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## STATE OF ALABAMA

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### Alabama's March Unemployment Rate Drops to 5.7%

*Marks 16 Months of No Rate Increase; Lowest Rate in Nearly Seven Years*

MONTGOMERY – Governor Robert Bentley on Friday announced that Alabama's preliminary, seasonally adjusted March unemployment rate is 5.7%, down from February's rate of 5.8%, and well below March 2014's rate of 7.2%.

The last time Alabama's rate was 5.7% or lower was in July 2008.

"We continue to see decreases in Alabama's unemployment rate, and increases in both of our employment measures, which is a testament to the strong economic development efforts we have prioritized," Governor Robert Bentley said. "We have gone 16 months with no increase in our unemployment rate. This steady progress is further evidence that, as far as employment indicators go, Alabama has regained its pre-recession standing. My priority as Governor remains job creation, and I will continue my effort until every Alabamian who wants a job has the opportunity to have one."

Current Population Survey (CPS), or household, employment measured 2,021,806 (seasonally adjusted). The last time CPS employment was higher was in September 2008, when CPS employment measured 2,033,383. This also marks the fourth month in a row that CPS employment has measured over two million, which has not occurred since 2008. Wage and salary employment, totaling 1,936,800 in March, increased by 6,300. March's wage and salary employment figure is at its highest point in seven years for the same time period.

Monthly gains were seen in the leisure and hospitality sector (+3,800), the trade, transportation, and utilities sector (+1,800), and the professional and business services sector (+1,100), among others.

Over the year, wage and salary employment increased by 28,600, with gains in the professional and business services sector (+8,400), the leisure and hospitality sector (+6,700), and the education and health services sector (+5,700), among others.

JobLink, the state's online free jobs database ([www.joblink.alabama.gov](http://www.joblink.alabama.gov)), registered 21,673 active job orders in March.

“Every county in Alabama currently has a lower unemployment rate than they did a year ago,” Alabama Labor Commissioner Fitzgerald Washington said. “Wilcox County, despite traditionally having one of the highest unemployment rates in the state, has seen a five percentage point decrease in its rate over the year. That’s great news!”

Wilcox County’s March 2014 unemployment rate was 18.6%, compared to its current rate of 13.6%.

Counties with the lowest unemployment rates are: Shelby County at 3.9%, Lee County at 4.7%, and Elmore, St. Clair, and Autauga Counties at 4.9%.

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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.*