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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**ACCG AND COOPERATIVE EXTENSION TEAM UP TO OFFER
DISTANCE LEARNING SESSION ON FEDERAL STIMULUS OPPORTUNITIES**

ATLANTA, Ga. (June 1, 2009) – The Association County Commissioners of Georgia recently teamed up with the University of Georgia’s Cooperative Extension Program to offer a distance learning session on funding opportunities available through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. This program allowed local government officials throughout the state to hear from representatives from the Governor’s Office and several state agencies that are administering federal stimulus funds in Georgia simply by going to their local Cooperative Extension Office.

“We were pleased to be able to offer this opportunity to county officials so that they could hear directly from the state agencies without having to invest the time or cost associated with traveling to a meeting,” said ACCG Executive Director Jerry R. Griffin. “We could not have done this without our partners at Cooperative Extension, who served as our host sites and have the equipment and training available to offer a program of this type.”

More than 115 counties participated in the program offered at their local Cooperative Extension office. The program lasted about an hour and a half and highlighted the requirements for accountability associated with the various programs that will be funded in Georgia. Speakers also provided an overview of opportunities available through their agencies and an update on some of the funds that have already been obligated.

Speakers participating in the session included: Jerry Griffin, Executive Director, Association County Commissioners of Georgia; Celeste Osborn, Deputy Chief Financial Officer, Office of the Governor; Greg Mason, Chief Operating Officer, Georgia Environmental Facilities Authority; Carladenise Edwards, Chief of Staff, Department of Community Health; Scott Austensen, Deputy Superintendent, Finance & Business Operations, Department of Education; Andrea Harper, Assistant Commissioner, Department of Labor; Meg Pirkle, Assistant to the Chief Engineer, Department of Transportation; Brian Williamson, Assistant Commissioner, Community Development & Finance, Department of Community Affairs; Laurel Hart, Director of the Office of Affordable Housing, Department of Community Affairs; Don Watt, Office of Special Housing Initiatives, Department of Community Affairs; and Philip Randall, ARRA Accountability Officer, Department of Human Resources.

ACCG and Cooperative Extension have established a partnership that includes a joint ACCG/Cooperative Extension Liaison to help connect county officials with the vast resources provided by the Cooperative Extension network. The federal stimulus distance learning session is another outstanding example of how the two organizations are working together for the betterment of Georgia’s citizens.

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About ACCG: It is the mission of the Association County Commissioners of Georgia to enhance the role, stature and responsiveness of county government in Georgia. Since counties are the level of government closest to the people and serve all the people of the state, ACCG will promote the ability of Georgia counties to provide public services responsibly, efficiently, and cost effectively through cooperative legislative action, education of public officials, provision of quality member services and technical assistance, and increasing public awareness of critical local government issues. For more information, go to www.accg.org.