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Alabama Development Office

## Exports from State Companies Increase By 19 Percent

MONTGOMERY -- Gov. Bob Riley has announced that exports from Alabama companies grew by 19 percent last year and outpaced average export growth in the nation.

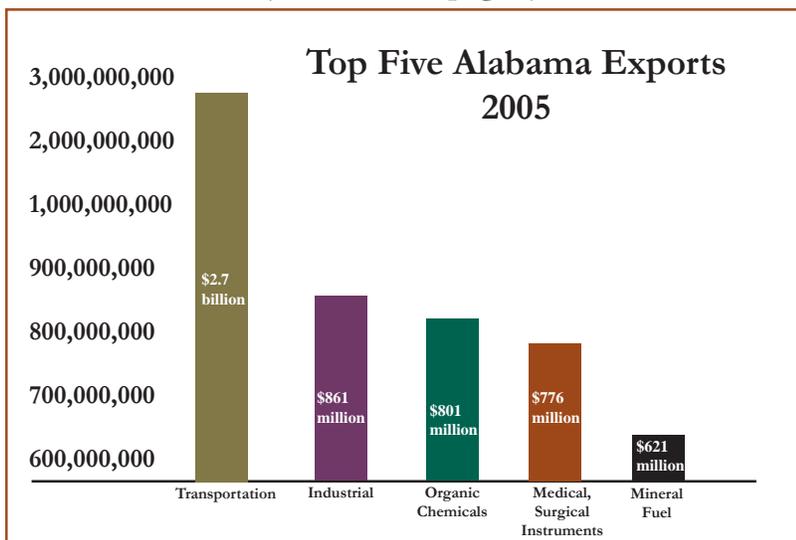
“Increasing exports from Alabama’s existing industries creates new jobs and new opportunities for our workers. Opening new markets and selling more Alabama products overseas is one reason why our economy has recently experienced such strong growth,” said Gov. Riley.

During 2006, the value of Alabama exports increased by more than 19 percent from 2004 and surpassed the national growth average of 10.6 percent. Manufactured goods totaling \$10.8 billion were shipped from Alabama companies to 181 countries during 2005.

“Trade continues to be important to our state’s economy,” said Alabama Development Office Director Neal Wade. “If we can continue to improve our business climate, we will continue to capture our share of the nation’s export growth. With Alabama’s export growth outpacing that of the nation last year, there’s no doubt we’re moving in the right direction.”

The top five markets for Alabama products were Canada (\$2.2 billion), Germany (\$1.6 billion), Mexico (\$912 million), Japan (\$680 million), and Mainland China (\$466 million). The leading export markets remained unchanged in ranking from 2004 with the exception of Mainland China, which moved ahead of the United Kingdom as the state’s fifth largest market. Exports to China increased by 20.02 percent with the top product

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## Alabama Makes Luxury Lifestyle Magazine

BIRMINGHAM -- Birmingham made the luxury lifestyle publication *The Robb Report* as a destination on par with Antigua and the California coastline.

The March issue of the magazine features Birmingham’s Renaissance Ross Bridge Golf Resort & Spa and the Porsche Driving Experience in its Frontrunners column on the “best, latest and most inspired” destinations.

The magazine highlights a package deal offered by Ross Bridge that allows visitors to practice “two kinds of driving.” The resort offers classroom training and track time at Barber Motorsports Park in a Porsche 911 as well as the Ross Bridge golf course. It also notes that the hotel features a 12,000-square-foot spa and a fleet of Cayennes as courtesy vehicles.

## Salad Oil Company May Employ 300

BRUNDIDGE -- A New Jersey-based salad oil company is moving to Alabama and will initially hire 40 people here.

The company, which makes mayonnaise, mustard, salad dressing and packaged vegetable oil, may hire up to 300 people in coming years. Capital investment for the project is \$5 million. The company’s targeted customer bases are food service, retail grocery and food product manufacturers and processors.

## Deer Valley To Hire 100

GUIN -- Deer Valley, a maker of manufactured homes, will open a new 70,000-square-foot plant in Sulligent, which will create more than 100 new jobs in Lamar and Marion counties. The firm’s headquarters is located in Guin.

## Alabama Automotive Jobs Increase 43.7 Percent

HUNTSVILLE -- A report released this month shows that the automotive industry employs nearly 45,000 people in Alabama, far outpacing any other manufacturing industry in the state.

Despite setbacks in the industry overall, Alabama had a 43.7 percent increase in automotive manufacturing jobs since 2003.

The report was released by the Alabama Automotive Manufacturers

Association (AAMA) and the University of Alabama at Huntsville.

Another nearly 80,000 jobs are also linked to the industry, pushing the industry's payroll to \$4.8 billion last year. The study found that 29 new automotive plants were



*Photo courtesy of Hyundai Motor Manufacturing Alabama*

established in Alabama over the past two years, bringing the total number of active plants to 263.

Montgomery County had the largest jump in automotive jobs, gaining more than 4,000 jobs as Hyundai Motor Manufacturing of Alabama and its suppliers began operations in May of 2005. Hyundai and the state's two other assembly plants, Honda Manufacturing of Alabama in Lincoln and Mercedes-Benz U.S. International in Vance, collectively employ 11,000 workers.

The association "is encouraged by the growth of the industry in Alabama, the large increase in new plants moving to the state, and especially those existing small plants that now have automotive business," said AAMA President Ralph Malone.

## Alabama Exports Increase by 19 Percent

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exported in the plastics sector. From the top ten trading partners, Colombia, ranked 10th, registered the largest increase of 55 percent from 2004. The number one product shipped to this Latin American country was industrial machinery.

Alabama exports diverse products from many industry sectors, with all major industries in the state involved in exporting. The top five exports for 2005 were transportation equipment (\$2.7 billion), industrial machinery, including computers, (\$861 million), organic chemicals (\$801 million), medical or surgical instruments (\$776 million), and mineral fuel (\$621 million).

Gov. Riley has put a major emphasis on promoting export growth. In mid-2004, he launched "Export Alabama," a statewide effort partnering ADO, the Export Alabama Trade Alliance, and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce to promote the growth of exported goods and services from Alabama companies. Under the initiative, the state has also undertaken several trade missions to South America, Europe, Japan and Israel. In 2006, plans are underway for additional trade missions to Central America, China, Germany and the Czech Republic.

## Hyundai Donates 55 More Sonatas for Training

MONTGOMERY -- Hyundai Motor Manufacturing Alabama, LLC (HMMA) has turned over the keys to 55 new 2006 Sonatas to Alabama secondary schools and two-year colleges, the second in a series of donations by the company's first U.S. manufacturing plant.

The pre-production vehicles will be used for training in automotive programs throughout Alabama, most of which are certified by the National Automotive Technicians Education Foundation (NATEF).

"We understand the value and importance of a well-trained work force and are pleased to present these vehicles to assist in Alabama's educational programs," said Greg Kimble, director of human resources for HMMA. "This donation is a part of our continuing efforts to train Alabama's future work force for careers in the automotive industry."

## Alto To Expand in Atmore

ATMORE -- Alto Products, the oldest and largest independently owned clutch manufacturer in the world, is expanding in Atmore and will hire an additional 17-25 people.

The company's corporate headquarters are in Atmore and it operates three U.S. manufacturing plants, four distribution facilities, and international offices in seven countries.

Alto has produced more than a billion clutches over the past 50 years for automotive, high performance, heavy duty, marine and motorcycle applications.

## Governor Thanks State's Business Leaders

MONTGOMERY -- At a luncheon he hosted recently to honor business leaders and local economic developers, Gov. Bob Riley said that Alabama "has developed an international reputation."

The event drew about 150 people from throughout the state.

"We have become a destination state for new industries," Gov. Riley said. "People around the world today are beginning to recognize that if you want your business to be the most cost effective and you want to be the most efficient, then you need to locate in Alabama."

Saying Alabama's economy has undergone a "remarkable renaissance" in the past three years, Gov. Riley said the credit for the state's growth belongs to its workers, business leaders and economic developers.

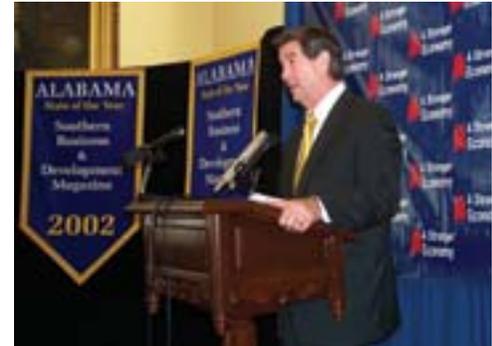
Alabama Development Office Director Neal Wade said Gov. Riley set the tone for Alabama's economic development program from the beginning. "We began a journey three years ago and it was clear from the first time I sat down with Governor Riley that he wanted to have a diverse, broad, strong economic development program and he has been at the center of that," Wade said.

The state's unemployment rate has dropped from 5.7 percent in January 2003 to 3.5 percent in December 2005-its lowest recorded level in Alabama's history. Alabama's gross state product (GSP), a measure of the state's total output of goods and services, increased by 3.4 percent in 2005. Alabama's GSP is projected to continue growing in 2006 and 2007.

For three consecutive years, Alabama has been named "State of the Year" by *Southern Business and Development* magazine for its record of industry recruitment and job creation. The magazine covers economic development in 17 Southern and border states. Last year, *Site Selection* magazine ranked the Alabama Development Office as the nation's best state-level economic development agency.

Gov. Riley said that 25,310 jobs were announced in 2005 by companies recruited to Alabama and by existing industries that are expanding their operations.

"Thank you for all the opportunities you're providing the people of Alabama," Gov. Riley said. "At the state level, we are going to do everything humanly possible to make you profitable, competitive and successful."



*Gov. Riley thanks business leaders*

## Groundbreaking Held for Airbus Center

MOBILE -- Formal construction of an Airbus aircraft engineering center has begun in Mobile, the first step on a path that state and local officials say could transform the state's port city into one of the world's premier aerospace centers.

The Airbus "center of excellence" is to be constructed at Brookley Field Industrial Complex and is expected to employ 150 aerospace engineers. It is scheduled to open in January 2007 and will initially be assigned design work on

the A350 commercial jet. The engineering center could be significantly expanded to include a 1,000-employee aircraft assembly plant if Northrop Grumman and the European Aeronautic Defence and Space Co. (EADS) win a competition to build refueling tankers for the U.S. Air Force.

The company's estimate of 150 jobs is a "lower number" that should increase over time, according to Tom Enders, co-chief executive of EADS.

## *Alabama Group Travels to Singapore To Find Business*

SINGAPORE - A group of Alabama business and government leaders traveled to Singapore this month to attend the Asian Aerospace and Asian Defence Technology Show with the hopes of bringing back jobs for Alabamians. The aerospace show drew 900 exhibitors from 43 countries.

ADO Director Neal Wade led the delegation of about 14 people to the show where the leaders

represented Alabama in an attractive and well-designed pavilion. The state identified a specific list of about 65 companies and the delegation made contact with corporate executives from that list.

The Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce and the Mobile Airport Authority hosted a reception for about 150 officials from companies with a presence in Mobile and others seeking to expand into North America.