

## **Southern Alabama Renewal Community**

ID	Renewal Community Name	OLAS#	Population	Sq Miles	Poverty	Unemployment
89	Southern AL	AL0003	107,587	4,481	43%	13%

Butler County joins eight other counties in Southwest Alabama in this Southern Alabama Renewal Community. The Black Belt region of Southwest Alabama is named for its dark productive soil. The region has experienced out migration from the 1940s through the 1970s as people moved north for gainful employment. Two of the counties have poverty rates near 50% and the region has had double-digit unemployment for fifteen years. The Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs chaired the proposal process.

The Southern Alabama Rural Renewal Community Course of Action chooses the following goals and actions:

### Reducing Tax Burdens

The state plans on possibly expanding existing state tax incentives for economically distressed areas but this would result in reduced school revenue.

### Improving Local Services

The state plans to improve community access to worker readiness and skill training through the coordination of existing programs and helping to secure funding for new ones.

### Reducing Crime

The state, in conjunction with communities and groups in the RC will identify areas that need attention and assist them in securing resources to further reduce crime.

### Reducing Government Regulations

Alabama already has a One Stop Permitting process. Also, the state revised Alabama Tort regulations making them more favorable to the business community. Other efforts will at a minimum include density and zoning restrictions, the need for variance and special exceptions, encouragement and incentives for voluntary compliance with government regulations.

### Soliciting In-Kind Donations

The state and partners plan to leverage state and federal funds for the enhancement of skill and employability of the area as well as infrastructure development and expansion and other areas as is needed.

### Involving Community Partners in Economic Development

- Alabama-Tombigbee Regional Commission
- Rural Distressed Counties Committee
- Regional Planning Commission