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**ACCION ALABAMA CELEBRATES
“SMALL BUSINESS SATURDAY”
WITH TAILGATE PARTY AT JEFFERSON COUNTRY STORE
*COME ENJOY THE ALABAMA vs. AUBURN GAME,
OR JUST STOP BY ON YOUR WAY***

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. – It will be “double your pleasure, double your fun” when Accion Alabama celebrates “Small Business Saturday” and the Alabama vs. Auburn football game with an authentic country tailgate party on Saturday, November 30, at the Jefferson Country Store located at 26120 Alabama Highway 28 in Jefferson.

The fun will start at 11 a.m. with brief remarks by Eddie Postell, manager of the Office of Small Business Advocacy, Lisa Riley, market manager for Accion Alabama, store owners Betsy Compton and Tony Luker, and other area business leaders and elected officials. The event will continue through the day, with lots of food and drink - and guests are invited to watch the game starting at 2:30 p.m. on a large flat-screen TV.

Accion Alabama – an extension of Accion Texas Inc., the nation’s largest nonprofit microlender – is hosting the rural celebration to draw attention to the vital role small business plays in Alabama’s economy.

“We’re having a little fun on this day, but it’s to shed light on the big impact that small business makes across Alabama,” said Accion Alabama Market Manager Lisa Riley. “Small businesses employ over 768,000 people in Alabama alone. We need to recognize and celebrate the impact they have on Alabama, and the entire country.”



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According to the U.S. Small Business Administration, as of 2010 there were over 393,000 small businesses doing business in the state, making up more than 96 percent of all firms, and providing nearly half of the private sector jobs.

“We want everyone to recognize that small business is really *big* in Alabama - and get out and shop small and shop local,” Riley said.

“Small Business Saturday” – also known as “Shop Small Saturday” - is a national campaign which originated three years ago to encourage shoppers to patronize small and local businesses during the Holiday shopping season. Small Business Saturday is the Saturday after Thanksgiving and Black Friday, the traditional start of the holiday shopping season. This year, Small Business Saturday is Nov. 30.

The Jefferson Country Store was established in 1957 and was closed in 2012. After a year of being shuttered, new owners Betsy Compton and Tony Luker decided it was time to reopen the family business. Over the years it had become a community gathering place for locals and a rest stop for truck drivers and travelers. It was a staple for the surrounding towns to come to meet and get needed groceries or buy a towering cheeseburger for lunch.

Accion Alabama assisted Compton and Luker with their dream of reopening the longtime establishment. Non-profit Accion helps new and existing entrepreneurs successfully grow their businesses. Through affordable lending and business development services, Accion is committed to empowering diverse individuals and small businesses that have limited access to traditional sources of capital.

About Accion Alabama

Since opening in Alabama in January 2012, Accion Alabama – with offices in Birmingham and Mobile - has made nearly \$700,000 in loans to more than 60 businesses.

Accion Alabama is an extension of San Antonio-based Accion Texas Inc., the nation’s largest nonprofit microlender. Accion’s financial and business-support services help entrepreneurs strengthen their businesses, stabilize and increase their incomes, create employment and contribute to the economic revitalization of their communities. Since its inception, Accion has made more than 14,000 loans totaling more than \$152 million.

Accion Texas operates in eight states: Alabama, Arkansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Tennessee and Texas. For more information, visit www.accionalabama.org or call 1-888-215-2373.