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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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### **ALEA: ‘Stay Alive, Think Before You Drive’ this Fourth of July**

*ALEA’s Highway Patrol Division Focuses on Impaired Driving and Alabama’s Move Over Law*

**MONTGOMERY**— Despite the recent record-breaking gas prices, Troopers with the Alabama Law Enforcement Agency’s (ALEA) Highway Patrol Division are expecting to see crowded roadways once more over this Fourth of July holiday weekend as citizens and visitors from all over travel to various destinations to enjoy time with friends and family. As the anticipated holiday weekend nears, ALEA would like to remind everyone to “Stay Alive, Think Before You Drive” this Fourth of July.

“Beginning with the 2022 Memorial Day weekend, our Agency kicked off ‘101 days of Summer Safety.’ We are continuing this vital safety initiative throughout the Fourth of July weekend and the rest of the summer, with a specific focus on impaired driving during this Fourth of July weekend,” said ALEA Secretary Hal Taylor. “Through the implementation of this safety initiative as well as the utilization of deliberate catch phrases, such as “Stay Alive, Think Before You Drive,” it is our sincere hope to capture the attention of citizens across the state to reiterate the importance of safe and responsible driving behaviors. No parent or loved one should ever have to experience one of our Troopers knocking on their front door to inform them that their loved one is not returning home.”

This year’s Independence Day falls on a Monday and this means the busy holiday travel period will encompass the entire weekend, beginning at 12:01 a.m. Friday, July 1, and end at midnight Monday, July 4. Once again, Troopers with ALEA’s Highway Patrol Division have developed and will be implementing a variety of additional initiatives to make the roadways safer for all through enforcement details, along with educational opportunities. The operation highlights the Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over national campaign and consists of informative media day events, line patrol and saturation details along with driver license checkpoints, as well as Light Detection and Ranging (LIDAR) details, which will be conducted in various locations across the entire state.

ALEA’s Director of Department Public Safety (DPS) Colonel Jimmy Helms said, “Our Troopers in the Highway Patrol Division have worked diligently to reduce crashes and traffic fatalities across the state through a number of high visibility enforcement details. However, a main area of focus this year is educating the public on the dangers of impaired driving. Gone are the days of motorists who are only impaired through the consumption of alcohol which can affect your driving and response time on the roadways. Drugs -- including opioids, marijuana and some over-the-counter medicines can impair driving by causing drowsiness, alter visual function and affect mental judgment, while simultaneously reducing motor skills. Even other factors, such as fatigue and stress, can impair your ability to drive. We want to educate all motorists on the dangers of impaired driving, some which may seem more innocent compared to others, to reach our goal of all citizens and visitors returning safely home after this holiday weekend.”

In addition to safety reminders such as speeding, following too closely, checking blind spots and distracted driving, the Agency would also like to remind citizens of the importance of staying alert and protecting the state's first responders, as well as all emergency response personnel by moving over or slowing down when emergency lights are detected on Alabama's roadways.

"In April of this year, I had the distinct honor of speaking on behalf of ALEA during a work zone safety press conference in conjunction with the Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT). It was here that I witnessed a family that had lost so much, champion the state's Move Over Law and plead for public assistance in keeping our roadways safe for our first responders and emergency personnel," said Michael McBrayer, Chief of ALEA's Highway Patrol Division. "My heart goes out to them and all of the families who have lost a loved one while working in a construction zone or while working on the side of the road. Please move over or slow down when you see emergency lights and workers on the side of the roadway and help us bring home those individuals that risk their lives to maintain and keep Alabama's roadways safe."

In just the month of June, the Alabama Law Enforcement Agency experienced two ALEA Troopers who were struck while stationed safely on the side of the road in two different areas of the state. Thankfully, both Troopers made a full recovery.

"The recent experiences within our Agency alone, reiterates the magnitude of all motorists staying alert and helping us protect all citizens and visitors traveling within our state," said Secretary Taylor. "I wish everyone a safe and enjoyable Fourth of July."

Motorists should be advised that fines for any moving traffic violation committed in a construction zone where workers are present will result in a \$250 fine or double the regular fine, whichever amount is greater. Double fines aren't just for speeding anymore. Distracted driving, tailgating, aggressive driving or any moving violation will result in a double fine under the amended Alabama law. The Alabama Legislature's amendments to the construction zone law went into effect July 1, 2021, as the number of injuries and fatal crashes in work zones increased in 2020.

Additional safety tips from both ALEA's Highway Patrol and Marine Patrol for the Fourth of July can be found at: [www.alea.gov](http://www.alea.gov).