



Alabama Department of Industrial Relations

News Release

For Immediate Release: March 27, 2009

Alabama's Unemployment Rate Rises to 8.4% *Rate Remains Below those of Neighboring States due to Economic Development*

MONTGOMERY – Alabama Department of Industrial Relations Director Tom Surtees announced today that Alabama's unemployment rate rose to 8.4% for February. This is an increase from January's rate of 7.8%. Alabama's rate continues to remain below those of our bordering states. The February unemployment rates for our neighboring states are as follows: Georgia, 9.3%, Tennessee, 9.1%, Mississippi, 9.1%, and Florida, 9.4%.

"I know that to someone who is unemployed the fact that our unemployment rate is lower than those of our neighboring states may not mean much," said Surtees. "However, the fact that our rate does continue to stay below the rates of other states in our region reflects the tremendous impact economic development has had in our state over the past several years. Without the significant number of businesses and industries Alabama has successfully recruited, we would undoubtedly be in much worse shape than we are."

Since 2003, Alabama has seen more than 2900 new and expanding business announcements.

The February rate of 8.4% represents 180,547 unemployed people, and a loss of 3,400 jobs since January 2009. Most of the losses occurred in the sectors of trade, transportation, and utilities, construction, and manufacturing. The sectors of leisure and hospitality, government, educational and health services, and professional and business services all experienced gains.

The counties with the lowest unemployment rates were Shelby at 6.1%, Madison at 6.2%, and Lee and Coffee at 7.0%. The counties with the highest unemployment rates were Wilcox at 21.5%, Chambers at 18.9%, and Dallas at 18.5%.

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Members of the media seeking more information should contact Public Information Officer Tara Hutchison at (334) 242-8616.