

# NEWS RELEASE

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## Alabama Department of Public Safety

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### **'Take Back Our Highways' Campaign Promotes Traffic Safety during Memorial Day Travel Period**

**MONTGOMERY** — Alabama state troopers reported 11 fewer traffic fatalities during their early summer "Take Back Our Highways" traffic safety campaign. Department of Public Safety Director Col. J. Christopher Murphy credited the May 22-31 campaign with a sharp reduction in trooper-worked traffic fatalities, compared with the same 10-day period last year. He said 16 traffic deaths occurred during the campaign, compared with 27 traffic deaths in 2009.

"Even one traffic death is too many, but this reduction in traffic deaths is significant. It is a positive indicator of the effectiveness of troopers' continuing work to save lives, improve driving behavior, and promote awareness of the importance of driving safely," said Murphy.

The concentrated highway safety effort at the summer travel season's outset joined Alabama troopers, sheriff and police departments, and troopers in Tennessee, Mississippi, Florida and Georgia. Murphy acknowledged the role of all who participated in the effort to promote traffic safety throughout the region. He also expressed appreciation to the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs and Alabama Department of Transportation for partnering with DPS to increase highway and traffic safety.

In Alabama, troopers from all six DPS divisions — about 200 additional troopers over and above those assigned to regular patrol duty — were on patrol during the campaign. Troopers targeted traffic violations that frequently cause crashes and contribute to crash severity, including speeding, failure to yield the right of way, following too closely, driver inattention and DUI. They also emphasized compliance with seat belt and child restraint laws as part of the Click It or Ticket campaign that continues through June 6.

Murphy said the key to the continuing success of "Take Back Our Highways" is its positive effect on driver behavior. "'Take Back Our Highways' has proven effective in changing driving behavior for the better. The result is more than 300 lives saved in Alabama since troopers initiated TBOH in 2007."

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*for more information contact:*

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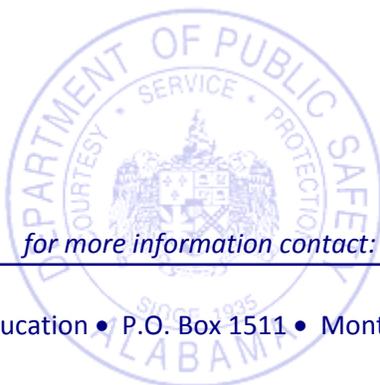
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Trooper enforcement activity for the 10-day TBOH effort included 362 DUI arrests and 6,907 seat belt and child restraint citations. Crash statistics, along with trooper enforcement activity, for the 10-day “Take Back Our Highways” initiative follow:

- ◆ Total traffic arrests: 24,755
  - Includes:
    - DUI: 362
    - Speeding: 8,286
    - Following too Closely: 145
    - Improper Lane Change: 173
    - Seat Belt/Child Restraint: 6,907
- ◆ Total non-traffic arrests: 716
- ◆ Total warnings: 3,706
- ◆ Total assists: 604

Included in the campaign’s fatality total are eight trooper-reported traffic deaths during the 78-hour Memorial Day holiday travel period from 6 p.m. Friday, May 28, through midnight Monday, May 31. Lack of restraint use was a factor in many of the holiday period deaths. Preliminary reports indicate six of the eight crash victims were not using safety restraints. Last year a total of 15 traffic deaths — seven rural and eight urban — occurred in Alabama during the Memorial Day travel period.

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*for more information contact:*

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