its March results for its SurePayroll Small Business Scorecard.

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The latest monthly SurePayroll Small Business Scorecard shows that small business owners' optimism has rebounded to 70 percent, despite a slight drop in hiring and wages being flat. This is the first time optimism has reached the 70s since May 2011.

The survey, which is conducted by online payroll service provider SurePayroll Inc., also showed that 31 percent of small business owners have plans to hire employees during the rest of the year and 67 percent have plans to maintain their current

employment levels. Of all the survey takers, only 2 percent responded with plans to

business should open the door to increased hiring."

While many small business owners remain positive about their future employment plans, month-over-month SurePayroll Scorecard data revealed that regional hiring is down 0.2 percent, despite showing growth in February. The South remained flat. Wages were slightly up in the South and West and down in the Midwest and Northeast. Year-over-year, the South continues to show promising signs with hiring up 2 percent and wages up 0.6 percent.

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