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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **1 Bus + 1 Driver = A BIG Impact on Education** *ALEA Highlights National School Bus Safety Week*

**MONTGOMERY** – Each school day, millions of children across the nation ride school buses to and from their destinations; and while school buses are considered one of the safest vehicles on the road, school bus-related crashes still occur. In support of National School Bus Safety Week, Oct. 17-21, the Alabama Law Enforcement Agency (ALEA) is sharing information from the U.S. Department of Transportation’s National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) to remind drivers about the importance of school bus safety.

Each year, the third week in October is designated as National School Bus Safety Week and is supported by the National Association for Pupil Transportation. The campaign serves as a reminder to motorists, students, and school bus drivers of the important role they each have in ensuring children’s safety. This year’s theme is “1 Bus + 1 Driver = a BIG Impact on Education.”

“Statistically, school buses are the safest way to transport school children; however, this campaign offers a unique reminder to motorists and students about the dangers which exist outside the school bus,” said ALEA Secretary Hal Taylor. “Our goal for every student who boards a school bus is to reach their final destination safely. Our Agency is fully committed to protecting all children and reducing the risks and hazards associated with their transportation while on board a school bus.”

According to data provided to ALEA by the Center for Advanced Public Safety (CAPS) at the University of Alabama, so far in 2022, there have been 394 school bus-related crashes across the state resulting in one fatality. In 2021, there were 565 school bus-related crashes reported, which also resulted in one life lost.

ALEA’s Department of Public Safety Director Colonel Jimmy Helms said, “We receive and investigate far too many crashes involving school buses, which is why we are devoted to continuing to bring awareness to this issue as well as implementing specific enforcement techniques to end this horrible trend. In every state, it is illegal to pass a school bus while the school bus stop-arm is extended, and the red lights are flashing. Although the school bus is one of the safest modes of transportation, illegal school bus passing pose what could be a deadly threat to both riders and their caretakers. Drivers are required to stop for school buses loading or unloading passengers, children should also check both ways and proceed with caution when crossing the roadway.”

Prior to stopping, school buses display yellow warning lights that signify the bus is about to stop. Once a bus comes to a stop, red flashing lights and a stop sign are displayed. ALEA would like to remind motorists that the majority of children hurt or fatally injured in school transportation incidents are not harmed while on the bus, but actually outside the bus. Most are struck by motorists who fail to stop for the flashing red lights and extended stop signs. When a road is divided into four or more lanes, only traffic driving in the same direction as the bus must stop. Drivers may not resume their travels until the bus resumes traveling.

To view additional information and bus safety tips, visit: [School Bus Safety | Bus Stops, Drivers | NHTSA](#).

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