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ALEA and ALDOT Launch Interstate Safety Campaign

MONTGOMERY -- The Alabama Law Enforcement Agency (ALEA) and the Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) are launching a campaign to promote safety along Alabama interstate highways. Roughly 13 percent of roadway fatalities occurred within Alabama in 2020 along interstate highways.

As part of the campaign, additional ALEA Troopers will be assigned to specific locations along the 669 miles of Alabama's interstate highways, starting with I-85 through Montgomery, Macon and Lee counties. Troopers will have a greater presence in these areas to address a variety of dangerous driving behaviors.

ALEA Secretary Hal Taylor said, "We continue to see far too many crashes along Alabama's interstate system. Therefore, we are taking deliberate steps and proactive measures with the assistance of the Alabama Department of Transportation to reduce the number of crashes occurring on our interstates."

ALDOT is using innovative engineering and roadway design to help prevent crashes. The department has installed cable barriers along Alabama's interstates to prevent median cross-over and head-on collisions. ALDOT is also using road resurfacing technology that improves surface friction, so that drivers have more control over their vehicles and are less likely to hydroplane on wet roadways. ALDOT also performs ongoing repairs to the roadway, bridges, and damaged guard rails and cable barriers.

Through its Drive Safe Alabama public information campaign, ALDOT is bringing attention to the great need for highway safety, especially the need to always wear a seat belt. In 2020, 932 people died on Alabama roads. Almost 60 percent of those people were not wearing a seat belt. Drive Safe Alabama provides online and educational safe driving information through Facebook, Twitter and other social media platforms, as well as through TV, radio, billboards and community outreach.

"ALDOT is committed to highway safety through the engineering and maintaining of the state's transportation infrastructure and making the public aware of how to stay safe on the road," said George

Conner, Deputy Director of Operations, ALDOT. “Understanding the impact that driver behavior has on safety, we strongly support ALEA in its work to enforce traffic safety laws and bring attention to the role drivers play in making our interstate highways safer.”

“We are absolutely dedicated to ensuring we reach our overall goal of reducing crashes in order to see zero loss of life on Alabama roadways,” said Colonel Jimmy Helms, Director of ALEA’s Department of Public Safety. “We are fully committed to addressing the safety issues along our roadways. The overall goal of this campaign is to ensure everyone who chooses to travel arrives to their destination safely.”

ALEA and ALDOT offer specific safety tips to help prevent crashes:

- **Travel at a safe distance from other drivers.** Following too closely to another vehicle is one of the leading contributing factors in crashes.
- **Move over.** By law, motorists must move over or reduce speed when approaching law enforcement or emergency vehicles, including tow trucks. If it is not safe to move over, the driver must slow to a speed that is at least 15 miles per hour less than the posted speed limit, unless otherwise directed by a law enforcement officer.
- **Remain attentive around large vehicles and semi-trucks.** Those traveling alongside larger vehicles should keep in mind that larger vehicles have limited maneuverability, longer stopping distances and bigger blind spots.
- **Plan ahead.** Adjust travel plans or allow extra time if traveling busier roadways, especially during the busiest parts of the day.
- **Phone Down/Buckle Up.** Focus on driving by putting aside cell phones and other items that may be distracting. All passengers should wear a seat belt, front seat and back seats. Seat belts are the best defense against impaired, aggressive, and distracted drivers. Studies show that wearing a seat belt can reduce risk of fatal injury and moderate to critical injury by approximately 50 percent.
- **Slow down and use caution, especially when traveling through work zones.** Speeding is a leading contributing factor in all fatal crashes.

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