



Alabama Department of Industrial Relations

News Release

For Immediate Release: April 23, 2010

Passage of HB279 Allows Thousands to be Paid Unemployment Compensation Benefits

Passage also Retains Funding for Many Programs for the Unemployed

MONTGOMERY – Alabama Department of Industrial Relations Director Tom Surtees today thanked Governor Bob Riley and the Alabama Legislature for passing and enacting HB279. The bill, sponsored by Representative Frank McDaniel (D) Guntersville, and a companion bill sponsored by Senator Rodger Smitherman (D) Birmingham, provides for continued funding for many state-wide programs that provide services to the unemployed and underemployed of Alabama, and also extends the state’s Extended Benefit program.

“I would like to thank Representative McDaniel, Senator Smitherman, the state Legislature, and Governor Riley for passing and enacting this worthy bill,” said Surtees. “Not only will its passage allow us to continue to fund vital programs, but we will be able to pump millions back into Alabama’s economy in the form of extended UC benefits. These benefits are oftentimes the only thing that keeps families’ heads above water during this recession.”

During the Special Session of 2009, the Alabama Legislature voted to change the law in order to take advantage of federal stimulus funds in regards to unemployment compensation. These changes allowed for Alabama to pay up to an additional 20 weeks of benefits with the federal government funding them at 100%.

HB279 allows claimants to continue qualifying for the Extended Benefits program until four weeks before the federal funding runs out. The Extended Benefits program is for claimants who have exhausted all federal unemployment compensation benefits. Based on current federal legislation, claimants could qualify for the Extended Benefits program up until May of 2010.

Claimants who are eligible to receive additional or retroactive benefits will be contacted by mail.

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