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## STATE OF ALABAMA

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: FRIDAY, JUNE 19, 2015**

### **Alabama's May Unemployment Rate is 6.1%**

#### *Wage and Salary Employment Surpassing 2015 Economic Predictions*

MONTGOMERY – Governor Robert Bentley on Friday announced that Alabama's preliminary, seasonally adjusted May unemployment rate is 6.1%.

“Earlier this year, leading economists at the University of Alabama predicted that our wage and salary employment would grow by 33, 800,” Governor Robert Bentley said. “I am proud to say that only five months into 2015, we've added 34,800 jobs, already surpassing job growth predictions. Our effort to create jobs is strong, and we will continue until every Alabamian has an opportunity to find a job.”

“Although we experienced an increase in our unemployment rate this month, the news is not bad,” Alabama Labor Commissioner Fitzgerald Washington said. “Both employment measures registered gains, which is clear evidence that Alabamians are going back to work. We haven't seen wage and salary employment this high in May since 2008. Additionally, household employment also increased by more than 47,000 since last year.”

Wage and salary employment increased in May by 9,400, rising to 1,958,100. Monthly gains were seen in the professional and business services sector (+2,700), the leisure and hospitality sector (+1,900), and the trade, transportation, and utilities sector (+1,700), among others. The last time wage and salary employment was equal to or above 1,958,100 was May 2008, when it was 2,012,500.

Over the year, wage and salary employment has increased by 30,500, with gains in the professional and business services sector (+7,000), the leisure and hospitality sector (+6,300), and the education and health services sector (+6,200), among others. Current Population Survey (CPS), or household, employment was recorded at 2,038,731 in May, representing a monthly increase of 6,990, and 47,488 over the year.

“It is not surprising to see an increase in the unemployment rate in the summer months due to more people entering the workforce,” Washington added. “Students and recent graduates tend to enter the job market during these times and begin their job searches.”

Counties with the lowest unemployment rates are: Shelby County at 4.2%, Lee County at 5.1%, and Elmore County at 5.1%.

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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.*

*The Governor’s Press Office can be reached at 334-242-7150.*