

Jim Byard, Jr.

Biographical Sketch

Community and economic development has been a focus of Jim Byard, Jr.'s entire public service career.

In January 2011, Governor Robert Bentley asked Jim to put his community development skills to work on behalf of the state naming him director of the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA).

As ADECA Director, Jim serves in Governor Bentley's Cabinet, oversees a staff of 200 and manages a \$350 million annual budget. Jim's daily work revolves around economic development projects, local infrastructure development and community enhancement projects, workforce development services, alternative energy and energy conservation measures, water resource management, and strengthening public safety in all of Alabama's 67 counties. Following the deadly tornadoes of April 2011, the Governor assigned Jim's office the added responsibility of coordinating the state's role in long-term community recovery.

To support community development, ADECA awards hundreds of grants each year to city and county governments and nonprofit organizations throughout Alabama.

Jim was serving his third term as mayor of Prattville when the Governor selected him to lead ADECA. Voters had previously elected him to the Prattville City Council at the age of 26 where he served two terms, one as council president. He was the youngest mayor in the city's history when elected in 2000. An F3 tornado struck Prattville in 2008 giving Jim a firsthand experience in responding and recovering from a natural disaster.

During his tenure as mayor, Prattville experienced rapid residential and business growth with many national retailers opening in the city, including Alabama's first Bass Pro Shop.

In 2004-05, he served as president of the Alabama League of Municipalities, a nonpartisan association of more than 450 Alabama cities and towns. In 2009-2010 Jim served on the board of directors of the National League of Cities, the oldest and largest municipal government organization, representing about 19,000 cities, towns, and villages.

He currently serves on the boards of directors of the Accelerate Alabama Alliance, the Economic Development Partnership of Alabama Foundation, the Alabama Research Alliance, the American Red Cross, the United Way of Autauga County, and the Prattville YMCA. He is a past president of the Prattville Kiwanis Club.

Jim holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in political science with double minors in business and sociology from Troy University Montgomery. He and his wife Beverly live in Prattville with their three children: Marylise, James III, and Richard.