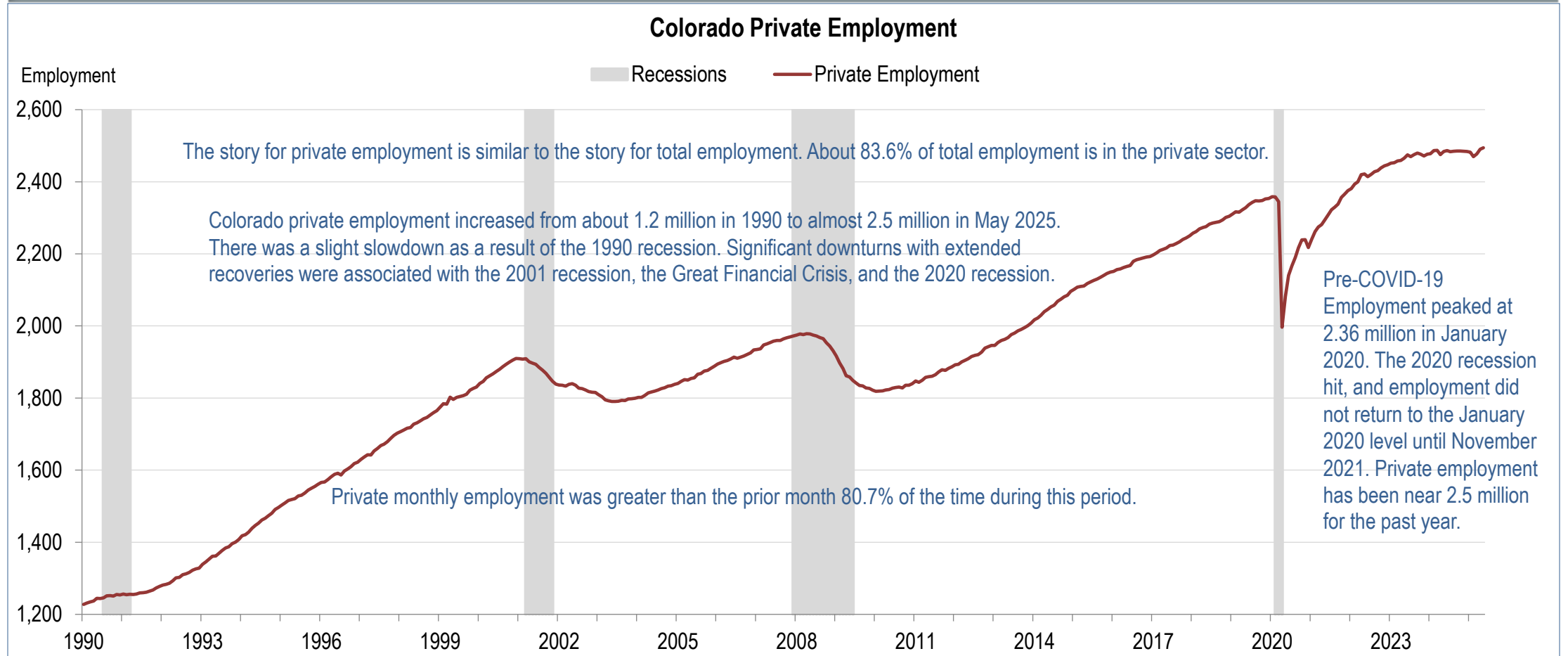
Source: BEA, SAGDP2, cber.co.

Colorado Private Industries Overview

Driving the Economy Challenges and Opportunities

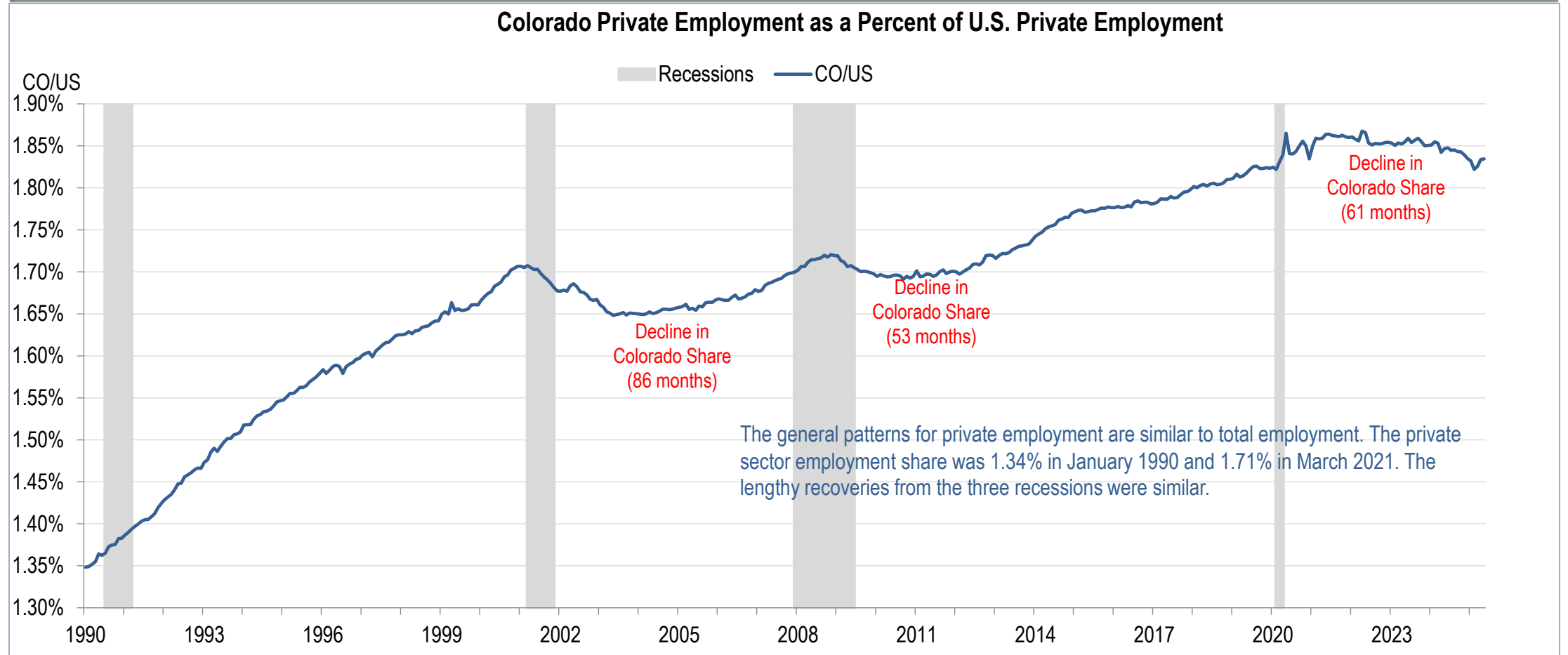
- The purpose of government is to provide essential services, maintain order and security, protect fundamental rights and freedoms, address societal challenges, and promote economic stability and growth. For that reason, the purpose of government is not to drive the economy. The composition of Colorado government employment is:
 - Federal 11.7%
 - State 29.1% (education 17.0% and other 12.1%)
 - Local 59.2% (29.9% education and 29.3% other).
- The private sector is businesses that are not government-owned. They foster economic growth by providing goods and services, creating jobs, fostering innovation, and generating government tax revenue. They compete and are profit-driven. As a result, they promote efficiency and new ideas, which lead to better products and services.
- In 2024, 83.6% of the organizations were private.
- In 2000, 80.6% of all employees worked at private businesses. In 2024, that had risen to 85.6%.
- In 2024, 88.5% of Colorado's GDP was from the private sector.
- In 2000, 79.0% of private sector GDP was from service sector businesses. In 2024, the percentage increased to 83.5%. This transition to services is part of a national trend.

Colorado Private Employment



Source: BLS, S.A. cber.co.

Colorado Private Employment as a Percent of U.S. Private Employment

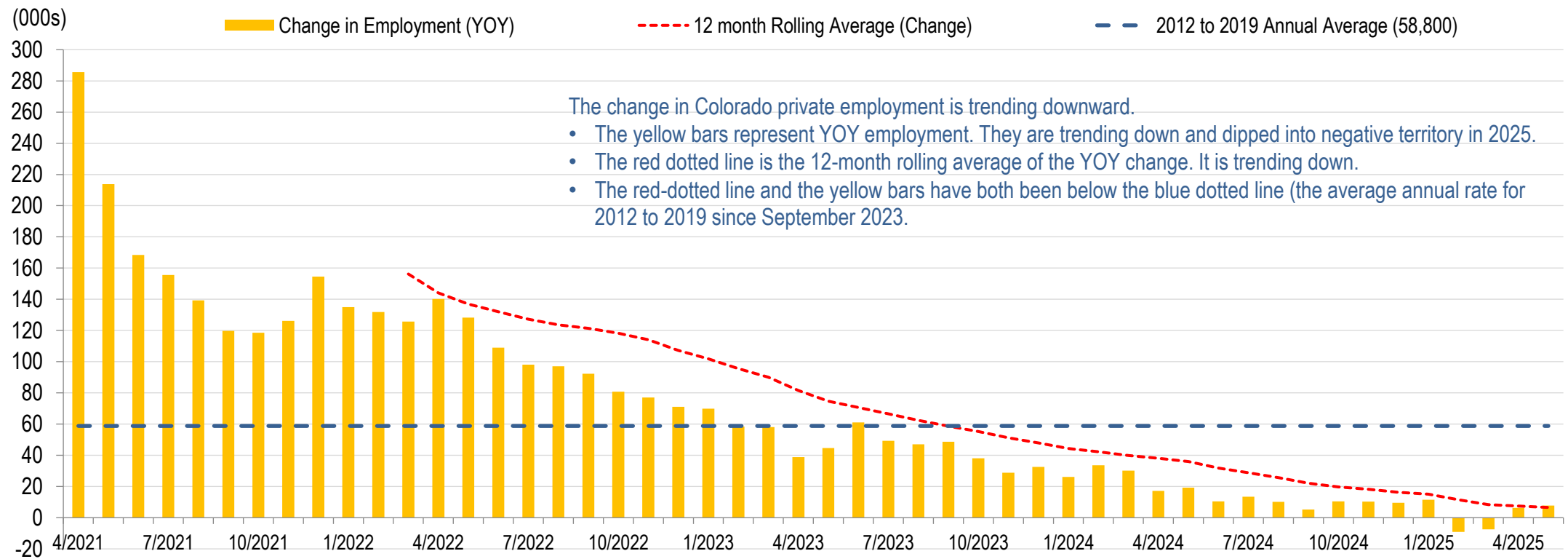


Source: BLS, S.A. cber.co.

Short-Term YOY Change in Employment (Post-COVID)

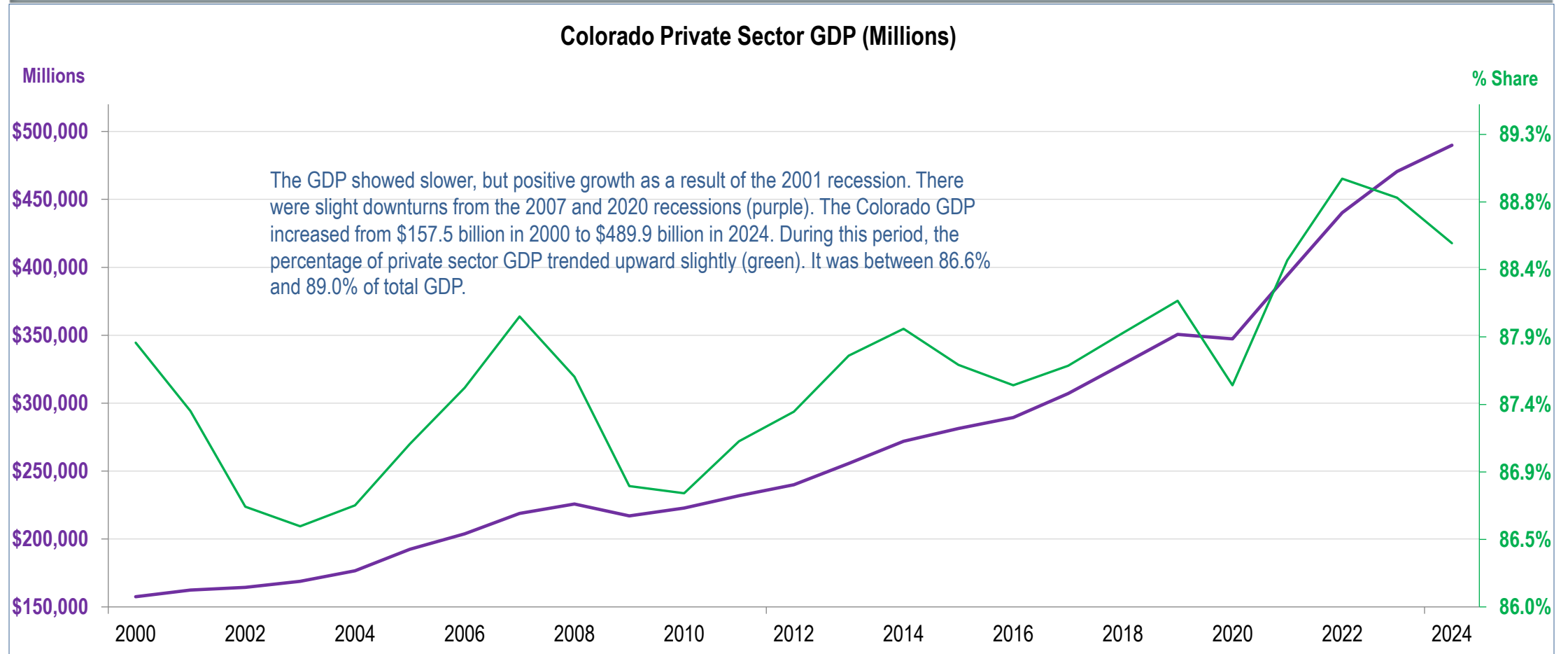
Colorado Private Employment

YOY Change in Colorado Private Employment



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, NSA cber.co.

Colorado Private Industries GDP



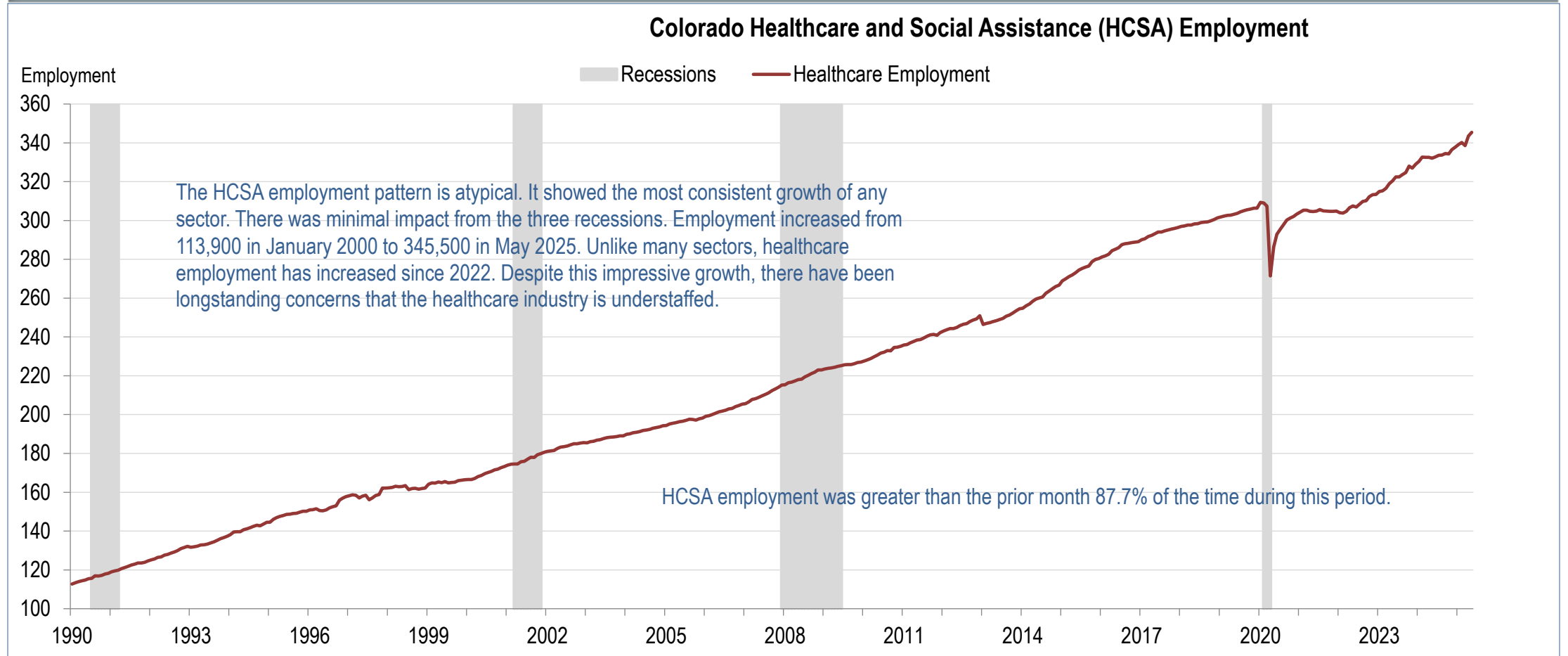
Source: BLS, S.A. cber.co.

Colorado Healthcare and Social Assistance (HCSA)

Driving the Economy Challenges and Opportunities

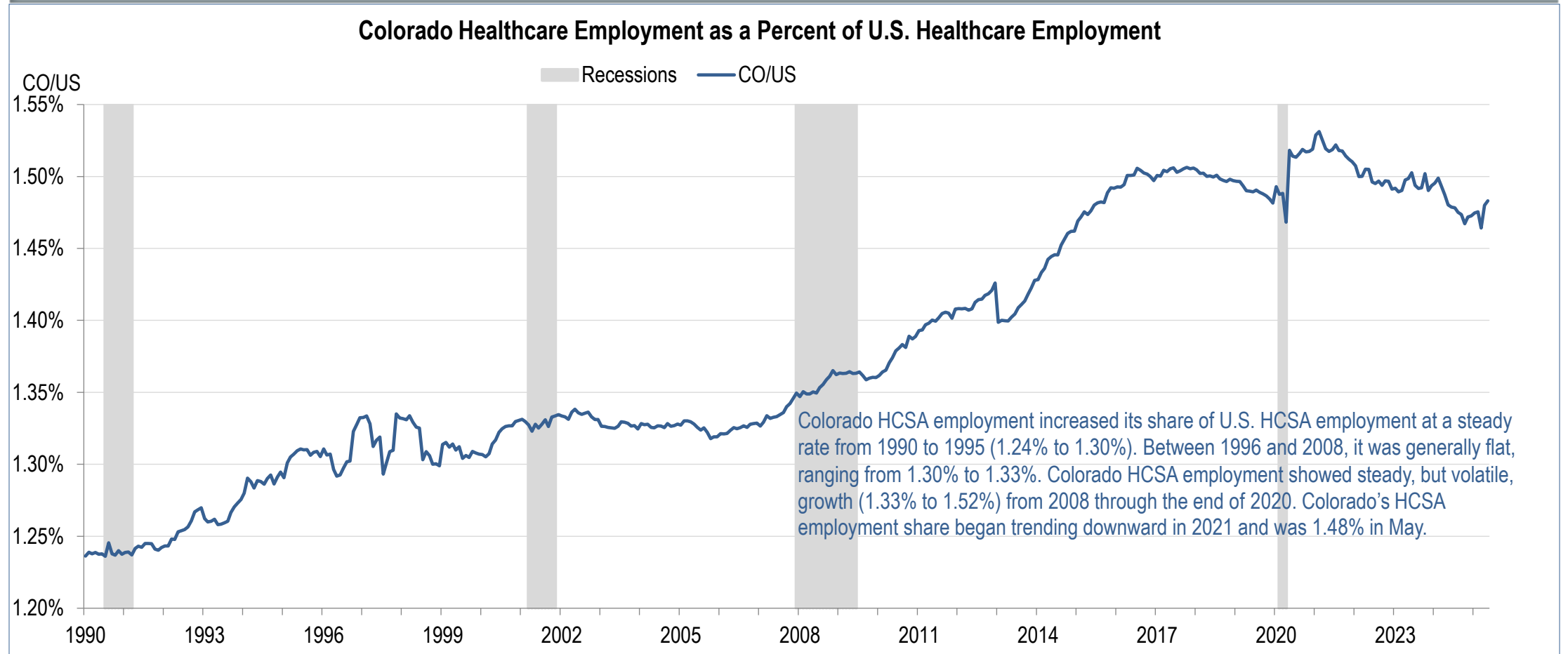
- HCSA is indirectly an economic driver of the economy. It keeps the workforce and population healthy. Healthcare facilities are expensive to build, and federally-supported healthcare research is conducted in universities and local companies.
- In 2024, HCSA was ranked third in Colorado's private sector GDP at \$33.4 trillion, or 6.0% of Colorado's GDP.
- In 2024, the HCSA sector was the largest employment category (345,400 employees). In 2024, the HCSA sector had 11.54% of all employees. Employment increased by 102,200 from 2011 to 2024, an annualized rate of 2.5%.
- HCSA Average Annual Wages (AAW) for 2024 were \$66,530.
- Employment increased by 102,200 from 2011 to 2024, an annualized rate of 2.5%.
- The employment location quotient for HCSA Colorado was 0.67. A low LQ supports concerns that Colorado has too few HCSA employees, especially in rural areas. As baby boomers and the older generation continue to age, the workforce shortage will remain a challenge for the state.
- Medicaid funding has always been a budget concern for the state legislature. Discussions by federal officials to alter Medicaid funding in 2025 could exacerbate that problem. If changes are made and Medicaid and healthcare are a priority for the state legislature, it may have to provide state funding for certain healthcare costs.

Colorado HCSA Employment



Source: BLS, S.A. cber.co.

Colorado HCSA Employment as a Percent of U.S. HCSA Employment

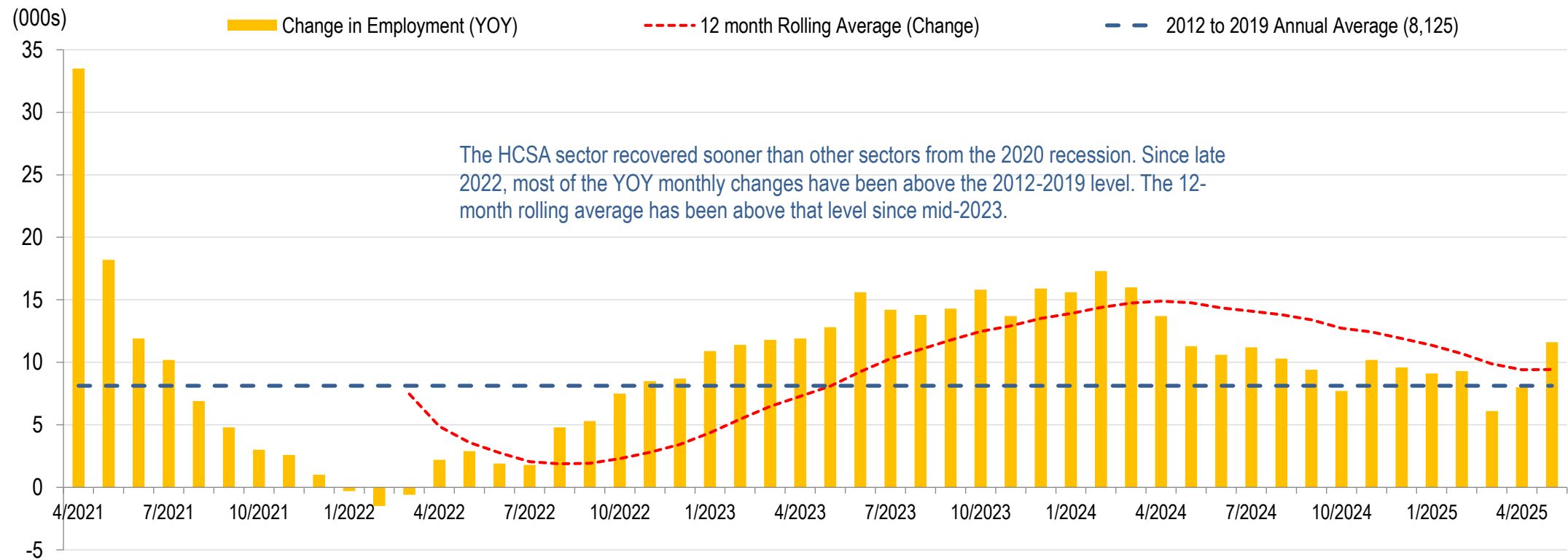


Source: BLS, S.A.cber.co.

Short-Term YOY Change in Employment (Post-COVID)

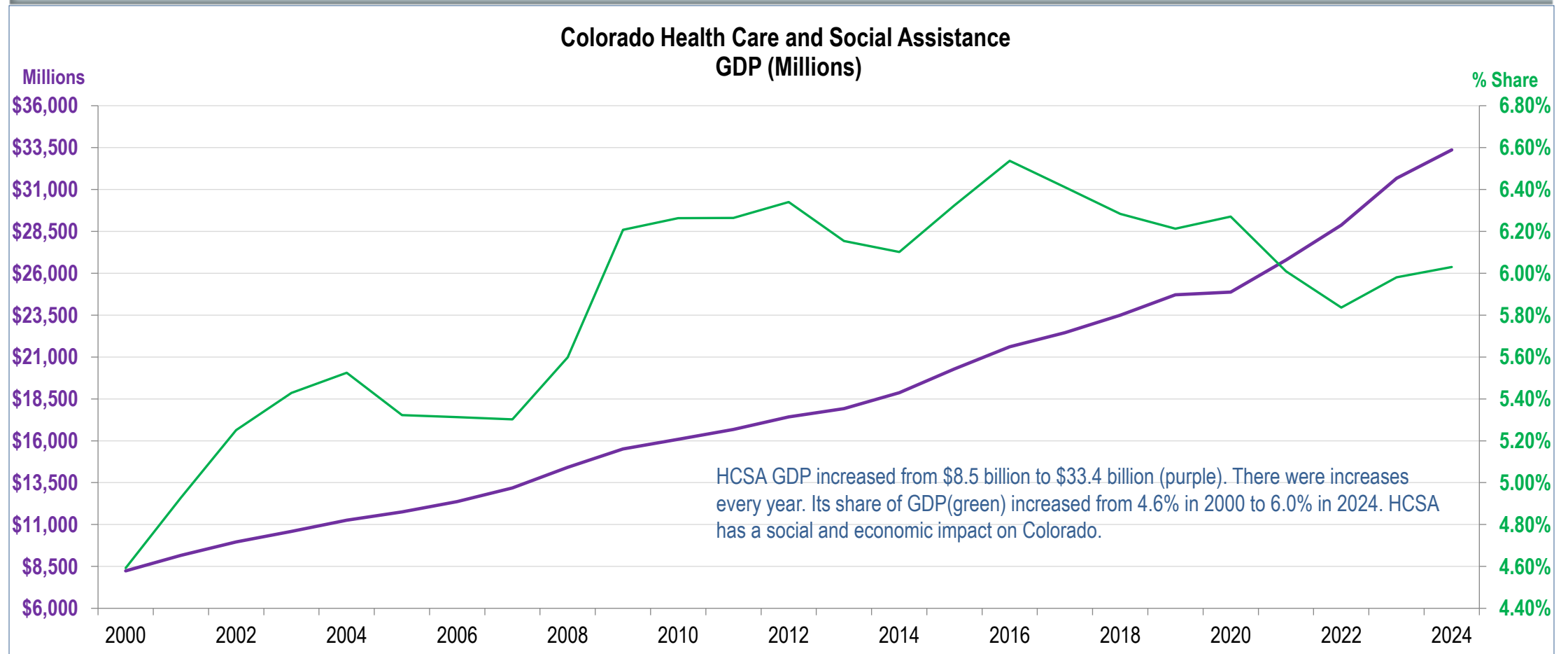
Colorado Healthcare Employment

YOY Change in Colorado Healthcare Employment



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, NSA cber.co.

Colorado HCSA GDP



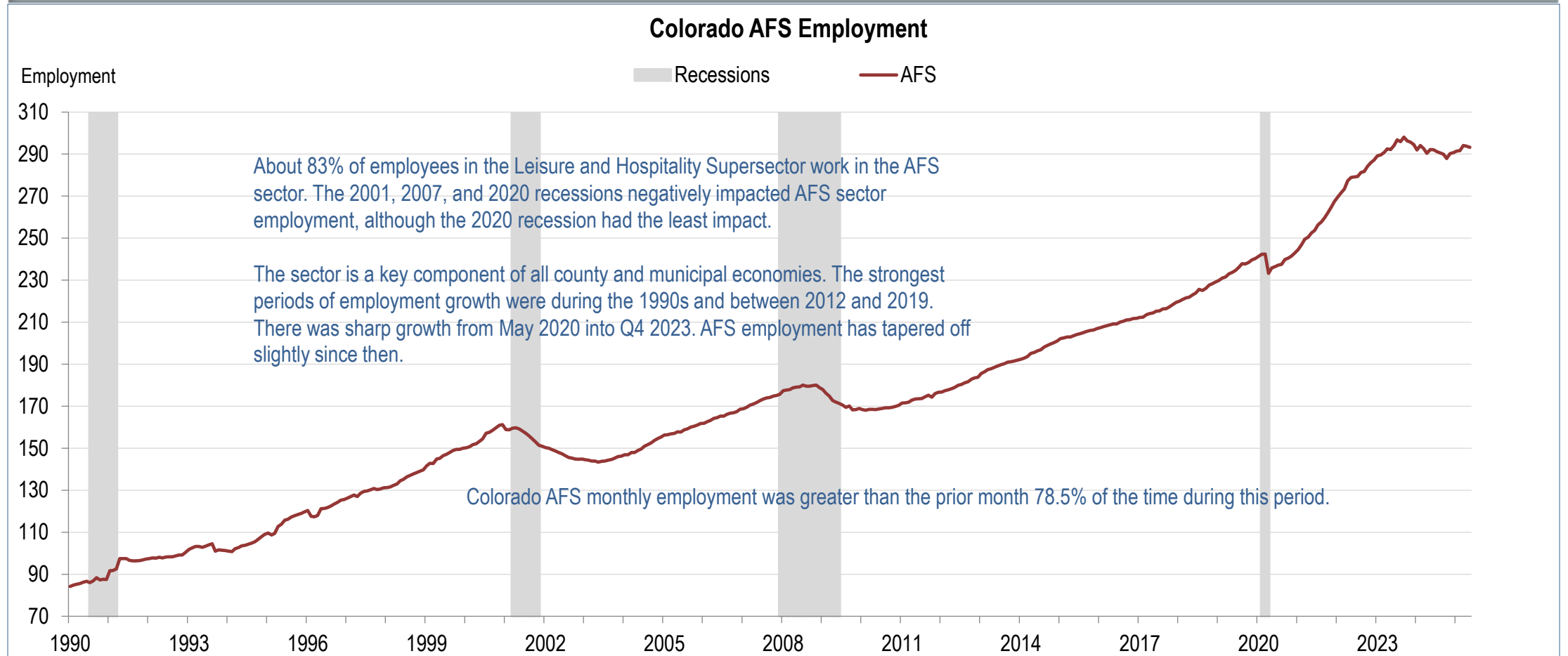
Source: BLS, S.A. cber.co.

Colorado Accommodation and Food Services (AFS)

Driving the Economy Challenges and Opportunities

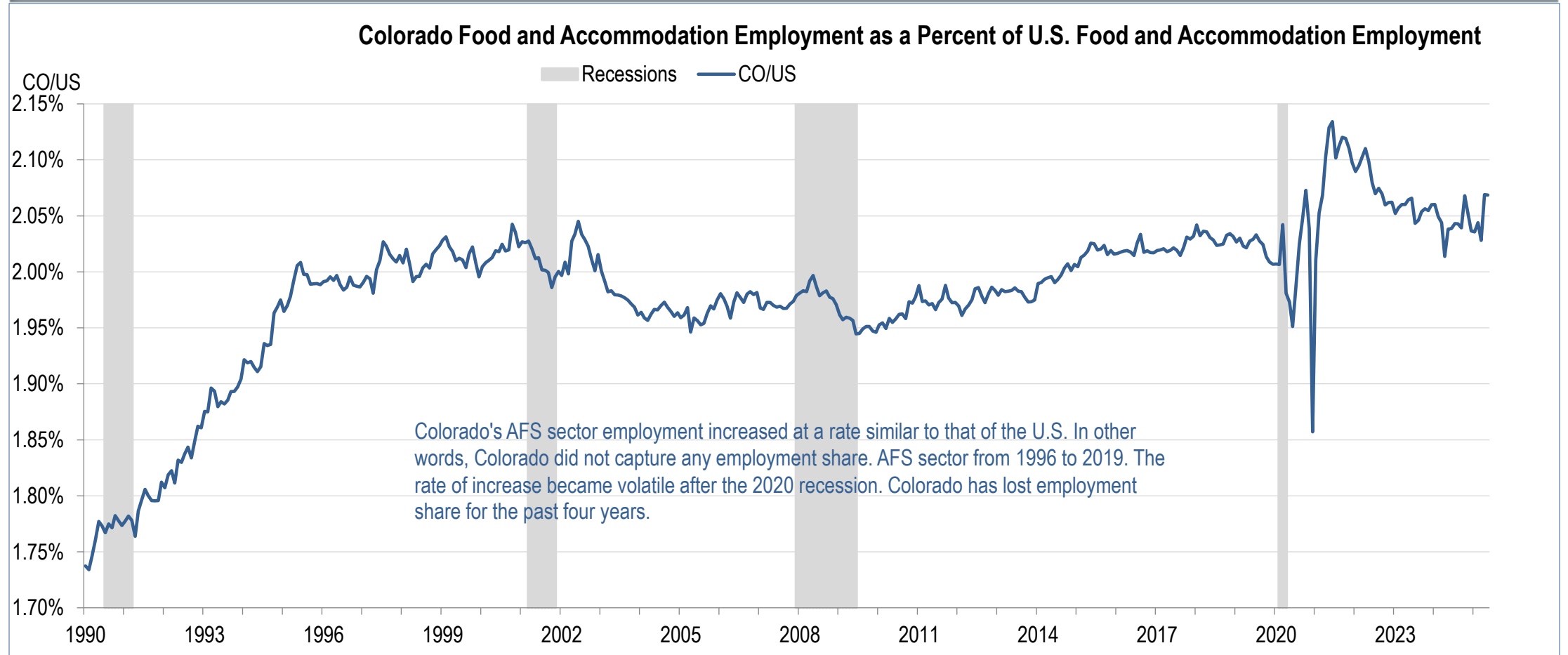
- The second largest employment sector is AFS. Its 296,700 employees account for 10.0% of total state employment. Between 2011 and 2024, the AFS sector employment increased by 71,600, or 1.9%. The annualized rate of increase is slightly less than the state average for this period, 1.9%.
- AFS employment accounts for about 82% of Leisure and Hospitality employment. AER employment accounts for the remaining 18%.
- The sector provides accommodation and food services for both tourists and residents. Tax revenues from AFS services benefit state and local coffers.
- The AFS sector has an employment location quotient of 1.11. AFS employment was more resilient than some sectors during the 2001, 2007, and 2020 economic recessions.
- Downtown Denver restaurants have struggled for a variety of reasons because the city has lost some of its luster as a place to visit.
- AFS Average Annual Wages (AAW) for 2024 were \$33,765, well below the state average, \$81,423.
- In 2024, the AFS contribution to Colorado's GDP was \$22.0 billion, about 4% of the total. AFS businesses employ workers in most communities.

Colorado Accommodation and Food Services Employment



Source: BLS, S.A. cber.co.

Colorado Accommodation and Food Services Employment as a Percent of U.S. Accommodation and Food Services Employment

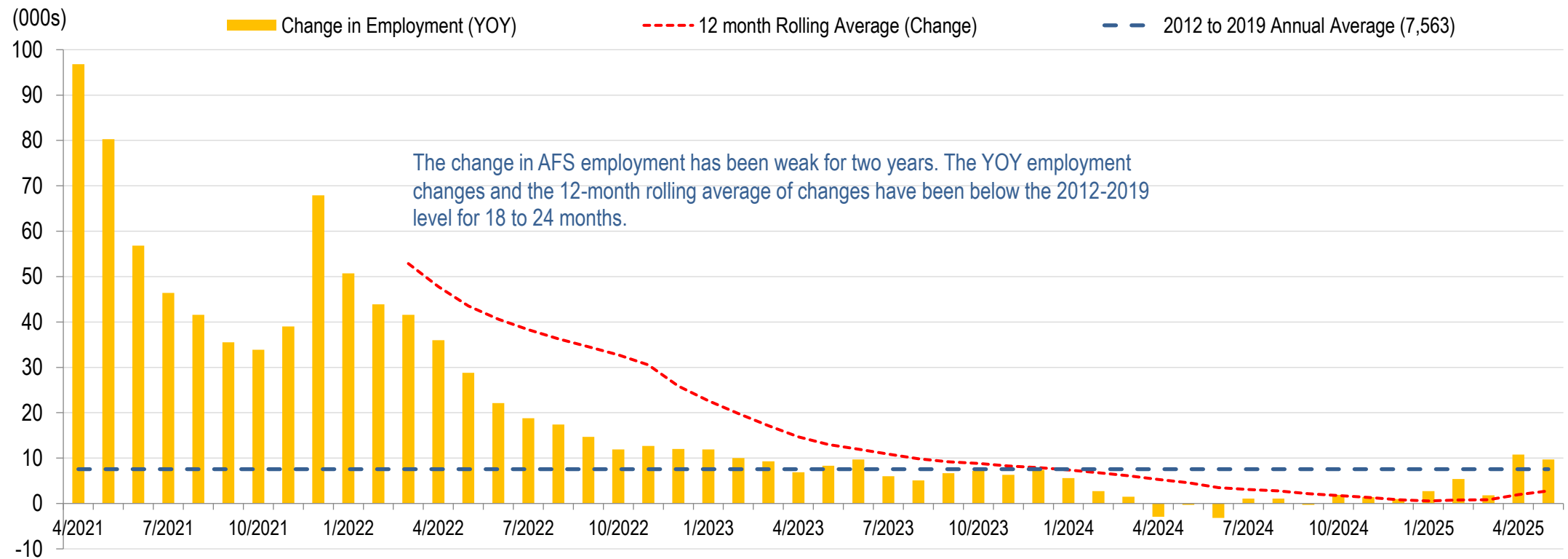


Source: BLS, S.A.cber.co.

Short-Term YOY Change in Employment (Post-COVID)

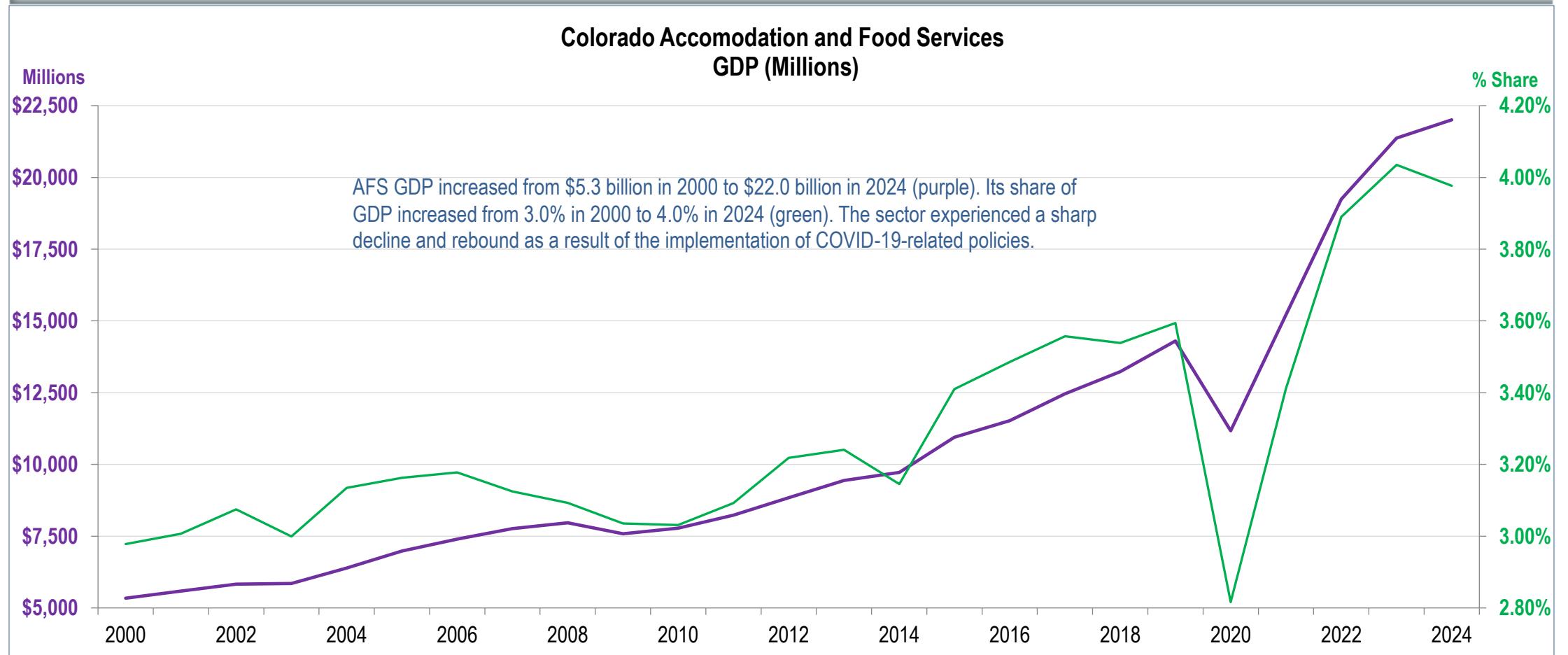
Colorado AFS Employment

YOY Change in Accommodation and Food Services Colorado Employment



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, NSA cber.co.

Colorado AFS GDP



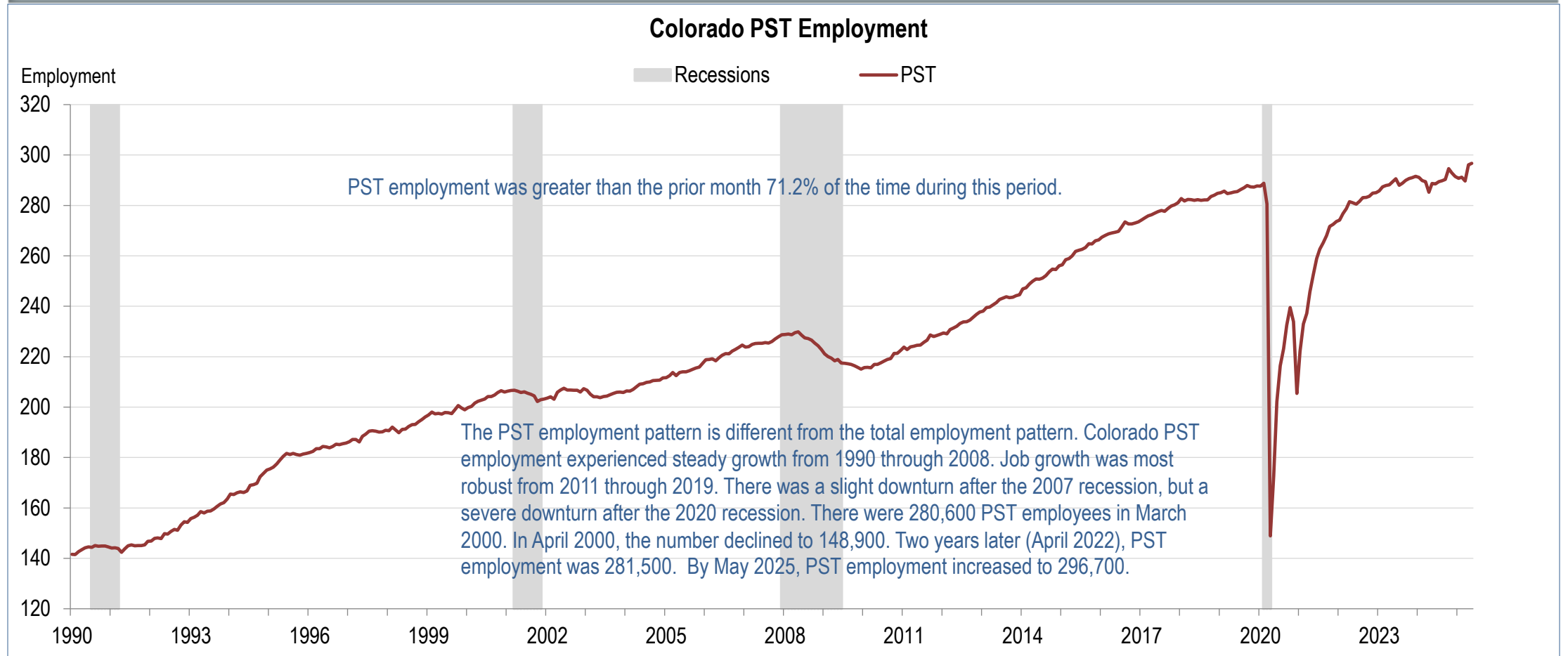
Source: BLS, S.A. cber.co.

Colorado Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (PST)

Driving the Economy Challenges and Opportunities

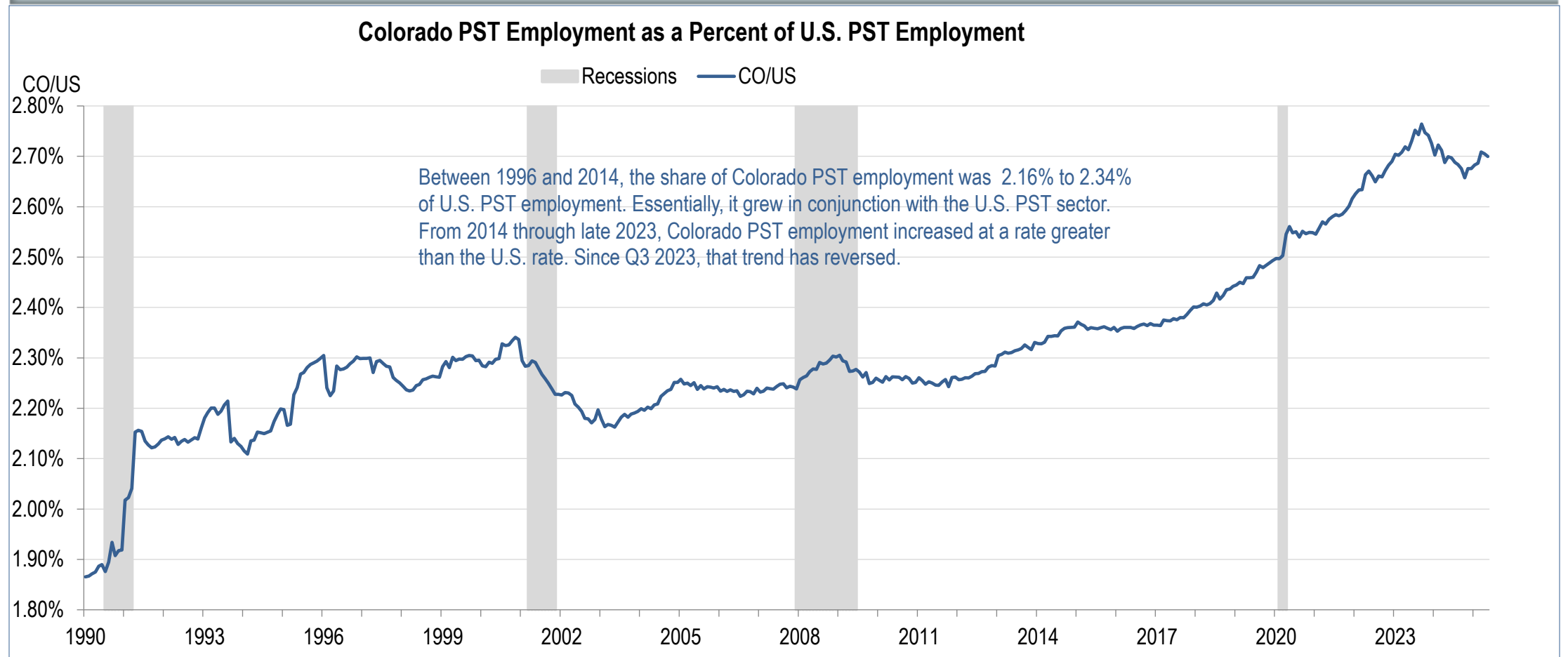
- In May 2025, the PST sector was the state's third-largest employment sector with 293,200 workers, or 9.8% of total employment.
- Employment increased by 122,400 between 2011 and 2024, an annualized growth rate of 3.7%.
- The PST sector has an employment location quotient of 1.44. That means it has a competitive advantage for Colorado. The state PST sector has a higher concentration of employees than the U.S. Many of these companies have ties to the state's advanced technology clusters.
- PST Average Annual Wages (AAW) for 2024 were \$135,142.
- The PST contribution to the state's GDP was \$61.3 billion, or 11.1% of the total. PST is the second-largest private sector industry for its contribution to GDP.
- The PST sector's level of employment, location quotient, wages, and contribution to GDP make it a primary driver of the state economy.

Colorado Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services Employment



Source: BLS, S.A. cber.co.

Colorado PST Employment as a Percent of U.S. PST Employment

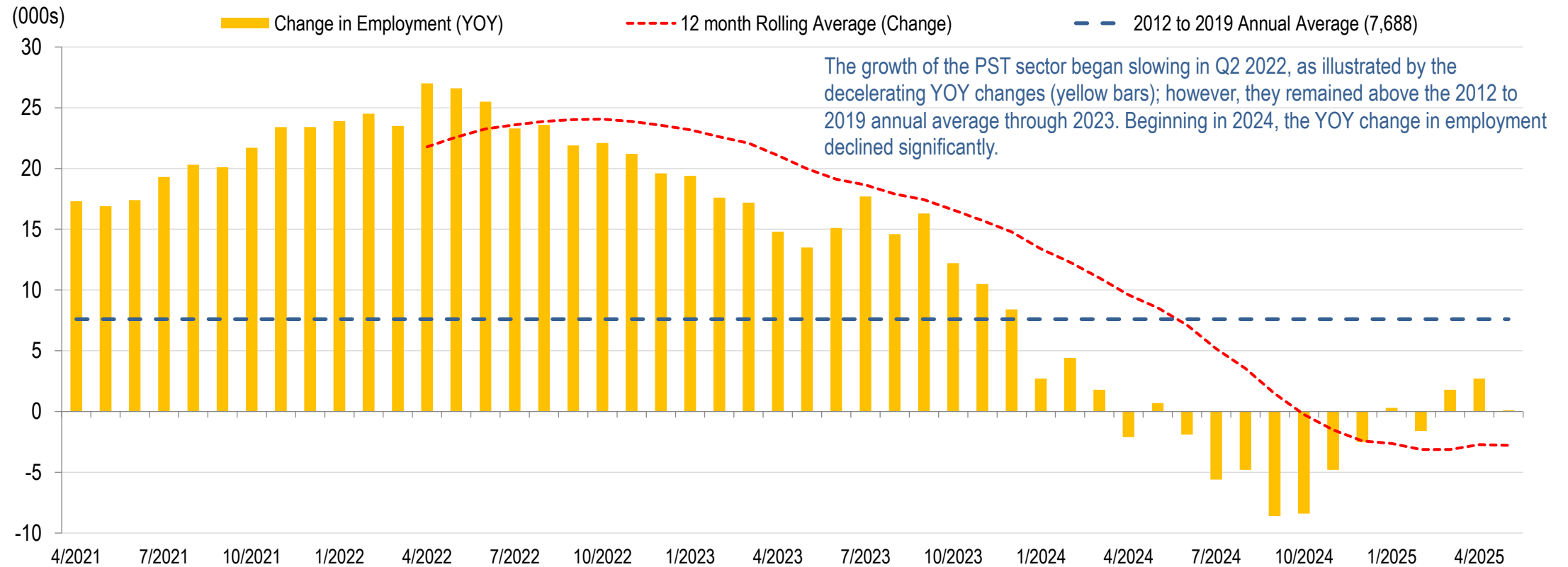


Source: BLS, S.A. cber.co.

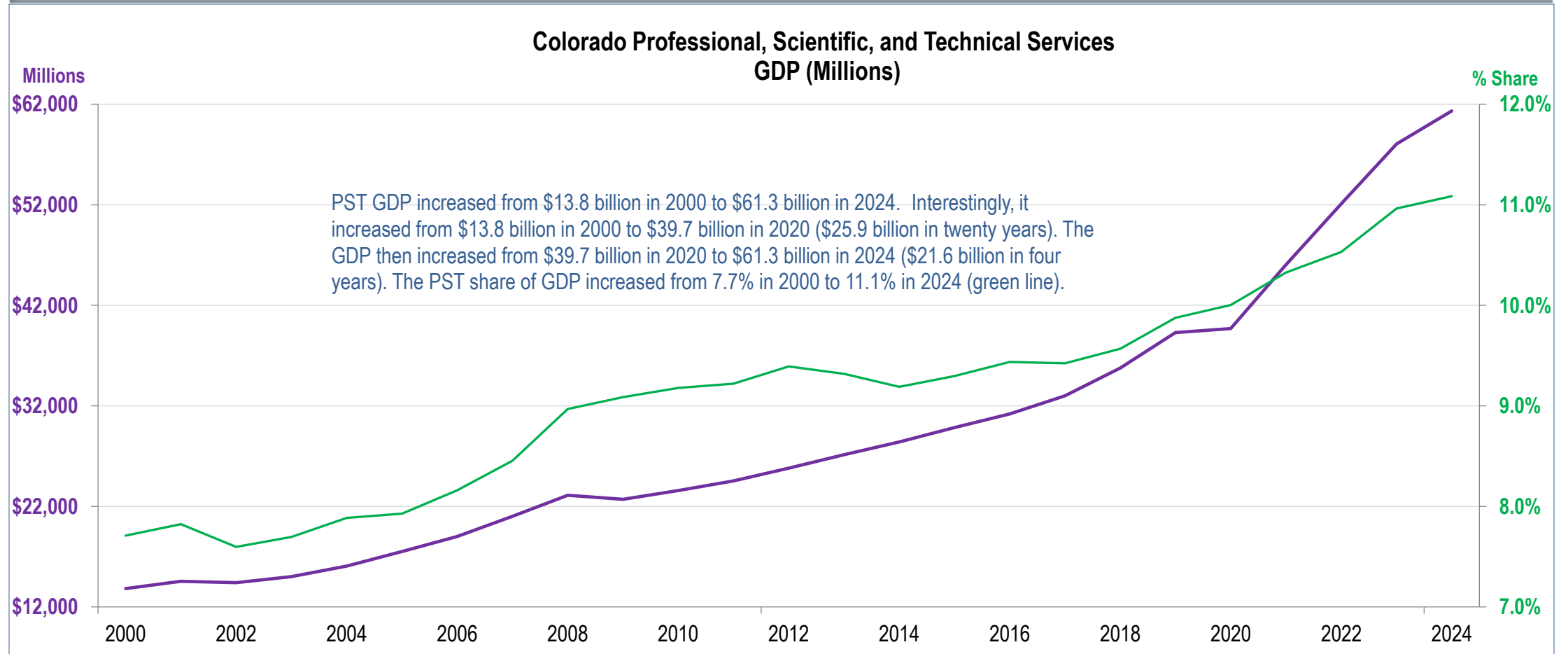
Short-Term YOY Change in Employment (Post-COVID)

Colorado PST Employment

YOY Change in Professional, Scientific, and Technical Colorado Employment



Colorado PST GDP



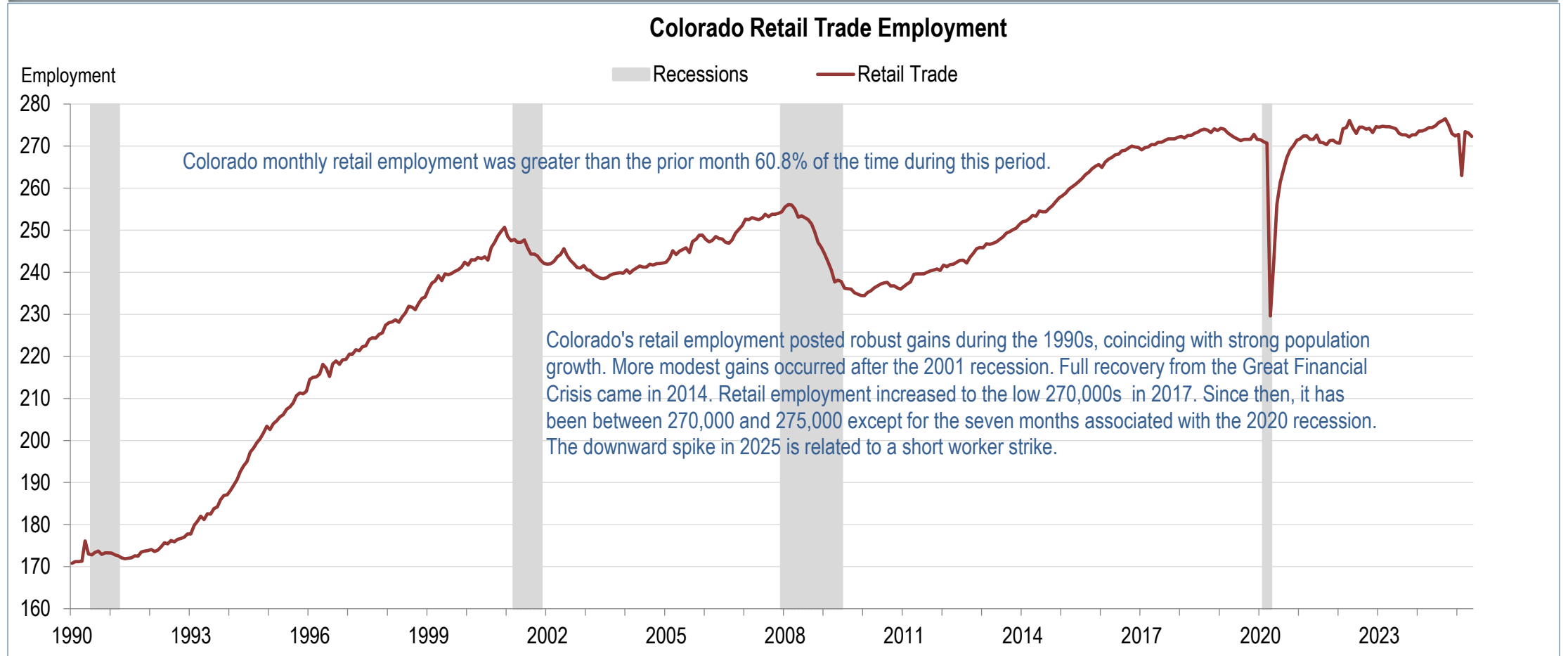
Source: BLS, S.A. cber.co.

Colorado Retail Trade

Driving the Economy Challenges and Opportunities

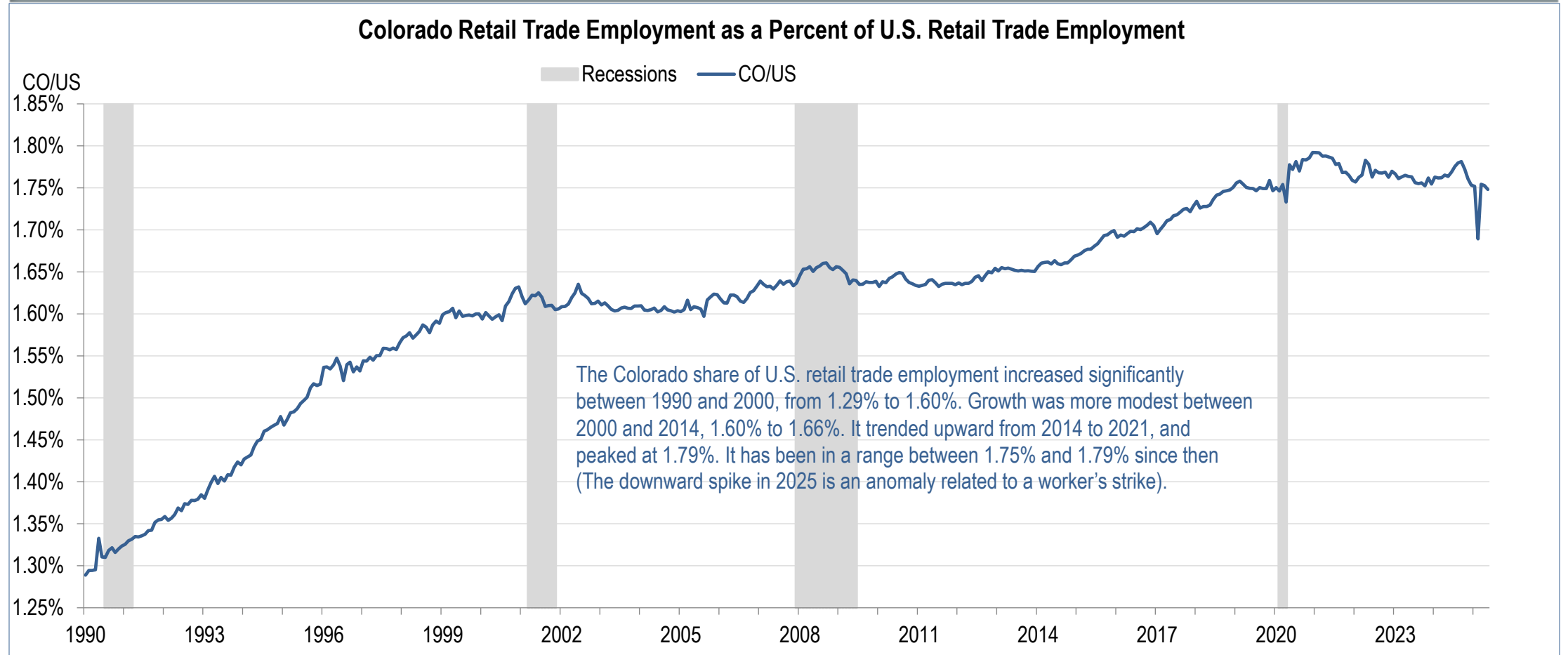
- In May 2025, the retail trade sector was the state's fourth-largest employment sector with 272,300 workers, or about 9.2% of total employment.
- Employment increased by 37,900 between 2011 and 2024, an annualized growth rate of 1.0%. The evolution of the industry and slower population growth partially explain the slower employment growth during this period.
- Retail trade employment has an employment location quotient of .93. Retail trade rarely provides a state-level competitive advantage. As a result, a location quotient of near 1.0 is reasonable.
- Retail trade Average Annual Wages (AAW) for 2024 were \$44,237.
- Retail trade contributes \$31.6 billion, or about 5.7%, to the state's GDP. It is the sixth largest contributor.
- Much like AFS, retail trade employs a large number of employees. It also generates tax revenue that helps state and local governments provide services. Population changes are critical to the retail trade industry. It has prospered as the state's population increased. The sector's important role in the economy will continue to evolve in the future.

Colorado Retail Trade Employment



Source: BLS, S.A. cber.co.

Colorado Retail Trade as a Percent of U.S. Retail Trade Employment

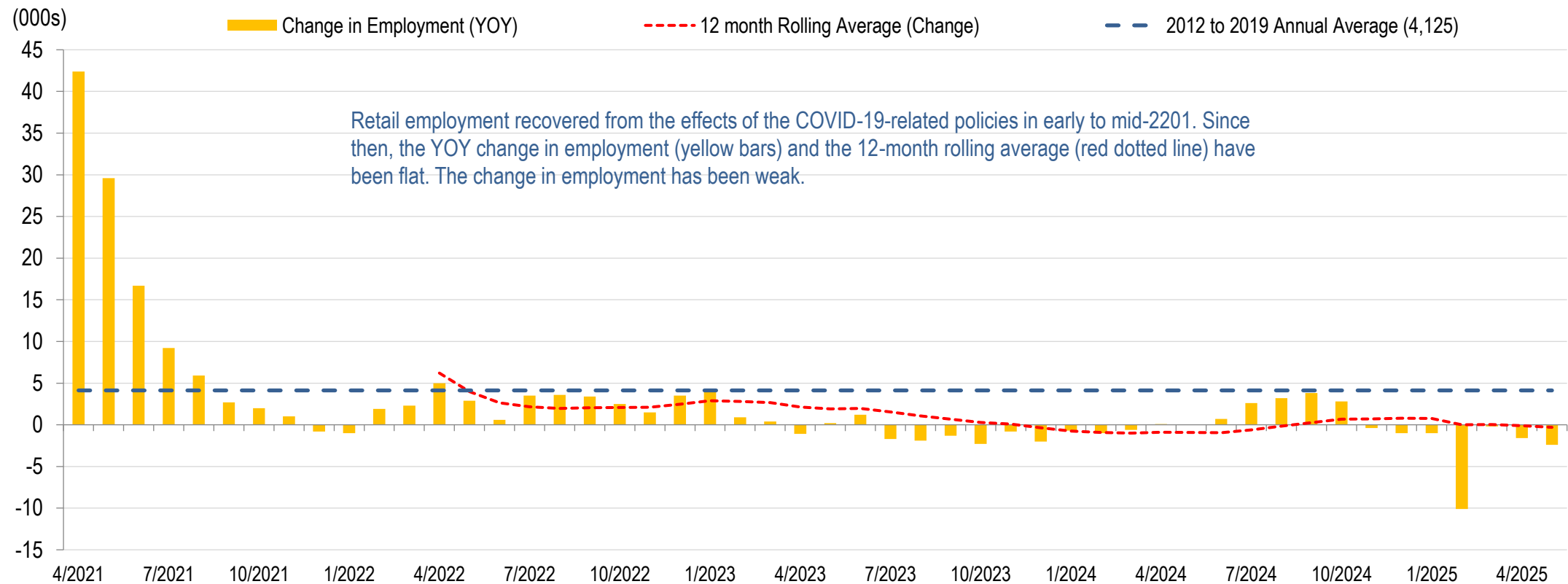


Source: BLS, S.A.cber.co.

Short-Term YOY Change in Employment (Post-COVID)

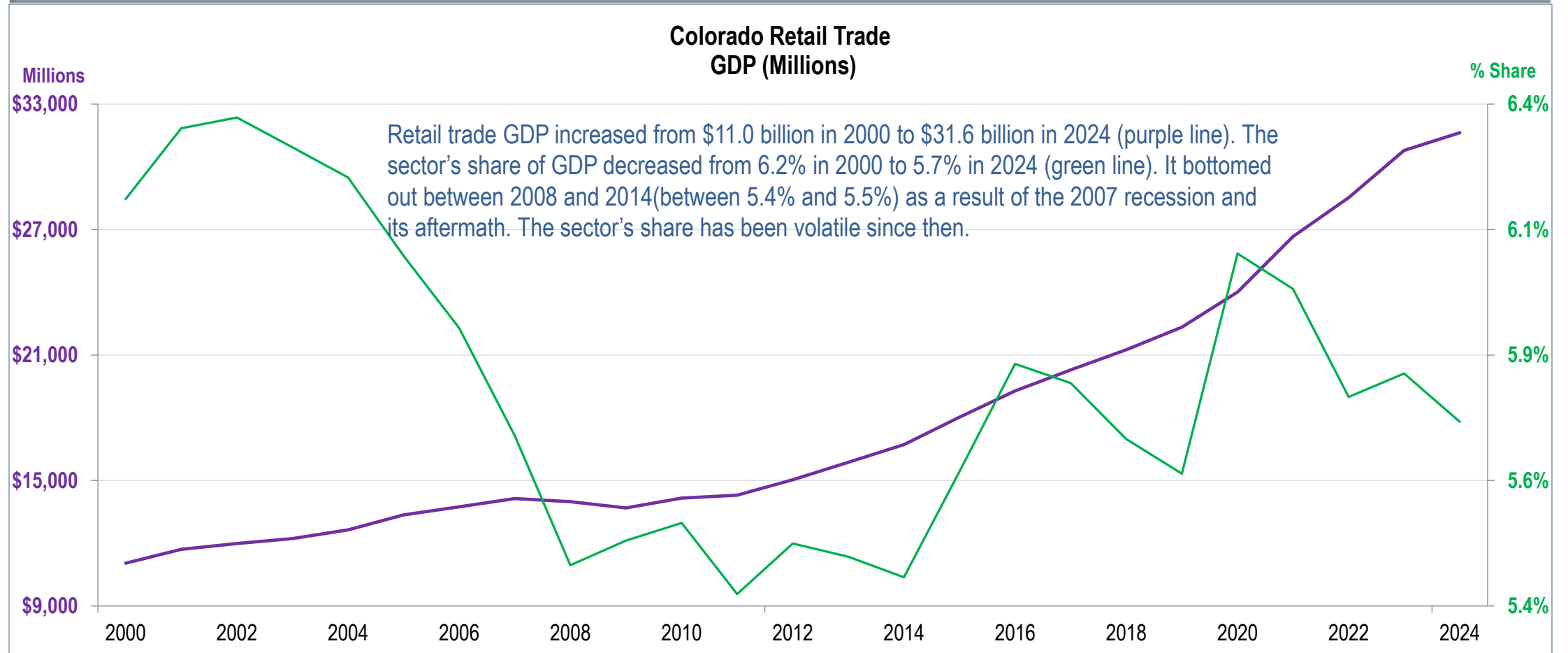
Colorado Retail Trade Employment

YOY Change in Colorado Retail Trade Employment



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, NSA cber.co.

Colorado Retail Trade GDP



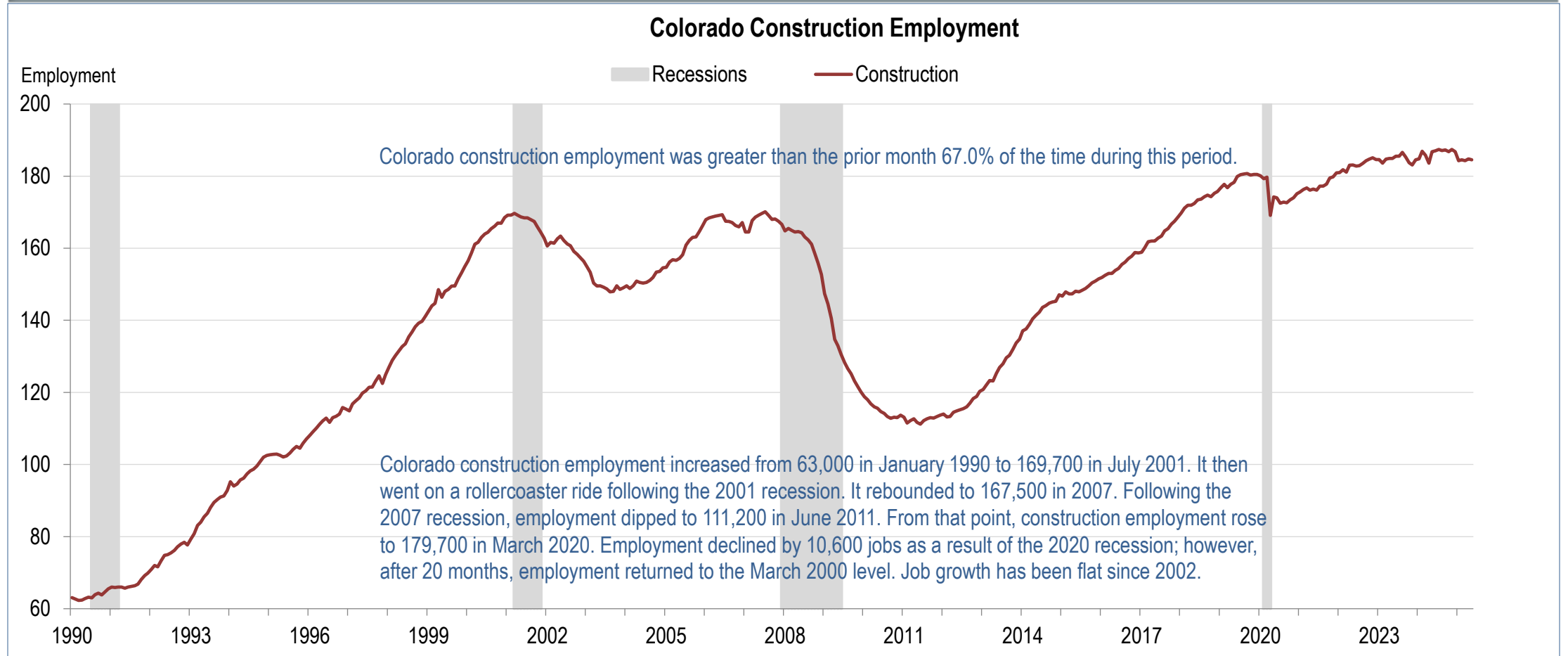
Source: BLS, S.A. cber.co.

Colorado Construction

Driving the Economy Challenges and Opportunities

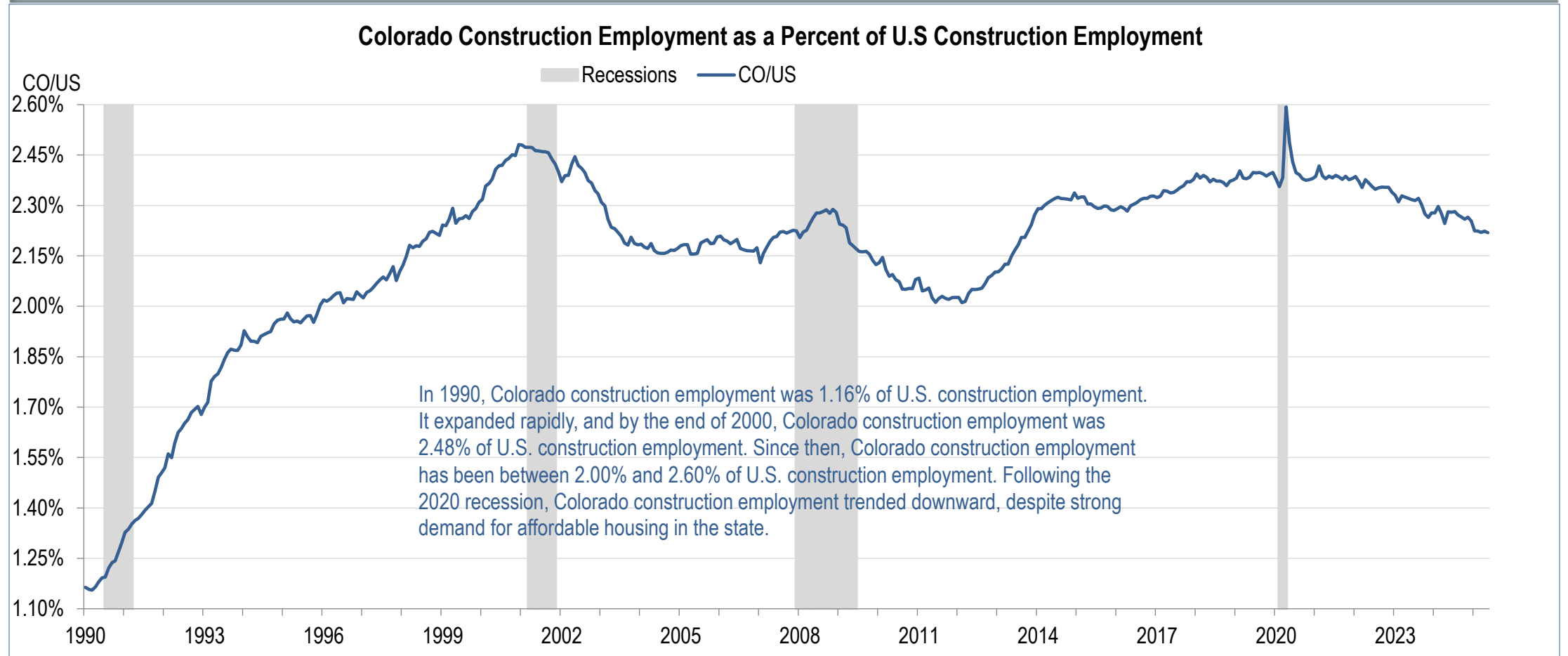
- In May 2025, construction employment was the state's fifth-largest sector with 184,500 workers. It accounts for 6.17% of total employment.
- The sector had solid growth during the 1990s in conjunction with the increased population. The 2001 recession was mild, and the recovery was timely. The Great Financial Crisis was more severe, and the recovery was more extended. For the construction sector, the 2020 recession was mild, but the recovery has been lackluster.
- Employment increased by 71,500 between 2011 and 2024, an annualized growth rate of 3.3%. Note that construction employment increased by 63,300 jobs between 2013 and 2019 (the recovery period from the 2007 recession).
- Construction employment has historically been volatile. That challenge will continue with concerns about immigration policy and its impact on the construction workforce.
- Construction employment has a location quotient of 1.18. Since the COVID-19-related recession, conversion and remodeling projects have been popular. There may also be greater demand in Colorado for the mix of different services (maintenance, residential, commercial, and non-building).
- Average Annual Wages (AAW) for construction in 2024 were \$81,400.
- In 2024, the construction sector's contribution to the state's GDP was about \$33.0 billion, or about 6.0% of the total.
- Population changes are critical to the construction industry. The sector has flourished as the state's population has increased.

Colorado Construction Employment



Source: BLS, S.A. cber.co.

Colorado Construction Employment as a Percent of U.S. Construction Employment

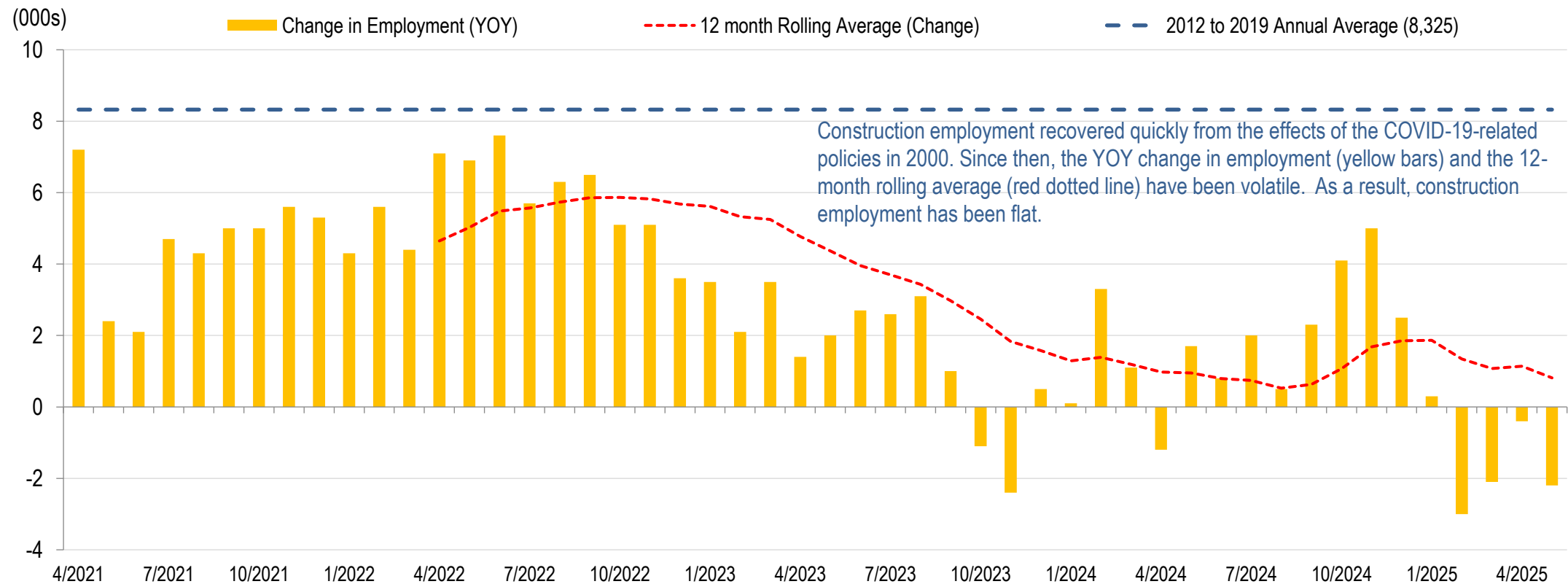


Source: BLS, S.A.cber.co.

Short-Term YOY Change in Employment (Post-COVID)

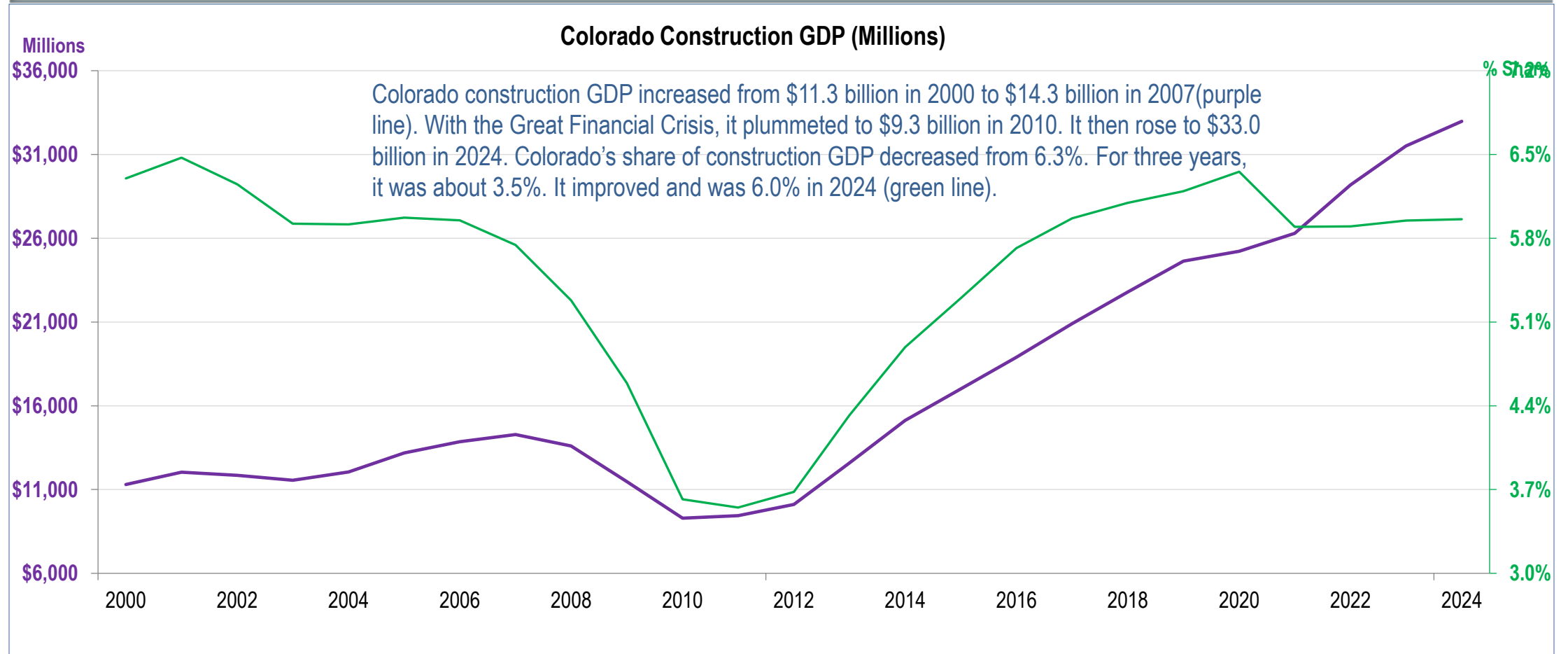
Colorado Construction Employment

YOY Change in Colorado Construction Employment



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, NSA cber.co.

Colorado Construction GDP



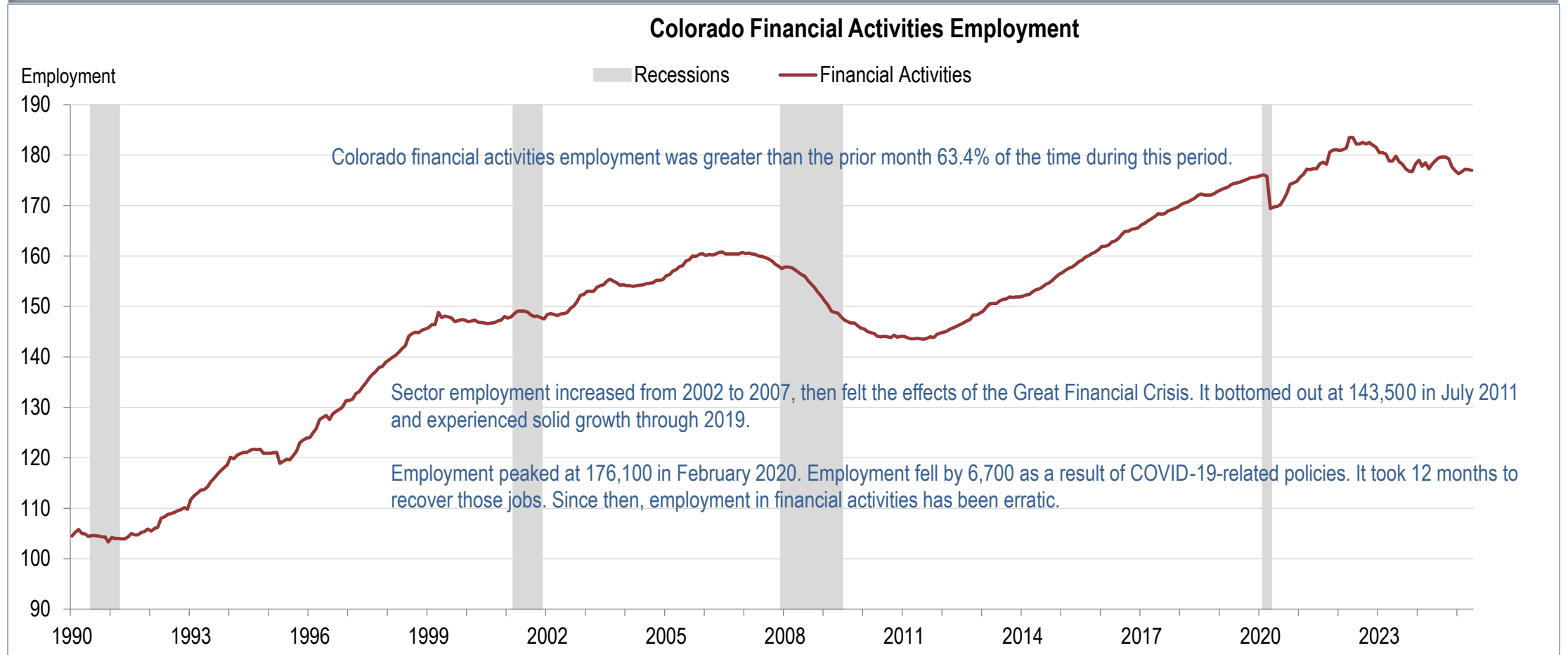
Source: BLS, S.A. cber.co.

Colorado Financial Activities (FA)

Driving the Economy Challenges and Opportunities

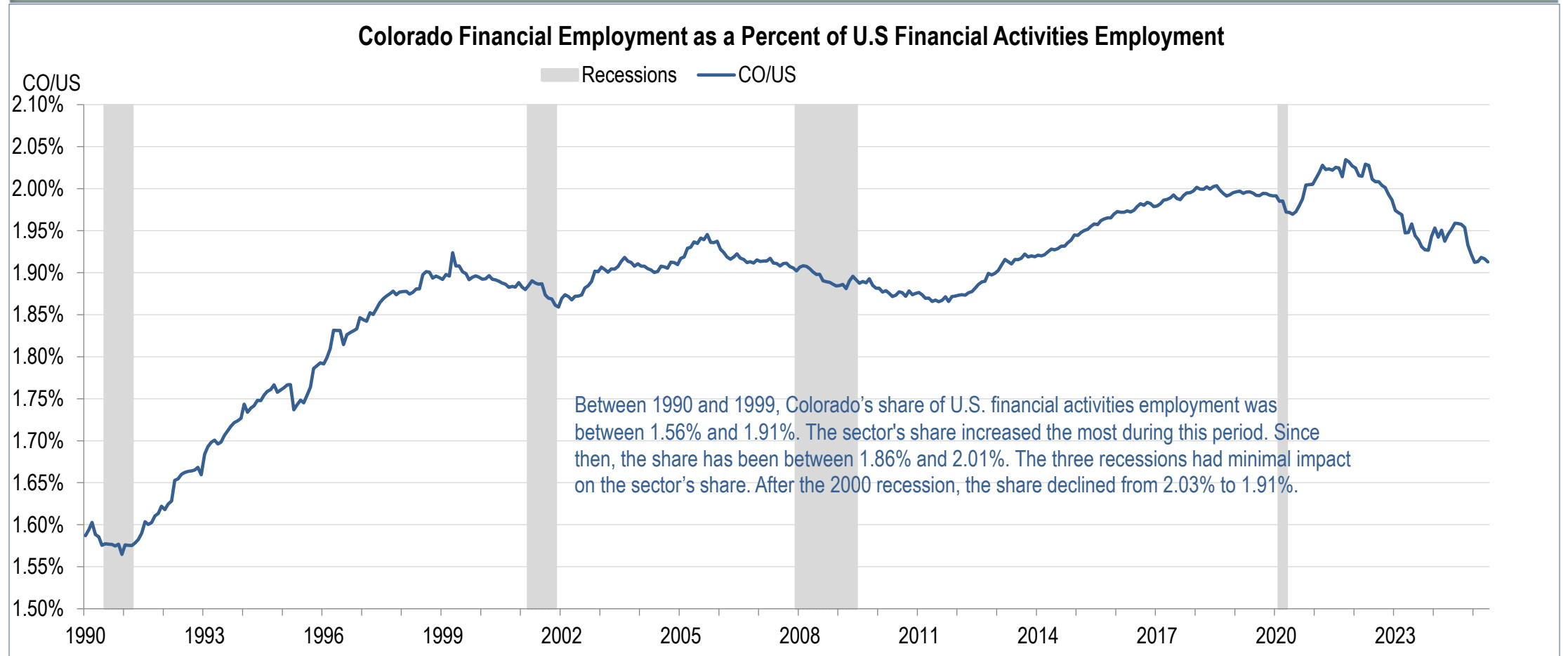
- In 2024, financial activities contributed \$118.4 billion, or about 21.4%, to the state's GDP. Finance and insurance accounted for about \$30.3 billion. Real estate, rental, and leasing contributed \$88.1 billion.
- The sector is the state's sixth-largest wage and salary employment sector with 177,000 workers, or 5.9% of the wage and salary workforce.
- Employment increased by 34,100 between 2011 and 2024, an annualized growth rate of 1.4%.
- The 2007 recession did not significantly impact the sector, although significant job losses occurred during the Great Financial Crisis. The COVID-19-related recession had little impact on sector employment.
- FA employment has a location quotient of 1.02. Colorado does not have a competitive advantage in this area.
- The FA AAW was \$133,523 in 2024. AAW was \$80,463 for finance and insurance, and \$135,142 for real estate, rental, and leasing.

Colorado Financial Activities Employment



Source: BLS, S.A. cber.co.

Colorado Financial Employment as a Percent of U.S. Financial Activities Employment

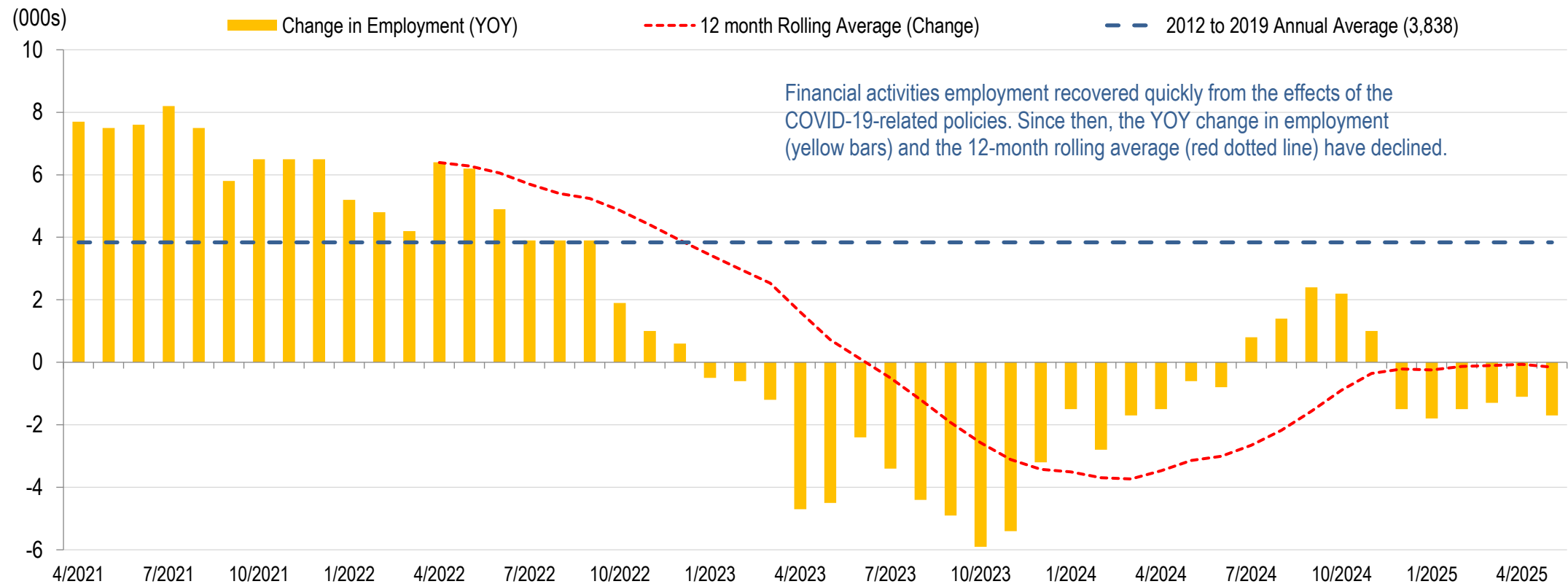


Source: BLS, S.A.cber.co.

Short-Term YOY Change in Employment (Post-COVID)

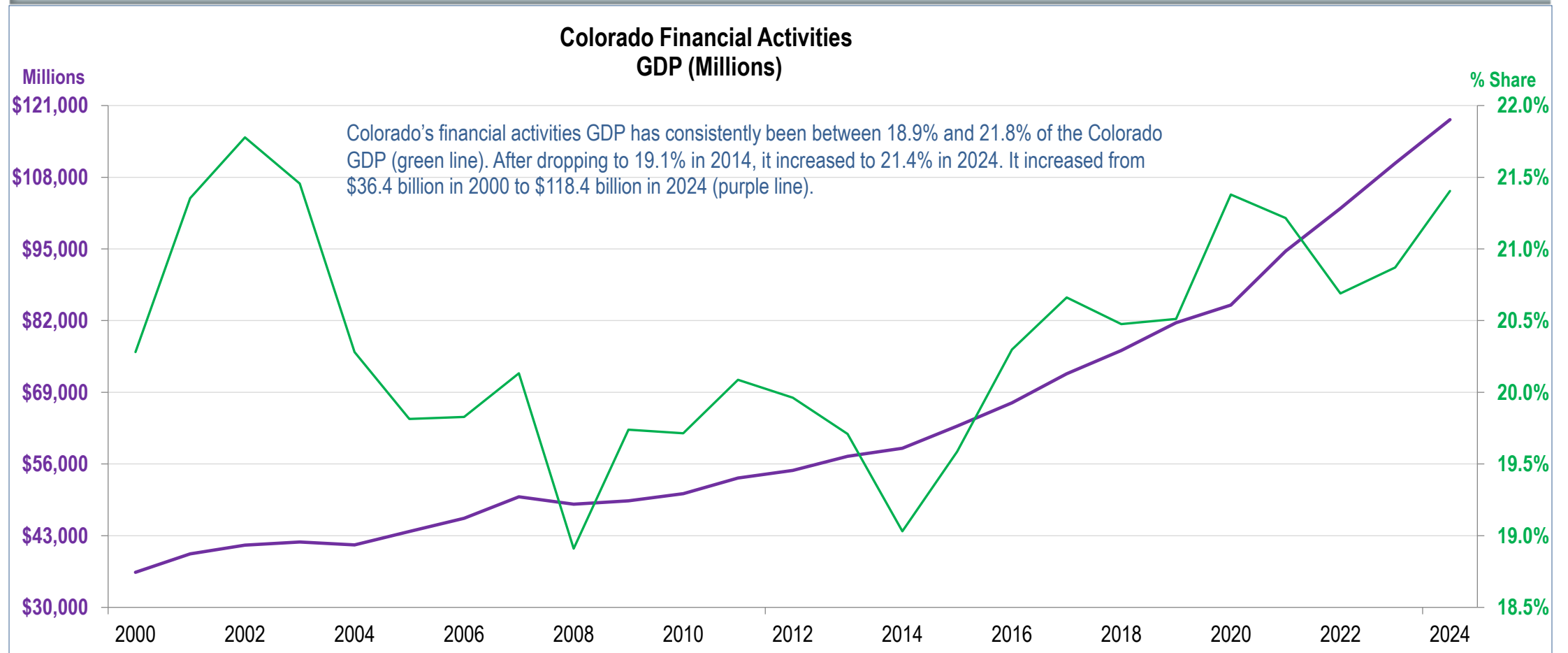
Colorado Financial Activities Employment

YOY Change in Colorado Financial Activities Employment



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, NSA cber.co.

Colorado Financial Activities GDP



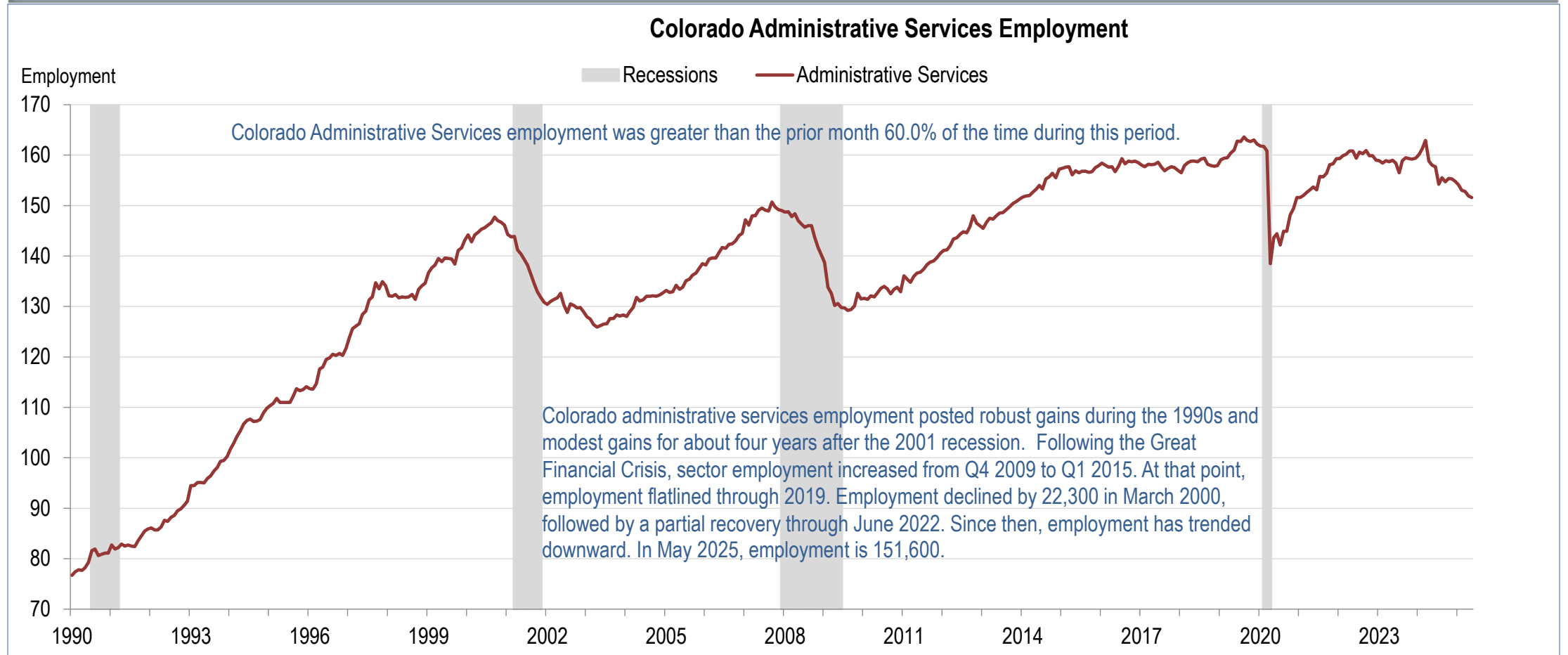
Source: BLS, S.A. cber.co.

Colorado Administrative Services

Driving the Economy Challenges and Opportunities

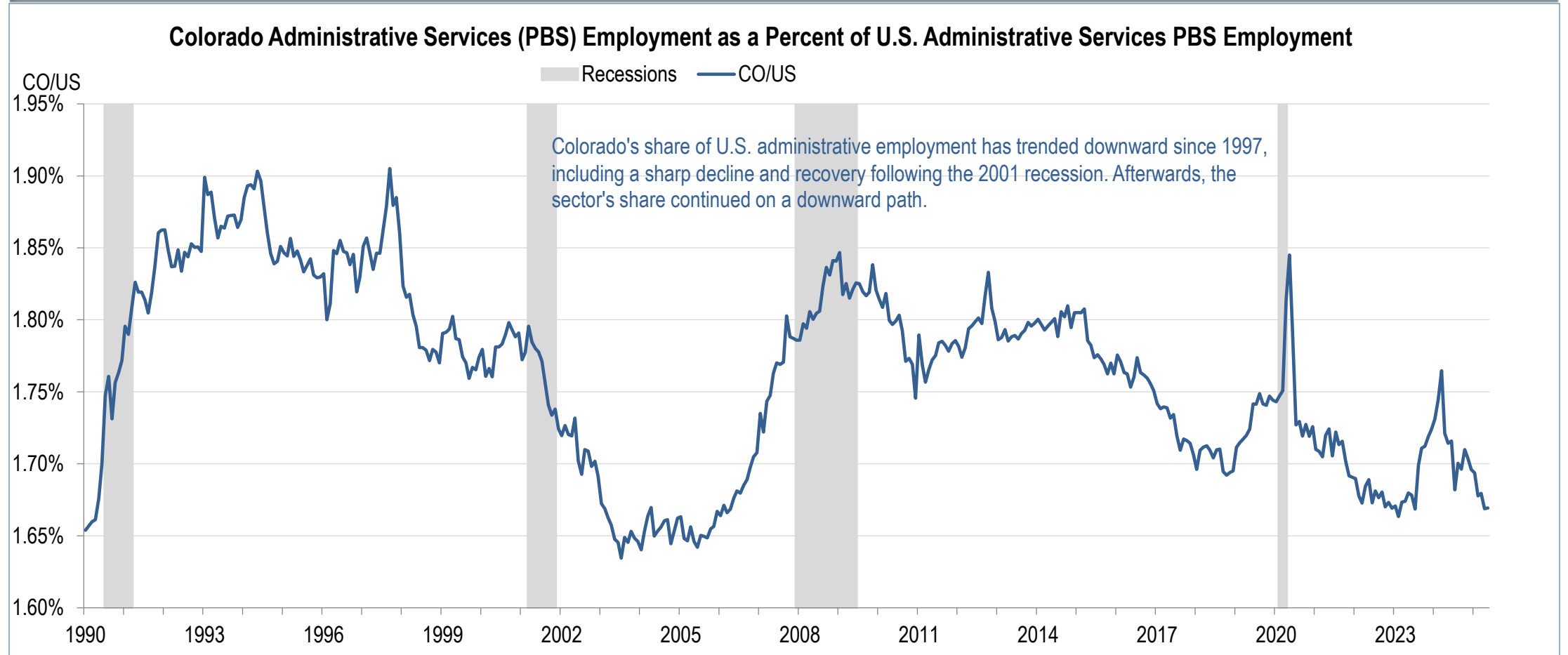
- Administrative services employment is a sub-sector of the PBS Supersector.
- Administrative services employment growth as a percent of U.S. sector growth has trended downward since the 1990s. As a result, the sector's location quotient is 0.89.
- Sector employment has had an unusual growth pattern. Like many sectors, it increased during the 1990s. At that point, it became very volatile.
- Employment was 76,700 in January 1990. It reached 147,700 in September 2000. The 2001 recession hit, and employment dropped to 125,900 in April 2003.
- Sector employment increased before the Great Financial Crisis. It peaked at 149,200, slightly more than the peak in 2000. Sector employment decreased during that recession.
- Administrative services employment rebounded until 2015, when it plateaued. Sector employment reached 163,600 in August 2019. In May 2025, employment was 151,600. This level is slightly more than in September 2000 (147,700).
- In 2025, administrative services employment accounts for 5.07% of total employment.
- AAW for administrative employment is \$61,506.
- On a brighter note, administrative services contribute about \$16.1 billion to the state's GDP, an increase from \$5.6 billion in 1990. Despite the lackluster employment data, this is an increase in GDP share from 3.0% in 1990 to 4.0% in 2024.

Colorado Administrative Services (PBS) Employment



Source: BLS, S.A. cber.co.

Colorado Administrative Services (PBS) Employment as a Percent of U.S. Administrative Services (PBS) Employment

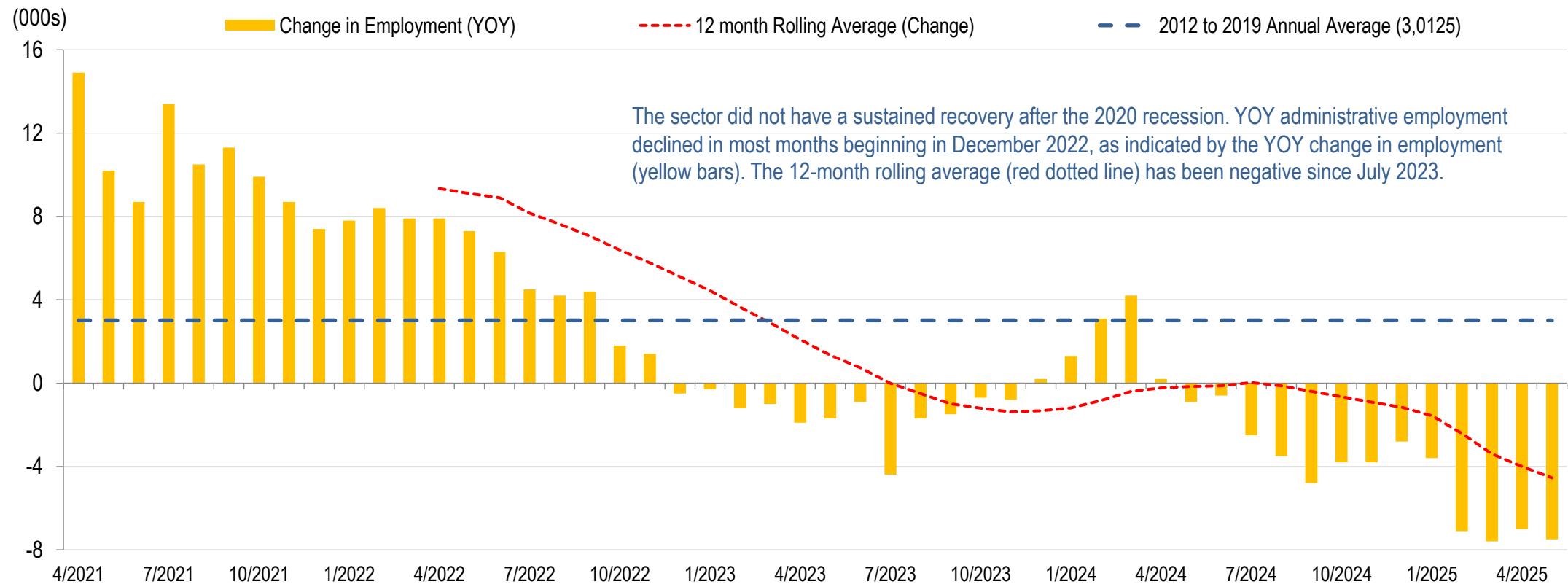


Source: BLS, S.A.cber.co.

Short-Term YOY Change in Employment (Post-COVID)

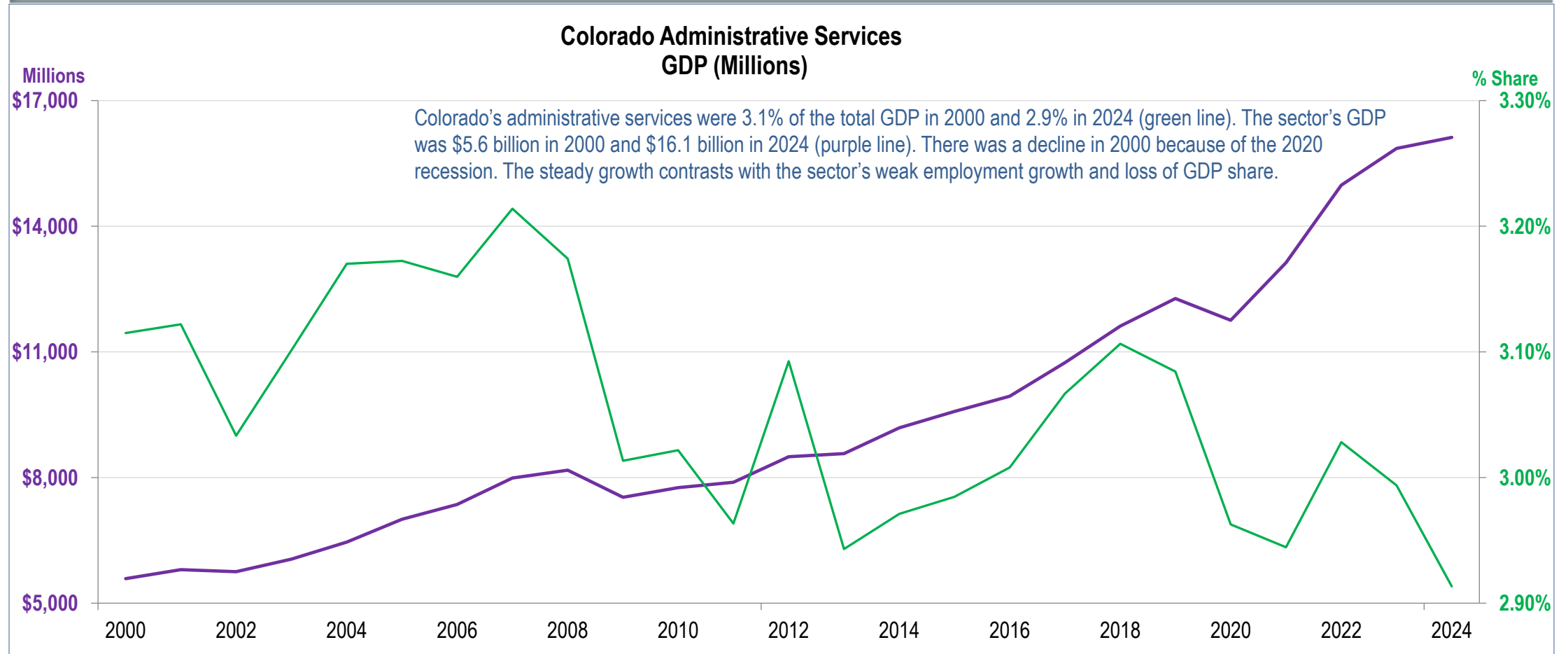
Colorado Administrative Services Employment

YOY Change in Colorado Administrative Services Employment



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, NSA cber.co.

Colorado Administrative Services (PBS) GDP



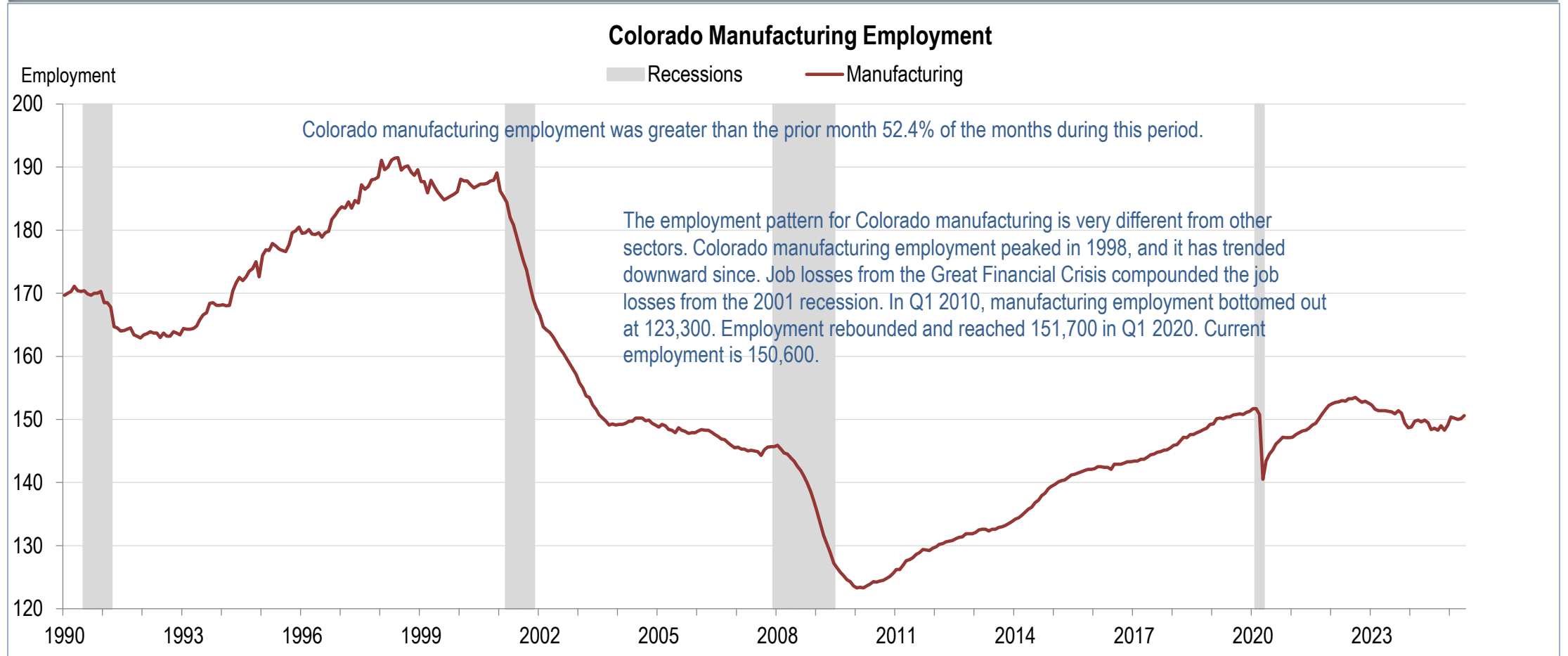
Source: BLS, S.A. cber.co.

Colorado Manufacturing

Driving the Economy Challenges and Opportunities

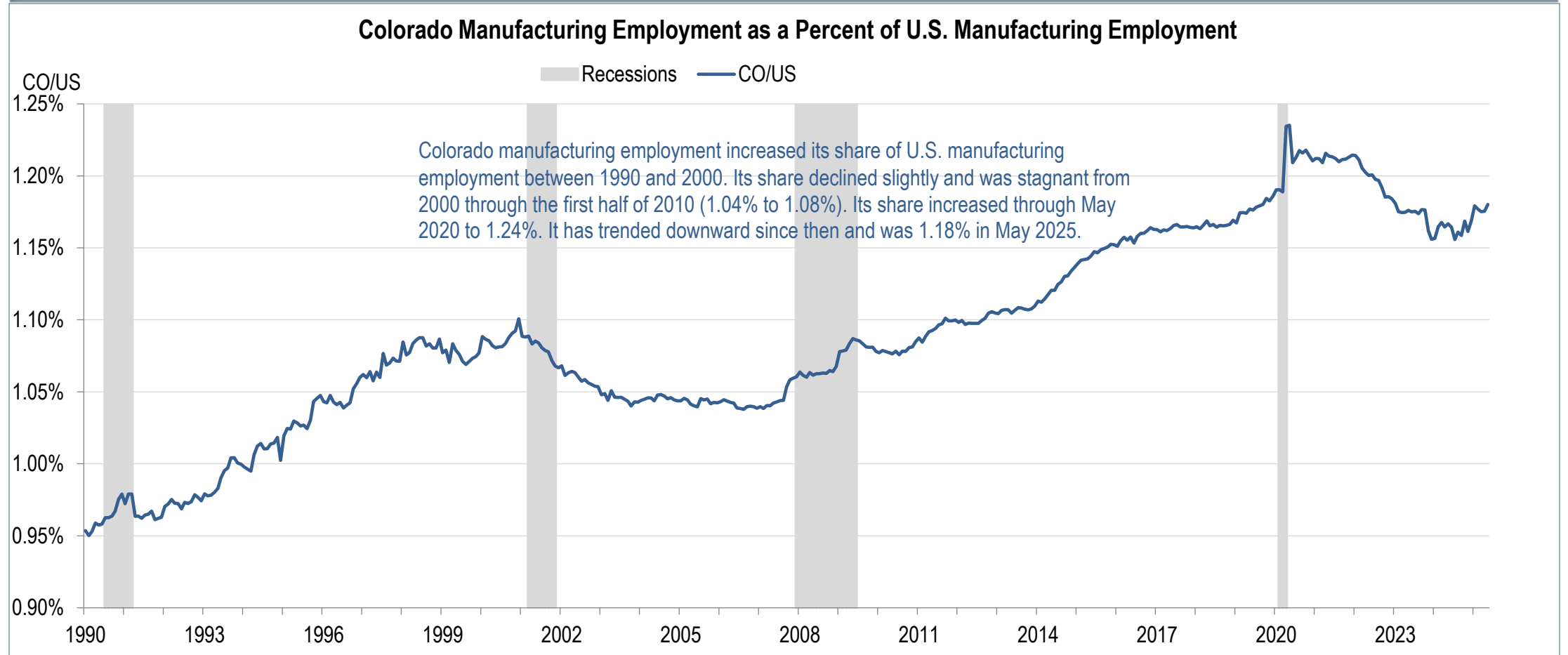
- Colorado manufacturing is different than 30 years ago. As a result, it has an atypical employment pattern. It increased from 169,700 in January 1990 to 191,100 in April 1998. Many manufacturers began offshoring, and Colorado's manufacturing employment trended downward. Numerous computer manufacturers reduced or eliminated their facilities in the state. In May 2025, there were 150,600 manufacturing employees, 5.03% of all workers.
- In 1990, 70% of manufacturers produced durable goods. By 2024, 61% of Colorado manufacturers produced durable goods.
- Between 2011 and 2024, manufacturing jobs increased by 24,900, an annualized growth rate of 1.2%.
- In May 2025, the manufacturing location quotient was 0.67.
- The Bureau of Labor Statistics QCEW reports that AAW for manufacturing employment was \$89,648. QCEW states that there are about 6,000 manufacturing establishments in Colorado.
- On a positive note, manufacturing contributes about \$28.7 billion to the state's GDP, about 5.2% of the total. In 1990, the sector contributed about \$14.4 billion. For 2024, it was \$18.7 billion. The increase in Colorado's GDP is in direct contrast to the decline in employment. It reflects the many changes to manufacturing over the past two decades (technology, supply chain management, management processes, offshoring, and onshoring).
- In 2024, about 24.0% of the durable goods were computer and electronic products, down from 40.0% in 2010. The estimated 2024 value for transportation is about 19.3%, an increase from about 10.6% in 1990. A portion of the aerospace industry is in this category.
- In the smaller nondurable goods sector, 49.0% of the total nondurable goods manufacturers were in beverage manufacturing in 2024, up from 42.7% in 2010.

Colorado Manufacturing Employment



Source: BLS, S.A. cber.co.

Colorado Manufacturing Employment as a Percent of U.S. Manufacturing Employment

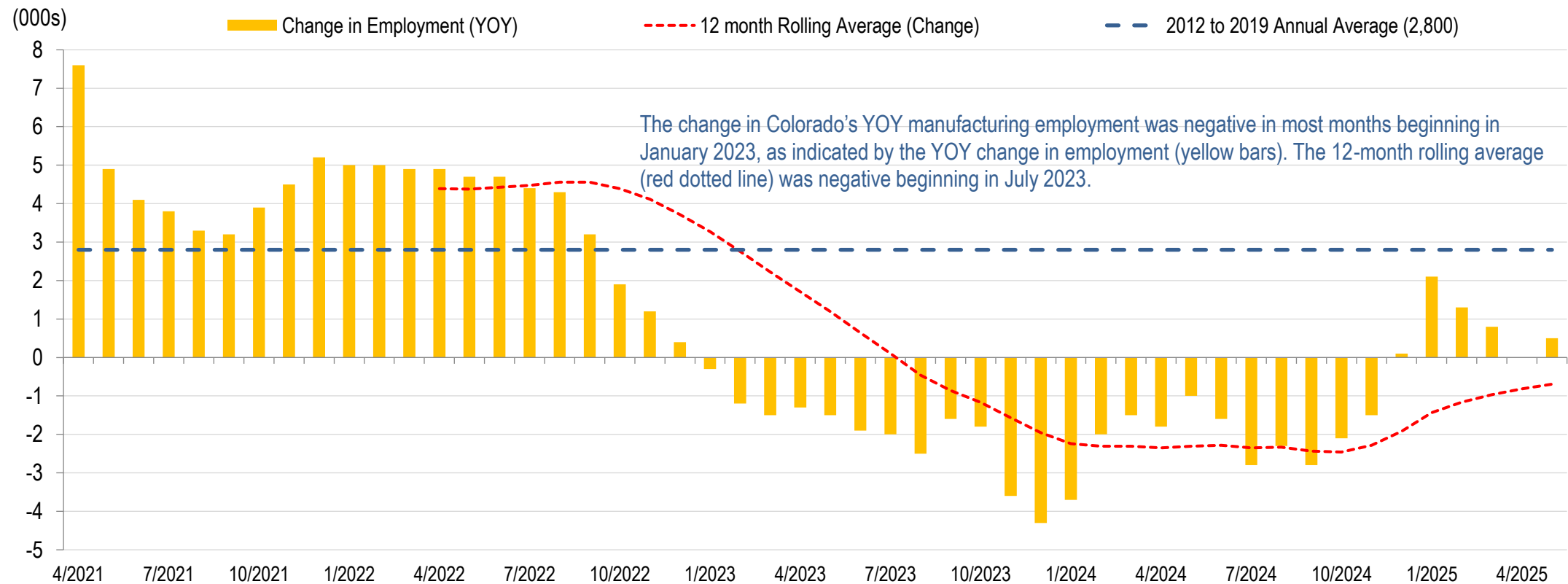


Source: BLS, S.A.cber.co.

Short-Term YOY Change in Employment (Post-COVID)

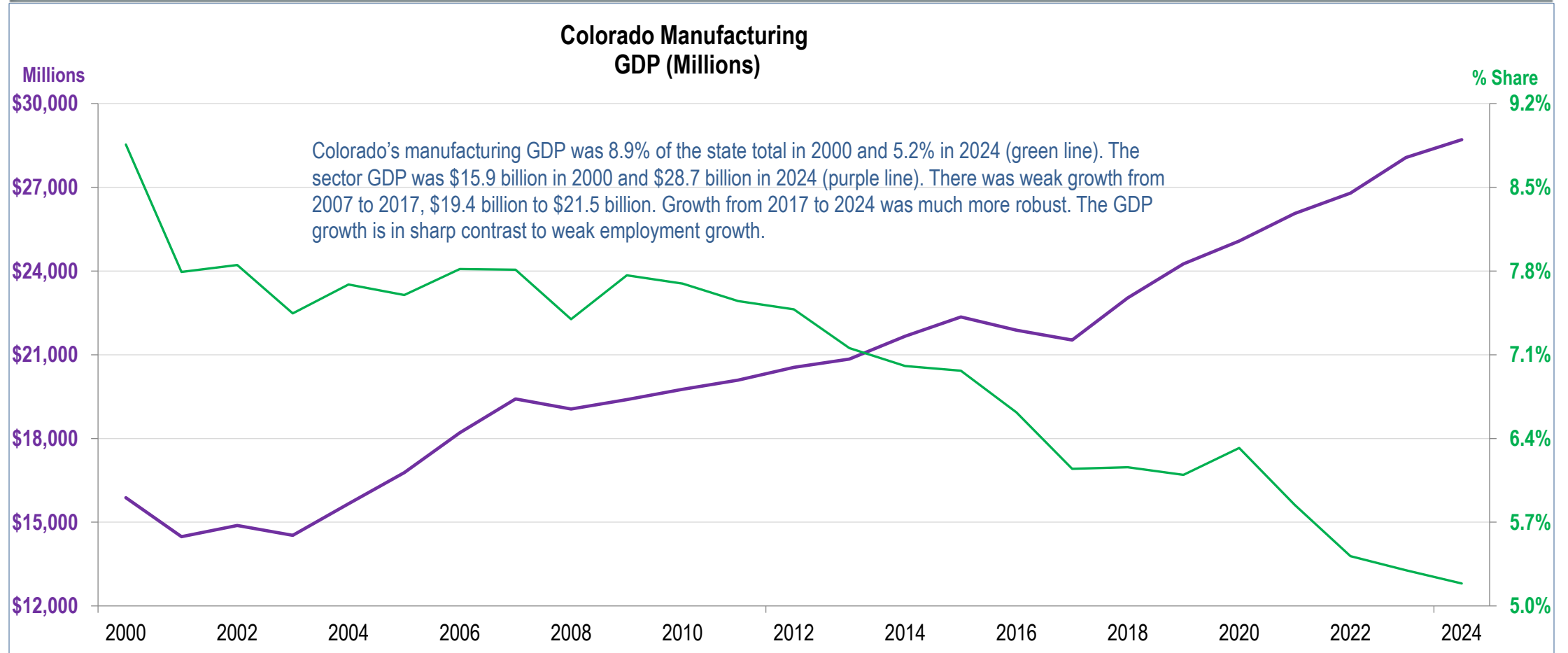
Colorado Manufacturing Employment

YOY Change in Colorado Manufacturing Services Employment



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, NSA cber.co.

Colorado Manufacturing GDP



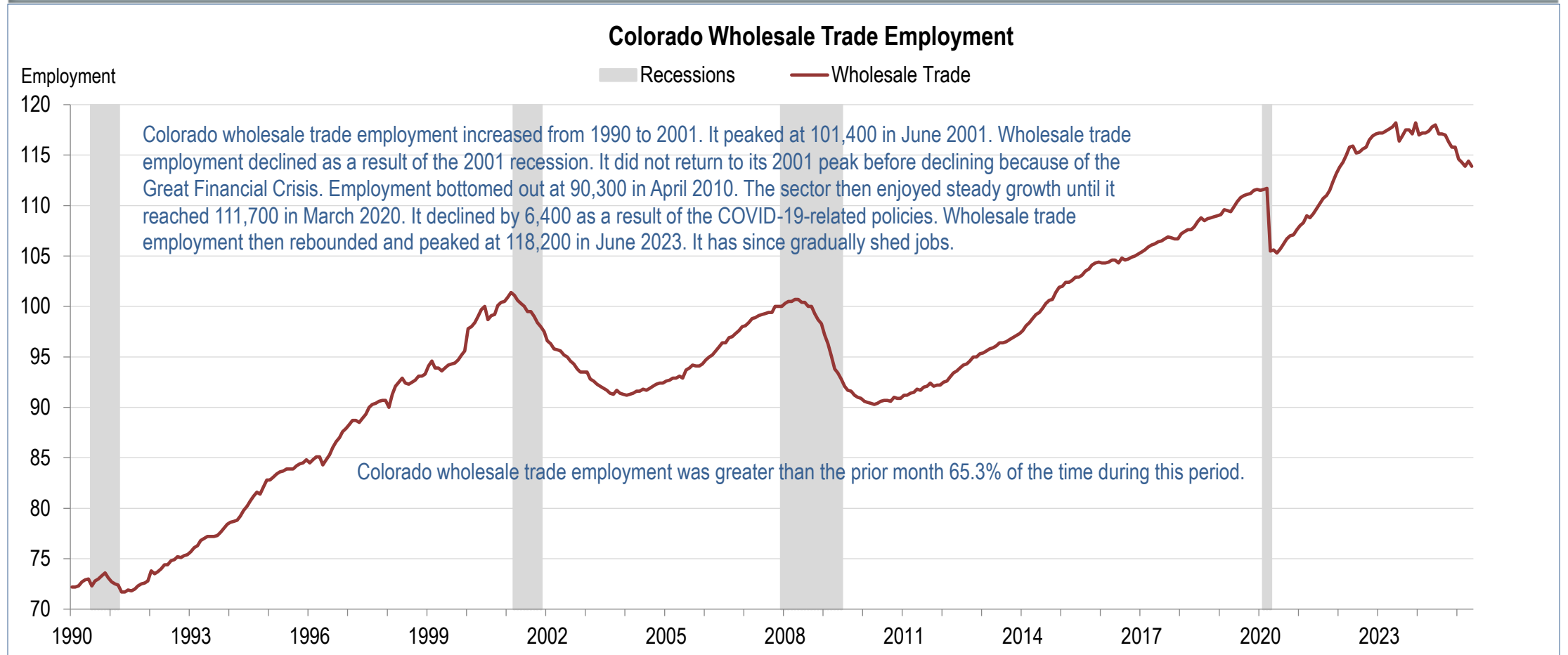
Source: BLS, S.A. cber.co.

Colorado Wholesale Trade

Driving the Economy Challenges and Opportunities

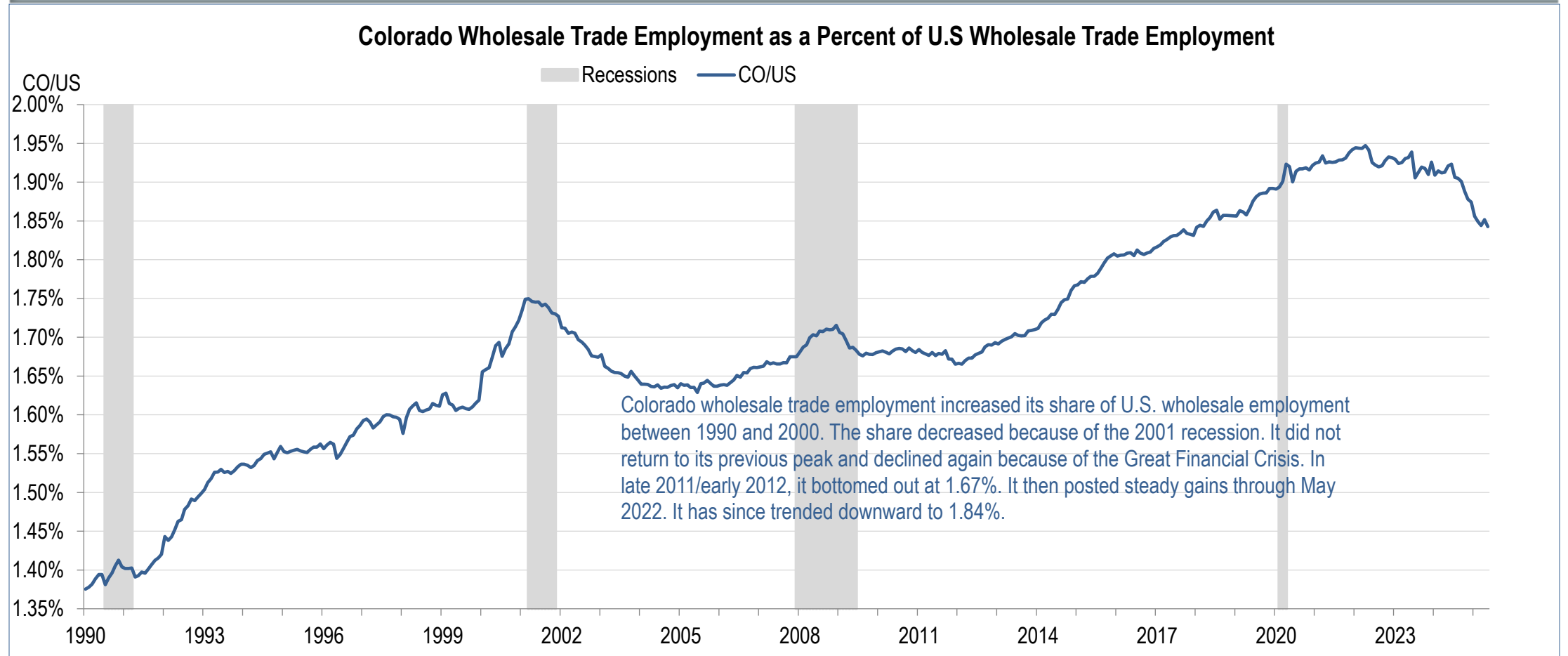
- The wholesale trade employment pattern is somewhat similar to the overall employment pattern. There was strong growth during the 1990s. Wholesale trade employment had extended recoveries from the 2001 recession, the Great Financial Crisis, and the COVID-19-related recession. There was consistent job growth from the trough of the Great Financial Crisis until 2020. After the COVID-19-related recession, employment peaked in 2023 and has since trended downward.
- There were 113,900 Colorado wholesale trade workers in May 2025, 3.81% of the total. Employment increased by 26,200 between 2011 and 2024, an annualized growth rate of 1.7%.
- Wholesale trade companies include distributors of food, building materials, automotive parts, and industrial equipment. Wholesale trade employment has a location quotient of 0.98.
- The Bureau of Labor Statistics QCEW reports that AAW for wholesale trade employment is \$114,200.
- In 2024, wholesale trade contributed about \$30.4 billion to the state's GDP, about 5.5% of the state's total. It was \$10.5 billion in 2000 and \$30.4 billion in 2025.

Colorado Wholesale Trade Employment



Source: BLS, S.A. cber.co.

Colorado Wholesale Trade Employment as a Percent of U.S. Wholesale Trade Employment

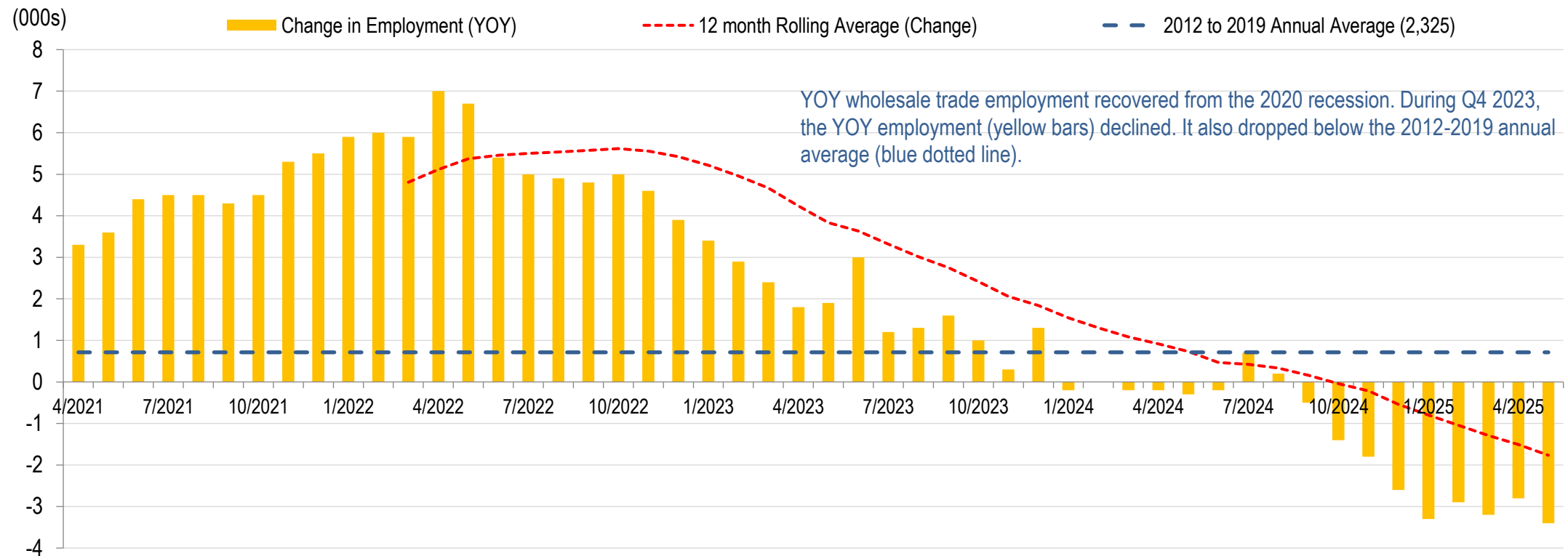


Source: BLS, S.A.cber.co.

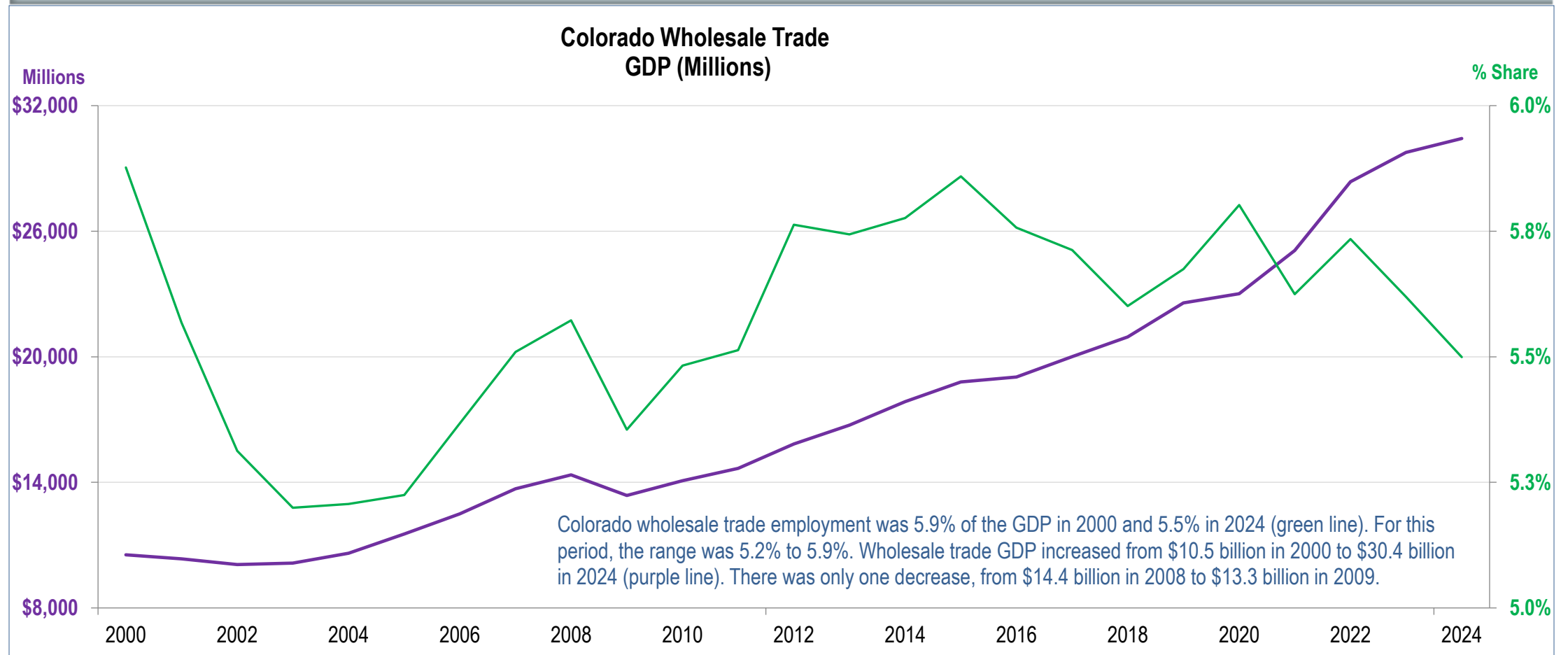
Short-Term YOY Change in Employment (Post-COVID)

Colorado Wholesale Trade Employment

YOY Change in Wholesale Trade Employment



Colorado Wholesale Trade GDP



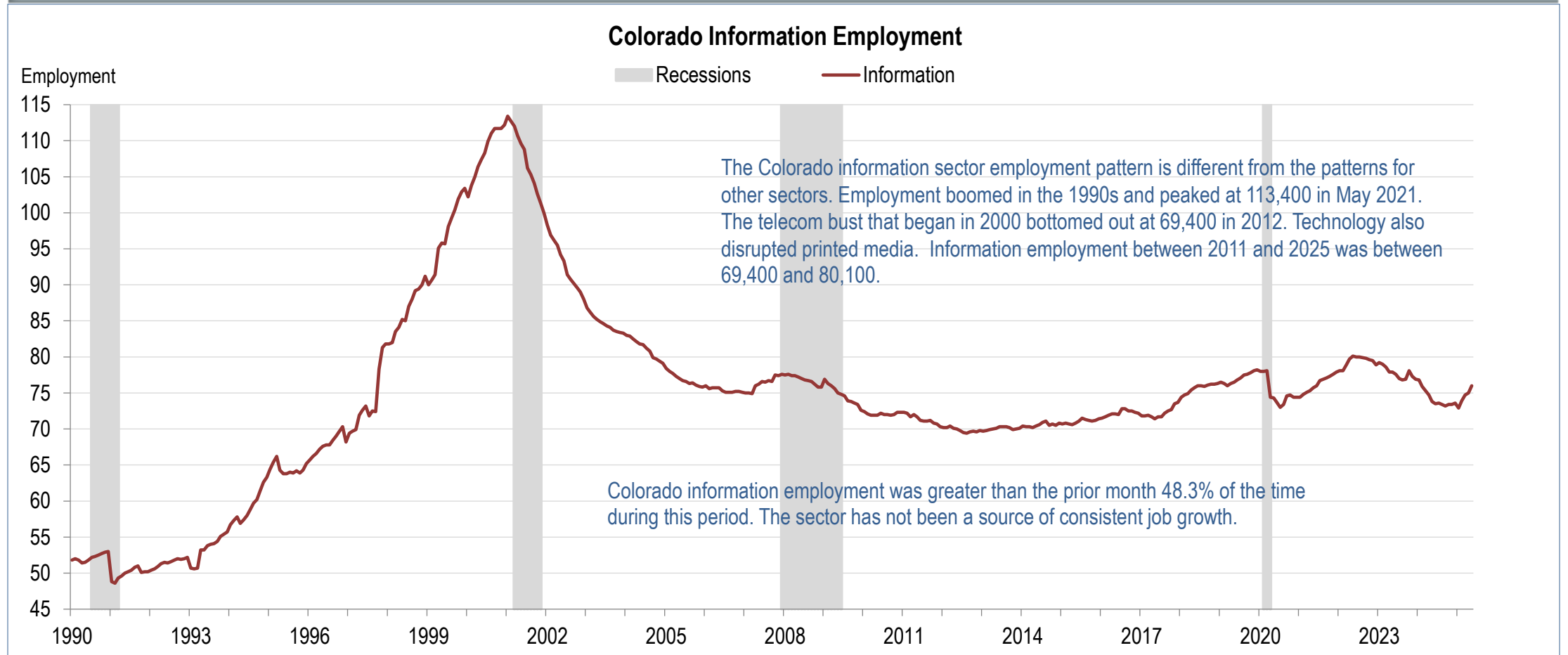
Source: BLS, S.A. cber.co.

Colorado Information

Driving the Economy Challenges and Opportunities

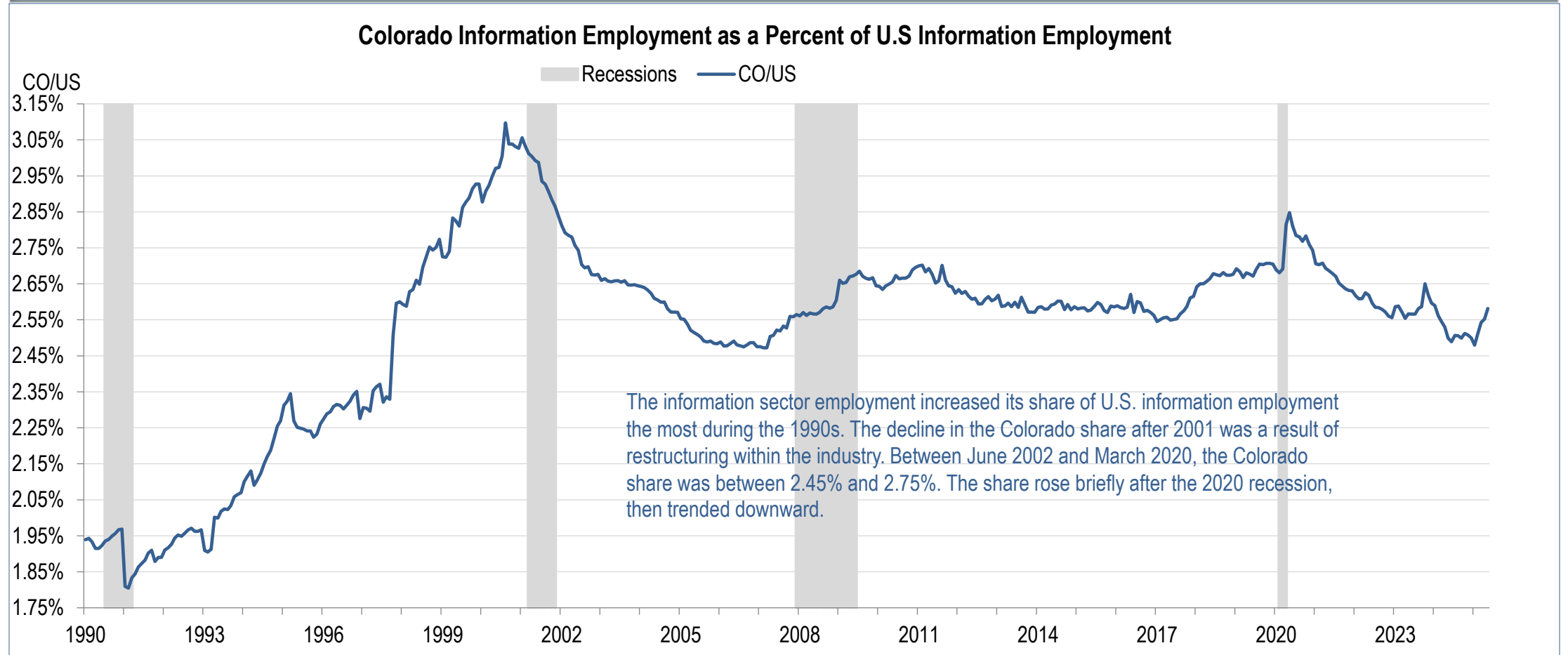
- Colorado's information sector has a distinct employment pattern.
- It increased rapidly during the 1990s, from 51,800 in January 1990 to 113,400 in May 2001.
- The sector's employment then decreased sharply to about 70,000. It was at that level between 2012 and 2017. It rose briefly leading up to the 2000 recession. It peaked at 79,700 in January 2021. In May 2025, sector employment was 76,000, 2.54% of the state total.
- Between 2011 and 2024, information employment increased by 2,200, or about 0.2%.
- On a positive note, the sector has an employment location quotient of 1.38. The information sector is a small industry, but it provides a competitive advantage for Colorado.
- AAW for Colorado information employment is \$154,732.
- Information contributes about \$31.6 billion, or about 6.0%, to the state's GDP.

Colorado Information Employment



Source: BLS, S.A. cber.co.

Colorado Information Employment as a Percent of U.S. Information Employment

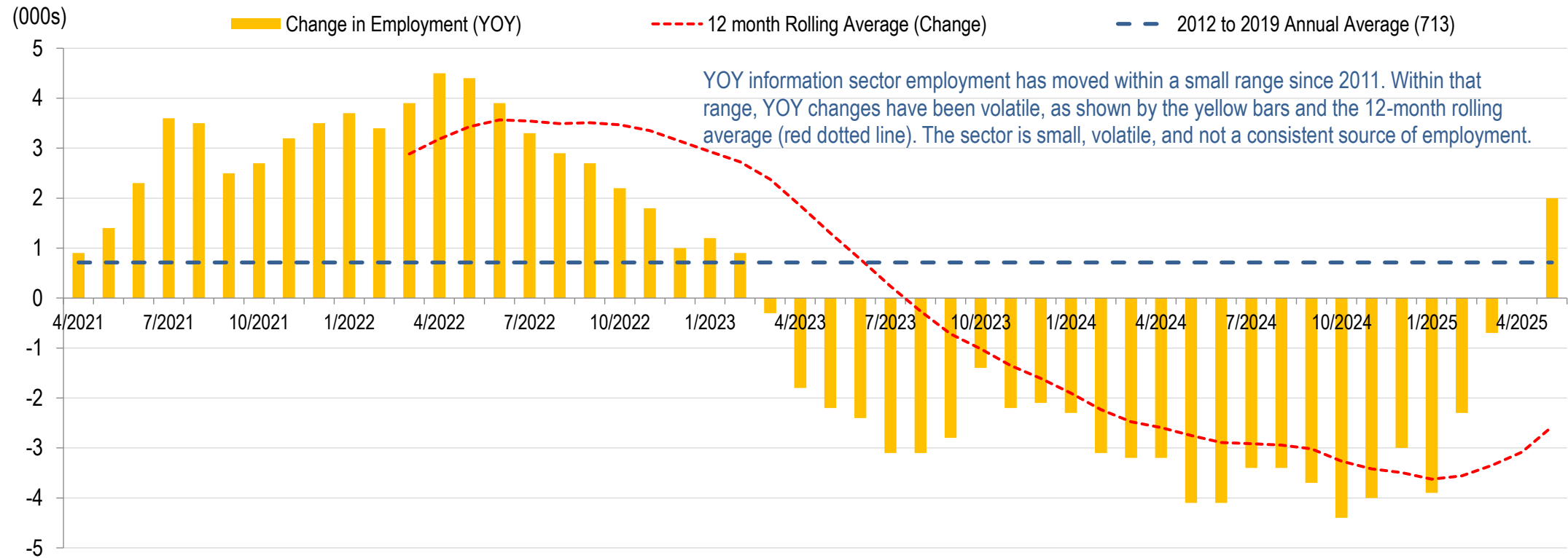


Source: BLS, S.A.cber.co.

Short-Term YOY Change in Employment (Post-COVID)

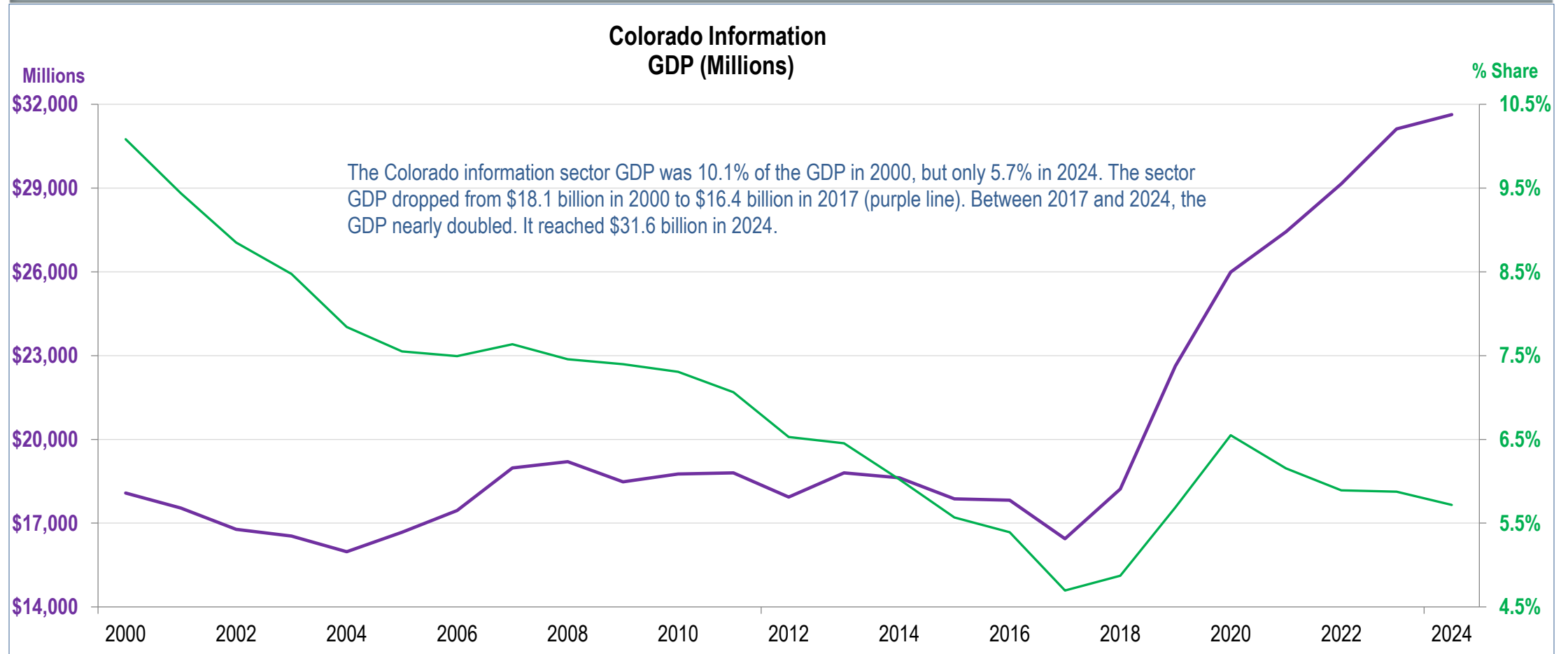
Colorado Information Employment

YOY Change in Information Employment



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, NSA cber.co.

Colorado Information GDP



Source: BLS, S.A. cber.co.

cber.co
Drivers of the Colorado Economy, July 2025

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Gary Horvath has produced annual employment forecasts of the state economy for over 30 years. They have been supplemented by monthly economic updates and indices that track economic performance over the short term. In addition, he has directed three statewide analyses that included reviews of all 64 county economies.

Horvath was the principal investigator for a state and federally funded project to prepare a nanotechnology roadmap for Colorado. As well, he was a co-founder of the Colorado Photonics Industry Association, a trade group for Colorado’s Photonics cluster. Horvath has been an active board member of the group since its inception.

Horvath has also served on the Board of Directors for the Economic Development Council of Colorado, Northwest Denver Business Partnership, Adams County Regional Economic Partnership, and Broomfield Economic Development Corporation. Horvath has also been the chair of the electronics committee in the Governor’s Office of Economic Development and International Trade early stage and proof of concept Advanced Industries grant program, and he served on the 2021 Colorado Legislative Redistricting Commission.