



*Effective. Efficient. Excellent.*  
**ALABAMA GOVERNMENT**

The Alabama Council For Excellent Government promotes public policies that give Alabamians a more Efficient, Effective, Accountable & Excellent Government.

The Alabama Council For Excellent Government encourages and supports policies that foster an environment to create more jobs in Alabama, make living in Alabama more affordable for families and that improve Alabama's business climate and employment opportunities.

ACEGov will promote legislation necessary to implement such policies.

*"As leaders of this state, chosen by the people we serve, we are elected to fix problems, not pass them on to someone else, to a future generation. The problems we must tackle may have been decades in the making, but it is up to us to solve them today."*

- Governor Robert Bentley

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**About ACEGov**



ACEGov supports Governor Bentley's bold vision to lead Alabama with greater economic opportunities and by tackling our state's challenges with real solutions.

Alabamians never back down from a challenge, and neither will we. Please help us make Alabama government more efficient and accountable to the hardworking people of this state.

**Take Action**



Join us to support our efforts to make Alabama's Government more Effective, Efficient and Accountable to the hard working men and women of our state.





## What We Do

***“As leaders of this state, chosen by the people we serve, we are elected to fix problems, not pass them on to someone else, to a future generation.***

***The problems we must tackle may have been decades in the making, but it is up to us to solve them today.” - Governor Robert Bentley***

Alabama is a great state where you will find some of the most caring, loving, toughest and hardworking people in the world. While we’ve seen tremendous economic growth in the last two decades, we know Alabama’s best days are still ahead.

The men and women we elect to represent us have a duty to lead our state to be even greater than it is today. We must expect our state leaders to face challenges head on, make tough decisions and do what’s necessary to create an environment where jobs can be created, where children have an opportunity to get a good, quality education beginning at an early age, and where government operates efficiently and effectively to serve the hardworking taxpayers.

Today, as a result of the conservative policies of Alabama Governor Robert Bentley, state government operates more efficiently than it has in years. Through a series of cuts, consolidations, savings and good old-fashioned belt-tightening, the size of state government has shrunk by 12 percent and taxpayers have been saved 1.1 billion dollars annually.

And yet despite those efforts, Alabama government continues to face decades-old problems with a General Fund budget shortfall of hundreds of millions of dollars, and debts that rises into the hundreds of millions of dollars.

Governor Robert Bentley has made the bold decision to identify, address and solve those problems rather than prolong them with temporary, quick-fixes. And he has presented Alabamians and Alabama Lawmakers with real solutions.

The Alabama Council for Excellent Government exists to support Governor Bentley in his efforts to solve real problems and to make Alabama greater, stronger and more excellent for all the hardworking men and women who call this Great State our home.

*“One thing I have always known about our people, and it has proven true during my time in office – They do not back down from a challenge.*

*Not when they are fighting for their basic civil rights, not in defending our nation’s Freedoms and not in the aftermath of Natural Disasters.*

*And as Leaders of this State, neither will we.*

”

— Governor Robert Bentley

### Governor Bentley's 2015 Agenda

- \* Accelerate Alabama Economic Development Incentives
- \* \$541 Million Revenue Plan
- \* "Fostering Hope" Scholarships for Alabama's Foster Children
- \* \$10 Million in increased funding to expand Alabama's First Class Volunteer Pre K Program
- \*Alabama Healthcare Improvement Task Force
- \* AlaVetNet Employer Tax Credits for Hiring Unemployed Veterans
- \* First Lady Dianne Bentley Domestic Violence Prevention

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### Alabama Conservatives Dislike Cuts to State Services Poll Reveals



Apr 13, 2015

### Governor Bentley To Cabinet: "Prepare Now For Devastating Cuts Under The Clouse Budget"



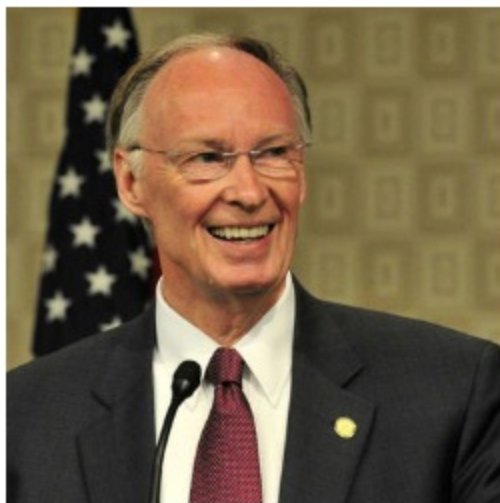
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### Veterans and Rural Areas To Benefit from Governor Bentley's Jobs Incentive Package



Apr 6, 2015

### Governor Bentley Creates Health Care Task Force, Tells Newly Appointed Members: "Leave Your Turf At The Door"



Mar 26, 2015

### Governor Bentley To Huntsville Leaders: "It Takes More Courage To Solve Problems Than to Say 'No'"



Mar 23, 2015

### Governor Bentley To Birmingham Business Leaders: "There is Nothing More Conservative Than Paying Off Your Debts"



Mar 22, 2015

### Tax Fairness and Debt Repayment Highlight Governor Bentley's Bold Solution for Increased State Revenue

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## Alabama Conservatives Dislike Cuts to State Services Poll Reveals

July 29, 2015

Alabama's Conservative Republicans Say a Strong "No" to Cuts, Prefer Tax Increases Instead

(MONTGOMERY) When given the choice between fair, modest tax increases and cuts to vital state services Alabamians who identify themselves as "very Conservative" favor taxes. Those are the findings of a poll conducted by Public Opinion Strategies. The poll commissioned by the Alabama Council For Excellent Government also shows conservative Republicans overwhelmingly approve of Governor Robert Bentley's job performance.

Governor Bentley has led the charge to raise revenue through fair, modest tax increases since he first presented his budget to Alabama Legislators in March. As part of his push to convince Alabamians as well as Legislators that the state must fundamentally change it's budgeting process, Governor Bentley crisscrossed the state this spring advocating tax increases as opposed to cutting the already bare bones General Fund budget. And it seems to have convinced Alabama's most conservative citizens that cuts to state services are not acceptable.

The poll reveals that Republicans believe the State Economy and State and Local Government are the most important issues facing Alabama today. Respondent's top mention in terms of economic issues was "Budget Shortfall/ Debt".

Governor Bentley holds a strong 75% approval rating among the Conservative voters and a robust 87% approval rating among Very Conservative Republicans who are age 65 and older, a key primary voting group that traditionally and consistently turns out for elections.

When asked about specific solutions to the state's budget crisis, very Conservative Republicans overwhelmingly favored an increase in the tobacco tax, a measure Governor Bentley has advocated both in the 2015 Regular Session and in the upcoming Special Session. However, when Conservative Republicans were asked if cuts to state services is the solution, respondents were strongly opposed. 92 percent were opposed to closing Alabama State Parks and cutting back on the number of State Troopers on the road. 88 percent were opposed to cutting mental health services and 68 percent were opposed to cuts to Medicaid. 86 percent were opposed to cuts to the Alabama Department of Environmental Management and allowing the federal Environment Protection Agency to take over.

The poll of 500 likely Republican voters was conducted June 18-21 and has a margin of error of +/- 4.38%.

The Special Session to address the Budget Crisis resumes August 3.

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## Governor Bentley Creates Health Care Task Force, Tells Newly Appointed Members: “Leave Your Turf At The Door”

April 06, 2015

MONTGOMERY – With an aim to stop troubling health trends in Alabama, Governor Robert Bentley created the Alabama Health Care Improvement Task Force on Monday, keeping a commitment he made in his State of the State address last month.

At a Monday press conference Governor Bentley signed Executive Order 4, identifying specific areas of focus for the task force. Governor Bentley emphasized that the 38-member panel will be tasked with addressing pressing healthcare problems facing Alabamians, such as lack of primary-care physicians and inadequate access to health care. “I want everyone to have an open mind,” Governor Bentley told the members of the task force. “Come to this task force leaving your turf at the door. This will be a long term process to begin to solve the real health and healthcare related problems in this state.”

Portions of 65 of Alabama’s 67 counties currently experience shortages of primary medical-care professional, with shortages extending to all areas and for all people in about two dozen counties. And Alabama ranks 40th in Primary-care physicians and 48th in dentists per 100,000 residents.

The Task Force includes doctors, medical school leaders, hospital administrators, insurance executives, nurses, state agency leaders, legislators and professional in the mental health, dietetics, dentistry, public health, pharmacy, wellness and other specialties. State Health Officer Don Williamson will Chair the task force.

The diverse group of medical and healthcare representatives may suggest changes to state regulations and laws. Its initial recommendations are due to Governor Bentley before the 2016 Legislative Session begins. Governor Bentley stressed that that task force is expected to address options to improving the health of Alabamians.

“As Governor and as a physician, the health of Alabamians is extremely important to me”, said Governor Bentley. “Alabama faces serious problems with chronic conditions. Many of our health issues are related to lifestyle choices, poverty, and access to quality health care. The Alabama Health Care Improvement Task Force will address options to improve the health of Alabamians, including strategies to have more accessible and more affordable health care in the state.”

Alabama has a significant problem with inadequate health-insurance coverage, especially among adults. According to the Census Bureau, around 645,000 people or 13.6% of the population do not have health insurance. Ten Alabama hospitals closed between March 2011 and December 2013, with many more hospitals that provide critical health-care access in financial jeopardy.

Alabama faces major problems with chronic conditions, ranking among the top ten states for rates of diabetes, obesity and deaths cause by cancer and by cardiovascular diseases.

The Task Force is scheduled to hold its first meeting Wednesday, April 15 at the State Capitol.

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## Governor Bentley To Cabinet: “Prepare Now For Devastating Cuts Under The Clouse Budget “

April 13, 2015

Governor Robert Bentley on Monday called Cabinet and various agency heads to the Capitol with a stern warning over potential budget cuts under a “no new revenue” budget presented this month by the Legislature. “Under the proposed Clouse Budget, we are looking at drastic reductions in services across the board for General Fund agencies,” said Governor Bentley. “You all need to start preparing now for layoffs and closures across the state should the Clouse budget pass.”

Governor Bentley presented his budget to the Alabama Legislature on March 4 with \$541 Million in proposed new revenue, through fair taxes. The additional revenue proposed by Governor Bentley will adequately fund state General Fund agencies and important state services. The Governor’s budget and proposed new revenue plugs an approximate \$260 Million dollar shortfall in the General Fund and will also pay back hundreds of millions of dollars of debt the state owes.

The Clouse Budget, presented earlier this month, does not include any additional or new revenue. That budget assumes an 11-20% cut in state appropriations in the General Fund.

At Monday’s meeting, Governor Bentley told his Cabinet state government services will drastically change if the Clouse budget passes. “If the Clouse Budget passes, with no additional revenue to support state services, then we won’t have a choice, folks. We will have to close some things and start laying people off.”

Governor Bentley specifically addressed a number of Cabinet agencies, which will face cuts under the proposed Clouse Budget. Speaking to Don Williamson, head of Alabama’s Medicaid Agency, Governor Bentley asked about the impact of elderly daycare programs closing due to potential budget cuts. “Four-hundred elderly who are currently in daycare programs will all have to go to the nursing homes now,” said Governor Bentley. “Don, you ready for that?” “No Sir,” said Williamson. “That’s \$350 Million we don’t have.”

Speaking to Nancy Buckner, Commissioner of the Department of Human Resources, Governor Bentley noted that under the Clouse Budget, 30-thousand children would lose TANF benefits and the department itself would lose nearly \$190 Million in federal matching funds.

Agencies were asked by members of the Legislature how the budget cuts would impact their agencies. Some of the cuts include closing 15 Alabama State Parks including Lake Guntersville State Park and Joe Wheeler State Park, closing State Trooper Posts in Grove Hill, Gadsden, Alex City, and Eufaula/Troy, layoffs of 600 employees in the Alabama court system, drastic reduction in mental health services, closure of the Huntsville Regional (Forensic Sciences) Laboratory and closure of prison facilities within the Department of Corrections.

The Alabama Department of Environmental Management would no longer receive state funding under the Clouse Budget. Currently all ADEM state funds are used to enforce Federal Clean Water Act permits for businesses in the state. Without state funds all future Clean Water Act permits would be issued and enforced by the federal Environmental Protection Agency.

The Governor’s Budget increases state revenue with eight fair taxes, including closing loopholes on large out-of-state corporations.

Cabinet agencies were created by state law, and are required to perform certain government services. With the proposed cuts included in the Clouse Budget many of those would not be able to fulfill their statutory requirements as an agency. Several agencies such as the Department of Human Resources and the Alabama Department of Mental Health would risk federal lawsuit and loss of additional federal funding should services be reduced.

“The budget I presented is fair and funds state government because that’s what the people of this state expect, and that’s what I’m going to give them,” Governor Bentley said. “I didn’t come down here to do the same things we’ve been doing for sixty years. It’s time we fixed our dysfunctional way of budgeting once and for all. We will continue to find efficiencies as we’ve done for four years. But we have to face the fact that we have a dire problem, and the Clouse Budget won’t solve that problem.”

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## Governor Bentley To Huntsville Leaders: "It Takes More Courage To Solve Problems Than to Say 'No'

March 26, 2015

HUNTSVILLE – Governor Robert Bentley on Thursday outlined his revenue solution for the state of Alabama’s budget crisis, this time to a packed room filled with local elected officials and business leaders in Huntsville. As he has done this week in Birmingham and Dothan, Governor Bentley walked the audience through the serious issues the state is now facing with a \$700 Million hole in the state’s General Fund budget. “I’m asking you all to encourage your legislators to support the tax plan, it’s what has to be done to solve our problems”, said Governor Bentley.

Governor Bentley detailed his Revenue solution, which comes in the form of eight different tax increases ranging from an increase on the state’s tobacco tax to requiring out of state corporations to pay state income where they currently do not.

The Governor also addressed Legislators who currently claim to oppose taxes, yet enjoy multiple taxpayer funded projects in their districts, “ You know, I don’t want to embarrass any of our legislators by bringing tax dollars into their districts when they really don’t like taxes.”

After a telling the audience the state must have increased revenue to continue to provide essential state services, Governor Bentley asked the audience to encourage their local legislators to support the tax increases.

“It’s easy to run for office, it’s a lot harder to govern”, Bentley said. “ People will say to me ‘you know he’d make a good candidate’ and I think ‘yes, but would be make a good mayor or a good county commissioner or a good governor?’ It’s easy to say what you will do when you are a candidate, but when you get in office and you see the real problems you have a tough decision to make. And it’s OK to change your mind once you see real problems. It takes more courage to solve problems than to say No.”

The Governor will continue his statewide tour detailing his revenue solution on Friday in Mobile.

Photo Credit: al.com

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## Governor Bentley To Birmingham Business Leaders: "There is Nothing More Conservative Than Paying Off Your Debts"

March 23, 2015

Governor Robert Bentley today told a group of community and business leaders in Birmingham the state of Alabama must have more revenue to support essential state services. And he called on elected state leaders to support his plan to increase revenue with a series of fair tax initiatives. The Governor spoke to the group about his revenue proposal to establish stable funding of the state's General Fund Budget.

"You can't solve the General Fund budget without growth taxes," said Governor Bentley. "Without new revenue we will never be able to pay off our debts and get our state on solid financial ground. "

Governor Bentley released his detailed plan to address funding shortfalls and debt repayment in February. This week he is scheduled to travel to four Alabama towns explaining the need for more revenue in the state's General Fund budget.

" I know it's difficult to talk about raising taxes. But the revenue solution I have proposed is about tax fairness," Governor Bentley told the crowd of 150 at the Harbert Center. "If the hardworking people of Alabama pay their share of taxes, so should large corporations." One key component of Governor Bentley's Revenue solution is focused on corporate income taxes and would require combined income reporting for those corporations that do business in other states.

The Alabama General Fund Budget faces a \$264 Million dollar shortfall this year. Governor Bentley told the Alabama Legislature in his State of the State address that the state needs a total of \$700 Million in revenue to pay off decades-old debts in addition to addressing the General Fund shortfall.

"There is nothing more conservative than paying off your debts and getting your fiscal house in order," Governor Bentley told the Birmingham audience. "And I need you all to help convince the Legislature that we must have new revenue if we are ever going to get our state out of debt and get our financed in order."

Monday's Birmingham visit was sponsored by the Birmingham Business Alliance. Governor Bentley is scheduled to visit Dothan, Huntsville and Mobile this week.

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**Geoffrey Morgan** A year ago

There will never be any tax equity or rational application of state taxes in Alabama until the outdated, corroded, and bigoted 1901 state constitution is repealed and replaced in its' entirety. Gov. Bentley can fantasize all he wishes, but he is subordinate to the Alabama Legislature, and that group is controlled by those corporate and special interest who will not co-operate in anyway but to derail anything but a retributive tax. That specifically means that the taxes passed will be payed by the poor and the poorest.

The state property tax system is the major culprit. There is no reason that a large (foreign in a lot of cases) corporation should pay as much property tax on 2,000 acres that I pay on my less than a acre home.

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## Tax Fairness and Debt Repayment Highlight Governor Bentley’s Bold Solution for Increased State Revenue

March 22, 2015

*Editor’s Note: Governor Bentley presented his Revenue Solution for the State’s General Fund on February 27, 2015. The following is a release from the Office of Governor Robert Bentley detailing the Revenue Plan.*

MONTGOMERY—With a focus on tax fairness and debt repayment, Governor Robert Bentley announced his solution to fill a \$700 Million funding shortfall in the General Fund Budget.

The General Fund supports most non-education related functions of state government. For decades, problems have existed in the way funding was appropriated to the General Fund because of no growth taxes available to support it. A temporary solution for the past few years has been to support the ailing fund with one-time revenue. With mounting debts state government owes dating back to 2005 and no one-time revenue available, Governor Bentley has launched a new plan that will put the General Fund on a better, more sustainable, path forward.

“We have spent the last four years making government operate more efficiently and effectively, saving taxpayers over \$1.2 billion annually,” Governor Robert Bentley said. “As we begin the 2015 Legislative Session, one of the most serious issues we face is the funding of our state’s General Fund. We have debts that must be repaid, and we must help our two largest agencies, Medicaid and Corrections, with funding increases. I am presenting a plan that will increase revenue for the General Fund and make taxes more fair and equitable for everyone.”

The Governor’s Revenue Plan includes eight options that total \$541 million in estimated increases in revenue. When the Governor presents his budget options to the Legislature next week, he will also propose un-earmarking \$187 million to solve the financial shortfall in the General Fund. The Governor’s revenue options include:

### Corporate Income Tax

- Require combined income reporting for corporations that do business in other states.
- Estimated increase in revenue – \$20 million

### Financial Institution Excise Tax

- Remove the credit that financial institutions receive for sales taxes paid
- Estimated increase in revenue – \$1 million

### Insurance Premium Tax

- Remove the credit for state privilege tax paid by insurance companies
- Remove the credit for ad valorem tax paid by insurance companies
- Remove the office facilities and real property investment credits made by insurance companies
- Estimated increase in revenue – \$25 million

### Public Utilities License Tax

- Remove exemption that applies to municipal utilities
- Estimated increase in revenue – \$47 million

### Individual Income Tax

- Eliminate income tax withholding exemption certificates
- Estimated increase in revenue – \$12 million

### Sales Tax for Automobiles

- Increase the rate for automobile sales to 4%
- Estimated increase in revenue – \$200 million

### Rental Tax for Automobiles

- Increase the automobile rental tax to 4%
- Estimated increase in revenue – \$31 million

### Cigarette and Tobacco Tax

- Increase the tax to \$1.25 per pack (increase of \$0.825 per pack)
- Increase tax on other tobacco products proportionately
- Keep wholesalers’ discount the same as current
- Estimated increase in revenue – \$205 million

“I believe this revenue plan is best for Alabama, and I look forward to working with the Legislature during the budget process. We were elected to make bold decisions that help Alabama, and I believe we will do just that,” Bentley added.

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## Veterans and Rural Areas To Benefit from Governor Bentley's Jobs Incentive Package

April 10, 2015

Another key bill in Governor Robert Bentley's Made in Alabama Accelerate Alabama Job Incentive package passed the Alabama Legislature Thursday. The Alabama Veterans and Targeted Counties Jobs Act will provide extra incentives to industries that hire Veterans or locate in a rural or low-income area of the state. The Accelerate Alabama Jobs Incentive Package is a key component of Governor Bentley's 2015 Agenda. "Passing the Accelerate Alabama Jobs Incentive Package will once again make sure that Alabama leads the nation in the recruitment of high-skilled, well-paying jobs the people of our state need and deserve," said Governor Bentley. "There is nothing more important to our state than job creation."

Since Alabama won the battle for Mercedes in 1993, which launched the state's growing automotive industry, all southeastern state's have become much more aggressive in their efforts to compete for jobs. Governor Bentley recognized that and called for new legislation to make sure Alabama remains a leader in recruiting new industry and in helping our existing businesses – both large and small.

The Alabama Veterans and Targeted Counties Jobs Act is one of five bills making up the Incentive package backed by the Governor. This particular bill gives industry creating a least 25 jobs in a county with a population of 25,000 or less an extra 1 percent job credit from the new employee wages after the first year, for a period up to 10 years. The credit is paid out of state funds from utility taxes. A recent *Made in Alabama* article outlined the need for the legislation for rural areas of the state. Also under the new bill, new employers receive an extra 0.5 percent jobs credit for hiring veterans and making them 8 percent of their workforce.

Another bill in the package is The Alabama Jobs Act , which gives eligible companies who create at least 50 new jobs a 3 percent jobs credit for up to 10 years. Governor Bentley signed the bill into law last Friday.

Local economic developers and national experts collaborated to update and improve the current incentives Alabama uses to recruit industry, helping to develop The Made in Alabama Accelerate Alabama Jobs Incentive package.

Alabama's current incentives are 15 years old and 100-percent dependent on borrowing money. The new incentives package is aimed at giving Alabama a more competitive edge. In a recent *AI.com* article, Alabama Commerce Secretary Greg Canfield explained how Alabama has missed out on landing major industries because of the state's outdated incentives.

Three more bills complete the Made in Alabama Accelerate Alabama Jobs Incentive Package, which address areas of Research and Development, and Tax Abatements. Those bills are currently moving through the Legislature.

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## @ACEGOV

 Morgan, a First Class PreK student tells @GovernorBentley "Thank you" for her classroom.  
<https://t.co/MsyCeQd1Tm>  
7 months ago

 Monroeville students show @GovernorBentley how they use technology in the classroom. Broadband would be a Gamechanger  
<https://t.co/1CwGnTb6Vt>  
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 Monroeville Elem is ready for broadband where students can't complete tests b/c of poor connectivity  
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## Join Us

***"The problems we must tackle may have been decades in the making, but it is up to us to solve them today."***

**-Governor Robert Bentley**

Please help us as we join Governor Bentley in his bold mission to make Alabama an even greater place to call home. We support Governor Bentley's Conservative policies to create more well-paying jobs, to create greater economic opportunities, to offer voluntary PreK for all 4-year-olds, to make Alabama state government more efficient and to make tough decisions to get our state out of debt and get our state's financial house in order.

We want to make sure you know the latest news about Governor Bentley's bold mission to make Alabama greater.

### JOIN OUR TEAM - BE INFORMED!

Make sure you know what's happening in your state government and the decisions being made by the men and women you have elected. Sign up below to receive the latest news from ACEGov.

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**ALABAMA GOVERNMENT**



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The Alabama Council For Excellent Government promotes public policies that give Alabamians a more Efficient, Effective, Accountable & Excellent Government.

The Alabama Council For Excellent Government encourages and supports policies that foster an environment to create more jobs in Alabama, make living in Alabama more affordable for families and that improve Alabama's business climate and employment opportunities.

ACEGov will promote legislation necessary to implement such policies.

*"As leaders of this state, chosen by the people we serve, we are elected to fix problems, not pass them on to someone else, to a future generation. The problems we must tackle may have been decades in the making, but it is up to us to solve them today."*

#### @ACEGOV



#Alabama has the best workforce in the country. It's what makes our state stand out from the rest. #jobs <https://t.co/lIR1V7Q1ND>  
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More #jobs for north Alabama. #alpolitics <https://t.co/eAEsgW8qJY>  
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Every single county in Alabama saw a decrease in Unemployment. #alpolitics



## About ACEGov



ACEGov supports Governor Bentley's bold vision to lead Alabama with greater economic opportunities and by tackling our state's challenges with real solutions.

Alabamians never back down from a challenge, and neither will we. Please help us make Alabama government more efficient and accountable to the hardworking people of this state.

## Take Action



Join us to support our efforts to make Alabama's Government more Effective, Efficient and Accountable to the hard working men and women of our state.

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