

KU center's leader in middle of political debate over economy

LAWRENCE, Kan. (AP) — A University of Kansas research center's executive director is in the middle of a political debate over the state's economy because Republicans are using a report he wrote to attack Democratic Gov. Kathleen Sebelius.

The work by Arthur Hall of the Center for Applied Economics has

been cited by Sen. Jim Barnett, of Emporia, a Republican candidate for governor, who has said Kansas is suffering from "an economic growth deficit."

Sebelius and her administration have painted a different picture of the economy, arguing that it is growing, citing 22 consecutive months of job growth.

Hall said Monday that his research deals with structural issues present in the economy for two decades and that he's not commenting on Sebelius' administration.

"I am delighted that people are paying attention to the research," he said during an interview. "If everyone was ignoring us, then why be here?"

In his report, Hall argued the state's economy lags behind the rest of the nation and other Plains states. He said the Kansas economy has structural problems that need addressing.

In the days after Sebelius' State of the State address, Hall testified to at least four legislative committees at the invitation of Republi-

cans. He said Monday that his data is current through 2004 and he can't say how much any gaps between Kansas and other states have closed since.

"The mission of the center is to do objective analysis for anyone," Hall told the Lawrence Journal-World. "I've given that presentation for the last year to multiple audiences."

Senate Minority Leader Anthony Hensley, D-Topeka, noted that Hall's center is funded by the Koch family, conservatives who support anti-tax, pro-business and libertarian groups.

Hall said the center has operated over the last two years primarily on a grant of \$500,000 from the Fred and Mary Koch Foundation.

Responses from more smart people looking for love in the right places

DEAR READERS: As promised, today I'm printing my own tried-and-true list of how to meet a potential mate. (Because some of my suggestions have already been offered by others, I'm abbreviating this list.) Read on:

Simply put, decent people are found where decent people gather.



Abigail Van Buren

● Dear Abby

You will never meet anyone sitting at home, so get out of the house and become involved. Enroll in an adult education class, take a class in auto mechanics, welding, computer training, sailing, navigation, golf.

Volunteer your services. There are plenty of under-privileged, disabled, elderly and teens who could use a friend. Get involved with your church or a civic organization.

Join a political party and volunteer to help at a polling station. (You'll meet everyone in your district!) Join a professional organization — Rotary, Chamber of Commerce, manufacturing organization or any organization having to do with your profession.

Take dancing lessons — square dancing, line dancing, ballroom or salsa. Take up fishing or hiking, join a gym or health club. Do some entertaining and ask your friends to bring along a friend. If you have children, join Parents Without Partners.

You may not meet "The One" right away, but you'll make new friends — and one of them may have a friend who's perfect for you.

DEAR ABBY: A former friend I'll call "June" was the cause of many important relationship break-ups in my life — one of which is mended now. We hadn't spoken for years.

About seven years ago, June was hired at the place where I have worked for the past 12 years. She now tries to find and make up excuses to converse with me, both in and out of work. I ignore her. I am not mean or rude; however, I have complained to our supervisors that I don't want anything other than work-related issues to do with June. They have notified her of my complaints, and she is getting the hint.

Outside of work is another story. I "forgave" June many years ago, but I still do not wish to have her as a friend or acquaintance. Please tell me how to get rid of her. I have considered a restraining order, but she hasn't done anything threatening.

— BEING STALKED IN

KOKOMO DEAR BEING STALKED: The next time June approaches you outside of work, if you have not already done so, tell her exactly what you have told me. If that doesn't do the trick, change your routine — the places or the hours that you shop, go for exercise, etc.

If the woman still pursues you, then do inform the police that you are being stalked by someone who appears to be unbalanced, because that may be what the woman is, and get it on record.

DEAR ABBY: I was sitting with a friend today, and we began talking about the rising gas prices. After a few minutes she said, "Why don't Americans do what they do in Europe?"

I asked her what that was, and she told me that Europeans take a regular day off from driving — which not only saves gas but also brings families closer together. What an excellent idea for people here in the United States.

I think it is a simple solution to a growing problem and could make a huge difference. Do you think this is possible?

— JIM H., NAPLES, FLA.

DEAR JIM H.: I certainly do. When people are determined enough, anything is possible. We may not be able to control gas prices, but we can decide how we want to spend our money. For those who need to economize, walking, riding bicycles, ride-sharing and public transportation are sensible solutions.

DEAR ABBY: As promised, I'm continuing the topic about finding Mr. (or Ms.) Right. Read on:

DEAR ABBY: I would like to offer some suggestions to the successful career woman who asked if she and her friends should "dumb themselves down" in order to find a man:

When people let frustration and pouting get the best of them, they give off a bad vibe that no one finds attractive. She needs to continue with her success. She should get out of the house, do things she enjoys,

go to parties, parks, sporting events, church, art classes, wine tastings — whatever! Mr. Right won't magically show up on her doorstep, and she'll be happier in the meantime doing what makes her happy.

It's OK to talk with friends and co-workers about her single status. Do they know she's available and open for suggestions and blind dates?

The person she meets may not be Mr. Right, but he may have a friend who could be. Has she tried online dating sites? There's one for just about everyone.

Instead of looking for "Mr. Perfect," look for "Mr. Perfect-for-YOU."

Make a list of the qualities that you can't live without and then stick to it. And, last but not least, she should list all the great qualities she has to offer, and post it where she can see it every day. If she keeps reminding herself that she is a catch, she'll get caught!

— HAVE FAITH

DEAR HAVE FAITH: Your comments are terrific, and I hope the woman who wrote me (and others!) take them to heart. That so many people identified with that letter and reached out is heartwarming. Thanks for wanting to help. Read on:

DEAR ABBY: In my area of about 150,000 people, there's a shortage of women. Many single, successful straight men find it hard to thrive amidst all the noise, pollution and crime of a big city.

Look at the statistics — the new exurbia is where to find a lot of

single engineers, scientists, financial and insurance executives. I know smart women who have moved here just to meet men and have promptly gotten married. (And if they absolutely, positively want to be married, they should consider moving to Alaska!)

— STEVE IN RICHLAND

DEAR STEVE: It would certainly be worth an exploratory vacation trip to find out.

DEAR ABBY: Instead of bemoaning their situation, those women should revel in it as I did. I moved my career forward, took up off-road cycling, traveled the world, took classes, went to plays — you name it. I married for the first

time at 36.

But I'm glad I can look back at my single years with so many fond memories of the adventures I had. And if Mr. Right never comes along, she may be too busy to notice.

— BEEN THERE IN WISCONSIN

DEAR ABBY: She needs to "broaden her customer base." Someone from a completely different background might be less likely to be threatened by her success in her field. The bonus is twofold. She'll meet a whole new crowd and discover new interests. Nothing is more attractive than a person enjoying herself.

— TRENT IN CATHEDRAL CITY, CALIF.

DEAR ABBY: Smart women who have trouble finding men for relationships should join Mensa. Mensa members come from every demographic and have one thing in common: They are in the top 2 percent of the population intelligence-wise.

— HELPFUL READER IN THE U.S.A.

DEAR HELPFUL: Good suggestion. Not everyone finds love in Mensa, but it's a wonderful way to meet other people who value intelligence in both men and women. To learn more about Mensa, log on to www.mensa.org or www.us.mensa.org.

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