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STATE OF ALABAMA

Governor Bentley Announces Alabama's July Unemployment Rate Drops to 5.7%

Lowest Rate, Fewest Number of Unemployed Since 2008

MONTGOMERY – Governor Robert Bentley on Friday announced that Alabama's preliminary, seasonally adjusted July unemployment rate is 5.7%, down from June's rate of 6.0%, and below July 2015's rate of 6.1%. July's rate represents 123,095 unemployed persons, compared to 130,298 in June and 130,098 in July 2015.

"We continue to see decreases in Alabama's unemployment rate, and increases in both of our employment measures over the year, which is a testament to the strong economic development efforts we have prioritized," Governor Robert Bentley said. "We haven't seen an unemployment rate this low in eight years. Not only did the rate decrease since last month, there are also nearly 28,000 more people working this year than there were last year."

In July 2016, 2,039,029 people were counted as employed, up from 2,011,438 in July 2015. Additionally, 123,095 people were counted as unemployed in July 2016. The last time that number was at or below 123,095 was in June 2008, when the number of unemployed measured 118,828.

Over the year, wage and salary employment increased 10,000, with gains in the leisure and hospitality sector (+3,300), the trade, transportation, and utilities sector (+3,200), the financial activities sector (+3,100), and the manufacturing sector (+3,000), among others.

"July registered the fewest number of unemployed people since 2008 and the good news also trickled down to the counties this month as well," Alabama Department of Labor Secretary Fitzgerald Washington said. "Every county in Alabama saw its rate decrease over the month, and 66 of 67 counties saw their rates decrease over the year, some by more than two percentage points. This is excellent news!"

Counties with the lowest unemployment rates are: Shelby County at 4.2%, Elmore County at 4.7%, and Baldwin County at 4.8%. Counties with the highest unemployment rates are: Wilcox County at 14.3%, Perry County at 12.1%, and Clarke County at 11.4%.

Major cities with the lowest unemployment rates are: Vestavia Hills at 3.4%, Homewood at 3.9%, and Hoover at 4.0%. Major cities with the highest unemployment rates are: Selma at 11.4%, Prichard at 10.2%, and Bessemer at 9.0%.

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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.