

2017 Alabama State Economic Report Prepared for the Economic Development Administration: Atlanta Regional Office



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INTRODUCTION



GOVERNMENT & ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

The Government and Economic Development Institute (GEDI) at Auburn University, part of University Outreach, leads Auburn's EDA University Center and works with its partners from the Harbert College of Business and the Vice President for Research and Economic Development. Auburn's approach to its UC work brings together a cross-disciplinary team from various parts of the university to create synergies that will benefit Alabama's innovation, entrepreneurship and community development across the state. Specifically, the Lowder Center for Family Business and Entrepreneurship and the Office of External Engagement and Support have partnered to form the University Center.

This report was prepared for the Economic Development Administration's (EDA) Atlanta Regional office.

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About this Report:

The content and analysis included in this report provides a high-level analysis of the State of Alabama's performance against national statistics. Included in the analysis, is a narrative covering the state's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. The report provides a holistic, rather than comprehensive overview of the events occurring during the period of January 2017 through early December 2017.

Information included in this report has been consolidated from various news media reports, economic forecasts and other state and private sources. The sequence of this report follows the guidelines outlined in EDA's "Guidelines for University Center Annual State Economic Reports."

The content of this report does not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Economic Development Administration, nor Auburn University.

1. Statistical Snapshot of Alabama

The State of Alabama has made progress in several metrics when compared to the nation. The chart below includes high-level metrics on Alabama's performance.

Metric	Alabama	National
Population-2016 ¹	4,863,300	323,127,513
Population Change Since 2010	+83,564	+14,381,975
Per Capita Income-2016 ²	\$38,896	\$49,235
State Per Capita Income % vs National	79%	100%
Unemployment Rate-October 2017 ³	3.6%	4.1%
Educational Attainment, population 25 or older with High School Diploma or more ⁴	85.1%	87.5%
Percentage of Workforce in Durable Goods Producing	8.62%	15%
Percentage of Workforce in Non-Durable Producing	10.5%	10.6%

¹ [2016 Alabama Population](#)

² [Alabama's Income and Taxes](#)

³ [Civilian Labor Force by County](#)

⁴ <http://www.statsamerica.org/sip/Education.aspx?page=edu1&ct=S01>

Employment by Industry

BEA Major Sectors	2016 Earnings (\$000)	Average Earnings per Job	Rank	2016 Jobs	Percent Distribution in State	Percent Distribution in U.S.
Total by place of work	\$125,150,213	\$48,331	43	2,589,452	100.0 %	100.0 %
Wage and Salary	\$90,592,415	\$44,717	38	2,025,920	78.2 %	77.6 %
Nonfarm	\$11,459,119	\$21,819	46	525,191	20.3 %	21.5 %
Farm	\$781,801	\$20,391	18	38,341	1.5 %	1.0 %
Nonfarm	\$124,197,560	\$48,826	43	2,543,659	98.2 %	98.6 %
Private	\$97,966,706	\$45,677	43	2,144,776	82.8 %	85.9 %
Forestry, fishing, etc.	\$574,837	\$35,447	26	16,217	0.6 %	0.5 %
Mining	\$443,237	\$34,111	35	12,994	0.5 %	0.8 %
Utilities	\$1,981,397	\$132,420	29	14,963	0.6 %	0.3 %
Construction	\$7,453,781	\$54,679	46	136,319	5.3 %	5.2 %
Manufacturing	\$18,016,738	\$67,267	39	267,840	10.3 %	6.9 %
Wholesale Trade	\$5,881,981	\$68,045	41	86,442	3.3 %	3.6 %
Retail Trade	\$8,310,892	\$29,294	48	283,706	11.0 %	10.0 %
Trans. and warehousing	\$3,968,851	\$50,363	41	78,805	3.0 %	3.6 %
Information	\$1,493,764	\$54,523	45	27,397	1.1 %	1.7 %
Finance and insurance	\$6,505,291	\$59,824	34	108,741	4.2 %	5.2 %
Real Estate and rental and leasing	\$1,814,910	\$18,109	46	100,220	3.9 %	4.6 %
Professional, technical services	\$10,299,793	\$72,027	23	143,000	5.5 %	7.0 %
Management of companies, enterprises	\$1,694,792	\$97,173	34	17,441	0.7 %	1.3 %
Administrative and waste services	\$4,409,786	\$25,655	50	171,886	6.6 %	6.2 %
Educational services	\$1,115,879	\$27,063	44	41,232	1.6 %	2.4 %
Health care, social assistance	\$14,366,535	\$59,366	21	242,001	9.3 %	11.2 %
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	\$521,568	\$15,015	48	34,736	1.3 %	2.2 %
Accommodation and food services	\$3,846,431	\$20,619	49	186,547	7.2 %	7.3 %
Other services, exc. public admin.	\$5,266,243	\$30,216	49	174,289	6.7 %	5.9 %
Gov. and gov. enterprises	\$26,230,854	\$65,761	33	398,883	15.4 %	12.7 %

2. Alabama's Strategies



Alabama's Department of Commerce plans to increase its focus on technology-focused jobs in advanced manufacturing, engineering, research and development, and design. Knowledge based jobs will be the department's focus.

In the spring of 2016, Alabama updated its economic development plan entitled "Accelerate Alabama 2.0." In the plan, seven targeted businesses sectors are identified for recruitment. They are:

- Metal and Advanced Materials
- Aerospace/Aviation
- Agricultural Products/Food Production
- Automotive
- Bioscience
- Chemicals
- Forestry Products

In addition, six foundational target sector target industries that are intrinsic to the core competencies of many industries and provide operational processes. They are:

- Corporate Operations
- Cybersecurity
- Data Centers
- Distribution/Logistics
- Information Technology
- Research & Development

Accelerate Alabama 2.0 includes the above targeted industries and foundational targets, recommendations and related tactics centered on the three economic drivers of Recruitment, Retention, and Renewal. The 2.0 plan differs from the initial plan in that it incorporates elements of the Alabama Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research Program to Stimulate Competitive Research.

Aerospace Cluster

The Mobile area and Southwest Alabama will experience continued growth resulting from the aerospace cluster's development. With the location of the Airbus manufacturing plant several years ago, the region announced the opening of an aerospace training facility to provide workforce development skills and training. The region has been designated as a federal "Manufacturing Community" by the U.S. Department of Commerce.



Agriculture/Food Products

Alabama remains a player in the agriculture and food products sector. Alabama is the second largest producer of broilers and fourth largest producer of poultry and eggs. Agricultural exports exceed \$1 billion annually and sustains 34,000 jobs in the state. Employment is expected to remain stable in the near future.

Automotive Manufacturing

Approximately 57,000 jobs are in the automotive sector and is expected to grow by 4% by 2019. Nearly 13 percent of jobs in the state are in manufacturing, representing more than 2.1 million workers. Automobiles are Alabama's number one export product. The state is home to more than 450 automotive suppliers.



Bioscience

The medical equipment and supplies manufacturing industry is expected to grow at a four percent compounded rate between 2017 and 2019. The state has bio-research strengths in the Birmingham to Huntsville corridor. The HudsonAlpha Institute for Biotechnology in Huntsville is located in the Cummings Research Park and is poised for growth along with its surrounding entrepreneurs. Similarly, the Innovation Depot incubator in Birmingham, the Auburn Research park, and the university of South Alabama's Biotechnical Research Unit in Mobile should continue to flourish.

Chemicals

The chemical industry is Alabama's second largest export category, with overseas shipments of \$2.2 billion in 2016. With a cluster along Alabama's Gulf Coast containing approximately 25 companies and almost 200 located in other parts of the state, the industry employs 10,400 people.⁶

⁶ <http://www.madeinalabama.com/industries/industry/chemicals/>

Forestry Products

Alabama has nearly 23 million acres of timberland. There are more than 650 forest manufacturing companies employing nearly 25,000 people. In 2016, new capital investment for the sector topped \$1.1 billion, creating 1,000 jobs.

Metals

Alabama's abundance of natural resources, including minerals make it home to more than 1,100 primary metal manufacturing companies. The largest are in the steel, pipe, and specialty metal sectors. Overall, more than 43,000 Alabama residents are employed and with over \$1.5 billion in exports in 2016. The future looks bright as well with the development of carbon fiber, advanced materials, and additive manufacturing advances in the state.⁷

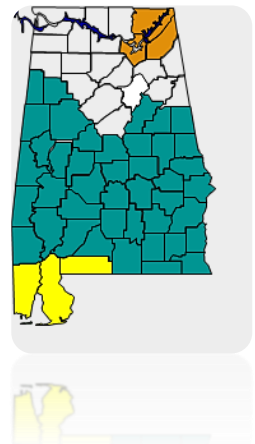
3. Alabama's Economic Condition

Alabama's economy is more diverse than ever before. Known for its recent growth in the manufacturing sector, the state's automotive cluster continues to build steam. The state is competing with North Carolina for a **\$1.6 billion Toyota-Mazda plant with 4,000 jobs** that will be operational in 2021. The plant will produce both the Corolla and crossover vehicles.⁸



Information technology businesses are now looking to locate in Alabama with the passage of incentive legislation targeting data headquarters. In Northeast Alabama, the Tennessee Valley Authority is demolishing its remaining Widows Creek coal plant in Stevenson to pave the way for a new Google data center. Approximately **90 jobs have been lost**. However, on this property, **Google is building a \$600-million-dollar data center** in Jackson County.

The following economic development news occurred throughout the year and is broken down according to EDA's defined geographic regions: Appalachia (orange), Blackbelt (green), Coastal (yellow), Other(white) and Statewide.



Appalachia

February

Repro Corporation announced a contract with Walmart that will **add 442 new jobs** making socks for the company in DeKalb County.⁹

⁸ http://www.al.com/business/index.ssf/2017/11/alabama_among_two_finalists_fo.html

⁹ <http://www.timesfreepress.com/news/business/aroundregion/story/2017/feb/09/walmarts-plstock-more-ft-payne-socks-will-cre/411919/>

May

- Mohawk Industries announced the acquisition of Beaulieu facility in Jackson County. The transaction **preserves current jobs in Bridgeport** and commits to grow employment in the area.¹⁰
- Farmers Telecommunications Cooperative, Inc. (FTC) announced a new fiber infrastructure investment in Marshall County, starting in Albertville and later moving into Boaz and Guntersville.¹¹

September

- Alabama Governor Kay Ivey announce a \$190,422 Community Block grant to Bridgepoint. The grant will provide needed infrastructure improvements to the recently closed Mohawk Industries fiber mill.¹²

Blackbelt

February

- The Lake Martin Innovation Center launched in Alexander City. The 17,000 square foot facility will function as a business incubator and co-working space facility.¹³
- The Chamber of Commerce of West Alabama **projects 2,400 automotive jobs will be available within the next 18 months** due to the expansion of Mercedes' Vance, Alabama plant. Mercedes suppliers will fill more than 16 different jobs, with annual salaries ranging from \$23,000 to \$143,000.¹⁴



¹⁰ <http://www.madeinalabama.com/2017/05/mohawk-acquires-fiber-facility-in-bridgeport-preserving-jobs/>

¹¹ <http://alabamanevcenter.com/2017/07/08/98028/>

¹² <https://wdef.com/2017/09/12/grant-alabama-governor-create-jobs-bridgeport/>

¹³ <http://archive.constantcontact.com/fs120/1102651109448/archive/1127152266174.html>

¹⁴ <http://abc3340.com/news/local/mercedes-benz-suppliers-will-hire-2400-workers-in-tuscaloosa-co>

- Nemak announced it is **adding up to 100 new jobs** through 2020 in Sylacauga. The company produces aluminum engine heads and cylinders. ¹⁵



March

- Golden Dragon Copper announced it plans to **add 30-40 jobs** to its Thomasville facility. The company is a supplier of precision copper products. ¹⁶
- Ashford's Next Level Apparel announced a plant expansion that will **add 75 to 100 jobs** and a new 125,000-square-foot warehouse facility in early 2018. ¹⁷
- Global aerospace and defense firm Leonardo announced it **will create 750 jobs at an advanced assembly facility in Tuskegee if the company's T-100 jet trainers wins a U.S. Air Force competition** for a next-generation training aircraft. ¹⁸

April

- A groundbreaking ceremony for the Millbrook Business Park was held. The 89-acre park has 10 lots available for development. The Elmore County EDA is actively recruiting light industrial, technology-focused companies to the park. ¹⁹
- Auto supplier Hanwha Advanced Materials announced plans to invest \$20 million to upgrade its Opelika facility and **add 100 new jobs over the next 3 years**. The company supplies both Kia and Hyundai with headliners, bumper beans, and underbody shields. ²⁰
- The Truck & Wheel group broke ground on a new 127,000-square-foot wheel assembly factory in Vance. The \$35 million facility is expected to open in 2018, **providing 70 to 75 new jobs**. The factory will be highly robotic and automated, attaching tires to rims, inflating them and running quality assurance tests in a matter of seconds. ²¹

¹⁵ http://www.al.com/business/index.ssf/2017/02/nemak_alabama_to_add_up_to_100.html#incart_river_index

¹⁶ <http://www.alabamaneews.net/2017/03/01/golden-dragon-copper-add-40-new-jobs-wilcox-county/>

¹⁷ http://www.dothaneagle.com/news/local/next-level-apparel-adding-jobs/article_cc831b34-04f0-11e7-9352-3b51bb13460a.html

¹⁸ http://www.madeinalabama.com/2017/03/air-force-trainer/?utm_source=facebook,%20twitter&utm_campaign=leonardo_trainer_jet&utm_medium=social

¹⁹ <http://www.madeinalabama.com/2017/04/alabama-germany-partnership/>

²⁰ http://www.madeinalabama.com/2017/04/hanwha/?utm_source=facebook,%20twitter&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=hanwha_expansion

²¹ [Wheel Assembly Factory Will Open Next Year](#)

May

- A new economic development alliance in Elmore County is **funding the construction of a \$700,000 warehouse facility** that the county's largest manufacturer, GKN Aerospace will use to free up manufacturing floor space for new projects.²²
- James Hardie announced it will **invest \$220 million and create 200 jobs in Prattville**. The new manufacturing facility will produce up to 600 million standard feet of siding and trim.²³

June

- General Electric named Auburn one of eight universities for its additive education program. The university will receive a Concept Laser MLAB 100R metal printer valued at \$250,000.²⁴
- MRaine Industries was awarded CDBG funding by Governor Ivey to help the town of Autaugaville install infrastructure for a water bottling plant. This is **expected to result in 25 jobs for the community**.²⁵
- The Alabama Launchpad business plan competition announced it was expanding to include a regional competition in the Auburn area. Beginning in October, startups from Chambers, Lee, Macon, Russell, and Tallapoosa counties can compete for up to \$100,000 in awards. The partnership includes the City of Auburn, Auburn's Harbert College of Business and the Auburn Research and Technology Foundation.²⁶
- Germany-based Winklemann Group announced it is creating subsidiary that plans to invest \$12 million to establish a metal forming operation in Auburn that will **create 50 jobs over the next five years**. The company is a high-tech manufacturer within the aerospace industry.²⁷



July

- AT&T announced that **rural broadband is now available in parts of Hale and Greene counties**.²⁸

²² <http://www.madeinalabama.com/2017/05/gkn-aerospace/>

²³ <http://alabamane.wscenter.com/2017/05/18/james-hardie-invest-220-million-create-200-jobs-new-alabama-plant/>

²⁴ http://www.al.com/business/index.ssf/2017/06/ge_chooses_auburn_for_advanced.html#incart_river_index

²⁵ <http://archive.constantcontact.com/fs120/1102651109448/archive/1128166961409.html>

²⁶ <https://www.bizjournals.com/birmingham/news/2017/06/15/alabama-launchpad-expanding-to-auburn-area.html>

²⁷ <http://www.madeinalabama.com/2017/06/winklemann-group/>

²⁸ http://www.al.com/business/index.ssf/2017/07/rural_broadband_new_available.html#incart_river_index

- Gateway Tire announced plans to invest \$11 million to open a 200,000-square-foot tire distribution center in Dothan’s Westgate Industrial Park, adding heft to the area’s strong distribution/logistics sector. The project will **create 30 jobs**.²⁹
- Pursell Agri-Tech, LLC announced a new fertilizer coatings plant will open resulting in the **creation of 22 jobs over the next three** years in Sylacauga. The city’s council approved tax abatements.³⁰
- Sylacauga’s Fleetwood Metal announced plans to expand and **create 70 jobs** over the next year. The company is an automotive supplier to Honda.³¹

August

- Baxter completed a 230,000-foot expansion of their Opelika plant which will **increase employment by over 150 people**. The company is a leading provider of essential renal and hospital products.³²



September

- The makers of Clyde May’s Alabama-style whiskey announced plans to consolidate their Conecuh Ridge Distillery operations in Troy. The project will make an initial investment of \$13.6 million and **expects to employ 50 people within five years**, with an average annual wage of \$54,000.³³
- ASK Telemarketing had its grand opening of its new headquarters in Montgomery. The company invested \$2.7 million which will lead to the creation of an **additional 400 jobs over the next two years**.³⁴
- Georgia-Pacific announced plans to construct a \$100 million lumber production facility in Talladega that will **create more than 100 full-time employees** and generate an annual payroll of \$5 million. The \$300-square-foot plan will open in late 2018.³⁵

²⁹ <http://www.madeinalabama.com/2017/07/gateway-tire/>

³⁰ <https://www.sylacauganews.com/local/sylacauga-city-council-approves-tax-abatement-pursell-agri-tech-22-jobs-created>

³¹ http://www.al.com/business/index.ssf/2017/07/sylacauga_fleetwood_metal_expa.html

³² <http://governor.alabama.gov/news/press-releases/governor-ivey-celebrates-expansion-at-baxter-opelika-facility/>

³³ <http://governor.alabama.gov/news/press-releases/governor-ivey-announces-conecuh-ridge-distillery-to-center-operations-in-tr>

³⁴ <http://www.alabamaneews.net/2017/09/12/ask-invests-2-7-million-new-facility-bringing-new-jobs-montgomery/>

³⁵ <http://www.madeinalabama.com/2017/09/georgia-pacific-plans-100-million-alabama-lumber-production-facility/#gallery-59b95175a3058-1>

- Mercedes-Benz announced plans to invest \$1 billion in its Tuscaloosa operations to set up electric vehicle production and to construct a battery plant. The investment is expected to **create 600 jobs**.³⁶



October

- Koch Foods Inc. announced plans to invest nearly \$40 million to build a feed mill in rural Randolph County that will produce prepared feeds and feeding ingredients to support its Pine Mountain, Georgia processing plant. The company **will hire 27 full-time employees and 19 additional truck drivers**.³⁷

November

- SAS Automotive Systems announced it will **bring 170 jobs to Tuscaloosa County's Mercedes-Benz plant**. The company is a global auto supplier.³⁸
- American Apparel announced a \$48 million Marine Corp contract to produce combat utility uniforms at its Opp plant. The company plans to **hire 10 full-time people**.³⁹
- Korean auto supplier Guyoung Tech USA began production at its \$7.5 million Montgomery operation. The company plans **to ramp up employment to 130** over the next few years.⁴⁰

December

- Shaw Industries Group announced it will invest \$184 million in its manufacturing facility in Andalusia. Demolition work has begun with the new changes to improve efficiency, ergonomics and safety for the plant's 1,000 associates. ⁴¹
- Wayne Farms announced the beginning of a \$105 million expansion project at its Enterprise processing facility that will increase production and **add 400 jobs**.⁴²
- The Talladega-Sylacauga Micropolitan Statistical areas was rated the best location in the U.S. for manufacturing jobs, according to a study by SmartAsset. Over 39% of the areas

³⁶ <http://www.madeinalabama.com/2017/09/mercedes-to-launch-electric-vehicle-production-in-1b-alabama-project/>

³⁷ <http://www.madeinalabama.com/2017/10/koch-foods/>

³⁸ http://www.al.com/business/index.ssf/2017/11/sas_automotive_systems_bringin.html#incart_river_index

³⁹ <http://www.andalusiastarnews.com/2017/11/09/48m-contract-secures-local-jobs-more-people-needed/>

⁴⁰ <http://www.montgomeryadvertiser.com/story/news/2017/11/30/hyundai-supplier-bring-130-jobs-montgomery/909115001/>

⁴¹ http://www.madeinalabama.com/2017/12/shaw-to-invest-184-million-in-alabama-fiber-manufacturing-facility/?utm_source=facebook,%20twitter&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=shaw_alabama_investment

⁴² <http://www.madeinalabama.com/2017/12/wayne-farms-launches-105-million-alabama-expansion-creating-400-jobs/>

workforce is employed in manufacturing. The area's top employer is Honda Manufacturing of Alabama.⁴³

- Hwashin America announced it plans a \$23 million expansion of its Greenville facility which will **create approximately 100 jobs**. The automotive supplier currently employs 800 people.⁴⁴

Coastal

March

- Walmart announced plans to construct a distribution center in Mobile. The \$126 million project is **expected to create 550 full-time jobs** with an average wage of \$16.83 per hour.⁴⁵
- Continental Motors Group announced plans to build a manufacturing facility and corporate office at the Mobile Aeroplex. Plans call for the construction of a 225,000-square-foot facility to be completed in 2019.⁴⁶



May

- Governor Ivey announced the creation of the Alabama Aviation Education Center in Mobile. The \$6.5 million center will be developed in partnership with Airbus at the Mobile Aeroplex at Brookley and will feature classrooms, workshops, and innovation rooms.⁴⁷
- Construction was underway on a Walmart **\$140 million solar project** in Lafayette expected to be completed by the end of 2017. This is in addition to its **\$135 million import distribution center in Mobile**.⁴⁸

⁴³ <http://www.madeinalabama.com/2017/12/alabama-metro-ranks-no-1-for-manufacturing-jobs-analysis-says/>

⁴⁴ <http://www.greenvilleadvocate.com/2017/12/13/hwashin-announces-23-million-expansion-set-to-provide-100-new-jobs/>

⁴⁵ http://www.al.com/news/mobile/index.ssf/2017/03/walmart_distribution_center_pe.html

⁴⁶ <http://www.madeinalabama.com/2017/03/continental-motors/>

⁴⁷ <http://governor.alabama.gov/news/press-releases/governor-ivey-announces-creation-of-alabama-aviation-education-center-in-mo>

⁴⁸ <http://www.alabamane.wscenter.com/2017/05/31/walmart-big-plans-alabama-year>

June

- Amazon announced it plans to invest approximately \$30 million to open a 362,000-square foot sortation center in Mobile. The facility **will eventually employ more than 360 part-time employees** with the potential to increase to 1,000 in busy periods.⁴⁹



- Alorica announced the **addition of 70 jobs** at its Saraland location. The company is a customer service provider.⁵⁰
- Provalus announced plans to invest \$6.5 million open a IT Services firm in Brewton, Alabama that will **create 300 jobs**. The facility will offer business process outsourcing, information technology outsourcing, and Helpdesk services to clients including Fortune `1000 companies.⁵¹

August

- Safran, a French aerospace company, announced plans to open a manufacturing operation at Mobile Aeroplex **and hire 20 employees over the next three years**. The company will produce and install aircraft engines at this facility.⁵²

Other

January

- Scot Industries in Talladega announced a \$6 million expansion that will **create 15 new jobs** in three years.⁵³
- Alabama's Hyundai plant recorded a banner year of automobile production. The Montgomery plant manufactured 379,021 vehicles.⁵⁴



⁴⁹ <http://alabamanewscenter.com/2017/06/05/amazon-to-open-30-million-alabama-sortation-center/>

⁵⁰ http://www.al.com/news/mobile/index.ssf/2017/06/alorica_to_add_jobs_in_saralan.html#incart_river_index

⁵¹ <http://governor.alabama.gov/news/press-releases/it-services-firm-provalus-to-create-300-jobs-at-alabama-facility>

⁵² <http://www.madeinalabama.com/2017/08/safran-to-open-aerospace-manufacturing-facility-at-mobile-aeroplex/>

⁵³ https://www.annistonstar.com/the_daily_home/million-expansion-will-mean-new-jobs-at-scot-industries-in/article_8d545626-bdb5-11e6-bae3-437ed2fb2b52.html

⁵⁴ http://www.al.com/business/index.ssf/2017/01/alabama_hyundai_plant_continue.html#incart_river_index

- Cullman Regional Medical Center broke ground on a 20,000-square-foot vertical expansion which will provide another 30 beds and employ an **additional 100 people**.⁵⁵
- The Alabama Tourism Department selected Muscle Shoals' Sound Studio as the state's top attraction for the year. This was once a sought-after recording studio for some the world's best-know musical acts.⁵⁶
- Birmingham was named a top global travel destination for 2017 by the New York Times.⁵⁷
- Raytheon was granted a \$235 million Navy contract to build missiles in Huntsville. Delivery will begin in 2017.⁵⁸

February

- The state announced that exports grew to \$20.6 billion in 2016. Gains of 6.4% from 2015 came from transportation equipment, chemicals, and paper products.⁵⁹
- Publix opened its Alabama distribution center with plans to **have 300 workers by the end of 2017**. The facility is located Birmingham and Tuscaloosa.⁶⁰
- Auto supplier Grupo Antolin announced plans to invest \$10.4 million to construct a manufacturing **facility in Jefferson County will employ 150 people by 2020**.⁶¹

April

- American Metals Group announced it will **create 80 jobs over the next three years** in Childersburg. The company manufactures cold drawn steel bars for the auto, construction and energy industries, and is expecting to produce products during the summer.⁶²

⁵⁵ http://www.al.com/business/index.ssf/2017/01/cullman_hospital_expansion_bre.html

⁵⁶ http://www.al.com/entertainment/index.ssf/2016/12/alabamas_top_tourist_attractio.html

⁵⁷ <https://www.bizjournals.com/birmingham/news/2017/01/04/birmingham-named-among-bes.html>

⁵⁸ http://www.waaytv.com/redstone_alabama/raytheon-gets-million-contract-to-build-missiles-in-huntsville/article_1c2a2df0-e1c2-11e6-b824-bb84ab5ed8b9.html

⁵⁹ <http://www.madeinalabama.com/2017/02/alabama-exports-2/#.WKXK45hYQPs.twitter>

⁶⁰ <http://alabamane.wscenter.com/2017/02/22/publix-opens-alabama-distribution-center-creates-300-jobs/>

⁶¹ <http://www.madeinalabama.com/2017/02/grupo-antolin/>

⁶² http://www.al.com/business/index.ssf/2017/04/american_metals_group_bringing.html#incart_river_index

- Aerojet Rocketdyne announced plans to expand its manufacturing plant in Huntsville for the company's AR1 rocket engine. The move will relocate engineering, program management, and other jobs resulting in the **addition of 800 total jobs.**⁶³



- A study of downtown Huntsville revealed that the city has a strong unmet retail demand. The Robert Charles Lesser & Company Real Estate Advisors' report found 215,000 to 265,000 square feet of new retail would be realized based on recapturing existing retail leakage, plus 60,000 square feet of new demand from the area's growth. Another report revealed that downtown Huntsville needs 500-600 new apartments by 2020 to full the live/work/play environment it desires.⁶⁴
- Walgreens announced it will expand its customer contact center in Muscle Shoals and will be **adding 150 jobs.**⁶⁵

May

- Blue Origins announced plans to manufacture its BE-4 engine in a state-of-the art production facility to be built in Huntsville. The plant will **employee up to 342** people and will make a \$200 million capital investment.⁶⁶
- The University of Alabama at Birmingham ranked 25th nationally in 2016 funding from the National Institutes of Health.⁶⁷
- The cities of Jasper, Oneonta, and Spanish Fort were designated Alabama Communities of Excellence.⁶⁸ ACE uses a comprehensive three-phase approach to help small towns improve.



⁶³ <http://www.madeinalabama.com/2017/04/ar1-rocket-engine/>

⁶⁴ http://www.al.com/business/index.ssf/2017/04/downtown_huntsville_has_strong.html#incart_river_home

⁶⁵ <http://www.madeinalabama.com/2017/04/walgreens-alabama-customer-contact-center-adding-150-jobs/>

⁶⁶ <http://governor.alabama.gov/news/press-releases/governor-ivey-announces-blue-origin-to-build-new-rocket-engine-manufacturin>

⁶⁷ <http://alabamanewscenter.com/2017/05/18/uab-again-ranks-high-in-nih-funding-receiving-more-than-238-million/>

⁶⁸ <http://www.alabamacommunitiesofexcellence.org/2017designations/>

- Alabama legislators renewed Alabama’s historic renovation tax credit which has spurred revive downtown Birmingham and other areas of the state. The program will run through 2022 with \$20 million available each year.⁶⁹

June

- Austria-based Kronspan, a leading manufacturer of wood-based panel projects, stated it plans to invest \$3362 million to expand operations in Calhoun County, **creating 160 jobs**.⁷⁰
- Decatur’s RUAG Space announced it will **hire 100 people** to support United Launch Alliance. The company manufacturers enclosures that protect satellites as they are launched into space.⁷¹
- Hubbel Power Systems announced it will expand two of its facilities in Leeds as well as add and upgrade its equipment. Approximately \$10 million will be invested with the **potential to create up to 70 jobs** in the next few years.⁷² The company manufactures transmission, distribution, telecommunications, and substation equipment used by utility companies.⁷³
- Shipt, the Birmingham based online grocery delivery marketplace, announced it had **raised an additional \$40 million**. The company has partnerships with Miejer, Costoc, Whole Foods and others. The company offers memberships for unlimited grocery delivery service.⁷⁴
- GATR **broke ground on a \$7.5 million, 63,000 square foot plant addition** to its Huntsville facility. The company produces deployable satellite communication solutions.⁷⁵
- Huntsville was named the top tech city in U.S. by Ziprecruiter and Payscale. The city’s tech year-over-year job growth was 309 percent, while median pay was \$59,500.⁷⁶



⁶⁹ <http://www.birminghamtimes.com/2017/05/legislators-renew-alabamas-historic-renovation-tax-credit/>

⁷⁰ <http://www.madeinalabama.com/2016/06/kronospan/>

⁷¹ http://www.al.com/business/index.ssf/2017/05/decatur_gets_100_new_jobs_to_s.html#incart_river_index

⁷² http://www.al.com/business/index.ssf/2017/06/hubbell_power_systems_expandin.html#incart_river_index

⁷³ http://www.al.com/business/index.ssf/2017/06/hubbell_power_systems_expandin.html#incart_river_index

⁷⁴ <https://techcrunch.com/2017/06/06/alabama-based-shipt-raises-40-million-to-challenge-dominant-grocery-delivery-startups/?ncid=rss>

⁷⁵ http://www.al.com/business/index.ssf/2017/06/gatr_expansion_huntsville.html#incart_river_index

⁷⁶ http://www.al.com/business/index.ssf/2017/06/alabama_city_is_americas_faste.html

- National Mill Maintenance completed a \$850,000 renovation of its Tarrant facility which supports 27 new jobs. The company repairs hydraulics and conducts on-site millwright and maintenance services.⁷⁷
- Dynetics announced its building a \$14.2 million test facility near Decatur. The facility will **initially bring 10 jobs** to the area, but with an average salary of \$80,000.⁷⁸
- An article detailed Boeing's plans **to add 400 additional jobs and capital investments of \$70 million in Alabama by the year 2020**. Boeing's manufacturing operations that support missile defense systems and space exploration programs are located in Huntsville.⁷⁹
- Steyr Arms announced it will invest \$2.9 million in its Jefferson County location and will **create 10 jobs**. The company imports, distributes and assembles Steyr firearms. The company plans to relocate the manufacturing of its products for U.S. Sales from Austria to Bessemer.⁸⁰
- Global Aviation Solutions, an aviation company that specializes in upgrading Black Hawk helicopters with locations in Huntsville and Guntersville, announced it has plans to **add another 25 to 50 positions** at its Alabama location over the next two years.⁸¹
- Blue Origin announced it will manufacture BE-4 engines in Huntsville. The spaceflight company was started by Amazon founder Jeff Bezos and will **employ up to 342 people** and make capital investments of approximately \$200 million.⁸²

July

- Huntsville's HudsonAlpha Institute for Biotechnology released an economic study detailing the \$1.85 billion impact the institution has to the economy. The company's life sciences campus employs more than 750 people.⁸³

⁷⁷ <http://archive.constantcontact.com/fs120/1102651109448/archive/1128143145968.html>

http://www.decaturdaily.com/news/morgan_county/decaturo/dynetics-to-build-aerospace-facility-in-morgan-county/article_e4414f71-eeab-517b-89fa-f90efb5833d1.html?platform=hootsuite

⁷⁸ http://www.decaturdaily.com/news/morgan_county/decaturo/dynetics-to-build-aerospace-facility-in-morgan-county/article_e4414f71-eeab-517b-89fa-f90efb5833d1.html?platform=hootsuite

⁷⁹ <http://www.madeinalabama.com/2017/06/boeing/>

⁸⁰ <http://www.madeinalabama.com/2017/06/steyr-arms/>

⁸¹ <http://www.madeinalabama.com/2017/06/north-alabama-aviation-firm-upgrading-austrian-air-force-helicopters/>

⁸² <http://www.madeinalabama.com/2017/06/blue-origin-to-invest-200m-in-alabama-rocket-engine-production-facility/>

⁸³ http://www.al.com/business/index.ssf/2017/07/hudsonalpha_biotech_campus_wor.html

- Inland Seafood of Ensley announced it will **create 100 new jobs**. The company provides seafood, meat and poultry products for sale to restaurants and grocery stores.⁸⁴
- The Bolta Group celebrated the opening of its first U.S. production plant in Tuscaloosa. The company specializes in automotive surface finishing and plans to **create an additional 150 jobs** in 2018.⁸⁵
- Sterling Packaging announced it will break ground on a \$6 million, new 60,000 sq. ft building in Monroeville’s Industrial Park. The company designs and manufacturers folded paper cartons for the food and beverage, hardware and cosmetic industries. The new facility is expected to **create up to 55 new jobs**.⁸⁶
- An Appalachian Regional Commission study revealed that a proposed Birmingham Northern Beltline is estimated to create a \$26.7 billion impact in the area. The impact includes the **creation of approximately 14,000 jobs** with an average salary of \$61,000. The 53-mile project will complete the interstate loop around the city and is projected to be completed by 2054.⁸⁷



August

- Morgan County based Wolverine Tube announced plans to re-open its manufacturing plant by the end of 2017 after a decade-long hiatus. The company will shape aluminum billets into real-car roofs for Bobardier and components used in John Deere tractors. The company may possibly supply bridge decking as well. **Approximately 100 jobs will be added** by the end of 2018 and 250 within three years.⁸⁸

September

- Magna International announced it is adding aluminum casting capabilities to its Birmingham Kamtek facility. The company supports automotive light weighting and its \$60 million expansion has the potential to **create more than 100 jobs**.

⁸⁴ http://www.al.com/news/birmingham/index.ssf/2017/07/inland_seafood_to_expand_in_en.html

⁸⁵ <http://www.tuscaloosaneews.com/news/20170721/bolta-marks-new-plants-opening>

⁸⁶ http://www.al.com/news/index.ssf/2017/07/new_jobs_and_millions_in_inves.html

⁸⁷ http://www.al.com/news/index.ssf/2017/07/northern_beltline_to_make_267.html

⁸⁸ http://www.decaturdaily.com/news/morgan_county/decatu/wolverine-tube-to-reopen-bringing-jobs/article_f6a82bd0-444b-5e7b-9197-ecb2b837c328.html

- Hagerstown Indiana based Autocar announced it will invest \$120 million to expand and open a manufacturing plant in Jefferson County. The company will build heavy-duty cab-over-engine trucks in an existing one million-square-foot complex located in both Center Point and Birmingham. The development is expected to **create 746 jobs**.⁸⁹

- Anniston based New Flyer announced a \$25 million expansion of its bus manufacturer facility. The company employs approximately 750.⁹⁰



- Autocar announced it is investing \$120 million, **creating 750 jobs** at its Birmingham truck manufacturing plant. The plant is expected to have at \$645 million economic impact. The company is the first U.S.-based automotive manufacturer to establish assembly operations in Alabama and its builds trucks for the commercial market.⁹¹

- Calhoun Community College in Decatur broke ground on a new automotive technology building. The facility will be used for technical repair training for autos and heavy diesel machinery.⁹²



October

- Z Modular announced plans to open a 106,00-square-foot production facility in Birmingham that will eventually **have 100 employees**. The company produces modular units for the health care, facilities, data centers, schools, and hotel markets.⁹³

November

- BOCAR plans **to create 300 jobs** and \$115 million in investment to build a new plant in Huntsville. The company is a German automotive supplier that produces high pressure aluminum die casting, plastics and machining for various OEM automotive companies.⁹⁴

⁸⁹ <http://governor.alabama.gov/news/press-releases/governor-ivey-announces-autocar-selects-birmingham-for-truck-assembly-plant>

⁹⁰ <http://www.madeinalabama.com/2017/09/new-flyer-to-add-innovation-center-in-25-million-alabama-expansion/>

⁹¹ <http://alabamanewscenter.com/2017/09/13/autocar-investing-120-million-creating-nearly-750-jobs-birmingham-truck-manufacturing-plant/>

⁹² <http://www.calhoun.edu/about-calhoun/news-and-announcements/groundbreaking-ceremony-launches-construction-of-new-automotive-technology-building-for-calhoun-community-college-in-decatur>

⁹³ <http://alabamanewscenter.com/2017/10/04/chicago-based-z-modular-create-100-jobs-new-birmingham-facility/>

⁹⁴ http://www.enscourier.com/news/local_news/bocar-to-add-more-than-jobs-in-north-alabama/article_7aec1a52-caf5-11e7-8d84-979059dfcfbc.html

December

- The Birmingham Business Alliance announced its 2017 projects. They **represent 2,957 jobs** and over \$560 million investments representing 25 different new and expanding industries.⁹⁵
- Hexcel Corporation's Decatur production site to undergo a \$200 million expansion project that will enable the company to integrate its U.S. carbon fiber and PAN production facility. When completed, the expansion will add another 90 jobs to its existing workforce.⁹⁶

Statewide

April

- The Public Affairs Research Council of Alabama reported that just over 60 percent of Alabama's 2016 high school graduates scored "workforce ready" in 2016, according to new results from ACT's WorkKeys assessment. The Class of 2016's success rate, 61.3 percent, improves on the 60.8 percent rate for the Class of 2015. And because a greater number of students took the test in 2016, the Class of 2016 produced more workforce ready graduates: 28,717 compared to 2015's total of 25,453, netting an increase of 3,264 graduates earning Silver level or above workforce credentials.⁹⁷
- An Auburn University Montgomery tourism study revealed that 25 million travelers spend more than \$13 billion in Alabama during 2016. This was an increase of 5.4% from the previous year.⁹⁸



May

- Governor Ivey signed House Bill 574 to extend the Alabama Jobs Act. This **increases the incentive package to industry to \$300 million.**⁹⁹

⁹⁵ <http://alabamanewscenter.com/2017/12/06/birmingham-business-alliance-pursuing-time-high-economic-development-projects/>

⁹⁶ <http://www.madeinalabama.com/2017/12/hexcel-to-expand-alabama-plant-creating-90-jobs-with-200m-project/>

⁹⁷ <http://archive.constantcontact.com/fs120/1102651109448/archive/1127695324704.html>

⁹⁸ http://www.al.com/business/index.ssf/2017/04/tourists_spent_more_than_13_bi.html

⁹⁹ <http://www.wsfa.com/story/35462738/ivey-signs-al-jobs-act-extension-praises-montgomery-for-growth-and-expansion>

June

- The Alabama Department of Commerce announced the state’s foreign direct investment reached \$1.57 billion in 2016.¹⁰⁰
- Governor Kay Ivey signed into law three bills which reduce regulations for small businesses. One bill removes the requirement for a business to obtain a license in another municipality to make deliveries.¹⁰¹

July

- Business Facilities magazine gave Alabama high rankings for its workforce training programs, auto manufacturing strength an overall manufacturing employment, while touting the growth potential of Mobile and Huntsville.¹⁰²

September

- The Department of Commerce announced grants to help entrepreneurial organizations in Alabama including the University of Alabama in Birmingham, Innovation Depot in Birmingham, and the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce Foundation.¹⁰³

Alabama Business Closing Announcements¹⁰⁴

Closing or Layoff	Initial Report Date	Planned Starting Date	Company	City	Planned # Affected Employees
Layoff	01/10/2017	03/17/2017	BEAULIEU GROUP, LLC. - BRIDGEPORT FIBERS	Bridgeport	332
Closing	11/27/2017	11/13/2017	AG MANUFACTURING	Wetumpka	104
Closing	11/17/2017	12/31/2017	LAKELAND COMMUNITY HOSPITAL	Haleyville	87
Layoff	11/16/2017	01/26/2018	CAHABA GOVERNMENT BENEFIT ADMINISTRATORS, LLC	Birmingham	264

¹⁰⁰ http://www.madeinalabama.com/2017/06/alabama-foreign-investment/?utm_source=facebook,%20twitter&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=alabama_foreign_investment

¹⁰¹ <http://www.alabamaneews.net/2017/06/06/governor-ivey-signs-bills-improve-alabamas-business-climate/>

¹⁰² <http://www.madeinalabama.com/2017/07/business-facilities/>

¹⁰³ <https://www.usnews.com/news/best-states/alabama/articles/2017-09-24/grants-to-aid-business-programs-in-birmingham-mobile>

¹⁰⁴ <http://www.madeinalabama.com/warn-list/>

Closing or Layoff	Initial Report Date	Planned Starting Date	Company	City	Planned # Affected Employees
Layoff	09/28/2017	12/15/2017	FEDERAL-MOGUL	Jacksonville	56
Layoff	08/01/2017	11/17/2017	JABIL ALABAMA	Dothan	96
Closing	07/24/2017	08/01/2017	PAR PHARMACEUTICALS	Huntsville	832
Layoff	06/27/2017	08/25/2017	SIKORSKY	Troy	158
Layoff	04/18/2017	06/19/2017	AT&T	Birmingham	134
Layoff	04/07/2017	06/30/2017	DOLLAR EXPRESS	Montgomery	9

4. Alabama SWOT

Strengths:

- 1) **Business Friendly Climate:** Alabama was ranked among the top states for doing business according to the publication Area Development. The state ranked 6th overall in the magazine’s 2017 “Top States for Doing Business.”¹⁰⁵ Alabama ranked in the individual categories:
 - Leading workforce development programs: No. 3
 - Most improved economic development policies: No. 3
 - Shovel-Ready Sites program: No. 3
 - Speed of Permitting: No. 5
 - Favorable Regulatory Environment: No. 6
 - Favorable utility rates: No. 7
 - Cooperative and responsive state government: No. 7
 - Overall Cost of doing business: No. 7
 - Competitive Labor environment: No. 8
 - Business incentive program: No. 10
- 2) **Huntsville, also known as the “Rocket City”** is ranked as the nation’s top metro area in aerospace and defense. One of the area’s top employers, Boeing, plans to add 400 jobs by 2020.¹⁰⁶
- 3) **Alabama’s Industrial Development Training (AIDT)** program. According to a leading site consultant, Alabama is ahead of other states in using industry to help direct high school, two-year college and four-year college curriculums to fill workforce needs.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁵ <http://www.madeinalabama.com/2017/09/area-development-ranks-alabama-among-top-business-friendly-states/>

¹⁰⁶ <http://www.madeinalabama.com/2017/07/business-facilities/>

¹⁰⁷ <http://alabamane.wscenter.com/2017/08/01/tomberlins-take-jeff-bezos-workforce-among-alabama-right-economic-development/>

- 4) **Natural Resources**-Alabama's forest product industry recorded projects involving \$1.2 billion in new investment and more than 1,000 anticipated jobs according to the Alabama Forestry Association and the 2016 New and Expanding Industry Report issued by the Alabama Department of Commerce.¹⁰⁸
- 5) **Automotive Industry**- Since the landing of Mercedes-Benz in the 1990's, this plant along has impacted 20,000 jobs and had an annual impact of \$1.5 billion in 2017.

Weaknesses:

- 1) **Road and Bridge Infrastructure**-The state has more than 1,000 bridges that are deficient according to a report by the American road and Transportation Builder's Association. The top ten most structurally deficient bridges are split between the Birmingham and Mobile areas.¹⁰⁹ The state does not have matching funds should a federal infrastructure funding bill pass.
- 2) **Pipeline of Skilled Workers**-Numerous studies have confirmed Alabama's businesses continue to struggle to find skilled workers.¹¹⁰
- 3) **Broadband**-Many rural areas of the state still do not have access to broadband internet service. In 2016, only 66% of Alabamians have access to high-speed internet. According to the Federal Communication Commission, only 44% living outside cities have access.¹¹¹
- 4) **Rural Healthcare**-Access to healthcare in many rural parts of Alabama continues to decline with the closing of several county hospitals.¹¹²

Opportunities:

- 1) **Exports**: Alabama exports topped \$20.5 billion in 2016, speared by gains in transportation equipment, chemicals, and paper products. Expanding exports is a priority in the state's Accelerate Alabama 2.0 economic development plan.¹¹³
- 2) **Pre-Kindergarten Education**: According to the National Institute for Early Childhood Education, Alabama's state-funded program is the best in the nation for the 10th consecutive year. The program is known for its high-quality, but its reach is limited due to limited state funding.¹¹⁴ During 2017, the program was expected to reach 25 percent of eligible students, and increase from 20% the year before.

¹⁰⁸ <http://www.madeinalabama.com/2017/07/alabama-forest-products/>

¹⁰⁹ http://www.al.com/business/index.ssf/2017/02/report_more_than_1000_of_alaba.html

¹¹⁰ <http://www.alreporter.com/2017/03/23/wanted-skilled-workers-ensure-alabamas-success/>

¹¹¹ http://www.al.com/opinion/index.ssf/2016/03/nly_66_of_alabamians_have_acce.html

¹¹² http://www.al.com/opinion/index.ssf/2017/09/a_matter_of_life_and_death_sav.html

¹¹³ <http://alabamanewscenter.com/2017/02/16/alabama-exports-accelerate-to-20-6-billion-in-2016-breaking-record/>

¹¹⁴ http://www.dothaneagle.com/news/education/for-th-year-alabama-pre-k-program-ranked-best-in/article_6883a4f0-1d2e-11e6-bab9-777a2c962981.html

- In February, Auburn University announced the construction of a \$8.7 million **aviation education facility**. The building is expected to be completed in July 2018.¹²⁰
- In February, West Alabama Works launched a \$1.5 million training program funded by ARC to **retrain 1,000 displaced coal mine workers** for the automotive industry. The project will deliver job training services to fill critical regional workforce needs in the rapidly growing automotive and advanced manufacturing industries in western Alabama. Areas to be served include Tuscaloosa, Fayette, Bibb, Hale, and Lamar Counties.¹²¹
- In June, Southern Research launched the Prosperity Fund, a \$2.4 million initiative to help create start-ups and help small firms in Jefferson, Fayette, Tuscaloosa and Walker counties affected by the coal industry downturn.¹²²
- In September, the Innovate Birmingham Workforce Partnership graduated its first class. **The training program is designed to establish a pipeline of information technology talent** for the Birmingham area. Graduates of the IT boot camp have secured employment with Blue Cross Blue Shield, Honda, Protective Live, and UAB.¹²³
- In October, the Alabama Community College Systems announced it will begin offering nationally recognized credentials in manufacturing skills at all its colleges beginning in January 2018. A partnership with the Manufacturing Skills Standards Council (MSSC) will make Alabama the first state in the nation.¹²⁴
- Alabama’s job training programs help fuel the state’s automotive industry growth. The Alabama Industrial Development Training Agency assists industry in recruiting workers for new and expanding industries. A new initiative, “Apprenticeship Alabama” offers tax credits to companies with apprentices who receive classroom instruction and on-the-job-training.

¹²⁰ http://www.oanow.com/news/auburn/million-aviation-education-facility-coming-to-airport/article_77562f26-ecf3-11e6-9b61-df84268f4f1a.html

¹²¹ <http://www.tuscaloosachamber.com/posts/2017/02/02/arc-awards-west-alabama-works-15m-grant-for-waw-2020-initiative>

¹²² Business Alabama Magazine, October 2017

¹²³ <https://www.birminghamtimes.com/2017/09/innovate-birmingham-graduates-a-second-it-bootcamp-class/>

¹²⁴ <http://www.madeinalabama.com/2017/10/alabama-community-colleges-to-offer-manufacturing-credentials/>

- The state reorganized and strengthened its workforce efforts with the announcement of AlabamaWorks. The program aligns the state into seven Regional Workforce Councils and Alabama Career Centers to enhance industry related training and career training.¹²⁵
- The Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce is focusing on technology growth in the region by supporting start-ups and entrepreneurs. A new downtown incubator has been created along with a business pitch competition. More focus will provide new opportunities for start-up, small business, and minority-owned business growth.¹²⁶
- The **future of Alabama’s automotive industries** will be shaped by new technologies and a workforce that can adjust. “The question of what skill sets will be required in the future with changes in technology and the production environment remains to be seen,” states EDPA’s Steve Sewell. “For instance, in the last 20 years, we’ve seen so much more automation in our automotive plants in the state, so that requires a different level of technology and a different kind of worker who can program, maintain and repair equipment and who can work in that kind of manufacturing environment. So those are the things that we can control somewhat. We can’t control the technology, but we can control our preparedness in terms of giving our citizens the skill sets and putting the right kind of programs and curriculum in place so that they are prepared to seize the opportunities that are going to come with new technology.”¹²⁸



Closing

This report is intended to represent a high level of analysis comparing relevant national statistics to those of the State of Alabama in order to determine if our state compares favorably to national trends. We have also created a narrative identifying Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats that represent Alabama’s progress and opportunities in innovation, manufacturing and business climate, shortcomings in poverty and reliance on the federal government, and menacing challenges with revenue shortfalls and government regulations.

¹²⁵ <http://www.madeinalabama.com/2017/10/job-training-programs-fuel-growth-of-alabama-auto-industry/#gallery-5a31477d3a428-3>

¹²⁶ <http://www.madeinalabama.com/2016/11/tech-sector-growth/>

¹²⁸ <http://www.businessalabama.com/Business-Alabama/February-2017/The-Shape-and-Future-of-Auto-Growth/>

Information contained in this report is the result of broadly conducted research and analysis of news media reports, economic forecasts, and various indicators produced from a number of responsible sources including but not limited to:

- U.S. Census Bureau
- U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics
- StatsAmerica
- U.S. Cluster Mapping
- Alabama Department of Labor
- Alabama Department of Commerce
- Business Alabama Magazine
- Economic Development Partnership of Alabama