

Alabama highway safety panel revived

MONTGOMERY, Ala. (AP) — Gov. Bob Riley has signed into law a bill that brings back a highway safety committee charged with lowering the number of highway deaths. The State Safety Coordinating Committee will survey areas of Alabama where there have been multiple highway deaths and recommend safety improvements.

"The committee will focus on those areas to see what the problem is," said Rep. Jim McClendon, R-Springville. He introduced legislation resurrecting the safety panel.

The 12-member committee has access to about \$1 million, which has been sitting at the Alabama Department of Community and Economic Affairs for years. The defunct state safety committee never met, so former Gov. Don Siegelman moved the committee's assets to ADECA.

In 2004, there were 1,154 traffic fatalities in Alabama. The goal of the committee is to reduce highway fatalities to fewer than the 2004 number.

"If we can't see success in statistics, we'll let someone else take over," McClendon said.

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