



PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

100 NORTH UNION STREET, SUITE 888

MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA 36104

**COMMISSIONER
PLACE 1**

**TWINKLE ANDRESS
CAVANAUGH
PHONE: 334.242.5203**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 29, 2011**

**Contact: Sally Corley
334-242-5203**

CAVANAUGH PROPOSES RETURN OF \$17 MILLION SETTLEMENT TO POWER COMPANY CONSUMERS

Montgomery – Alabama Public Service Commissioner Twinkle Andress Cavanaugh on Tuesday announced she will use the body's next meeting to recommend that a \$17 million legal judgment recently won by Alabama Power Company be returned to consumers in the form of a rebate on their bills. She first proposed the idea of the rebate during the commission's November working session.

"Consumers were asked to pay this money for a specific purpose, and now that the courts have ruled that reason moot, it should go back into the consumers' wallets, where it rightly belongs," Cavanaugh said. "I'm pushing for Alabama Power customers to realize these rebates as soon as possible, and while it won't make a big dent in most household budgets, in this economy, every dollar counts."

Several years ago, the federal government mandated that all utilities with nuclear power supplies had to contribute to a fund to construct the Yucca Mountain facility, a secure site for storing spent fuel rods and other radioactive waste. The Yucca Mountain site, originally approved by Congress in 2002, was set to be built roughly 80 miles from Las Vegas, Nevada.

Facing stiff opposition within his home state, Sen. Harry Reid (D – Nevada) joined with other Congressional liberals to block construction of the Yucca Mountain facility, a move that received the support of the Obama Administration's Department of Energy around 2009.

Having paid into the earmarked fund but receiving no benefit, Alabama Power Company sued the federal government on behalf of ratepayers for the return of the invested money. The amount of the resulting negotiated settlement, \$17 million, corresponds with the cost for the company to build its own comparable fuel rod disposal site.

Cavanaugh made the motion at the previous meeting to include the settlement return on this month's Public Service Commission docket, currently scheduled for Tuesday, December 6, and said that Alabama Power Company has been cooperative with her efforts.

The amount of each rebate will be based upon the average bill paid by each Alabama Power Company customer. Both individual and business customers will be eligible to receive the refund if Cavanaugh's proposal is approved by the full commission.

###