

GOVERNOR KAY IVEY'S STRATEGIC PLAN



SUBMITTED FEBRUARY 4, 2020



STATE OF ALABAMA

February 4, 2020

Members of the Alabama State Legislature:

As required by §41-19-3 of the Code of Alabama, I am pleased to present my four-year strategic plan. Unlike other plans issued by previous governors, this report comes at a time when Alabama has just entered our third century as a state. For this reason, allow me to briefly elaborate on a few points of pride as you peruse the pages of this document.

As you know, since becoming governor on April 10, 2017, my administration and I have made it a top priority to work with all members – in both chambers and from both parties – to find common sense, affordable solutions – whenever possible – to address some of the myriad of challenges and opportunities we have long faced as a state.

In many ways, the commitment to this effort has enabled us to begin tackling many issues that, quite frankly, have either been ignored for too long and/or lacked consensus in terms of agreeing on a plan to move our state forward. I am especially proud of the progress we have made with bipartisan political support – much of which is outlined in this strategic plan – but I am even more excited about many of the opportunities to work together with you and your colleagues in the future.

Specific areas of importance to me include improving education, ensuring better access to quality health care for all Alabamians and building on the success of Alabama's robust economy, the strongest by any measure during our 200-years of statehood.

Finally, in working with you, the men and women of the Legislature, I am committed to making sure we give the hardworking taxpayers of Alabama a government that is open and transparent... as well as one that always tells the truth and rallies around opportunities to do big things and be bold.

I am deeply honored – and eternally grateful – for the opportunity to serve with you as your Governor.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kay Ivey". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kay Ivey
Governor

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- Ivey Administration Highlights

- Refining the Labor Force

- Recruiting Industry

- Strong Start, Strong Finish Initiative

- Rebuilding Alabama's Infrastructure

- Alabama Prison Program

- Strengthening Public Safety

- Improving Health Care

- Focusing on Mental Health

- Deploying Broadband

- Real World Experience for Minority Students

- Enhancement and Protection
of Alabama's Natural Resources



Ivey Administration Highlights

Since Governor Kay Ivey took office in April 2017, her administration has taken on some of our state's toughest issues.

Legislation

Among the notable actions in the special and regular sessions in 2017 through 2019:

- **2017** - House Bill 89 (Act 2017-401) created a school-safety electronic notification system; Senate Bill 218 (Act 2017-269) established the Military Stability Program for the retention and expansion of Alabama's military installations; renewed the Alabama Jobs Act to incentivize economic development growth.
- **2018** - House Bill 470 (Act 2018-539) changed the Simplified Sellers Use Tax (SSUT) Program to increase collection rates; Senate Bill 149 (Act 2018-395) enacted the Alabama Broadband Accessibility Act; Senate Bill 212 (Act 2018-480) established the Alabama School of Cyber Engineering. The education budget approved for Fiscal Year 2019 increased First Class Pre-K funding by \$18.5 million dollars, which was the largest, single-year increase ever approved; it allowed Alabama to officially break the 1,000-classroom mark. The General Fund passed for Fiscal Year 2019 included a \$50 million increase for the Alabama Department of Corrections and \$3.2 million for additional state troopers.
- **2019** - The Rebuild Alabama Act, the biggest state investment in infrastructure in 27 years, passed with bipartisan support. The Strong Start, Strong Finish legislative package passed and consisted of the Alabama Literacy Act, the Computer Science for Alabama Act, and the Alabama Industry-Recognized and Registered Apprenticeship Act. The Alabama Legislature approved spending \$7.1 billion from the 2020 Education Trust Fund budget, making it the largest investment in education in our state's history.
- Education employees received a 2.5-percent raise in 2018 and a 4-percent raise in 2019; state employees received a 3-percent raise in 2018 and a 2-percent raise in 2019.

Economy

- Alabama set many labor records from 2017 to 2019. Alabama reached a record-low unemployment rate of 2.7 percent in November 2019. Alabama met or surpassed the nation's annual job growth for ten consecutive months in 2019. November 2019's unemployment rate reflected 2,203,495 employed persons, a new record high, an over-the-year increase of 82,609 people.
- Since 2017, the state's global automakers – Mercedes, Honda, Hyundai and Toyota – have all launched expansions.
- **2017 banner project announcements** included the Autocar assembly plant, and Wayne Farms expansion, and the Alabama Air National Guard's 187th Fighter Wing was chosen as a home for the new F-35 Joint Strike Fighter Jet.
- **2018 banner project announcements** included the \$1.6 billion Toyota-Mazda joint assembly plant, the state's largest economic development project in the last decade, as well as the Google data center, Amazon fulfillment center, Shipt headquarters and Facebook data center.
- **2019 banner project announcements** included the addition of the Airbus A220 assembly line, Mercedes battery plant, Lockheed Martin hypersonics facility and missile production facility expansion, four Mazda-Toyota supplier manufacturing facilities and the Enviva wood pellet plant.
- According to the Alabama Tourism Department, one million more people visited Alabama in 2018 than ever before and spent \$15.5 billion, which was \$1.2 billion more than the previous year.



Ivey Administration Highlights (Continued)

Administrative Actions

- **In 2017**, Executive Order No. 708 established the Alabama Opioid Overdose and Addiction Council and Executive Order No. 712 expanded the Alabama Executive Veterans Network known as AlaVetNet.
- **In 2018**, Executive Order No. 713 established the Governor's SAFE (Securing Alabama Facilities of Education) Council and Executive Order No. 715 established the Alabama Counts! Census Committee.
- **In 2019**, Executive Order No. 717 established the Alabama Office of Apprenticeship and Executive Order No. 718 established the Governor's Study Group on Criminal Justice Policy.
- The Strong Start, Strong Finish (SSSF) education initiative launched by Governor Ivey in July 2017 has helped integrate Alabama's early childhood education, K-12 education, and workforce-development efforts into a seamless educational journey:
 - The Alabama Legislature approved Governor Ivey's recommended budget increase of \$26.8 million for First Class Pre-K for Fiscal Year 2020, the largest single-year expansion in the program's history. This investment will result in an additional 193 classrooms, bringing the total number of Pre-K classrooms for next year to 1,238.
 - The Computer Science for Alabama Act requires the Alabama State Department of Education to develop secondary-teacher certification pathways for computer science and provides a permanent advisory role for the Governor's Computer Science Advisory Council.
 - Governor Ivey set the statewide post-secondary attainment goal of adding 500,000 highly skilled Alabamians to the workforce by 2025. Governor Ivey established the Governor's Office of Education and Workforce Transformation (GOEWT) to ensure that the attainment and labor force participation goals are met. The Alabama Industry Recognized and Registered Apprenticeship Program Act establishes the Alabama Office of Apprenticeship (AOA) as Alabama's state apprenticeship agency.
- Governor Ivey has made many key appointments since 2017, such as naming Lyn Stuart as chief justice of the Alabama Supreme Court, William B. Sellers to the Alabama Supreme Court, Brad Mendheim to the Alabama Supreme Court, Judge Charles Graddick as director of the Board of Pardons and Paroles, Leigh Gwathney as chair of the Board of Pardons and Paroles, and Dr. Tommie Stewart to the State Board of Education. To date, the Governor has appointed 1,673 individuals to key positions in the state.

The Ivey administration is focused on overcoming our state's challenges and giving all Alabamians a better chance at a quality life and a promising future. With the support of the Alabama Legislature, Governor Ivey expects this forward momentum to continue.



Refining the Labor Force

In 2018, Alabama's gross domestic product exceeded \$221 billion. Our state's economic growth reflects the transformation of Alabama into an internationally competitive economy. Economic development, especially in advanced manufacturing, brings good-paying jobs to Alabamians. The numbers speak for themselves:

- *Unemployment.* The unemployment rate measured 4.7 percent in April 2017 and measured 2.7 percent in November 2019, a decrease of 42.6 percent.
- *Civilian Labor Force.* The number of people in the civilian labor force measured 2,176,593 in April 2017, and measured 2,265,458 in November 2019, an increase of 4.1%.
- *People Employed.* The number of people counted as employed measured 2,073,495 in April 2017 and now measures 2,203,495 (November 2019) – an increase of 6.3%.
- *People Unemployed.* The number of people counted as unemployed measured 103,098 in April 2017 and measured 61,963 in November 2019, a decrease of 39.9 percent.
- *Wage & Salary Employment.* The number of jobs counted in our economy measured 2,016,500 in April 2017 and now measures 2,114,800 (November 2019) – an increase of 4.9 percent.
- *Wages.* Average weekly wages have increased from \$800.80 in April 2017 to \$863.11 (November 2019) – an increase of 7.8%.
- *Labor Force Participation Rate.* The labor force participation rate increased from 56.8 percent in April 2017 to 58.6 percent in November 2019, an increase of 3.2 percent.

Even though the economy is booming, the state will continue to provide the support needed for workers to find jobs. By actively taking employment services into communities, the Alabama Department of Labor can successfully connect workers to employers. In addition to the job-matching services provided at the state's 50 career centers, the Alabama Department of Labor connects workers and employers through other initiatives, such as job fairs and the mobile career center.

The Job Fair Initiative, which began in 2016, has hosted 18 regional job fairs since its inception, and dozens of smaller, local fairs throughout the state. In total, nearly 40,000 job-seekers and more than 1,600 employers participated in these events. The Alabama Department of Labor understands that certain populations face challenges to employment, and has hosted job fairs designed to help veterans, those with disabilities, and those with barriers to traditional employment such as previous incarcerations or addiction problems.

The Alabama Department of Labor's mobile career center has deployed nearly 150 times since 2017, assisting at mass layoffs, job fairs, and other community events, and during times of natural disaster. The mobile career center brings all the services of a brick-and-mortar career center to job-seekers. It offers unemployment insurance assistance, résumé assistance, access to the internet, and ways to apply for jobs online.



Recruiting Industry

Alabama showed the world the power of economic development to shape our economy over the last few years. Through economic development, Alabama's economy transitioned into a modern economy driven by the strategic development of its industry clusters. The benefits of industrial recruitment ripple throughout the economy. Not only do the employees of the recruited company benefit but the wages of those employees grow the local economy. Over the next several years, the Alabama Department of Commerce will continue to recruit industry and evolve with the changing global economy.

To market the advantages of locating in Alabama, Commerce developed an effective campaign strategy to enhance our recruiting efforts. Alabama is no longer a hidden gem for businesses looking to locate. In large part, because Commerce focused on its objective: to put Alabama in its proper place on the world stage as a progressive recruiter of business and a common choice for the strongest companies in the world.

The Alabama Department of Commerce uses many tools to recruit industry, such as the Made in Alabama brand, which showcases the strengths, achievements, and capabilities of the state's economic activities. The state will continue to expand our marketing efforts as an important part of our economic development strategy.

Our economic development plan - Accelerate Alabama 2.0 – has made a major impact on Alabama's economy. Since 2012, economic development in Alabama has generated more than \$40 billion in new capital investment and more than 130,000 new or expected jobs. These types of results transform the economy and improves the quality of life for Alabamians. For 2018 alone, Alabama received \$8.7 billion in new capital investment expected to create 17,026 jobs. By targeting great companies, such as Airbus, GE Aviation, Shipt, and Mazda Toyota, to name a few, we positioned our state for long-term returns on our recruitment efforts.

Less than 25 years ago, not one automobile was made in Alabama. Today, our four auto Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEM) annually produce 1 million vehicles and 1.5 million engines. With the addition of Mazda Toyota, Alabama will produce 1.3 million vehicles and 1.8 million engines annually. According to the 2019 Global Location Trends report, Alabama was ranked in number one for job creation from foreign direct investment during 2018. Products made in Alabama are exported to 191 countries.

Continued economic growth requires us to prepare for the economy of the future. In an age of disruptive technologies and rapid change, we cannot count on more of the same. Our mega-projects have been game changers. The future, though, may look different. Our economic-development strategy must become nimble and focus on jobs ruled by brainpower. We are already actively recruiting and adding new tech jobs from companies such as Amazon, Google, and Facebook. To recruit the jobs of the future, Alabama passed the Alabama Incentive Modernization Act. This act will help rural areas become more economically vibrant and advance tech activity.

As we update our economic-development playbook, we will focus, on the strategic areas, listed below, to make sure the future is made in Alabama.

- *Emerging Hypersonics Hub;*
- *Growing Supply Chain Cluster;*
- *Supporting Existing Industry: Workforce Attraction;*
- *Expanding Aerospace Capabilities;*
- *Expanding Artificial Intelligence, Internet of Things, and Advanced Manufacturing 2.0;*
- *Elevating Rural Potential; and*
- *Strategic Push for Tech Jobs.*



The Strong Start, Strong Finish Initiative



Three months after assuming office, Governor Ivey launched the Strong Start, Strong Finish education initiative in July 2017 to integrate Alabama’s early-childhood education, K-12 education, and workforce-development efforts into a seamless educational journey for all Alabamians. Strong Start, Strong Finish is composed of three initiatives: Pre to Three (P-3) is focused on securing statewide saturation for the Alabama First-Class pre-kindergarten program and ensuring that all of Alabama’s third-graders are proficient readers by 2022; Computer Science for Alabama (CS4AL) will ensure that a rigorous Computer Science course is offered at all of Alabama’s middle schools and high schools by 2022; and Success Plus will prepare 500,000 more Alabamians to enter the workforce with high-quality postsecondary degrees, certificates, or credentials by 2025.

Progress by the Strong Start, Strong Finish Initiative will be measured by five benchmarks: (1) Pre-K readiness, focused on helping all of Alabama’s four-year-old children be prepared for an excellent early-childhood education experience; (2) school readiness, to ensure that all of Alabama’s five- and six-year-old students enter kindergarten and/or first grade with advanced skills; (3) literacy and numeracy by age eight, to ensure all students are prepared to persist through difficult coursework; (4) career exploration and discovery, to assist all students with understanding how to connect their interests and aptitudes with academic skills they learn in the classroom; and (5) college and/or career readiness, focused on helping all students graduate high school prepared to enter postsecondary education or an in-demand occupation.

Initiatives Aligned with the benchmarks of Strong Start, Strong Finish:

Pre-K Readiness

NGA P-3 Policy Academy — On July 6, 2019, Alabama was awarded a competitive National Governors Association Center for Best Practices “Integrating and Advancing State Prenatal to Age Three Policies.” P-3 is a technical assistance grant of \$25,000 to identify and support policies that will align early learning and health and human services in Alabama.

School Readiness

The First-Class Pre-K Program — The Alabama First Class Pre-K program is recognized as the nation’s highest-quality, state-funded pre-kindergarten program by the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER). The Alabama Legislature approved Governor Ivey’s recommended budget increase of \$26.8 million for First Class Pre-K for Fiscal Year 2020, the largest single-year expansion in the program’s history. This investment will result in an additional 193 classrooms, bringing the total number of Pre-K classrooms for next year to 1,238, moving closer to Alabama’s goal of serving up to 70 percent of eligible four-year-old children.

The P-3 Pilot Program — In December 2017, Alabama was awarded a \$1.5 million grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation to support the launch of the Pre-K-3rd Grade Integrated Approach to Early Learning pilot program (“P-3”), which started with 35 classrooms in 2017-2018. The P-3 pilot builds upon the First-Class Pre-K Program by taking the most successful parts of K-3 initiatives to establish a strong foundation of early learning experiences that promote student achievement from birth to age eight. The program grew to 75 classrooms in the 2018-2019 school year.



The Strong Start, Strong Finish Initiative (Continued)

Literate and Numerate by Age Eight

The Alabama Literacy Act (Act 2019-523) — The Act was designed to ensure that all students enter fourth grade reading at grade level by refocusing the Alabama Reading Initiative (ARI), providing support for educator professional learning in reading, and strengthening support for struggling readers. To meet the goal that all students will be proficient readers by the end of the third grade, the Alabama Literacy Act provides that all students receive strong reading instruction with the goal that all third graders enter fourth grade reading as proficient readers. The Alabama Literacy Act passed the Legislature in 2019 with strong bipartisan support.

The Alabama Campaign for Grade-Level Reading — The goal of the Campaign is that all students will enter the fourth grade as proficient readers by 2022. The Alabama Grade-Level Reading Campaign focuses on five primary areas: school readiness, preventing chronic absenteeism, restoring the Alabama Reading Initiative to fidelity, increasing summer learning opportunities for P-3 students, and improving childhood health.

The Governor's Advisory Council on Excellence in STEM (ACES) — Governor Ivey established the Governor's Advisory Council for Excellence in STEM (ACES) in October 2018 to prepare Alabama's workforce for occupations focused on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) skills and to increase mathematics and science achievement among Alabama's students. The Council, chaired by Dr. Neil Lamb of HudsonAlpha, presented Governor Ivey with a STEM roadmap for Alabama on November 7, 2019. It provided 24 recommendations for improving STEM education.

Career Exploration and Discovery

The Governor's Computer Science Summits — The purpose of the Summits is to bring together students, teachers, future teachers, business leaders, and other stakeholders to create momentum for sustained expansion of computer-science education in Alabama. Governor Ivey hosted Alabama's inaugural Computer Science Summit in March 2018. The summit, headlined by code.org founder Hadi Partovi, was held to unify stakeholders around expanding access to computer science in Alabama. Governor Ivey held the second annual Summit on April 2019. The third annual Summit will be held on April 27, 2020 and will feature Alabamian Nan Boden of Google X as the keynote presenter.

The Alabama School of Cyber Technology and Engineering — The school is based in Huntsville and scheduled to open during the fall of 2020 as a destination magnet school that will also serve as the hub for Computer Science professional development in Alabama. The Alabama School of Cyber Technology and Engineering board of directors hired Matt Massey to be the first president.



The Strong Start, Strong Finish Initiative (Continued)

Secondary Computer Science Certification Pathways (Act 2019-389) —The Act required the Alabama State Department of Education to develop secondary teacher-certification pathways for computer science. Three computer-science certification options were created: a traditional secondary pathway, an endorsement option for passing the CS Praxis, and a course-specific permit option. Act 2019-389 preserves career and technical educator certifications for teaching CS in a CTE setting.

College and Career Readiness

The Governor’s Computer Science Advisory Council — In September 2017, Governor Ivey established the Governor’s Advisory Council for Computer Science Education, which is co-chaired by Drs. Barbara Cooper and Jeff Gray. The Council released a state policy report and recommendations at the second annual Governor’s Computer Science Summit, and it continues to serve an advisory role as Alabama implements the provisions of the Computer Science for Alabama Act.

The Governor’s Coding Challenge—Governor Ivey established the Governor’s Coding Challenge, a computer-science competition for K-12 students. The Governor’s goal is to give more students the opportunity to gain recognition for their mastery and application of computer programming and design. The first Challenge was held April 30, 2019. Winners were selected from regional winners from each Alabama State Board of Education district. The winners were judged in elementary, middle, and high-school categories.

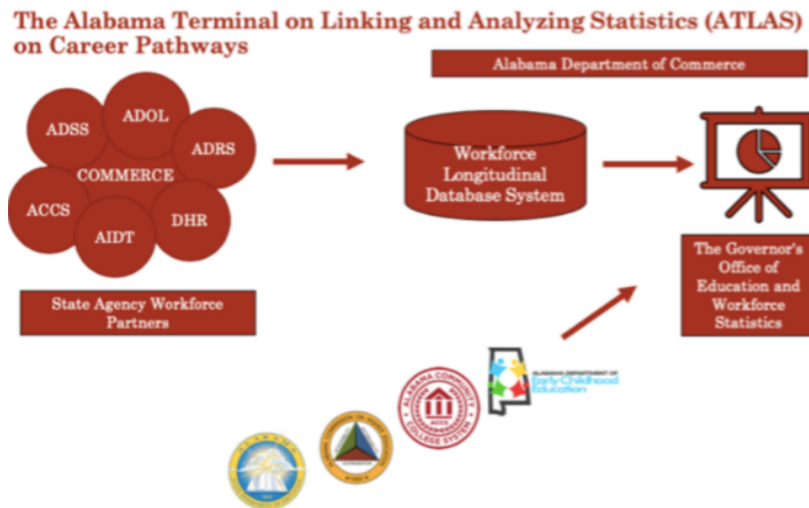
Career Exploration and Discovery

The Alabama College and Career Exploration Tool—The ACCET will be designed to serve as a digital dashboard, to let Alabamians compare college and career options before choosing a career pathway. The ACCET will guide students through a digitally delivered exploration and survey all 79 pathways within the 16 CTE industry clusters, an interest and career profile, and a graduation plan. The Alabama College and Career Exploration Tool (ACCET) will be designed to serve as a digital resume to display industry-recognized credentials and progress against established competency models. The ACCET will allow employers to auto-populate a list of the individuals who possess the credentials and competencies best suited for each job posting, which will reduce hiring costs and will incent employers to add credentials to job descriptions.



The Strong Start, Strong Finish Initiative (Continued)

The Alabama Terminal on Linking and Analyzing Statistics (ATLAS) on Career Pathways — The ATLAS on Career Pathways will serve as an integrated workforce and education database that will provide the data needed to identify in-demand career and credentials. Creating the ATLAS on Career Pathways will help the Governor establish a process for regularly adjusting Alabama’s workforce and economic development programs to meet the needs of Alabama’s economy.



The Jobs for Alabama’s Graduates (JAG) Expansion Initiative — The Jobs for Alabama Graduates Program helps at-risk youth enter training programs or enter the workforce. The Jobs for Alabama’s Graduates program has underway the most significant expansion process in the program’s history under Governor Ivey’s leadership. Governor Ivey worked to secure a \$250,000 increase in the state appropriation in the Fiscal Year 2019 budget. Governor Ivey secured a \$500,000 increase for JAG in the Fiscal Year 2020 budget, which brings the total state appropriation for JAG to 1,550,742. Governor Ivey plans to expand JAG to every county in Alabama.

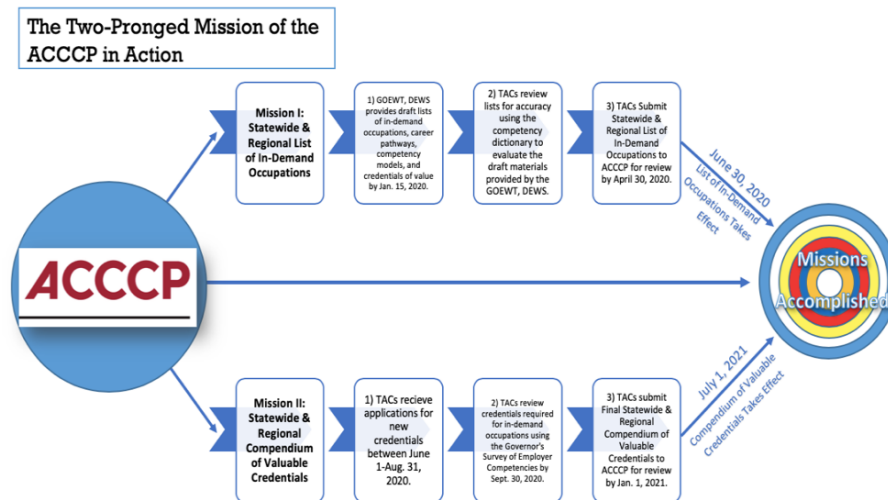
College and Career Readiness

The Alabama Office of Apprenticeship — The U.S. Department of Labor allows registered apprenticeships programs to be approved by either the federal Office of Apprenticeship or a federally-recognized state apprenticeship agency. Alabama currently used the federal Office of Apprenticeship to certify its registered apprenticeships. However, Act 2019-506 establishes the Alabama Office of Apprenticeship (AOA) as Alabama state apprenticeship agency.

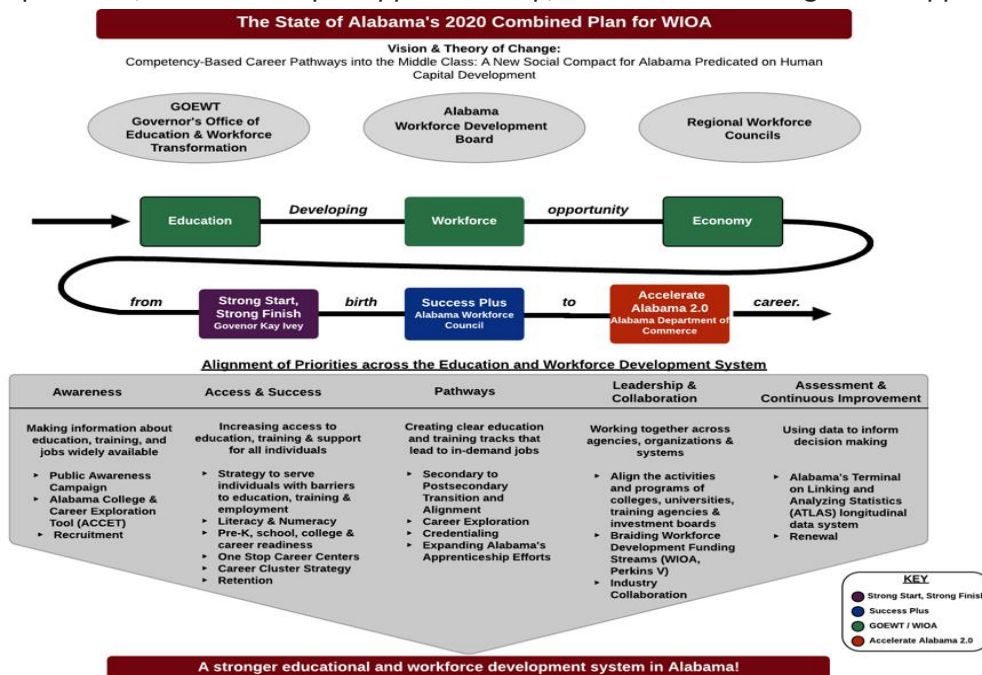
The Strong Start, Strong Finish Initiative (Continued)

The Alabama Committee on Credentialing and Career Pathways (ACCCP) —

The ACCCP, and its series of technical advisory committees composed of business and industry members representing each sector, will be responsible for determining the valuable career pathways in each of the seven workforce regions and for evaluating credentials and determining if they should be placed on the Alabama Compendium of Valuable Credentials—Alabama's list of credentials of value. The ACCCP shall appoint a technical advisory committee for each of the 16 career clusters. Each is composed of seven members who possess experience in education, workforce, or economic development.



The Alabama 2020 WIOA Combined Plan — Governor Ivey will submit a new four-year Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) state combined plan in February 2020. The plan was posted on all core and partner agencies' websites for a public comment period that lasted from November 1, 2019 to January 15, 2020. The combined state plan takes advantage of aligned definitions in WIOA and the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education (CTE) Act, including "career pathways," "sector strategies," and "programs of study." This intentional alignment will allow Alabama to develop career pathways in all 16 career clusters that begin with career exploration, transition to pre-apprenticeship, and culminate in registered apprenticeship.





For decades, Alabama's roadways crumbled without the resources and vision to maintain them. In 2019, the state prioritized the development and repair of our infrastructure, especially of our roads. Inadequate infrastructure impairs the quality of life and economic vitality of Alabama. Deteriorated roads damage vehicles and goods transported across them and risk the safety of the people who travel on them. A large, bipartisan majority of legislators in 2019 passed the Rebuild Alabama Act. When fully implemented, it will generate about \$300 million a year that will be directly invested in our roads and bridges by state, county and local governments. It will set our state on the path to restoring its infrastructure.

The Alabama Department of Transportation plans to provide safe and efficient roads and bridges by focusing on:

- 1) *Safety.* Lives will be saved by expanding the use of data-driven, systemic safety management approaches and by increasing the adoption of proven safety solutions by all road owners. Our fatality rate should continue decreasing as we promote and continue to implement programs such as the Highway Safety Improvement Program and the Railway-Highway Crossing Program. For rural areas, we will emphasize a High-Risk Rural Roads Program.
- 2) *Reliability.* Improve program and project decision making by using a data-driven approach, asset management principles, and a performance-based program that will lead to better road and bridge conditions. We plan to budget funds necessary to resurface approximately 850 miles of state roads and approximately 83 miles of Interstate roads, and to rehabilitate or replace approximately 40 outdated and worn-out bridges each year.
- 3) *Efficiency.* Through the revenue generated by the Rebuild Alabama Act, we will begin construction, on average, of an additional lane on five miles of the Interstate and on five miles of two-lane state highway each year. Additionally, we will advance a program to increase the statewide four-lane network with emphasis in rural, economically underserved areas
- 4) *Economic and Community Support.* Be responsive to the needs of industry to enhance economic growth and support investment in projects of local interest to improve the quality of life of local communities. To ensure our roads continue to meet the needs of our economy, we will work with the Alabama Transportation Rehabilitation and Improvement Program-2 (ATRIP-2) Committee and continue to administer the Industrial Access Road and Bridge program and Annual Grant Program established through the Rebuild Alabama Act.
- 5) *Advanced Aspirational Projects.* We will seek opportunities to advance aspirational projects through federal programs, grants and legislation. These are mega-projects costing hundreds of millions of dollars or more, for which conventional funding is not adequate.

Alabama Prison Program

Alabama Prison Infrastructure: Why the Status Quo is No Longer an Option

The Alabama Department of Corrections (ADOC) continues to face numerous long-standing, complicated issues, including challenges related to inmate safety due to overcrowding, staffing levels, and overall prison conditions. The Department has made progress towards addressing these issues, including introducing a strategic plan, enhanced contraband removal efforts, and an innovative workforce development program in 2019. The U.S. Department of Justice and federal courts are closely watching the state's progress. *The status quo – simply put – is no longer an option.*

The Alabama Prison Program is a key step in providing an environment that is safer for inmates and staff, one that is more conducive to the rehabilitation of offenders. While the Alabama Prison Program is not the lone solution to ADOC's challenges, it is a foundational and necessary first step. Under Governor Ivey's leadership, the ADOC is revitalizing its corrections system with plans to replace aging prison facilities that pose the greatest risk to public safety, place the largest financial burdens on taxpayers, and inhibit the development of programs for inmate rehabilitation. *The Alabama Prison Program is the most cost-effective method to address the dual challenge of staffing shortages and the physical conditions of Alabama's aging prisons.*

In recent years, Alabama has continued to increase financial commitments for the ADOC. When Governor Ivey took office in Fiscal Year 2017, the ADOC received a \$413.1 million General Fund appropriation. It is budgeted at \$517.2 million for this fiscal year. Moving forward, the state must continue to invest significantly more funds into the ADOC; the situation is dire. To comply with the federal court order mandating the addition of correctional officers, Alabama eventually will have to invest beyond the funding levels in the Fiscal Year 2020 budget. However, as noted in the April 2019 report from the United States Department of Justice, the state also must address the physical conditions of its facilities, in addition to staffing, to see a meaningful impact across our correctional system and avoid a federal takeover, which would place an incredibly heavy financial burden on our state.

Governor Ivey's Alabama Prison Program addresses both areas in critical need of attention – staffing and conditions – in the most cost-effective manner. Here are key facts to know:

- **Three New Facilities:** The Plan proposes building three new Level IV/Level V men's facilities and refurbishing and/or decommissioning an undetermined number of the existing Level IV/V men's facilities once the new facilities are in use. Decisions on refurbishing or decommissioning will be strategically made once the locations of the three new facilities have been finalized.
- **Less Financial Risk and Burden for the State:** The three new facilities will not be private prisons. They will be financed, built, maintained and owned by the developer teams awarded the contracts, and ADOC will lease, staff, and operate the facilities. This approach will let the state avoid the debt and financial risk related to the actual construction as well as the annual maintenance costs of the prisons.
- **Most Cost-Effective Method:** The ADOC expects the operational savings generated by decommissioning aging, inefficient, and unsafe Level IV/V men's facilities to equal or exceed the annual lease payments for the three new men's Level IV/V prisons.



Alabama Prison Program (Continued)

- **Opportunity to Improve and Increase Rehabilitation:** The three new facilities will allow ADOC to transition from a warehousing model to a rehabilitative model. This will help reduce recidivism, which will improve public safety and, ultimately, the wellbeing of Alabama's prison population.

In the years to come, Alabama must maintain its commitment to address challenges facing our prison system in staffing, infrastructure, programming, and other areas. Addressing infrastructure challenges beyond the three new prisons, such as the renovation of existing men's facilities, renovation or construction of the women's facility, and renovation or construction of Level I/II men's facilities, will need to be explored in the future.

Today, we have an immediate crisis and we need immediate action. That is why Governor Ivey is committed to propelling the Alabama Prison Program forward.

Strengthening Public Safety

To better serve the State of Alabama, the Alabama State Law Enforcement Agency (ALEA) has increased staffing across the Highway Patrol, Marine Patrol, Driver License, and State Bureau of Investigation divisions. Compared to 2017, the State of Alabama now has 19 percent more Troopers on roadways, 75 percent more front-line officers on the waterways, 21 percent more examiners in driver license offices, and 17 percent more agents in the field. The Driver License division reopened 30 offices originally closed in consolidation, increased days of operation in 21 locations, and provided Saturday services in 11 offices. The State Bureau of Investigation (SBI) created an Unmanned Aerial Systems Unit to assist in reconnaissance and surveillance for investigations, mapping of crime scenes, recording the implementation of search warrants, finding missing persons, and assisting with traffic homicide investigations which will also reduce interstate shutdowns. SBI expanded Geographical Information Systems capabilities, enhanced the Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force, created the Drug Enforcement Task Force, and increased efforts to reduce human trafficking and increase school safety.

With Governor Ivey's support, and under Secretary Hal Taylor's leadership, ALEA plans to further increase staffing levels across the agency and work to reinstate and increase State Police benefits for Tier II sworn personnel. Modernization efforts are a top priority to include replacing the Driver License Issuance System and the Criminal Justice Fingerprint Identification System.

ALEA will pursue expanding the Senior Alert to include adults with mental and physical disabilities and expanding current water safety laws to provide safer waterways throughout the state. ALEA will also continue to cross-train marine police officers to work roadways when traffic on waterways decreases in winter months. ALEA will work to ensure that all troopers are trained in traffic-homicide investigation, and all SBI agents will be trained to use unmanned aerial systems.



Improving Health Care

Governor Kay Ivey has worked to protect the health of all Alabamians through recent changes designed to improve Alabama Medicaid, the state agency that provides health coverage for about 1 million lower-income and disabled Alabamians.

Governor Ivey also helped expand behavioral-health services for children, supported programs designed to reduce infant mortality and opioid overdoses, and approved a law that required state licensing at more child-care centers.

Alabama Medicaid

In October 2019, Alabama Medicaid started coordinating the health care of 750,000 Medicaid beneficiaries through seven regional Alabama Coordinated Health Networks (ACHNs), non-profit organizations created to help patients understand their medical conditions and treatments and get needed appointments, medications, and transportation. These organizations are paid by Alabama Medicaid, up to prearranged caps, for the type and frequency of case management performed by their social workers, nurses, pharmacists, and other employees who talk with Medicaid beneficiaries. Each organization also can get bonuses for reaching quality benchmarks on: well-child visits for babies, measurement of body-mass indexes, counseling for obese children and teens, medication management for asthma and depression, and other measures. Each organization must have a quality-improvement project aimed at each of the following: reducing or treating obesity, infant mortality, and substance-use disorder. Primary-care physicians who treat members of a health network can get bonuses for meeting quality standards, providing cost-effective care, and offering patient-centered medical homes, which coordinate health-care referrals and offer 24/7 phone-call coverage. The belief behind the program is: better primary care and coordination of each patient's health care will over time improve people's health and reduce the growth in health-care costs.

In October 2018, Alabama Medicaid started overseeing, through Alabama Select Network, care for about 24,000 Medicaid beneficiaries who live in nursing homes or receive in-home services and supports to help them keep living in their homes. Most of these people are 65 or older.

Alabama Select Network is a for-profit company, formed in part by nursing-home owners and subsidiaries of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama and of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Tennessee. Alabama Medicaid pays the company a per-member, per-month amount for helping to direct people to the most-appropriate settings for their needs. Alabama Select Network can earn bonuses if, over time, there is an increase in the percentage of people receiving in-home services among people eligible for Medicaid's long-term services and supports. In-home services on average are less expensive than nursing-home care.

In October 2019, Governor Ivey released an extra, conditional state appropriation that, combined with matching federal dollars, will provide in fiscal year 2020 a total of \$78 million in extra payments to state hospitals for treating Medicaid beneficiaries. For comparison, Alabama Medicaid's total spending for hospitals totaled \$2.29 billion in FY 2018.

The conditional state appropriation, which legislators and the Governor approved, totaled \$22 million, which will allow hospitals to receive an additional \$56 million in matching federal dollars in Fiscal Year 2020. Alabama Medicaid Commissioner Stephanie Azar said the extra money will "help hospitals provide vital services."



Improving Health Care (Continued)

Proposals to Improve Access to Health Care in Rural Areas

Ensuring access to life-saving health care no matter where someone lives in Alabama is a high priority for Governor Ivey.

Governor Ivey supports plans to improve emergency-medical services, foster quality and efficiency at rural hospitals, and offer incentives to more health-care professionals willing to practice in underserved rural areas that need more primary-medical care or dental care. The Governor looks forward to working with legislators to improve health care in rural Alabama.

Safety Standards at Child-Care Centers

Governor Ivey signed a law that required hundreds of child-care centers to be licensed for the first time by the Alabama Department of Human Resources (DHR).

The law's stiffer licensing requirement took effect August 1, 2019. The number of unlicensed child-care centers in Alabama has dropped from 834 to 537. The number of child-care centers licensed by DHR has risen from 969 to 1,274. Formerly, any child-care center operated as part of a church ministry or a non-profit religious school could be exempt from DHR licensing.

That exemption is still in place for hundreds of child-care centers. Starting August 1, 2019, that exemption could not include any child-care center that received state or federal funds, operated for profit, or had at least one enrolled child who received a child-care subsidy from DHR.

The department inspects child-care centers to ensure they meet safety and adequacy standards for building space and fixtures, storage of cleaning materials and medicines, playgrounds, and toys, books, and other equipment, for instance. DHR also reviews staff training and criminal-background checks, and child-to-staff ratios.

The law signed by Governor Ivey also requires unlicensed child-care centers to be inspected at least annually by local fire and health departments, and to annually provide DHR proof of compliance with fire and health inspections, proof of insurance, employee criminal-background checks, and, if requested, immunization records of all children.

Addressing Infant Mortality

Governor Ivey proposed – and the Legislature approved – spending an extra \$1 million in Fiscal Year 2019 and again in Fiscal Year 2020 through the Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH), to try to reduce infant mortality.

The money is being spent on pilot programs aimed at reducing by 20 percent infant-mortality rates in Montgomery, Macon, and Russell counties over five years.

Services for the pilot programs are overseen by several agencies, in part to expand home-visitation programs such as the Nurse-Family Partnership and Parents as Teachers, in which nurses or peer specialists talk with and coach new mothers and meet their babies.

Additionally, money is being spent to provide care to women of childbearing age. The program screens and evaluates women for chronic medical diseases and social needs and makes referrals for services.



Improving Health Care (Continued)

Combatting Opioid Abuse

Governor Ivey supported – and the Legislature approved – spending \$1.1 million in Fiscal Year 2019 and again this year to improve the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP), in part by making it easier to use.

Pharmacists and other health-care providers who dispense opioids must report the prescription information to the PDMP. The PDMP can be used by physicians, dentists, pharmacists, and other health-care providers to see if a patient already has been prescribed opioids.

In 2018, Governor Ivey signed into effect a law that made it a crime to traffic in fentanyl and carfentanil, synthetic opioids that are much more potent than heroin.

Passing that law and improving the PDMP were recommended by the Alabama Opioid Overdose and Addiction Council, which the Governor formed in 2017 to “address the overdose crisis in Alabama.” The Council is led by state Mental Health Commissioner Lynn Beshear, State Health Officer Scott Harris, and state Attorney General Steve Marshall.



Focusing on Mental Health

Plans for New and Expanded Facilities

The Governor supports:

1. Building a more-complete range of care for people facing mental-health crises, in part by starting crisis diversion centers where people facing serious mental problems could be stabilized and treated without being sent to a jail or hospital. A facility could have 12 to 16 recliners, each for treating a person for 23 hours or less, and 16 beds, each for treating a person for as long as 10 days.

Governor Ivey supports an appropriation of \$18 million from the state General Fund in Fiscal Year 2021 for the Alabama Department of Mental Health to open as many as three crisis centers. Plans could change. Consultants hired by the Department may instead recommend building two crisis-diversion centers and investing in mobile-response teams that could travel to care for people in crisis within wide areas.

The need for a broader range of care was shown in 2019, when legislators from Houston, Pike, Dale, and Barbour counties won approval for laws that let police officers in those counties detain people and take them to hospital emergency rooms if the officers have “reasonable cause to believe that the individual is mentally ill and is an immediate danger to himself or herself or others.”

2. Another priority for Fiscal Year 2021 is adding beds and staff at the Taylor Hardin Secure Medical Facility, where people accused of crimes get psychiatric evaluations and people judged not guilty by reason of insanity are treated. This action is needed to reduce wait times for such services, as demanded in a federal lawsuit.

Mental Health Services in Schools

The Governor supports:

- Adding service coordinators in school districts;
- Expanding youth mental health first aid training;
- Adding therapists at 20 additional school districts (for a total of 92).

Therapists employed by 16 community mental health centers were working in 60 city and county school districts in December 2019, and therapists are scheduled to be working in another 12 school districts by Sept. 30, under the School-Based Mental Health Collaboration launched by the Alabama Department of Mental Health (ADMH) and Alabama State Department of Education. ADMH plans to spend \$1 million more in Fiscal Year 2021 to place therapists in 20 more public school systems. (Therapists also can bill for seeing students covered by Medicaid.)

In addition, the Department of Education plans to seek funding for mental-health service coordinators to work in public school systems statewide. These coordinators would talk with students and refer them, as needed, to counselors or therapists in or out of school, or to community groups or state agencies that could help students and their families.



Deploying Broadband

Access to high-speed internet, particularly in rural areas, became the 21st-century equivalent of the task of introducing electrical power in remote areas of the United States in the 1930s. Realizing the importance of broadband to Alabama, multiple State agencies have worked with the Legislature to improve deployment of broadband in rural areas.

In April 2017, Executive Order 704 established the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA) as the state agency to head up broadband development, paving the way for high-speed internet services in rural areas to attract industry, improve schools and health care, and create some parity with internet services offered in urban areas.

In the spring of 2018, lawmakers passed a law creating the Alabama Broadband Accessibility Fund. This law provided \$7.4 million in total funding to support broadband deployment in rural areas. In late 2018 and 2019, 27 non-government entities applied for Alabama Broadband Accessibility Fund grants to assist projects that will supply various areas of Alabama with broadband services. Fifteen of the applications were awarded funding. Once completed, these projects will provide access to broadband services to more than 3,000 new customers, 90 percent residential, and all in rural Alabama.

On May 30, 2019, Act 2019-327 was signed to allow numerous amendments to the original Act. These amendments included: a higher minimum speed threshold, increased maximum grant level, and a due date established by ADECA which would allow for Internet service providers to leverage federal funding. However, most importantly, Act 2019-327 included specific documentation of project completion. This added accountability metric means that communities will receive the broadband they were promised. Also, in 2019, the state allocated \$20 million to deploy rural broadband. Because of these changes, ADECA received more than 60 proposals in the first round of applications for 2020.

To ensure long term effectiveness of Alabama's deployment of broadband, the state has begun to develop a statewide broadband plan. In July of 2019, ADECA began the process of developing a plan by issuing a request for proposals for planning and mapping services. This process will provide technical expertise for grant program development, support and enable regional planning, develop current broadband maps and system and other critical components for a statewide strategic plan.

In the next three years, these efforts will continue to help support projects that will increase the availability of high-speed internet in rural Alabama



Real World Experience for Minority Students

The Governor's Office of Minority Affairs (GOMA) has implemented the Alabama HBCU (Historically Black Colleges and Universities) Co-Op Program. For the pilot stage of the program, the agency received funding of \$150,000 to place about 10 HBCU students with employers in both the private and public sectors on a semester-by-semester basis. The Co-Op Program focuses on placing HBCU students in leadership positions in such areas as STEM, marketing, and human resources. The purpose of the program is to provide students with hands-on experience in their areas of study, to provide Alabama employers with a trained diverse and talent pool and to keep this diverse talent within the Alabama upon graduation. GOMA began placing students in positions in the fall of 2019.

After its inception, the program was initially relying on the HBCU Liaisons to nominate and send qualified students for these positions. However, GOMA is broadening its strategy to include speaking with student leaders directly about the co-op program. GOMA is also planning to partner with the Alabama Departments of Commerce and Labor for employer recruitment.

Moving forward, GOMA's plan is to expand funding for this program to allow participation for additional students, and to also extend leadership development and soft skills training to students, as well as diversity training for participating employers. This will result in a comprehensive co-op program that focuses on both the recruitment and retention of diverse talent for Alabama's employers.



Enhancement and Protection of Alabama's Natural Resources

Alabama boasts tremendous natural resources. Promoting the wise stewardship and enjoyment of them for current and future generations is a priority of the state Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR). Initiatives underway to meet this priority include:

- Full implementation of state management for red snapper: Alabama has the largest artificial reef system in the country and the best red snapper fishery in the country. The Department has worked diligently for many years to transfer management of the recreational red snapper fishery from the federal government to state management. This was accomplished as a trial in 2018 and has been made permanent effective in 2020. The red snapper season was extended from 7 days in 2017 to almost 40 days in 2019. The positive economic and cultural impact has been tremendous for Alabama.

DCNR will work to move the management of gray triggerfish and amberjack fisheries from federal control to state management using similar methods as red snapper management. This will increase participation of fishermen and lengthen seasons to allow more access to these fisheries, continuing the positive impacts realized by state management of red snapper.

- State Parks Renovation and Maintenance Projects: The Department of Conservation manages 21 state parks encompassing more than 45,000 acres of land and water in Alabama. These parks host more than 5 million visits each year. Providing high-quality facilities and services is a must, and the following projects are scheduled: 1) Completely renovating the campgrounds at Joe Wheeler State Park, Oak Mountain State Park, and Cheaha State Park, 2) Completely renovating the chalets at Lake Guntersville State Park and Cheaha State Park, 3) Updating the Lake Shelby day-use area and campground bathhouses at Gulf State Park to bring these facilities up to the quality of the new Lodge at Gulf State Park, 4) Implementing a new reservation system so that all reservations can be accomplished on-line, 5) Building out the Wi-Fi capabilities for guests at each park.
- Creation of the Perdido River Outdoor Recreation and Wildlife Corridor: DCNR plans to acquire the final sections of land to create a 50,000-acre corridor that will provide all Alabamians with outdoor recreation opportunities along the Perdido River, one of the few remaining free-flowing rivers in the Southeast. Canoeing, hunting, fishing, hiking, and horseback riding will be available. This property will also create habitat for longleaf pine, gopher tortoises, Eastern indigo snakes, and red-cockaded woodpeckers.
- Deepwater Horizon Restoration Projects: In collaboration with our federal and local partners, we have worked to plan and implement restoration projects that will not only provide benefits to those of us who call Alabama home today but will also preserve our resources and strengthen the economy for future generations of Alabamians. To date, Alabama has committed to 130 projects totaling more than \$740 million. These funds come from the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council (Federal RESTORE), Alabama Gulf Coast Recovery Council (State RESTORE), National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund, and the Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA). All of these programs are managed by the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources to ensure coordinated and efficient use of the funds.



Enhancement and Protection of Alabama's Natural Resources (Continued)

- **Endangered-Species Habitat-Protection Projects:** The critical habitat of threatened and endangered species is important to protect within Alabama to ensure the viability of the species. This habitat protection can be accomplished in a manner that limits far-reaching and unintended consequences to industry in Alabama. Two such projects are the Forever Wild land acquisitions are helping protect the habitats of the spring pygmy sunfish in Madison County and the red hills salamander in Monroe County.
- **Chronic Wasting Disease Preparedness:** Deer hunting is a way of life for many Alabamians and activities associated with deer hunting contribute more than \$2 billion to Alabama's economy each year. Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) is a fatal neurological disease of deer, elk, and moose. To date, CWD has been diagnosed in 26 states, including neighboring states Tennessee and Mississippi. CWD could forever change wildlife management within the state. The Department's main objectives in fighting this threat are 1) to prevent the introduction of CWD into Alabama's deer population by maximizing public education efforts, 2) to maintain a prudent CWD surveillance plan in cooperation with hunters and landowners, 3) to minimize any impacts from CWD.

