NEW CHILD RESTRAINT REGULATIONS EFFECTIVE JULY 1
Set Forth Guidelines for Infant-only, Forward-facing, and Booster Seats

MONTGOMERY — Beginning July 1, children through age 14 must be restrained when riding in motor vehicles in Alabama, under provisions of the state’s new child restraint law. The new law applies to passenger cars, pickup trucks, vans (with seating capacity of 10 or fewer), minivans and sport utility vehicles.

The child restraint law, §32-5-222, was amended during the 2006 regular session of the Alabama Legislature to specify appropriate restraint systems by child age and weight. The new law also provides that violators will have points assessed against their driver record, in addition to incurring a fine of $25.

Public Safety Director Col. Mike Coppage said using the proper restraint and installing it properly are vital to protecting the safety of child passengers. “Many motorists – child passengers and adults – survive crashes or escape serious injury because they’re buckled up,” said Coppage.

The law requires the following size-appropriate restraint systems:

♦ Infant-only seats and convertible seats used in the rear-facing position for infants until at least 1 year of age or 20 pounds

♦ Convertible seats in the forward position or forward-facing seats until the child is at least 5 years of age or 40 pounds.

♦ Booster seats until the child is 6 years of age.

♦ Seat belts until the child is 15 years of age. Alabama’s seat belt law, §32-5B-4, requires that all front-seat occupants, regardless of age, be restrained.

Alabama’s old child restraint law required an “appropriate child restraint system” for children age 5 and younger riding in motor vehicles registered in Alabama, with seat belts allowed beginning at age 4. The old law also excluded trucks and buses with a tonnage rating of one ton or more.

The text of the law is located on the Public Safety Web site, http://www.dps.state.al.us. The site also provides contact information for public information/education officers qualified to assist with proper installation of child safety restraints.

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for more information contact:

Public Information/Education • P.O. Box 1511 • Montgomery AL 36102-1511

(334) 242-4445 • http://www.dps.state.al.us/