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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 28, 2011**

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PSC COMMISSIONER CAVANAUGH TOURS TORNADO-DAMAGED AREAS TO ASSESS INFRASTRUCTURE DAMAGE AND UTILITY NEEDS

Montgomery – Alabama Public Service Commissioner Twinkle Andress Cavanaugh on Thursday toured the tornado-damaged areas of Tuscaloosa, Alberta City, Pleasant Grove and Pratt City to assess infrastructure damage and work with regulated utility companies on providing needed services to the areas.

“I am assured by Alabama Power Company officials and others who toured with me that essential services will be returned to the less damaged areas just as soon as possible, but the damage to both transmission and distribution systems is severe and will require large-scale repairs,” Cavanaugh said. “The total devastation in many of the areas I toured is breathtaking, and the stories I heard from those who lost loved ones, homes and everything they have known is something I will carry to my final breath.”

Cavanaugh said that some of the most severely affected areas may not see services return for some time as she has been informed that the type of devastating damage seen in Alabama is normally only produced by multiple severe storms, rather than just one.

Currently, there are more power outages caused by the worst supercell storm system in Alabama in 30 years than there were for Hurricane Frederic in 1979 and Hurricane Dennis in 2005, according to Cavanaugh.

She noted that power companies in our sister southern states often send additional manpower to supplement their Alabama counterparts following tornados and other disasters, but extensive storm damage in both Mississippi and Georgia has limited the reciprocal assistance.

Cavanaugh said that additional assistance from regions outside the southeast is expected to arrive within 24 to 48 hours, but, in the meantime, the full workforce of the Alabama Power Company is working to complete repairs in the timeliest manner possible.

“My office is doing everything possible to ensure that tornado victims are provided with the utilities and services they need to pick up the pieces and begin life again,” Cavanaugh said. “I also ask my fellow Alabamians to join me in saying a prayer for those who perished in the storm, those they left behind, and those whose lives will be forever changed by the terrible destruction we witnessed today.”