



## STATE OF ALABAMA

ALABAMA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION  
P.O. BOX 304260  
MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA 36130-4260  
(334) 242-5203  
(334) 242-0824

TWINKLE ANDRESS CAVANAUGH  
COMMISSIONER

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Contact: Sally Corley (334)242-5203

CAVANAUGH SUCCESSFULLY PUSHES UTILITY RATE REDUCTIONS AS INCENTIVE FOR SMALL BUSINESSES AND JOB CREATION

Montgomery - Fulfilling a campaign promise to use the Public Service Commission as a tool for economic development and job creation, Commissioner Twinkle Andress Cavanaugh on Tuesday successfully pushed through a series of utility rate reductions designed to provide incentives to small business owners.

"As a small business owner most of my life, I understand that every dime saved determines whether you can expand operations, hire more employees or even keep the door open one more day," Cavanaugh said. "I am committed to helping business owners cut overhead costs while incentivizing them to help lower our unemployment rate and get Alabama's economy moving again."

She added that the rate incentives she promoted should also help fill empty existing storefronts and redevelop areas of towns and cities plagued by economic inaction.

Cavanaugh said among the adjustments approved by the Commission were:

- Currently, only small businesses that use 15,000 kilowatt hours of power or less qualify for the lowest cost business rate, but the Commission voted to raise the maximum usage to 20,000 kWh, which will widen the number of entities that qualify. Businesses that qualify under the new and more lenient standards will be notified so they may adjust their rate to the lower option. The change will go into effect for June 2011 billings.

- In order to encourage businesses to utilize unused storefronts and office space, the Commission approved a 15% monthly discount on charges for electricity when a new account is established in an existing building that has been unoccupied for at least six months. The rate, which does not apply to businesses merely moving locations, will go into effect for July 2011 billings and apply to one-year service agreements that begin before January 1, 2013.

- Small businesses that add additional employees and increase power usage will receive a rate reduction for 24 months, according to Cavanaugh. A 10% discount on monthly rates will be in effect for the first year and a 5% reduction for the second year on qualifying service agreements that begin before January 1, 2014. The discounts will become available in the May billing period.

Cavanaugh said she is proud to keep her campaign pledge and hopes other state agencies will follow the Commission's lead in finding "outside-the-box" ways to spur job growth and stimulate the economy.

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