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STATE OF ALABAMA

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Alabama's Unemployment Rate Drops to 6.0%

Lowest Rate in More than Six Years; Increase in Percentage of Job Growth Highest in Eight Years

MONTGOMERY – Governor Robert Bentley on Friday announced that Alabama's preliminary, seasonally adjusted November unemployment rate is 6.0%, down from October's rate of 6.3%, and below the October 2013 rate of 6.2%.

"Alabama's unemployment rate has not only continued its downward trend, but has reached a level we have not seen in more than six years," Governor Robert Bentley said. "Additionally, we continue to see strong growth in wage and salary employment, which is also at its highest point in nearly six years. This is a testament to the economic progress we have made in Alabama, and our efforts will continue until every Alabamian who wants a job has the opportunity to acquire one."

The last time that the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in Alabama was at or below 6.0% was October 2008, when the rate was 5.9%.

Over the year, wage and salary employment increased 33,700, with gains in the professional and business services sector (+11,100), the leisure and hospitality sector (+8,900), the manufacturing sector (+7,400), and the construction sector (+4,700), among others.

Wage and salary employment grew in November by 7,700 to 1,954,400. Monthly gains were seen in the trade, transportation, and utilities sector (+6,200), the education and health services sector (+1,500), and the government sector (+1,100), among others. The last time wage and salary employment was at or above the current figure was December 2008, when wage and salary employment totaled 1,964,400.

The annual increase in wage and salary employment represents job growth of 1.75%, the highest since June 2006, when it was 2.21%.

“The job growth we are experiencing in Alabama is encouraging,” Alabama Department of Labor Commissioner Fitzgerald Washington said. “What is even more encouraging is that of the sectors in which we are experiencing the most growth, three sectors have average annual salaries of more than \$45,000. These are good, high paying jobs that are helping Alabama families grow and succeed.”

JobLink, the state’s online free jobs database (www.joblink.alabama.gov), registered 22,974 active job orders in November. The Help Wanted Online (HWOL) data showed 48,261 total job ads were placed online in Alabama. The most advertised careers continue to be truck drivers, retail supervisors, and registered nurses.

All 67 Alabama counties saw either no change or a drop in their unemployment rates this month. Additionally, 84% of the counties have lower unemployment rates now than they did one year ago.

Counties with the lowest unemployment rates are: Shelby County at 3.8%, Lee and Cherokee Counties at 4.2%, and Cullman County at 4.3%. Counties with the highest unemployment rates are: Wilcox County at 12.2%, Bullock County at 11.8%, and Dallas County at 10.7%.

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“Seasonal adjustment” refers to BLS’s practice of anticipating certain trends in the labor force, such as hiring during the holidays or the surge in the labor force when students graduate in the spring, and removing their effects to the civilian labor force.

The Current Population (CPS), or the household survey, is conducted by the Census Bureau and identifies members of the work force and measures how many people are working or looking for work.

The establishment survey, which is conducted by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), a division of the U.S. Department of Labor, surveys employers to measure how many jobs are in the economy. This is also referred to as wage and salary employment.