

Fall 2025 Volume 83, Issue 2

The Alabama MUNICIPAL Journal

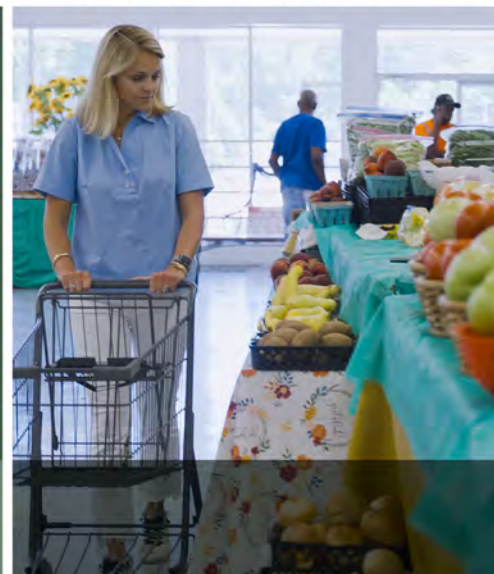
Official publication of the Alabama League of Municipalities



Live Locally Alabama Celebrates
First Anniversary with Call to Action:

Strong Communities Start with You

See page 35 for regional spotlight articles



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About ALM:

The Alabama League of Municipalities is a nonpartisan membership association of over 450 incorporated cities and towns. Since 1935, the League has worked to strengthen municipal government through advocacy, training and the advancement of effective local leadership. As the recognized voice of Alabama's cities and towns, ALM's member municipalities benefit from a variety of member programs, services and activities that are impossible to accomplish alone.



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ALM Team Prepares for Fall Transitions

Gregory D. Cochran • Executive Director

Every four years the ALM staff prepares for the results of municipal elections and the possible impact those local decisions have on our organization. However, this election cycle was different because most municipal officials were granted an extra year in office due to the Alabama Legislature passing legislation in 2021, which moved future local elections off the national election cycles. This change resulted in adding one year to this term only. This legislation was needed because of the difficulties in recruiting election workers, acquiring balloting machines and the constant confusion citizens were having in identifying the correct location to go to when voting in municipal elections and other elections throughout the year.

We have been blessed through the years with a strong executive committee, comprised of past presidents, focused on intentional leadership and providing the ALM staff with resources to accomplish our mission of serving municipalities across our state. We will miss those that are wrapping up their final year in office: Mayor Lew Watson and Councilmember Sadie Britt, Lincoln; Mayor Phil Segraves, Guin; Mayor Howard Rubenstein, Saraland; Mayor Gary Fuller, Opelika; Mayor Randy Garrison, Hartselle; Mayor Charles Murphy, Robertsdale; and Mayor Lawrence “Tony” Haygood Jr., Tuskegee.

We are also losing the leadership of several ALM board members: Councilmember Michael Ellis, LaFayette; Mayor Gary Livingston, Eva; Councilmember Tommy Perry, Priceville; Councilmember Connie Spears, Madison; Mayor Bobbie White, Brent; Mayor Jim Staff, Atmore; Mayor Brian Puckett, Helena; Mayor James Perkins Jr., Selma; Mayor Mike Lockhart, Muscle Shoals; Mayor Andrew Betterton, Florence; Councilmember Billy Pearson, Lincoln; Mayor Mike McMillan, Spanish Fort; and Mayor Dexter McLendon, Greenville. Each of these members gave countless hours and days to represent their communities and our organization to the best of their abilities. We appreciate their commitment to us and their citizens and wish them all the best in everything they do going forward.

For those new to municipal government, welcome! We appreciate your courage and desire to be a leader in your community. You will learn that the best form of government is the government closest to its citizens. You will hear from them daily—the good, the bad and the ugly. However, please know we are here to be a resource for you and your community. Our organization excels when we have strong member engagement.

The ALM was created in 1935 to be the voice of local governments and to advocate on their behalf. However, we have found that through the years, we are at our best when the partnership between ALM staff and elected local, state and federal policymakers works together in delivering the policies needed by communities to thrive. We have intentionally built a team at ALM to provide our local elected leaders with the resources and tools to build vibrant communities.

To begin with, our legal team has three outstanding attorneys to help guide you: Rob Johnston, Mary Elizabeth Dial and Mikal Webb. They have a wealth of knowledge and are eager to assist you with the dos and don’ts of municipal law. You can also seek assistance from the ALM member services team, which is led by Mary Jackson Pollard (a former city clerk), to engage you with our member database, the Certified Municipal Official training curriculum, the Alabama Communities of Excellence program and the Economic Development Academy. Please call on Kerri Butler and Annabel Patton to assist you with registering in our member database. The database allows us to keep you updated on ALM events,



legislative efforts and training opportunities. Keely Smith organizes our in-person conferences and training workshops throughout the year, making sure the venue, atmosphere and meals are spectacular.

Furthermore, we are blessed with an outstanding communications team led by Lori Jhons, our communications director. She, along with Karl Franklin and Ty Rayford, keeps our narratives and perspectives active on several traditional media and social media platforms as well as in our weekly email newsletter and the popular, quarterly magazine, *The Alabama Municipal Journal*. Additionally, the talented team of Baker Allen, Kaleb Beck, Adam Kilpatrick and Lillian Pitman lead our advocacy and policy research efforts.

Moreover, we have finance, information technology and loss control teams, which play vital roles in our successes as well as yours. They ensure that our finances are current, and we are able to deliver on our resources and tools, while also overseeing the administration of the Municipal Worker's Compensation Fund, the Alabama Municipal Insurance Corporation, the Alabama Municipal Funding Corporation loan program, the Municipal Revenue Services program and the Municipal Intercept Services program. Richard Buttenshaw and Barry Crabb do a tremendous job taking care of our finances and managing these programs as well as Sean Duke, who oversees AMIC. Of course no one can live without technology in today's world; so, thankfully we have a five-star IT team comprised of Chuck Stephenson, Rob Sellers and Elizabeth Ingram. They work together daily to keep our office safe from hackers and provide you with access to your member database. Lastly, our loss control team members, led by Will Strength, will become your best friends in assisting you with workers' compensation and insurance best practices.

To reach out to a team member listed above, please be sure to visit our website, www.almonline.org, for their contact information.

As you can see, we have reached far and wide to intentionally deliver the tools and resources you need to build a vibrant community. Whether you want to build on your tourism, parks and recreation, economic investment, infrastructure or reinvest in main street, we have the ability and relationships to bring you the expertise in those endeavors.

We look forward to working with you for the next four years! I hope you will reach out to Kayla Bass, our deputy director, or myself if you have any questions or opportunities for us to assist you and your community. ■

Peace be with you,
Gregory D. Cochran, CAE
Executive Director



Leadership Perspective

Mayor Sherry Sullivan • Fairhope • ALM President



Being a mayor is about more than managing the day-to-day operations of a city. It is also about setting a clear vision for the future and ensuring that every decision contributes to building a stronger, more vibrant community. Leadership in this role requires balancing long-term goals, such as infrastructure and economic development, while understanding the importance of the small details.

As we enter the last quarter of the year, the Alabama League of Municipalities will begin providing training for new and seasoned elected officials, focusing on their roles in government and the importance of collaboration with state and federal leaders. We will also begin preparing for the upcoming legislative session, including hosting **Advocacy Day on January 21** in Montgomery. I encourage everyone to mark your calendars! Next year will be an important season for Alabama as we elect new state leadership.

Collaboration with our state officials is one of the most vital responsibilities of mayors and councilmembers. We must continually advocate with state leaders, so they fully understand the challenges our towns and cities face each day. That is why Advocacy Day is such a major event for us, and why staying engaged with the weekly *State House Advocate* is also important.

A local pastor once said, “*Church members must gather, then scatter and share their faith.*” As elected officials, our work is much the same. We gather to collaborate and formulate our message, and then we scatter to make our collective voice heard in the places where decisions are made.

See you at Advocacy Day! ■



Leadership Perspective

Mayor Rusty Jessup • Riverside • ALM Vice President



I think all of us will agree that one of the most critical and important aspects of being a leader is **“Vision.”** Vision gives you the ability to look ahead - beyond the everyday grind. That vision of what you see and imagine is what gives you the ability to prepare, respond and lead in a direction that will be fruitful.

When I first became an active member of the Alabama League of Municipalities, one of the first things I noticed was how much broader I was seeing things. I was comparing my city to other cities, and my perception became 10 times more vivid, more lucid and, yes, more aware. The overall understanding I had of my role as a leader for my little city became more expansive. The League events and trainings have gifted me with enhanced foresight.

As you gain a broader perspective from being involved with ALM, I want to challenge you to also go to an event hosted by the National League of Cities. It will take your vision to an entirely new level! Your awareness and understanding of a municipality and how it can/will/should function will be multiplied by 50! Think about it. Your knowledge will go from a state perspective to a national perspective. You will meet other municipal leaders from Montana, Rhode Island, Ohio, New Mexico, Nebraska and more! Getting involved on a national level will bring amazing results, not only for yourself and your community, but for our Alabama League as well! Plus, it looks good for us to be well represented at these events.

There are two national conferences that are planned this year. Why not try to go? City Summit is this fall in Salt Lake City, Utah on November 19-22. It will be huge fun! Then, next spring, Congressional City Conference will be in Washington, D.C., on March 14-18. This is where we will meet with our U.S. senators and representatives. This event is always full of valuable information and provides terrific lobbying opportunities. I hope to see you there! ■





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BODY: Pumper
ENGINE: Cummins L9
HORSEPOWER: 360 hp
PUMP: Waterous
GPM: 1500 gpm
TANK: 1000 gallons

Tanner Fire Department

CHASSIS: Freightliner M2 106
BODY: Pumper
ENGINE: Cummins L9
HORSEPOWER: 360 hp
PUMP: Waterous
GPM: 1500 gpm
TANK: 1000 gallons



Onycha Fire Department

CHASSIS: Kenworth T480
BODY: Tanker
ENGINE: PACCAR PX-9
HORSEPOWER: 450 hp
PUMP: Hale
GPM: 1250 gpm
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The Alabama Legislative Process

ALM Legal Department

One of the prime functions of the Alabama League of Municipalities is to represent the interests of municipal government at the legislative level by informing members of legislation introduced that might affect municipal government and by presenting bills to the Legislature on behalf of Alabama's municipalities. It is extremely important for municipal officials and officers to have a good, basic understanding of the legislative process in Alabama. This article briefly explains the workings of the Alabama Legislature and how legislation is passed by that body.

Constitutional Provisions

Article IV of the Alabama Constitution of 1901 (Sections 44 through 111) establishes the legislative department of state government. Section 44 states that the legislative power of the state shall be vested in a legislature composed of a Senate and a House of Representatives. Section 44 has been construed by the Alabama Supreme Court to give plenary power to the state legislature. *State v. Lane*, 181 Ala. 646, 62 So. 31 (1913).

According to the Court, the Alabama Legislature possesses all of the legislative power residing in the state under the United States Constitution, except as that power is expressly or impliedly limited by the Alabama Constitution. This differs from the powers granted to the United States Congress in that Congress can exercise only those powers enumerated in the Constitution of the United States or implied therefrom.

Article IV prescribes the manner of drafting bills, the organization and qualifications of members of both houses, authorizes each house to determine the rules of its proceedings and establishes procedures for the enactment of laws. Due to space limitations, only the provisions most applicable to the interests of municipalities will be discussed in this article.

Composition of the House and the Senate

The state legislature consists of 35 senators and 105 members of the House of Representatives. This number was established by order of a three-judge federal district court for the Middle District of Alabama, Northern Division, in the case of *Sims v. Amos*, 336 F. Supp. 924, aff'd, 409 U.S. 942 (1972). In the decree, the court divided the state into 105 house districts and 35 senatorial districts. Each house district is entitled to one representative and each senate district is entitled to one senator. Each district has approximately the same number of people as any other district.

Qualifications of Legislators

Section 47 of the Alabama Constitution of 1901, states that senators must be at least 25 years of age at the time of their election and representatives must be at least 21 years of age at the time of their election. Both senators and representatives must also have been citizens and residents of Alabama for three years and must have lived in their respective districts for at least one year immediately preceding their election.

Section 60 of the Alabama Constitution of 1901 states that no person convicted of embezzlement of public money, bribery, perjury or other infamous crimes is eligible for membership in the state legislature.

Each house has the authority, given by the Alabama Constitution, to punish its members. With the concurrence of two-thirds of either house, a member may be expelled. A member who has been expelled for corruption is not thereafter eligible for membership in either house. Sections 53 and 54, Alabama Constitution of 1901.

Election and Terms of Members

Members of the House and the Senate are elected, for four-year terms, on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November in the even years which are not leap years. Their terms begin on the day following their election. Their terms expire on the day after the election of their successors four years later. Section 46, Alabama Constitution of 1901. Amendment 57 to the Alabama Constitution of 1901, provides that each house shall judge the qualifications of its members.

Organizational Session

The state legislature meets in Organizational Session on the second Tuesday in January following the election of

members. The only business that may be transacted at such a session is the organization of the legislature for the ensuing four years, the election of House and Senate officers, the appointment of standing and interim committees, the canvassing of election returns and the determination of contested elections.

During the Organizational Session, the House membership elects a speaker who has the duty of presiding over the House of Representatives. The House membership also elects a speaker pro tem to preside over the House in the absence of the speaker.

The Senate is presided over by the lieutenant governor. During the Organizational Session, the Senate chooses a president pro tempore to preside in the absence of the lieutenant governor.

Pursuant to Section 53 of the Alabama Constitution of 1901, the House and the Senate adopt rules of procedure for the next four years.

Legislative Committees

The standing committees of each house are established by the rules of each house. These committees, which are required by the Alabama Constitution, operate throughout the session for the consideration of legislation assigned to them.

Committee members are named at the Organizational Session and hold membership throughout their terms. The members of House standing committees are appointed by the speaker of the House. Members of Senate standing committees are appointed by the senate president pro tem.

Length of Sessions

Amendment 339 to the Alabama Constitution of 1901, requires the state legislature to meet in annual regular sessions. Each regular session is limited to 30 legislative days within 105 calendar days. Each special session called by the governor is limited to 12 legislative days within 30 calendar days.

A legislative day is a day on which either house of the legislature is actually in session. Normally, the legislature will meet in session two days per week and schedule committee work on the other days.

Types of Bills

Amendment 397 to the Alabama Constitution of 1901, states that a general law is a law which in its terms and effect applies either to the whole state or to one or more municipalities of the state less than the whole in a class.

A special or private law is one which applies to an individual, association or corporation. A local law is a law which is not a general law or a special or private law.

Section 11-40-12, Code of Alabama 1975, establishes eight classes of municipalities based on population. The legislature has the authority to pass measures which affect only those municipalities within a specified class or classes. Such classification legislation is defined as general law by Amendment 397 to the Alabama Constitution. Any legislation which has application to only one municipality must be advertised prior to introduction according to the provisions of Section 106 of Alabama Constitution of 1901.

Section 106, as amended by Amendment 341, states that notice of all local bills must be published, prior to introduction, at least once a week for four consecutive weeks in some newspaper published in the county. If no newspaper is published in the county, then the notice must be posted, prior to introduction, for two consecutive weeks at five different places in the county.

Steps in Passing Legislation

If a member of the legislature decides that a proposal has merit and that legislation should be enacted, the legislator prepares a bill or has a bill prepared for introduction into the house of which he or she is a member. That legislator then becomes the sponsor of the bill. All bills introduced must be prepared by the Legislative Services Agency (LSA) as directed by a member of the Legislature.

LSA is the principal bill drafting and legal research office serving the Legislature of the state of Alabama. LSA is a great source of information to the citizens of Alabama on all things relating to current legislation and historical legislative information.

Once bills are prepared by LSA, they are often introduced in both houses of the legislature on or about the same date. This practice is not prohibited except Section 70 of the Alabama Constitution of 1901, requires that all bills raising revenues shall originate in the House of Representatives. There is no limitation upon the number of sponsors that may sign a particular bill.

After introduction, the bill is assigned a consecutive number, for convenience and reference, and is read by title only. This action is known as the first reading of the bill. The speaker of the House of Representatives or the president pro tempore



of the Senate, depending on the body where the bill was introduced, refers the bill to a standing committee of the House or the Senate.

Section 62 of the Alabama Constitution of 1901, states that no bill shall become a law until it has been referred to a standing committee of each house, acted upon by that committee in session, and returned from that committee to the chamber for passage.

Standing committees are charged with the important responsibility of examining bills and recommending action to the full House or Senate. At some time when the House or Senate is not in session, the committees of each house will meet and consider the bills which have been referred to them and decide whether or not particular bills should be reported to the full membership. It is during these committee sessions that members of the general public are given an opportunity to speak for or against the measures being considered by the standing committees.

Bills which are favorably acted upon by the standing committees are reported to the entire house for consideration and are placed on the regular calendar. Bills reported unfavorably are placed on the adverse calendar. If a committee fails to act, the membership of each house, by a vote, may require the committee to act and report its action to the body at its next meeting.

The committee reports a bill to the full house when the reports of the committees are called. The bill is given its second reading at that time and is placed on the calendar. The second reading is by title only.

Section 63 of the Alabama Constitution of 1901, requires that every bill be read on three different days in each house and that each bill be read at length on final passage.

Bills are listed on the calendar by number, sponsor and title in the order in which they are reported from committee. Bills are considered for a third reading (passage) in the order of the calendar unless action is taken to consider a bill out of regular order.

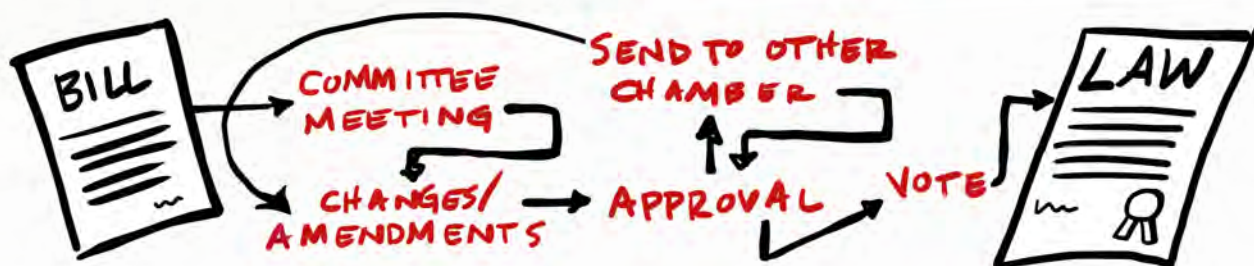
Important bills can be brought to the top of the order by special order or by a suspension of the rules. Special orders are recommended by the Rules Committee and must be adopted by a majority vote. In the final days of a session, both houses usually operate daily on special order calendars. When a bill comes up for consideration, the entire membership of the house considers its passage. The bill is read at length, studied and debated. In general, regular parliamentary rules of procedure apply when a bill is being debated on final passage. Each house has special rules which limit debate. A majority vote in each house is necessary for passage of legislation except in cases where the Constitution requires more than a simple majority. For example, a proposed Constitutional Amendment must receive the vote of three-fifths of all members elected. Section 284, Alabama Constitution of 1901. In a special session, any legislation not covered in the governor's call, or proclamation, must receive a two-thirds vote in each house. Section 76, Alabama Constitution of 1901.

Bills passed in one house are sent to the other house by a formal message and the bills then receive their first reading in the second house. Proposals go through the same procedure in the second house: committee study and report, second and third readings and floor debate and votes.

If the second house passes the bill without amendment, it goes back to the originating house for enrollment. If a bill is amended in the second house, it must be returned to the first house for consideration of the amendment. The first house may vote to concur or not to concur, in which case the bill dies. The first house may vote not to concur and request a conference committee to work out the differences between the two bills. If the other house agrees to a conference, the presiding officers of each house appoint members to the conference committee.

The conference committee meets and tries to reconcile the differences in the two versions of the bill. If agreement is reached and both houses adopt the conference committee report, the bill is finally passed.

Sometimes a house may refuse to adopt the report of the conference committee and ask for a further conference. If the committee is still unable to reach an agreement, it may ask to be discharged and request the appointment of another conference committee to begin the process again. If the conferees never agree, the bill is lost.



When a bill is passed in both houses in identical form, it is enrolled or copied in its final form and sent to the house of origin for signature by the presiding officer in the presence of the members. The measure is then sent to the second house where it is also signed by the presiding officer in the presence of the members. Then the bill is sent to the governor. The governor is not required to sign proposed Constitutional amendments, they are sent directly to the secretary of state for submission to voters for ratification at the time prescribed in the legislation.

Action by the Governor

When a bill reaches the governor, they may sign it and thus complete the enactment of a bill into law. However, if the governor objects to the bill, they may veto it or suggest amendments to the bill and return it to the house of origin. The bill is then reconsidered, first by the originating house and, if passed, by the second house. If a majority of the members elected to each house agree to the proposed amendments, the bill is returned to the governor for their signature. If both houses cannot agree to the governor's amendments or if the governor proposes no amendments but returns the measure, the bill has, in effect, been vetoed. The houses then may try to override the governor's veto. An affirmative vote of 18 senators and 53 representatives is required to override the governor's veto.

If the governor fails to return a bill to the house of origin within six days after it is presented to them, Sundays excepted, the bill becomes law without the governor's signature, unless the return was prevented by recess or adjournment. In such a case, the bill must be returned within two days after the legislature reassembles or the bill becomes law without the governor's signature. Bills which reach the governor less than five days before the end of the session may be approved by them within 10 days after adjournment. Bills not approved within that time do not become law. This is known as the pocket veto. The governor has the authority to approve or disapprove any item or items of an appropriation bill without vetoing the entire bill.

Budget Isolation Resolutions

Amendment 448 to the Alabama Constitution of 1901, states that the governor must submit a proposed budget to the legislature by the second day of each regular session. The legislature must make the basic appropriations necessary for the current budgetary period before passing any other legislation. However, if three-fifths of a quorum adopt a resolution declaring that this restriction does not apply to a certain bill, that bill may proceed to final passage. This is known as the budget isolation resolution and permits the legislature to enact legislation prior to adopting a budget.

Unfunded Mandates

The Alabama Constitution provides that any general law whose purpose or effect is to require a new or increased expenditure of funds held or disbursed by the governing body of a municipality or county, or instrumentality thereof, shall not take effect unless (1) it is approved by the affected governing bodies or (2) the legislature provides funding to pay for the mandate or (3) the legislature passes the legislation by the affirmative vote of two-thirds of those voting in each house. Amendment 621 of the Constitution of Alabama of 1901.

The amendment does not apply to: (1) local laws; (2) acts requiring expenditures of school bonds; (3) acts defining new crimes or amending definitions of crimes; (4) acts adopted prior to the ratification of the amendment; (5) acts adopted to comply with federal mandates, only to the extent of the federal mandate; (6) an act adopted or enacted by two-thirds of those voting in each house of the Legislature and any rule or regulation adopted to implement that act; (7) acts determined by the Legislative Fiscal Office to have an aggregate insignificant fiscal impact on affected governments; or (8) acts of general application prescribing the minimum compensation for public officials. The term "aggregate insignificant fiscal impact" shall mean any impact less than \$50,000 annually on all affected governments statewide.

Conclusion

The purpose of this article is to give the reader a basic understanding of the Alabama Legislature as well as the process for introducing and passing legislation. It is important for municipalities to have a good basic understanding of Alabama's legislative process. For further questions relating to Alabama's Legislature and the legislative process, contact the Legislative Services Agency (LSA). For questions relating to legislation affecting municipalities, please contact ALM's Advocacy or Legal Departments. ■

Alabama's Municipalities Will be Safer with New Safe Alabama Laws

Gov. Kay Ivey



There are still two months left in the year, but the biggest impact of 2025 is already clear. Criminals are on the run because our new president has doubled down on enforcing the law. Here in Alabama, we are doing the same.

This year my administration joined Alabama's cities and towns to further back the blue by granting our officers more legal protection to safely perform their duties. In June, I was pleased to sign into law the "Safe Alabama" package of bills. This was my number one goal during the 2025 Regular Legislative Session, and I was not alone in advocating its passage.

As it turns out, my speech at the Alabama League of Municipalities' annual convention in May was on the eve of the final vote on this important legislation.

During my remarks, I called upon your members to contact legislators to ensure these legal protections for our men and women in uniform were passed. I am proud to report that the ALM stood shoulder to shoulder with me in making sure the necessary votes were secured.

At the top of the bills to pass, the Back the Blue Legal Protection Act expands long overdue civil and criminal liability protection to law enforcement in the performance of their official duties. This gives our officers the confidence to more effectively do their jobs without the fear of Monday morning quarterbacking in the courts. The much-needed conversion device ban makes it a Class C felony in Alabama for a person to knowingly possess a "glock switch," a device designed to convert a pistol into a fully automatic machine gun.

Other provisions of the Safe Alabama package include expanded penalties for criminals possessing firearms while on bail awaiting trial in certain circumstances, as well as adding additional crimes for which bail may be denied.

Our cities and towns have a direct interest in the operations of local law enforcement. Over 15,000 men and women put on a uniform in Alabama each day to protect the public – no matter what personal risks may await them. They not only require adequate resources and equipment, but they must also be assured that we have their backs when they venture into harm's way. The Safe Alabama laws are a major step in that direction and should also help in new officer recruitment.

Above all, keeping our families safe is really the main function of government at all levels, and it will continue to be my priority in 2026. I greatly appreciate the ALM support in this noble goal.

Another victory this past legislative session was the passage of the FOCUS Act prohibiting cell phone use by students during class time. For years, teachers and parents have complained about the negative side effects of cell phone social media use upon classroom learning. After only days into the new school year, many teachers across Alabama were thrilled to share the positive impact of the new FOCUS Act. Students are once again focused on their assignments and asking questions about their classwork. Local schools will directly benefit from the return of engaged students in their classrooms. It is just common sense.

I am excited about the opportunities for 2026 as state and local government continues our partnership to invest in new roads and bridges and broadband expansion. New economic incentives and grant programs are attracting more industries and jobs throughout our state. We are also making great gains in education with our students capturing national attention in reading and math improvement.

We cannot afford to slow down on our progress in 2026, and I know that Alabama's municipal leaders agree. Thank you all again for your partnership! ■

Workforce Development and Energy Access Light the Path to Alabama's Economic Development Success

Lt. Gov. Will Ainsworth



For the past several decades, our state has proudly led both the southeast and the nation in economic development, industrial recruitment, and job creation, and closets at the Alabama Department of Commerce are overflowing with awards recognizing our successes and shovels commemorating groundbreakings.

But in order to continue that success, we must be able to provide a qualified workforce and essential resources while continually pivoting our economic development model to include new and expanding industries and employment sectors.

That is why I have devoted much of my time and focus as lieutenant governor on reforming our workforce development system and giving every Alabamian the opportunity to compete for long-lasting, high-paying, 21st Century jobs.

Rather than simply focusing on major metropolitan areas, our efforts have also included small towns and rural areas that often struggle for attention when new industries and job recruitment opportunities appear on the horizon.

My Lieutenant Governor's Commission on a 21st Century Workforce was established in 2019 and has been tasked with charting a path to enhance, improve, and modernize Alabama's workforce competitiveness.

We have successfully worked to eliminate duplicative workforce development programs and more closely align those that remain by combining them under the newly-created secretary of workforce development position, which is currently filled by former Senate President Pro Tem Greg Reed.

Our efforts also created an advisory panel that will provide counsel and guidance to the governor and the Legislature regarding improvements, changes, and necessary updates to our workforce development model.

And for students who need an alternative to the traditional college-prep track in high school, we have created a Workforce Pathways Diploma that ensures they are ready for employment and able to make a good living immediately upon graduation.

Despite these great successes and many others to numerous to list, we have more work to do in the workforce development arena, and as the legislative quadrennium draws to an end, I am reminded of the words of my high school coach who always said to "run through the tape, not to the tape."

In other words, the upcoming session will see even more focus, plans, and proposals from my office as we work to ensure Alabamians are qualified to fill the jobs that we recruit.

Providing companies and industries with abundant, affordable, and reliable energy is another important ingredient in Alabama's recipe for economic development success, and I believe it may become the single most important factor in future recruitment efforts.

It is why we passed legislation last year allowing the State Industrial Development Authority to issue up to \$1 billion in bonds to provide low-interest or no-interest loans for coops, local utilities, and other entities to engage in energy infrastructure projects, many of which are in rural areas.

We are also providing funding to make industrial parks, potential economic development sites, and other local sites more power-ready because lack of quick energy access is a detriment to attracting industrial prospects.

Toughening, enhancing, and expanding our energy grid in cities, small communities, and even country crossroads will continue to command legislative attention far beyond the 2026 session because companies seeking to locate here will demand it.

I am confident that Alabama remains on the right track, and with the continuing commitment and determined leadership of state leaders elected during the upcoming campaign cycle, our state's future will remain bright for all who live here. ■

Alabama's Rural Roadmap Initiative Will Make an Already Great State Even Better for All Who Live Here

Sen. Garlan Gudger

The 2026 Regular Legislative Session is fast approaching, and while January currently seems quite far away, it will be upon us before we know it.

Legislators are already pre-filing bills and measures, many of which are worthy of consideration and quick passage, such as the Child Predator Death Penalty Act, which is sponsored by state Sen. April Weaver (R - Brierfield) and state Rep. Matt Simpson (R - Daphne). It will allow execution sentences for those who prey upon the most innocent and helpless among us.

Continuing our streak of providing record funding for K-12 public schools, community colleges and four-year colleges and universities remains a priority along with allocating ample dollars for General Fund state agencies that provide essential services to Alabamians across the state.

Meeting the infrastructure, economic and developmental needs of our rural communities is a personal focal point, and I know it is one shared by Speaker Nathaniel Ledbetter (R - Rainsville), who represents a non-urban district that is similar to my own.

Alabama's future depends on the strength of all of our communities, and that means taking bold actions to support our rural towns and regions. To address deep-rooted challenges like crumbling infrastructure, population loss and health care gaps, rural Alabama needs more than quick fixes — it needs a solid plan.

I serve on the 15-member Alabama Growth Alliance along with other elected officials, agency directors and prominent business leaders appointed by Gov. Kay Ivey, and we are preparing a "Rural Roadmap" that initially targets five specific factors currently inhibiting growth and hindering the quality of life for residents in less-developed portions of our state.

Those factors include infrastructure, business growth, workforce training, livability gaps and health care.

We are working closely with local elected officials, residents and business owners in rural regions along with recognized experts in community development, economic recruitment and other areas.

The Alabama Rural Roadmap initiative is required to be finalized and delivered to the Legislature by the fifth legislative day of the 2026 Regular Session, which will set the stage for new legislation, inventive programs and long-term investment in rural renewal.

By giving equal focus to the needs of large cities, medium-to-small towns and rural crossroads across Alabama, we can continue our decades-long success in economic development and job recruitment and provide the tools necessary to make an already great state even better. ■



THE ALABAMA

LEGISLATURE

Scan the QR code to visit the Alabama Legislature's website (ALISON) to view bills, find legislators' contact information, access session details and live stream meetings! The Alabama Constitution, Code of Alabama and the Administrative Code are also available. See pages 24-25 for a guided tour of ALISON.



Why Not Alabama?

Rep. Nathaniel Ledbetter

Each legislative session serves as an opportunity to build on Alabama's successes and work together to address our challenges. The people of Alabama deserve our hardest work today to ensure a prosperous tomorrow, and as we head into the final year of the quadrennium, I firmly believe that is exactly what we have done.

Whether it was passing the nation's strongest fentanyl trafficking bill in 2023, enacting childcare tax credits for working parents in 2024, or making Alabama the most pro-law enforcement state in America in 2025, each session has been defined by strong public policy that enhances the quality of life for Alabamians.

We have cut taxes every single year, amounting to over \$1.5 billion in savings for the people of Alabama.

Public education has seen record investments, leading to nation-leading gains in fourth grade reading and math, significant expansion of career-tech opportunities and the highest starting teacher salaries in the Southeast.

Economic and workforce development initiatives like the SEEDs Act and the Growing Alabama Act have brought \$65 billion in investments and over 90,000 new, high-wage jobs to our communities. In fact, CNBC recently ranked Alabama as the 19th best state to do business in.

The days of being last in key national rankings are over, and Alabama's elected leaders are done settling for the status quo.

The momentum our state has behind us is proof of that, but as Coach Nick Saban often says, momentum alone isn't enough – it's what you do with it that matters.

My question, and challenge, to every elected official is simple: Why not Alabama?

In the last four years, we have climbed 20 spots in national education rankings. Why can't we move up 20 more?

Today, we rank as the 19th best state to do business. Why can't Alabama be number one?

We are leading the Southeast. Why not lead the entire nation?

In my opinion, there is no reason we cannot, but it is going to take work – our hardest work.

We must match this momentum with action, and members of the Alabama Legislature are committed to working with leaders at all levels of government to do just that. ■



Are you receiving the *State House Advocate*?

Stay engaged by reading our weekly e-newsletter, *State House Advocate*, during the legislative session. Our advocacy

STATE HOUSE
ADVOCATE

This Week in League Advocacy

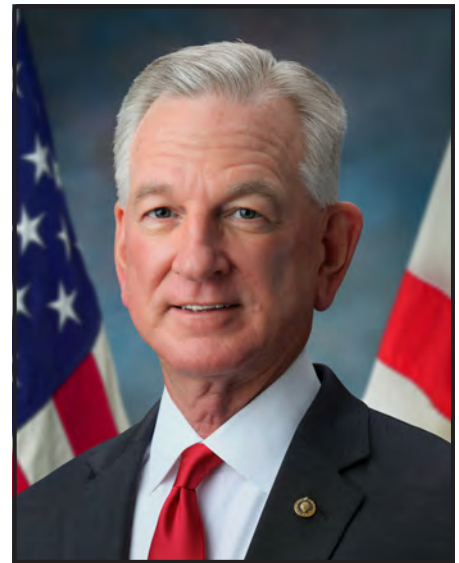


team shares a weekly update about the latest activity on the many proposals being considered by lawmakers. Past editions of the *State House Advocate* can be viewed on the League's website. As a member, you are automatically added to the mailing list. If you are not receiving the e-newsletters, contact Annabel Patton, membership clerk at apatton@almonline.org, to inquire.

Fighting for Alabamians and Growing Our State

U.S. Sen. Tommy Tuberville

The American people overwhelmingly voted for President Donald Trump's agenda last November, and we have hit the ground running in the 119th Congress to deliver on his agenda. We recently passed President Trump's One Big Beautiful Bill, which makes historic tax cuts, unleashes American energy, supports our farmers and makes local communities safer by securing our southern border. It also removes taxes on Social Security for nearly one million Alabama seniors and creates 21,000 new opportunity zone jobs for our state. Working Alabamians are also set to take home anywhere from \$6,700-\$9,300 more annually than they have before. Additionally, I was glad to see no taxes on overtime pay included in OBBB, which I proudly championed in the Senate.



President Trump is also delivering on his promise to make other countries pay their fair share when it comes to trade. Small towns across the country—including in Alabama—have been devastated by years of disastrous trade agreements that put America last. President Trump is getting us back to “Made in America,” and I am confident that Alabama will be at the forefront of this manufacturing renaissance. From Dothan to Huntsville, Alabama is already reaping the benefits of President Trump's tariffs with investments from new companies, creating more jobs for Alabamians.

Your work is critical in driving economic growth for our state. Because whether it is a local community college or a family farm, they need the support of their community—and their community needs them, too. Growing our state and supporting your work is top of mind for me here in Washington, D.C., and I am proud to represent Alabama on several key Senate committees that position me to do just that. This Congress, I retained my assignments on the Armed Services Committee; Veterans' Affairs Committee; Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry Committee; and the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee. I also added a fifth committee—the Senate Committee on Aging—where I am proudly advocating for Alabama's seniors. Furthermore, I received two subcommittee chairmanships—Senate Armed Services Committee Subcommittee on Personnel and HELP Subcommittee on Education and the American Family.

As SASC Subcommittee on Personnel chairman, I am using my recruiting background to help improve our military recruiting and retention. This includes securing a pay raise for troops and improving housing quality through this year's National Defense Authorization Act. Additionally, I had the honor of being nominated to the Board of Visitors of the U.S. Air Force Academy by President Trump, where we are working hard to eliminate woke indoctrination and return our academies to being revered military institutions that train our future combat leaders.

My first hearing as chairman of the Education and the American Family Subcommittee focused on steps that we can take to improve our current education system, including increasing literacy rates. If you cannot read, it is hard to do much else. It concerns me when I hear of low reading or math scores from our students. We have seen numerous reports showing our students are struggling in this post-COVID era. Alabama was the ONLY state that saw an increase in math scores in the 2024 National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) report that was released at the beginning of this year. We want to build on this progress and take our education to the next level.

It is my honor to represent Alabama in the U.S. Senate, and our work is not finished. I am looking forward to continuing to work with all of you to improve life for Alabamians and make our state an even better place to call home. ■

Building Alabama's Future

U.S. Sen. Katie Britt

As we conclude the first half of the 119th Congress, I could not be more proud of the progress we have made for Alabama. My commitment remains simple: to make our state the very best place to live, work, worship, attend school and raise a family. From our largest cities to our smallest towns, Alabama's 466 municipalities can count on me to listen to their priorities and fight for solutions in the U.S. Senate. In every meeting, hearing or conversation I am a part of, Alabamians can be sure their interests are represented, and they have a fighter in me.

Looking ahead, I remain focused on securing sustained investment in Alabama's infrastructure and economic future. A major priority is the Birmingham Northern Beltline, a critical link in the Appalachian Development Highway System. Alabama has more unfinished miles than any other state, but with the first phase expected to be complete by 2026, we are seeing long-overdue progress. This project will strengthen regional connectivity, create opportunity and keep Alabama competitive.

This year, the Army Corps of Engineers released its Fiscal Year 2025 Work Plan, which included significantly higher funding levels for Alabama projects. I worked diligently to help secure these investments that will advance efforts like the Mobile Harbor, the Selma Bank Stabilization Project and crucial operations on our waterways. Few states understand the importance of navigable inland waters like ours, and I will continue fighting to ensure they remain reliable channels of commerce.

At the same time, I am committed to balancing economic growth with environmental stewardship. Work on the Mobile Harbor and ship channel includes responsible dredging, but it is equally important to ensure sediment is reused to restore Dauphin Island and build wetlands across Mobile Bay. Protecting "Alabama the Beautiful" goes hand-in-hand with strengthening the port's role as an economic engine. I will continue working with the Army Corps of Engineers and the Trump Administration to deliver both growth and conservation.

Another crucial project is the I-10 Mobile River Bridge and Bayway Multimodal Project. This year, I was proud to join Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy in finalizing a \$550 million federal grant to help launch construction. This targeted investment is exactly how federal infrastructure dollars should be used—supporting transformative projects that ease congestion, grow commerce and improve quality of life. I look forward to working with local, state and federal leaders to see this project continue to advance.

Alongside infrastructure, I am working hard to deliver improvements in rural health care. Far too many Alabama families struggle with limited access to medical services. That is why I was proud to support the Rural Health Transformation Program, signed into law this year as part of President Donald Trump's Working Family Tax Cuts Act. This \$50 billion national fund will provide Alabama with over \$500 million from 2026 through 2030. These resources will strengthen our 54 rural hospitals with new technology, funding and support, ensuring families across our state have access to quality care close to home.

Ensuring communities across Alabama—from the Shoals to the shores—have the resources they need to thrive remains my top priority. On the appropriations committee, I have worked diligently to take a look at our state's needs and priorities, from utilities infrastructure to tools for our law enforcement officers to equipment for medical centers. Less than three years into my term, I have secured funding for nearly every county in Alabama, and I will not stop until I have delivered for every Alabamian no matter their zip code.

From rural health care to highways, waterways and economic development, my focus is always on Alabama's families and future. Thanks to strong partnerships at the local, state and federal levels, we are building safer communities, expanding opportunity and keeping our state moving forward. ■



Alabama's Strength Begins in Our Communities

U.S. Rep. Barry Moore
1st Congressional District



As we head toward the end of 2025, I recognize it has been a year of challenges and victories. Through it all one truth remains clear: Alabama's strength begins in our communities.

From Enterprise to Mobile, from our rural crossroads to our growing cities, it is the mayors, councilmembers and local leaders who keep our communities moving forward. In Congress, my job is to make sure Washington is working for you - not against you - and I will always fight for the tools our towns need to thrive.

This year, we have seen important wins for Alabama communities. I have worked closely with municipal leaders to ensure our towns and cities have the resources they need to grow. From securing disaster relief for rural areas, to advancing infrastructure improvements, to supporting law enforcement and first responders, my focus has been on strengthening the foundation of our communities.

Looking forward, my priorities for 2026 are clear: keep Washington accountable, fight for fiscal responsibility and stand up for the needs of Alabama. That includes protecting our farmers through a strong Farm Bill, pushing for policies that keep Alabama's families safe, and protecting your liberty by standing against out-of-control spending and government red tape.

Municipal leaders are on the front lines of service every day, and I value your partnership. Whether it is cutting through federal regulations or making sure small towns are not left behind in federal programs, my office is here to be a resource and an advocate.

Together, we can keep Alabama strong, prosperous and prepared for the future. Thank you for the work you do in your communities. I look forward to working alongside you in the years ahead. ■

Giving a Voice to Underserved Communities

U.S. Rep. Shomari Figures
2nd Congressional District



When I ran for Congress, my goal was to give a voice to underserved communities. For far too long, many people in Alabama's 2nd Congressional District were overlooked and forgotten. That is why I have aggressively worked to improve the lives of my constituents and their communities.

My district is home to people who are not immune to the challenges faced by other Americans across this country. The individual median income for my district is about \$31,000.

Several hospitals, especially in rural areas, are on pace to close without more support. Critical benefits like Medicaid and SNAP were recently cut, so my constituents will soon be forced to make tough budget decisions.

These issues are at the forefront of my mind, and I have spent this year pushing for change. I introduced a bipartisan bill to save our rural hospitals from closing because no one should have to drive for over an hour for health care. I introduced a bill to give tax credits to first-time parents providing some financial relief as the cost of living continues to skyrocket. My bill to ensure disaster relief funding is more accessible, especially in rural communities, and is now moving through Congress. Furthermore, I recently introduced legislation to strengthen workforce development programs, give more tax credits to people who need them most and eliminate federal loan caps for students pursuing higher education.

I am proud of what we have accomplished thus far, but I know more must be done. I am committed to advocating for real reforms that will produce real change for the people I have the privilege to represent and for the entire state of Alabama. ■

Finishing Strong, Starting Stronger

U.S. Rep. Mike Rogers
3rd Congressional District

Shocking as it is for me to believe, we are at the end of 2025, and the 2026 session is upon us. This next year promises to be a big one for the state of Alabama. As always, my primary focus every day of every year in Congress is doing my absolute best to ensure our state can flourish. A critical part of this success is delivering resources to our communities.

The work of the Alabama League of Municipalities is critical to my work as your representative. With your help, my office is able to discern what we can do for the enrichment of our communities. I am confident that Alabama would not be thriving as much as it is without your hard work.

At the time of this publication, I am still hard at work to pass the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2026. This year's NDAA focuses heavily on improving the acquisitions process for our Armed Services.

As many of you know, the Pentagon currently functions incredibly slowly as one of the largest bureaucracies in the world. As many of you also know, technology is moving at the speed of light. We are stuck in a cycle whereby the time our warfighters receive the equipment they have requested, the technology is often outdated.

That is why I am very proud of the statutes placed in the NDAA this year that will remodel the acquisition system. This will also be incredibly fruitful for Alabama and our strong defense industrial base.

I am lucky to be from the greatest state in our union, and I want to see it on top. Together, we can make 2026 an even better year for Alabama! ■

Keeping Alabama at the Forefront

U.S. Rep. Robert Aderholt
4th Congressional District

As the 119th Congress is underway, it remains an honor to represent Alabama's 4th District and serve the people of Alabama in Congress. As chairman of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies, I oversee the largest non-defense segment of the federal budget, while also serving on the agriculture and defense subcommittees. These responsibilities give me a strong platform to advocate for Alabama's priorities in Washington.

Over the past year, my focus has been clear, strengthening Alabama's role in national defense, improving access to health care and ensuring hardworking families keep more of their paychecks. These goals guide my work, and I am proud of the progress we have made.

On defense, I have fought to deliver major wins for Alabama. We advanced three top priorities: Space Command, the Golden Dome initiative and shipbuilding. Each represents not only a boost for national security, but an opportunity for Alabama's economy. With President Donald Trump's One Big Beautiful Bill, we secured funding for all three priorities, proof that Alabama is indispensable to America's defense.

In health care, I will continue to protect Medicaid for the truly vulnerable while cutting fraud and abuse. Reforms in the One Big Beautiful Bill safeguard seniors, veterans and families while ensuring resources are not taken away from those in need. The Rural Health Transformation Program will also provide significant funding to strengthen Alabama's rural hospitals, directly benefiting families across the state.

I remain committed to fiscal responsibility. Extending the 2017 tax cuts prevented the largest tax hike in modern history and ensured Alabama families can expect thousands more in take-home pay. By cutting waste and abuse, we have redirected resources into infrastructure, education and health care.

Looking forward, my priorities remain the same. Keep Alabama at the forefront of economic and workforce development while ensuring the economy benefits hardworking Americans. ■

Delivering Real Results for North Alabama

U.S. Rep. Dale Strong 5th Congressional District

As north Alabama continues to grow and lead, my top priority remains clear: to ensure our region remains the best place to do business. This includes enacting pro-growth, pro-business policies and securing investments to support and improve our infrastructure.

I am proud that Republicans have advanced landmark legislation providing historic tax relief to workers, support for our small businesses and investments in American manufacturing. Provisions like the small business deduction and immediate research and development expensing will be critical in creating new main street small business jobs and supporting the expansion of new American production factories.

Supporting jobs and strengthening our economy remain at the heart of my work. North Alabama's future depends on both attracting new opportunities and supporting the businesses, industries and workers who already call this region home. From workforce training to infrastructure improvements, I am committed to helping every community succeed because when one grows stronger, our entire region benefits.

As a member of the Appropriations Committee, north Alabama has a seat at the table for the annual funding process. In my first year alone, I successfully secured over \$14 million in direct funding for our region to improve roadway safety and support continued growth throughout north Alabama. We are on track this year to send even more of your taxpayer dollars out of Washington and back to our community.

While we have made significant accomplishments so far this Congress – returning funds directly to taxpayers, cutting wasteful spending and providing relief to hardworking Americans – I am excited about all that is on the horizon in the days ahead.

It is an honor to serve north Alabama, and my commitment remains steadfast: delivering real results that strengthen communities, support families and build a brighter future for us all. ■



Delivering on Our Promises

U.S. Rep. Gary Palmer 6th Congressional District

We began 2025 working to bring down inflation by rolling back regulations imposed by the Biden Administration that were costing American families hundreds of billions of dollars. In just the first seven months, my Republican colleagues in the House and Senate passed legislation to secure our border, made major reforms to Medicaid and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and created a Medicaid fund that is focused on rural health care. Plus, we prevented a \$4.5 trillion tax increase from going into effect, gave senior citizens a tax cut on their Social Security income and eliminated income taxes on tips and overtime pay. In addition, as chairman of the Environment Subcommittee on the Energy and Commerce Committee, I have worked with EPA Administrator Lee Zeldin to bring sense and clarity to our environmental regulations to ensure that we maintain the highest environmental standards without stifling our economy. As chairman of the Environment Subcommittee, the staff and I have been laser focused on unleashing American energy and securing America's critical mineral supply. I am working directly with the White House and Trump Administration's cabinet members to eliminate our reliance on China for refined rare earth elements which has become a clear threat to our economic and national security.

As we finish out 2025, I am confident that it will be remembered as a year that the Republican majorities in Congress and President Donald Trump delivered on our promises. The pace in 2026 will be just as fast and focused as we continue to work to bring down the cost of living and make health care more accessible and affordable. We will work with President Trump to end burdensome regulations and make America more prosperous and secure. ■



Strength in Working Together

U.S. Rep. Terri Sewell
7th Congressional District



As I reflect on this turbulent year, I have been challenged to find new and innovative ways to deliver for Alabama amidst the chaos in Washington. Over the last four years, our federal government provided unprecedented resources to our municipalities as we emerged from the pandemic and faced an evolving economy. The American Rescue Plan provided direct financial assistance to municipalities, counties, schools and hospitals to ensure our businesses, our health care workers, our working families and our children emerged from the pandemic stronger than ever. Then we passed the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, the Chips and Science Act and the Inflation Reduction Act to lay the foundation for America's economy to compete in the 21st century. Alabama saw record job growth, historic investments in broadband deployment and telemedicine, and \$7 billion for projects in our state.

However, 2025 has brought a shift in federal priorities. Alabama's municipalities can no longer depend on the same level of federal support to tackle the biggest issues facing their communities. Federal grants have been rescinded, agency staff have been fired and there is new uncertainty about the future of so many programs that local governments depend on each day.

This spring, Congress failed to pass all 12 spending bills, and the federal government will operate on a continuing resolution for the remainder of the fiscal year. Moreover, the House is advancing FY26 funding bills that would make deep cuts to programs like the Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds, the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), clean energy programs and community-based violence prevention programs.

Despite these new challenges, I have many reasons to be optimistic about the future of our state. Alabama has some of the best municipal leaders who will not let the chaos from Washington stop them from delivering for their residents. We know that our communities thrive when municipal, state and federal partners work together, and I will continue to be an advocate on the federal level to bring new resources and opportunities to Alabama.

Moreover, I will continue to work with Alabama's congressional delegation to advance bipartisan priorities like my bill—the LIFT Act—which would authorize the use of American infrastructure bonds, restore advance refunding of municipal bonds and expand bank-qualified debt for small municipalities and nonprofits.

While new challenges confront all of us in public service, I encourage us to keep our eyes on the prize and stay dedicated to working together on those issues that will help make a brighter future for the people of Alabama. ■

The Local Officials' **GUIDE** to MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT

Welcome Newly Elected Municipal Officials!

Congratulations on entering municipal public service! Your question of "what can I do to help my city or town be the best it can be?" has been answered by a vote of confidence from your neighbors and a seat at the table.

The next question for you on this journey is a little harder to answer – now what? The Alabama League of Municipalities has been answering that question since 1935. The League comes in to help show you the path forward. Formed as an advocate in the Alabama Legislature, ALM has expanded to include indispensable educational opportunities for new and incumbent municipal officials to navigate their time in office. As a new official in a member municipality, you now have access to all the resources, education and training that the League has to offer. **The latest helpful publication from the League is *The Local Officials' Guide to Municipal Government*. Pick one up at the next Orientation Training location (see page 50) or scan the QR code.**



Understanding ALISON: Alabama Legislative Information System Online

Baker Allen • Director of Governmental Affairs • ALM

For those of you who are new to municipal office, legislative advocacy is a primary function of your Alabama League of Municipalities. The League's advocacy team works diligently to preserve municipal authority. However, grassroots efforts – your engagement – remain the backbone of our legislative success. To support advocacy efforts, we produce weekly reports on Fridays during the legislative session via our legislative e-newsletter, the *State House Advocate*, which reviews the previous week and outlines what we expect to take place during the upcoming week. This newsletter focuses specifically on municipal issues allowing you to more directly engage with your legislators.

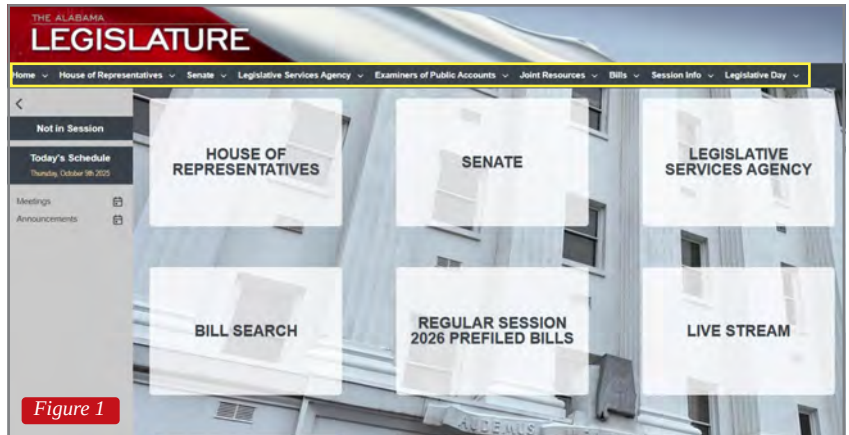
Often times we will ask you to personally advocate on behalf of your municipality during the session to enhance our lobbying efforts. The *State House Advocate* will provide you with key information as well as important contact information and online resources to help you with those efforts. Please contact Annabel Patton, our membership clerk, at apatton@almonline.org to ensure you are signed up to receive the SHA. Additionally, under the Legislative Advocacy tab



on our website (scan the QR code), you will find information on how to schedule a meeting with your lawmaker and tips on meeting with your lawmaker. Another resource of particular importance is the Alabama Legislative Information System Online (ALISON), the official website for the Alabama Legislature.

Understanding ALISON – A Valuable Advocacy Resource

Please familiarize yourself with ALISON by scanning the QR code to visit alison.legislature.state.al.us. ALISON contains legislative information the League is tracking and allows you to independently research what is happening in the state house. ALISON provides a wealth of information, including an overview of the legislative process, contact



information for legislators, session information (House and Senate special order calendars, bills, resolutions, confirmation, committees, and how legislators voted, etc.), meetings and announcements as well as links to other resources. On the ALISON homepage, you will see the following tabs: Home, House of Representatives, Senate, Legislative Services Agency, Examiners of Public Accounts, Joint Resources, Bills, Session Info and Legislative Day. (See Figure 1)

Who are my legislators, and what committees do they serve on?

To quickly reach your legislators, click on the "House of Representatives" or "Senate" tab at the top of the opening page. From there, click "House Leaders and Members" and then click "House Members." Once you have clicked "House



Members,” you will notice each member of the House listed with tabs to view their contact information, bio, committees they serve on and bills they have sponsored. The same goes for Senate members. These links will be particularly important when you are asked by the League to reach out to your lawmaker(s) or committee(s) to advocate for or against a bill being debated. (See Figures 2 and 3)

Session Info

Another important resource via ALISON, is the “Session Info” tab on the homepage, which will link you to a variety of options regarding the legislative session. This will take you to a page allowing you to quickly access several important categories such as the special order calendars, bills, resolutions, etc. (See Figure 4)

Finding the Status of a Bill

During the legislative session, you may want to research a bill to determine the impact it could have on your community. If so, click “Bills” at the top of the homepage. When using the search function, type SB or HB in front of the bill number (ex. SB5 for Senate Bill 5). After clicking on the bill, you will be taken to a page containing a lot of information on the bill including a copy of the bill, amendments, fiscal notes and sponsor. (See Figure 5)

Legislative Day

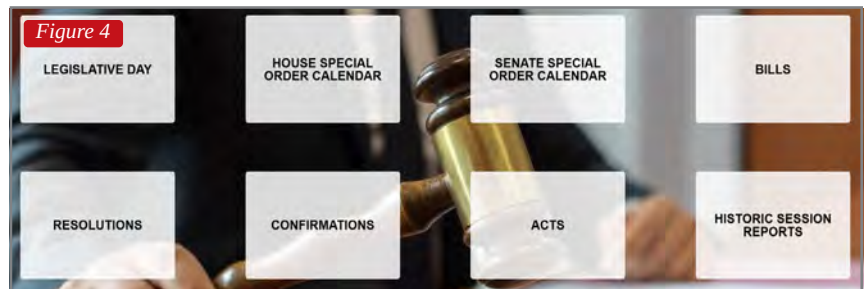
The “Legislative Day” tab along the top of the ALISON website will provide you with House and Senate special reports, special order calendars (as they are adopted), current matters before the bodies and legislative audio and video. (See Figure 6)

Live Stream

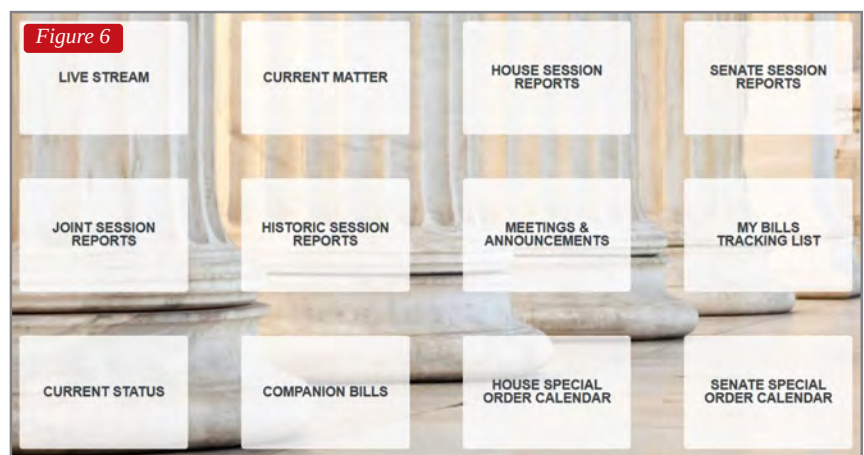
When you go to the ALISON homepage, you will see a button in the bottom left corner to click on “Live Stream.” By selecting it, you will be able to watch any live committee meeting or discussions on the House and Senate floor remotely.

Conclusion

ALISON is a great resource for staying up-to-date during the legislative session. Your participation is your strongest advocacy tool. Throughout the 2026 Regular Session your engagement will help us advance our legislative priorities and stop any bills that threaten local government. As mentioned above, read our weekly *State House Advocate* and please take some time to become comfortable navigating the ALISON site. As always, we appreciate your engagement and thank you for your support! ■



YEAR	BILL	SPONSOR	SESSION	BODY	SUBJECT	TITLE	ASSIGN COMM	PREFERRED
2026	HB1	Boyd	2026 Regular Session	House	Motor Vehicles & Traffic	Motor vehicles, suspension of driver license and ignition interlock device following test driving while under the influence conviction	Public Safety and Homeland Security (House)	6/25/2025
2026	HB2	Standridge	2026 Regular Session	House	Government Administration	Gulf of Mexico, resumption, observation and implementation by state and local entities and state and local employees required where practicable	State Government (House)	6/25/2025
2026	HB3	Brown (C)	2026 Regular Session	House	Taxation & Revenue	Taxation, to exempt certain retail sales of fish or other seafood from sales and use taxes	Ways and Means Education (House)	6/25/2025
2026	HB4	Woods (M)	2026 Regular Session	House	Taxation & Revenue	Taxation, establishes Alabama Broadband Investment Maximization Act, exempts ADECA project funded or administered purchases from sales and use tax	Ways and Means Education (House)	6/25/2025
2026	HB5	McCampbell	2026 Regular Session	House	Consumer Protection	Service contracts, terms defined, certain disclosures in advertising required, disclosures of limitations of contracts further provided for	Commerce and Small Business (House)	6/25/2025
2026	HB6	Peltus	2026 Regular Session	House	Retirement	Employees' Retirement System, all ALEA law enforcement officers, including State Police Tier II Plan members, to receive payment for up to 30 hours of accrued and unused annual leave per year	Ways and Means General Fund (House)	6/25/2025
2026	HB7	Woods (M)	2026 Regular Session	House	Crimes & Offenses	Crimes and offenses, penalty increased for crimes of making a terrorist threat or in the first or second degree, principal to immediately contact law enforcement of terrorist threat, suspension of student, readmittance, and restitution provided	Judiciary (House)	6/25/2025
2026	SB1	Gidley	2026 Regular Session	House	Education	Campus chaplains, public K-12 schools authorized to accept as volunteers, local boards of education and governing bodies authorized to vote on whether to allow, limitations provided	Education Policy (House)	6/25/2025



LEGAL VIEWPOINT

By Kaleb Beck, Legislative Counsel, ALM

The Relentless Rise of Municipal Reporting Mandates - Overview of the Business License Tax Reporting and Appeals Act

Each year the League’s advocacy team, with help from the legal and communication departments, strives to defend and advocate for the interests of all municipalities whether small, medium or large at the state house. A big part of advocating for our members is understanding the legislative process can be chaotic and unpredictable and realizing that there is a plethora of special interest groups represented at the state house on any given day. Given the vast representation across the street, the legislative process is fueled by negotiation and compromise. Sometimes the goal at the end of the day is to draw a line in the sand and successfully negotiate compromises to protect municipalities from the most negative impacts of legislation.

Over the last few years, a common theme in the Alabama Legislature has been the promotion of transparency in government, which often means new municipal reporting requirements. The 2025 legislative session was no different. Although transparency is important, reporting requirements can be quite cumbersome especially when punitive penalties are attached. The advocacy team routinely and vehemently communicates this concern to legislators.

After much negotiation and compromise, the final version of the Business License Tax Reporting and Appeals Act (Act 2025-408) promulgates certain business license reporting requirements and modifies the appeals process for business license final assessments. Early versions of the bill contained significant penalties for failure to comply with the newly enumerated reporting requirements. In fact, at one point, the “nuclear option”

of removing a municipality’s business license authority for failure to comply was considered by some. At the end of the day, the final version of the legislation, while not a perfect compromise, is more feasible for municipalities to endure than what was originally introduced.

The League appreciates Sen. Clyde Chambliss, the sponsor of the bill which became Act 2025-408, for working with our team and his communities to address our concerns. On May 14, 2025, Gov. Kay Ivey signed Act 2025-408 into law; it took effect on October 1, 2025.

Reporting Requirements

Business License Classifications and Schedules

Act 2025-408 requires each municipality that levies a business privilege tax or business license tax to file an annual report with the Alabama Department of Revenue (ADOR). The report must include (1) the classifications and schedules



for business license taxes for the previous fiscal year and (2) whether any changes were made to those classifications and schedules during the previous fiscal year as well as whether any such changes will be made during the next fiscal year. The report is due no later than March 30 of each year; **municipalities must submit their first report by March 30, 2026.** ADOR will post the reports it receives on its website. **Failure to file this report will result in the escrow of subsequent business license taxes and business privilege taxes collected by the municipality until compliance is achieved.** The penalty for noncompliance is an easier pill to swallow than alternatives. The city does not lose out on any revenue; instead, it simply cannot spend the revenue it collects until it complies. Once noncompliance is realized, compliance is easily achieved by filing the required report.

Requirements for a Private Entity Collecting Municipal Business Licenses

Act 2025-408 requires counties and municipalities to notify ADOR if they contract with a private entity to collect business privilege taxes or business license taxes on their behalf. ADOR has a form on its website municipalities can fill out and submit to ADOR to comply with this reporting requirement. Scan the QR code to view it.



The act places a further requirement on any private entity contracted by a municipality to audit business license taxes. **Pursuant to the act, any such private entity, when**

sending any written communication to a business entity that may owe a business privilege tax or business license tax, must also send a letter or other official notice from the municipality that declares the private entity's authority to collect taxes on behalf of the municipality.

Business License Appeals

Act 2025-408 also expands the Alabama Tax Tribunal's jurisdiction to include appeals of business license tax decisions from counties and municipalities. The tribunal was created in 2014 to "provide taxpayers with a means of resolving controversies that insures both the appearance and the reality of due process and fundamental fairness." **Taxpayers can now appeal final assessments of business license taxes in circuit court or with the tribunal.** Alabama Code Section 40-2B-2 outlines the tribunal's governance structure and the required appeal procedures.

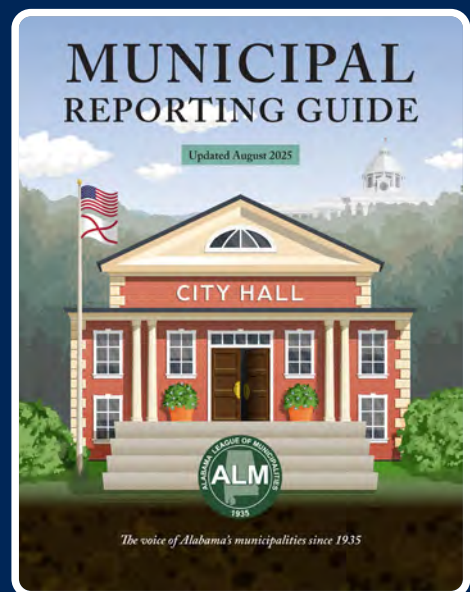
Conclusion

As your municipality gets oriented with the new requirements enumerated in Act 2025-408, please do not hesitate to reach out to the League's legal department at 334-262-2566 so we can assist you and your municipal attorney with compliance. Scan the QR code to view the League's *Municipal Reporting Guide* for more information on other municipal reporting requirements. ■



The Alabama League of Municipalities has recently updated the *Municipal Reporting Guide*!

As part of our mission to support our members, the League created this one-stop guide to ensure our municipalities are aware of various state laws that require local governments to provide annual reports on specific municipal operations. While this guide does not include all the information about each law, it does provide an overview of the requirements, contact information and deadlines. This guide (along with its companion piece, the *Municipal Resources Guide*, see page 54) is a living document that will be updated each year. Members, legislators and other elected officials are encouraged to share these great resources. It can be accessed online at almonline.org or by scanning the QR code above.





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From Alabama to Washington, D.C.: Lifting Local Voices Through NLC

Katya Mayer • Senior Regional Specialist (Southern Region) • NLC

As Alabama prepares for the upcoming legislative session, the work of local leaders remains at the forefront. While municipal officials often face challenges in areas such as housing, infrastructure, workforce development and public safety, each city has its own unique landscape, making it especially important for leaders to connect, share experiences and learn from different approaches. This makes peer-to-peer learning, coalition building and collective advocacy key tools for strengthening leadership in local government.

One effective means to build these connections and amplify municipalities' voices is through the National League of Cities (NLC). Each year, NLC offers elected officials and city staff from its member cities the opportunity to serve on NLC federal advocacy (FA) committees, member councils or constituency groups.



Why Engagement Matters

At its core, NLC is driven by its members. The organization's strength lies in the contributions of thousands of local officials who help shape the organization's priorities, share their experiences and advocate for the needs of their communities. Alabama leaders who engage through NLC committees, councils or constituency groups ensure the unique perspective of Alabama is heard and represented nationwide. This involvement significantly influences NLC policies and benefits the state of Alabama as a whole. Through participation, local officials can shape policy positions, develop advocacy strategies, gain valuable insight and advise on key issues facing local communities.



Clarence Anthony, NLC CEO and executive director, and Greg Cochran, ALM executive director, share reflections at the 2025 ALM Convention.



Councilmember Jan Arbuckle, Grass Valley, CA led a NLC 2025 Congressional City Conference session discussing the areas of opportunities for small communities with local officials from across the country.

Opportunities to Lead, Advocate and Connect

While NLC provides various ways for leaders and their staff to get involved, federal advocacy committees, member councils and constituency groups are designed to meet leaders where they are in their public service journey and to foster a community of colleagues across the country who are leading and advocating for cities, towns and villages.

Federal Advocacy Committees

These committees mirror the structure of federal agencies and congressional committees. Members focus on policy development in important areas like finance, transportation, energy and community development. By joining a committee, leaders stay informed about federal activities and help influence them. Members work closely with NLC staff, testify before policymakers and help shape NLC's policy positions. Joining an FA committee is a chance for Alabama's voices to connect with peers, bring back strategies and resources and ensure Alabama municipalities have a seat at the table in Washington, D.C.

Member Councils

NLC has seven member councils that bring together leaders from communities facing similar challenges or priorities. These councils include the Large Cities Council; Small Cities Council; Universities Council; Military Council; Young Municipal Leaders Council on Youth, Education and Families; First Tier Suburbs Council; and REAL Council. By bringing together diverse leadership groups, NLC enables leaders to collaborate with peers nationwide, share best practices and advocate collectively for their communities.

Constituency Groups

Representation matters, and NLC's constituency groups provide spaces for leaders from diverse backgrounds and experiences to build community and contribute to NLC's leadership development, policy formulation, advocacy and program activities. Groups like the National Black Caucus of Local Elected Officials (NBC-LEO), Hispanic Elected Local Officials (HELO), Asian Pacific American Municipal Officials (APAMO), Local Indigenous Leaders (LIL), LGBTQ+ Local Officials (LGBTQ+LO), and Women in Municipal Government (WIMG) all strengthen individual leaders and elevate voices that often go unheard.



Mayor Pro Tem Mary Sarver, Grandview, TX serves as chair of NLC's Small Cities Council. She is pictured here connecting with an Alabama youth councilor attending the First Time Attendee Lunch.



Mayor Bobby Scott Jr., of Center Point, AL welcomed NBC-LEO to Houston, TX for their 2025 Summer Conference in his role as vice president of NBC-LEO.



NBC-LEO Summer Conference attendees went on a mobile tour of a live construction site that is currently building out a strip mall that will become a grocery store, after school program facility and movie theatre.

The Alabama Connection

Alabama's local leaders have a long history of engaging with NLC, sharing lessons, networks and advocacy insights for their communities and the state. Participating in these groups often opens doors for municipalities to:

- Influence national policies affecting local budgets, from transportation funding to public safety resources
- Learn from peer cities facing different issues and sharing best practices
- Build advocacy coalitions to strengthen Alabama's voice in Washington, D.C. and support state discussions
- Develop leadership skills and mentor future municipal leaders

These opportunities are especially important as Alabama prepares for the 2026 legislative session.

Why Now?

Advocacy does not happen in a vacuum. It thrives on teamwork, shared knowledge and unified action. As Alabama municipalities gear up for the session, joining an NLC group gives an immediate, practical way to build momentum and learn.

Every Alabama leader from an NLC member city, town or village is encouraged to apply for an NLC committee, council or constituency group. It is more than a professional step; it is an investment in your community, state and the future of local leadership.

Local government is where democracy operates daily—through paving streets, providing clean water and delivering vital services that affect everyone's quality of life. However, local leaders cannot and should not carry this responsibility alone.

Strengthening your connection with NLC helps ensure our local priorities are heard at every government level. I hope you will seize this chance to step up, engage and lead. Local leadership is powerful. Together, we can make it even stronger! ■

How to Apply

Applications to join NLC committees, councils and constituency groups open October 14 and close December 2. Elected officials or staff from an NLC member city are eligible to apply.

Whether you lead a rural town or a metropolitan city, your perspective matters, and NLC wants to hear it. Visit nlc.org to learn more or scan the QR code.



BECOME A NLC MEMBER



Membership with NLC includes **exclusive access, tools, and resources** available to your entire city, town or village!

Scan the QR Code to complete the NLC interest form and connect with the NLC membership representative for your region

"The National League of Cities is the oldest and largest national association serving local government."



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LEARN LOCALLY:

KENNETH TURNER

COASTAL ALABAMA COMMUNITY COLLEGE



"The one thing they can never take from you is your education." My father, who had little formal education, repeated those words to me over and over when I was growing up. They must have stuck because, after a brief interruption following high school graduation to attend basic training, I entered college as a first-generation college student majoring in prelaw. At the time, I had no idea that I would spend my entire adult life in education: both as a student and an instructor.

I fell into education by chance. My original major was history, and I was intent on pursuing a law degree, but when I began English classes, I fell in love with the subject and left pre-law to become an English/history double major. I had no real intention of being a teacher, but that is where I landed, really by accident, and every time that I walk into a classroom with students, I know I am *accidentally* doing what I should be. I still feel the same passion for the subject matter, and I want my students to feel that passion. I want them to feel the same desire to learn something new that I still feel. Education is vitally important. It makes one a better person, a better citizen, a better employee, and a better consumer of information. I passionately believe that most of the issues that we have in our society can be solved through education and educating people.



I myself, have been a life-long learner. Since I started that original bachelor's degree, I have been taking classes continually with only a brief pause here and there that I was not a student. I have almost twenty years as a college student. I have completed graduate work in English, history, communications, and philosophy. That broad background allows me to teach in several different subject areas, and I enjoy the variety. It also means that I get to encounter my students multiple times. I may teach them English, speech, history, and humanities. I can develop a deeper relationship with those students, which is one of the beautiful things about a community college.

I have worked at a university and there are certain advantages to working there; however, on the community college level, an instructor is able to develop a much more personal, one-on-one relationship with the students. Community colleges serve a vital role in filling a gap for students between high school and college. Not only can they get a solid education in a technical field, but they can save a lot of money by taking their classes at a community college as opposed to a university. More importantly, they get a much more personal touch at the community college. The interaction between student and instructor at a community college is something that many of these students need to make them successful. Walking into a classroom and interacting with the students is what I love most about teaching, and I know that is true of most of the other instructors I know.

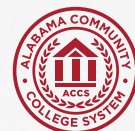
I have been a college instructor for a long time. During that time, I have watched how educating students has changed, and I have watched the students themselves changed, but the one thing that has not changed and will never change is the importance of the relationship that an instructor develops with the students in order to educate them.

"I passionately believe that most of the issues that we have in our society can be solved through education and educating people."

- KENNETH TURNER

When I started my studies at the university, I really had no guidance. I had to figure out how everything worked by myself, which was a difficult endeavor because, as I said, I was a first-generation college student. My community college students have that guidance. I have students who will come to me with a question that is not really in my job description, but they feel comfortable asking me because they know me and I can find the answer they need. Many of my students would struggle at a university, they can build the foundation they need to be successful here at a community college. These students would be left behind if they did not get the foundation and personal attention that community colleges offer.

In closing, I hope my students leave my class with the same passion for learning that I have, and more importantly, I hope they leave with the ability to think for themselves. It is cliché to say it, but we *are* building the future of our state and our country right here. As Thomas Jefferson said, "To penetrate and dissipate these clouds of darkness, the general mind must be strengthened by education."



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Live Locally Alabama Celebrates First Anniversary with Call to Action:

Strong Communities Start with You

Lori Jhons • Communications Director • ALM

The Alabama League of Municipalities is proud to recently celebrate the first anniversary of Live Locally Alabama! We launched this statewide, quality-of-life campaign to increase awareness of the critical role local governments play in our daily lives and to empower citizens of all ages to engage in building stronger, more vibrant communities.

Alabama is comprised of 466 cities and towns, each with their own strengths and challenges. Over the past year, Live Locally Alabama has served as a platform to highlight the range of services they offer, which depends on strong leadership, active community support and sustainable funding through local tax dollars, licenses and fees. Common examples include: police and fire protection; water and wastewater services; street and sidewalk maintenance; economic development; schools; garbage and recycling collection; parks, recreation and youth programs; libraries; and senior centers not to mention community events and festivals.



How to Get Your Municipality Engaged

The League created various campaign assets such as a strategic plan, press releases, a campaign logo style guide, over 40 graphics and videos for municipalities to utilize to promote their communities and everyday quality-of-life services. All items are available for free to download on the League's website.

Over the past year, we have promoted the campaign at all of our events; shared it with state and federal leaders; conducted several interviews on TV and radio; aired over 200 TV spots on Alabama Public Television; and contracted Yellowhammer News and SoulGrown to share articles, video reels and ads on their platforms. We continue to brainstorm ideas and work on more partnerships to help support Alabama's cities and towns.

There is no right or wrong way to get engaged with the campaign. We simply ask that you just get involved!

Consider:

- Setting up media interviews to discuss how your community provides a good quality of life for your citizens
- Asking your local TV or radio station to air the campaign videos
- Visiting the schools in your community and talking about civic education by sharing our *Your Municipality and You* booklet. Scan the QR code for the booklet.
- Creating a volunteer Live Locally Alabama committee to help your community get involved by creating positive social media content or planning events



Midfield councilmembers Velma Johnson and Janice Anderson show off their pride for the new Live Locally Alabama campaign.

- Asking a community celebrity to do a video tour of what they love about your community or have each member of the council do it

How Can Citizens Support Live Locally Alabama

Live Locally Alabama is not just a campaign; it is a movement that welcomes participation from citizens of all ages. Following the recent municipal elections, now is the perfect time for citizens to become more engaged with new and incumbent leaders alike as they prepare their visions for the next four years or more.

There are many ways citizens can get involved and support their cities and towns.

Adults can:

- Attend city council or town hall meetings to stay informed and speak up on local issues
- Volunteer with community organizations, clean-up events or local boards and commissions
- Support local businesses, farmers markets and civic fundraisers
- Report issues such as potholes, code violations or safety concerns to your local government
- Join neighborhood associations or start community improvement initiatives
- Serve on local advisory boards or task forces
- Mentor youth in civic leadership programs
- Share information about municipal services and the campaign with others
- Vote in every election
- Share Live Locally Alabama campaign graphics and videos on social media

Youth can:

- Join student government or local youth councils
- Participate in community service projects
- Learn about how local government works through school or library programs
- Help organize local drives or clean-up days with family and friends

Celebrate and Commit

As Live Locally Alabama enters its second year, the Alabama League of Municipalities invites every Alabamian to celebrate by committing to take one new action in support of their city or town whether that is voting, attending a council meeting or simply thanking a public servant—every action counts. For more information, engagement ideas and stories from communities across the state, visit our website by scanning the QR code on page 45. As you can see, the possibilities for getting involved are endless. Reach out to me any time at ljhons@almonline.org if you need help or want to discuss ideas.

The following pages of this magazine will showcase campaign articles featured on the SoulGrown digital platform about Albertville, Alexander City, Atmore, Centreville, Enterprise, Guntersville, Loxley, Millbrook, Muscle Shoals, Opelika, Rainbow City and Tuskegee. ■



Director Lori Jhons shared campaign resources with the Alabama Higher Education Partnership's Student Retention Council on Oct. 8, 2025.



ALM Deputy Director Kayla Bass unveiled the campaign to board members on July 11, 2024.

Live Locally Alabama:

East Alabama Cities Elevating Everyday Living

SoulGrown Staff and Lori Jhons • Communications Director • ALM



This article is printed as it appeared in the SoulGrown digital publication on Aug. 28, 2025.

The Alabama League of Municipalities' (ALM) Live Locally Alabama campaign celebrates the heartbeat of our state's communities—the people who live, work and give back right where they are. Across Alabama's 466 cities and towns, citizens are the backbone of progress, shaping healthy, vibrant places to call home in ways they may not even realize. From volunteering at local events to supporting small businesses or simply showing up for neighbors, everyday actions make a difference.

As part of the Live Locally Alabama campaign, ALM is visiting municipal leaders across the state to highlight

how local government works hand in hand with residents to build a sustainable, connected future. In east Alabama, three communities—Tuskegee, Opelika and Albertville—are proving that when leaders and citizens work together, they can create spaces and experiences that strengthen both community pride and a sense of belonging.

Learn About Local History in Tuskegee

Tuskegee Mayor Lawrence “Tony” Haygood Jr., who served as ALM’s president from 2022-2023, is a lifelong resident and dedicated community leader. He is deeply proud of Moton Field, the home of the legendary Tuskegee Airmen. With decades of public service under his belt, Mayor Haygood understands the profound impact this historic site holds. “Moton Field was where the Tuskegee Airmen trained—heroes who shaped the end of World War II, the integration of our armed services and the civil rights movement,” he said.

Today, the field remains a hub of aviation activity. “We’ve come full circle. Tuskegee University students are once again being trained at Moton Field to serve the military with strength and pride,” Haygood noted.

The city works alongside the Friends of the Tuskegee Airmen National Historic Site to preserve and share this history nationwide. “It’s been a community-wide effort—city, county and citizens working together to honor Moton Field’s legacy,” he said.

Moton Field also serves as a gathering place for community events and fly-ins, with future aviation activities on the horizon. “When citizens are informed, they participate more actively and that makes our community stronger,” Haygood added.



(Tuskegee Airmen National Historic Site/Facebook)

Play at a Park for All in Opelika

Opelika Mayor Gary Fuller, who served as ALM’s president from 2021-2022, has been serving the community for over two decades with a strong focus on enhancing quality of life and fostering community engagement. He is thrilled to



(Opelika Chamber/Facebook)

celebrate the success of Floral Park, a 28-acre property transformed into an inclusive, multi-use destination. “Floral Park is our 28-acre jewel, rebuilt from top to bottom and now the smash hit of the summer,” Fuller said.

The park features turf athletic fields for soccer and football, large and small dog parks, picnic pavilions, a walking track and an inclusive playground designed for children of all abilities. “Parents are bringing their kids twice a day; it has exceeded all our expectations,” Fuller shared.

For Mayor Fuller, the Live Locally Alabama campaign reinforces the value of amenities like Floral Park. “It brings our community together to enjoy the things we have right here at home,” he said. He encourages residents to get involved: “Volunteer—whether it’s with the library, food bank, community market, parks and recreation or

the Literacy Coalition. Be a part of making a difference!”

Explore and Enjoy Community in Albertville

Albertville City Councilwoman Jill Oakley brings over a decade of public service to her hometown and is equally enthusiastic about her community’s crown jewel: Sand Mountain Park and Amphitheater. The expansive facility features seven playgrounds, multiple sports courts—including baseball, softball, soccer, tennis and basketball—an outdoor water park and an amphitheater that highlights local music talent.

“This park meets the needs of our whole community: sports, recreation, exercise and live music,” Oakley said. “It’s an opportunity to live locally, enjoy the outdoors and make the most of our natural beauty.”

The project was the result of years of planning, community input and a dedicated one-cent sales tax to fund infrastructure, including the park’s development. “This is our way to give back to our community the things it needs to have a quality of life,” Oakley said.

She sees the Live Locally Alabama campaign as an invitation for residents to discover what is already around them. “You don’t have to go to Disney World. North Alabama has so much to explore and enjoy right here,” she said. “Our school system, parks and local boards offer countless ways to contribute.”

No matter their size or location, Tuskegee, Opelika and Albertville share one vital truth: communities thrive when citizens are engaged and invested. Local governments can build spaces and programs, but it is the people who fill them with meaning and connection.

Through the Live Locally Alabama campaign, these east Alabama cities show that stepping up—by volunteering, sharing ideas or simply showing up—makes a hometown stronger and brighter. Living locally is not just about where you live; it is about how you help shape the future of your community.

For more information on the ALM Live Locally Alabama campaign, including municipal and citizen resources, visit almonline.org/LiveLocallyAlabama. ■



(Sand Mountain Amphitheater/Facebook)

Live Locally Alabama:

Central Alabama Communities Building Stronger Futures Together

SoulGrown Staff and Lori Jhons • Communications Director • ALM



This article is printed as it appeared in the SoulGrown digital publication on July 24, 2025.

Live Locally Alabama is a statewide initiative developed by the Alabama League of Municipalities that celebrates the heart of our hometowns—the people who live there and the leaders who help them thrive. By sharing local stories about Alabama’s 466 cities and towns and highlighting civic achievements, the campaign reminds us that strong communities start with strong local leadership. In central Alabama, mayors are stepping up in big ways, working hand-in-hand with neighbors, businesses and city staff to create brighter futures right where they live. Take a

look at three central Alabama communities where local leadership is driving meaningful progress through signature projects and strong community partnerships.

Shop Smart in Alexander City

Alexander City is making big strides with their Gateway Project, a vibrant retail and service hub located near the city’s bustling downtown area. Opened in 2024, the Gateway Project combines shopping, dining and essential services all in one convenient location, offering residents options they did not have before. At least six businesses have already opened their doors, including Publix, Starbucks, Marshalls and Alex City Nails. With over 25 acres developed and plans for additional businesses continuing, this project is a major driver for the local economy and a place where community members can gather.

Mayor Curtis Baird talks about what this project means for Alexander City. “It’s the only location like it around, and it gives our citizens a great place to come and access services we didn’t have before,” Baird said. “It’s something new, something elevated and everyone’s really excited about the development.”

Baird also stresses the importance of getting residents involved beyond just using these new businesses and services. “We want people to feel comfortable interacting with city government because we need folks to serve on boards, panels and other groups that help move us forward,” he said. “We’ve put together a comprehensive and strategic plan with community input, and it’s given people a real chance to engage with the city, learn more and have a say in shaping the quality of life here.”

Civic engagement remains a key pillar of the Live Locally Alabama campaign, encouraging residents to actively participate in building stronger, more connected communities across the state.



(Alexander City Chamber of Commerce/Facebook)

Play with Passion in Millbrook

Millbrook’s 17 Springs is a remarkable multi-use complex designed to bring top-tier athletic facilities, family-friendly events and economic opportunity to the region. This sprawling 200-acre site includes multiple sports fields, walking trails,

playgrounds and event venues, all built to championship standards and designed to host tournaments and festivals that attract visitors from across the state. The front portion of the site will feature a marketplace with hotels, restaurants and retail shops, making it a full-fledged destination for locals and tourists alike.

The 17 Springs development is progressing in three phases: Phase I opened in August 2023 with tennis, pickleball and multipurpose fields. Phase II followed in February 2025 with a stadium, ballfields and an indoor fieldhouse. Now underway, Phase III will add hotels, restaurants, retail and medical space—completing the sports and entertainment district.

Councilman Michael Gay, an ALM board member, shares why 17 Springs is so exciting for Millbrook. “This is a huge facility—about 200 acres—with championship-quality athletic fields and event spaces,” he said. “It’s a \$100 million project supported by the Elmore County Commission, the school board, the YMCA and the economic development authority. Out front, there’ll be a marketplace with hotels, restaurants and other businesses.”

Gay also points to how this project is sparking local entrepreneurship. “It’s been fantastic for local businesses, giving people a chance to start new ventures and embrace the small business spirit. There’s a lot of excitement—we’re seeing the entrepreneurial energy really grow.”

When asked about the importance of the Live Locally Alabama campaign, Gay explains how the initiative seamlessly aligns with his city’s goals. “Live Locally Alabama fits us perfectly because we want to be a destination—a place where people come to have fun, stay a while and enjoy the quality of life here and throughout Elmore County and the River Region. It also gives our residents a chance to experience that same quality of life through all the events and developments happening downtown and at 17 Springs. We want folks from the area and beyond to come, enjoy and keep coming back.”



Soccer is one of the many sports youth and adults are able to play at 17 Springs.

Celebrate Community in Centreville

Centreville is a charming little city known for its friendly people and its beautiful location along the Cahaba River, one of the longest free-flowing, ecologically diverse rivers in the country. The city is focused on preserving its natural beauty while fostering a vibrant community life, with an emphasis on arts, culture and historic preservation. The Cahaba River Crawl is just one example of the annual events that bring residents and visitors together to celebrate the river and the city’s rich heritage.

Mayor Mike Oakley, an ALM board member, talks about the teamwork behind these efforts. “This event depends on strong partnerships—the city, main street, our board—all full of positive, proactive people. Our county leaders, hospital staff, school board...everyone plays an important role, and we work seamlessly together.”

Oakley also notes the incredible support the community shows for local events and gatherings. “Our community really steps up. Whether it’s a planned event like the Cahaba Crawl or an impromptu celebration downtown, people are always ready to get involved and show their support.”

Oakley sees the Live Locally Alabama campaign as a natural fit for Centreville’s vision and way of life. “Live Locally Alabama connects people with their local government, which is the closest to the community and really understands their needs. The best way for folks to get involved is through the Bibb County Chamber of Commerce—we have an amazing team there—and through our Centreville Main Street program, which is full of young entrepreneurs eager to make a difference.”

From new developments bringing fresh opportunities in Alexander City, to Millbrook’s dynamic 17 Springs complex, and Centreville’s strong community partnerships and natural beauty, these central Alabama cities show how local leadership and community involvement can build vibrant, thriving hometowns—exactly what Live Locally Alabama is all about.

Visit almonline.org/LiveLocallyAlabama to get involved with the campaign. ■



(Centreville Main Street/Facebook)

Live Locally Alabama:

Showcasing South Alabama Communities' Unique Attractions

SoulGrown Staff and Lori Jhons • Communications Director • ALM



This article is printed as it appeared in the SoulGrown digital publication on Feb. 4, 2025.

The Alabama League of Municipalities' (ALM) "Live Locally Alabama" campaign seeks to highlight the crucial role that local government plays in creating healthy and vibrant communities across the state's 466 cities and towns. The state's diverse range of communities consist of an abundance of cultural, recreational and educational opportunities—all with the singular purpose of developing a sustainable future.

Local government is often described as being the government closest to the people. As part of the Live Locally Alabama campaign, we are visiting with municipal leaders in different regions of the state throughout the year to see how they are contributing to the aforementioned goal. Many Alabama municipal leaders display a sincere love and commitment to their communities; we met with three of them recently.

Let us take a look at some of their community projects in south Alabama that are contributing to Alabamians' quality of life.

Experience One-of-a-Kind Entertainment in Atmore

Mayor Jim Staff, a lifelong native of Atmore, said, "I love Atmore because of the people here in Atmore. It's a small town, very vibrant, and everyone gets along with one another." Mayor Staff's love for Atmore and service to the community stems back more than 25 years. Mayor Staff served as a councilmember for District 5 from 2000 until 2012, when he was elected to his first term as mayor.

The city was recently able to bring their vision of creating a live entertainment venue to life by creating a unique stage made from a boxcar, donated by CSX. The city conducted a venue name contest and "Boxcar Willie" was the winner! Today, locals and visitors alike gather downtown at Boxcar Willie Park to enjoy musicians, including American Idol finalist Will Moseley, who performed at the Atmore venue in 2024.

Gather with Community in Loxley

Loxley Mayor Richard Teal has seen similar success in his community through the construction of a new public gathering space in Loxley Municipal Park. "We're in the process of building a large pavilion and



Photo credit: SoulGrown



Photo credit: SoulGrown

that contributes to our annual strawberry festival that draws over 100,000 people annually,” he remarked. The Baldwin County Strawberry Festival has become a beloved tradition for the community, which raises funds for Loxley Elementary School and for ARC Baldwin County, Inc. Mayor Teal believes the new pavilion will attract even more visitors to the festival, and hopes that the community will put the pavilion to use, from birthday parties to weddings.

Since 1988, Mayor Teal has embraced what it means to “live locally” by serving on Loxley’s City Council. After four years as mayor pro-tem, he was sworn into office as mayor on June 24, 2020. He has continued to be a devoted community member and was recently honored by the Alabama League of Municipalities for 30 years of exemplary service.

In addition to the pavilion, the city is working on a new city center which will feature a new city hall, public library, museum and office space for every city department. Architects on the project, WHLC, state that the new city center, which will span over 45,000 square feet, is “where southern charm meets a growing community.”

Explore Art in Enterprise

Enterprise Mayor William Cooper taught band students for over four decades before taking on the role as mayor in 2017. He previously represented District 1 on city council for 28 years prior to making history as the city’s first African-American mayor. Known as “the City of Progress,” Mayor Cooper has dedicated his career to maintaining that reality for Enterprise.

His city boasts a highly unique and photo-worthy public art project. “Weevil Way” is comprised of nearly 30 boll weevil statues, the city’s unofficial mascot, and many businesses proudly display their own customized weevil statues as a symbol of the unified Enterprise community.

“Our Weevil Way has been somewhat of a monumental task for our city,” Mayor Cooper said. “It encourages people to come downtown and look and take pictures. It has actually become a tourist attraction for our city!”

Regardless of these communities’ location, population or demographics, each of the mayors proudly commits to bettering the lives of their residents through the Live Locally Alabama campaign and showing off the state’s unmatched hospitality. They encourage all cities and towns to take on the challenge.

For more information on the ALM Live Locally Alabama campaign, including municipal and citizen campaign resources, visit their website. ■



Photo credit: SoulGrown



Photo credit: SoulGrown

Live Locally Alabama:

North Alabama Cities Invite Exploration and Enrichment

SoulGrown Staff and Lori Jhons • Communications Director • ALM

This article is printed as it appeared in the SoulGrown digital publication on Sept. 23, 2025.



Nestled between rolling hills and winding rivers, north Alabama's communities offer more than places to live—they offer ways to connect, explore and grow. The Alabama League of Municipalities' (ALM) Live Locally Alabama campaign celebrates the residents who bring these cities to life. From discovering local shops and attending seasonal festivals to volunteering at neighborhood events, everyday actions help shape vibrant, welcoming communities—precisely the spirit the campaign aims to accentuate.

As part of the Live Locally Alabama campaign, ALM is visiting municipal leaders across the state to highlight how local government

works hand in hand with residents to build a sustainable, connected future. Today we visit north Alabama, where three communities—Rainbow City, Guntersville and Muscle Shoals—are demonstrating how partnerships between citizens and leaders create spaces, programs and experiences that strengthen both pride and belonging.

Learn at Alabama's First Challenger Learning Center in Rainbow City

Nestled in northeastern Alabama, Rainbow City is a rapidly growing community that blends small-town charm with ambitious development projects. With a focus on education, recreation and strategic growth, the city has become a hub for families seeking both opportunity and quality of life.

Rainbow City Mayor Joe Taylor, an ALM board member, emphasizes early preparation for children to ensure a strong future workforce. "We found out in workforce development that we've got to start catching our kids a lot earlier. Fifth grade seems to be that sweet spot where we can track them in the right direction," he said.

At the heart of this effort is the Challenger Learning Center of Northeast Alabama, a hands-on STEM facility. "I did an area study that proved the standard rule of real estate still works: location, location, location. That's how Rainbow City won the Challenger Learning Center," Taylor explained. The center joins a network of more than 30 across 24 states, which have reached over 6 million students. Each facility features a simulator, briefing room, transport room, mission control and a space station. The Rainbow City center will include three classrooms, initially serving middle school students, with 25–40 students per room. The goal is to have it completed by the beginning of 2026, giving students hands-on, space-themed STEM experiences that extend far beyond the classroom.

The city is also experiencing robust growth through public and private investment. "Our city is growing because it needed to grow. We just got out of its way, made government run smoother and made development a priority," he said. "We have over a hundred million dollars in private partnerships and nearly a hundred million in public funding driving projects across Rainbow City." In the past five years, the city has added more than 50 new businesses, expanding from just three market vendors to over 20, and its population has increased by about 7% over the past decade.



(Etowah Chamber/Facebook)

Taylor sees Live Locally Alabama as a natural fit for the city’s approach to community engagement. “Even though we’re growing, we don’t have to grow apart—we can actually grow together. Live Locally helps us do that,” he said. Community markets are a key example. “We started with just a couple of vendors. Now, three days a week, 20 to 25 vendors bring our community together at City Hall Park,” shared Taylor.

Residents are encouraged to participate in city life. “We encourage people to come to city hall, attend meetings, and take part in public spaces. That’s how neighbors become community,” Taylor said. He also emphasizes smart, sustainable growth, noting that the city’s approach to education, location and quality of life is driving its economic development.

Play at Refreshed Parks and Recreation Spaces in Guntersville

Located on the picturesque shores of Guntersville Lake, Guntersville has long been known for its natural beauty and outdoor recreational opportunities. The city blends a strong sense of community with an emphasis on high-quality amenities for residents of all ages.

Guntersville Mayor Leigh Dollar, who served as ALM’s president from 2020-2021, has focused on amenities that enhance the quality of life for all residents. “One of the projects I’m most excited about is the splash pad. Children of all ages can use it—it’s by the lake, next to the pool, and free to the public outside of pool hours,” she said.

These upgrades were made possible through collaboration and investment as part of a larger focus on renovating the city’s parks and recreation facilities through a three-phased approach. “It took time, teamwork and a lot of money to bring these projects to life. A generous corporate donation from Pilgrim’s Pride helped us make the splash pad possible,” Dollar said. The city has also updated facilities for all generations. “Our recreational amenities serve everyone, from newborns to senior citizens. We’ve even redone our senior center, so all age groups are included,” she shared.

Dollar sees Live Locally Alabama as reinforcing the value of these investments. “Live Locally aligns perfectly with our vision. We want to provide amenities that make Guntersville enjoyable so people stay and take pride in their community,” she said.

Citizen involvement is critical to the city’s success, as engaged residents help shape the programs, parks and services that make Guntersville a thriving and vibrant community. “There are many ways to get involved: through board positions,

following updates on social media, reading the newspaper or simply calling to share opinions,” she explained. “We encourage people to engage with their city. That’s what matters. We’re doing it for them, and we hope everyone enjoys these amenities.”



(Lake Guntersville Chamber of Commerce/Facebook)



(City of Muscle Shoals, Alabama-Government/Facebook)

Shop at New Coffee Shops and Restaurants in Muscle Shoals

Situated along the Tennessee River, Muscle Shoals is a cultural and economic hub in northwest Alabama, renowned for its rich music history and vibrant local businesses. The city has become a destination for music enthusiasts and families alike, where the legacy of its legendary studios meets a growing community of businesses, arts and recreational opportunities.

Muscle Shoals Mayor Mike Lockhart, an ALM board member, highlighted the role of local investment in community vitality. “Through our comprehensive plan, we had stakeholders from our community get involved, and once that plan was done, the excitement of the vision created a sense of ownership from our own people,” he said.

Small, locally owned businesses are a cornerstone of Muscle Shoals’ success. When local people invest in their own community, they are the ones that give back. “Small businesses give back to schools, to nonprofits, and that’s exciting because we’re working together to be successful as a whole,” Lockhart said.

Welcoming entrepreneurs is equally important, and the city emphasizes transparency and accessibility to make starting a business easier. This approach has injected new energy into the community. “The community has just had a buzz about new coffee shops, ice cream shops and restaurants. It’s creating gathering places where people can come together, grab lunch or get an afternoon snack with their kids,” Lockhart added.

Community engagement is encouraged through boards and public input sessions. “We’ve had meetings in our school library where over 100 people came to give input on their vision for the community. When those opportunities arise, I encourage you to be a part of that,” he said. “We have boards throughout our city, from the library to parks and recreation to utilities, and I encourage citizens to get involved. An engaged citizen always makes for a better community.”

Finally, Muscle Shoals’ unique cultural and natural assets set it apart. “We have a lot of music heritage here, and I encourage you to come visit Fame Studios. There are others in neighboring cities that are just full of rich music history,” Lockhart said. “The Tennessee River is here, we’ve got natural resources, and it’s a beautiful place to come. We’re kind of a hidden gem in northwest Alabama with a bright future.”

Rainbow City, Guntersville and Muscle Shoals demonstrate that communities thrive when residents actively participate. Local governments can build programs, parks and amenities, but it is the people who fill them with meaning and connection.

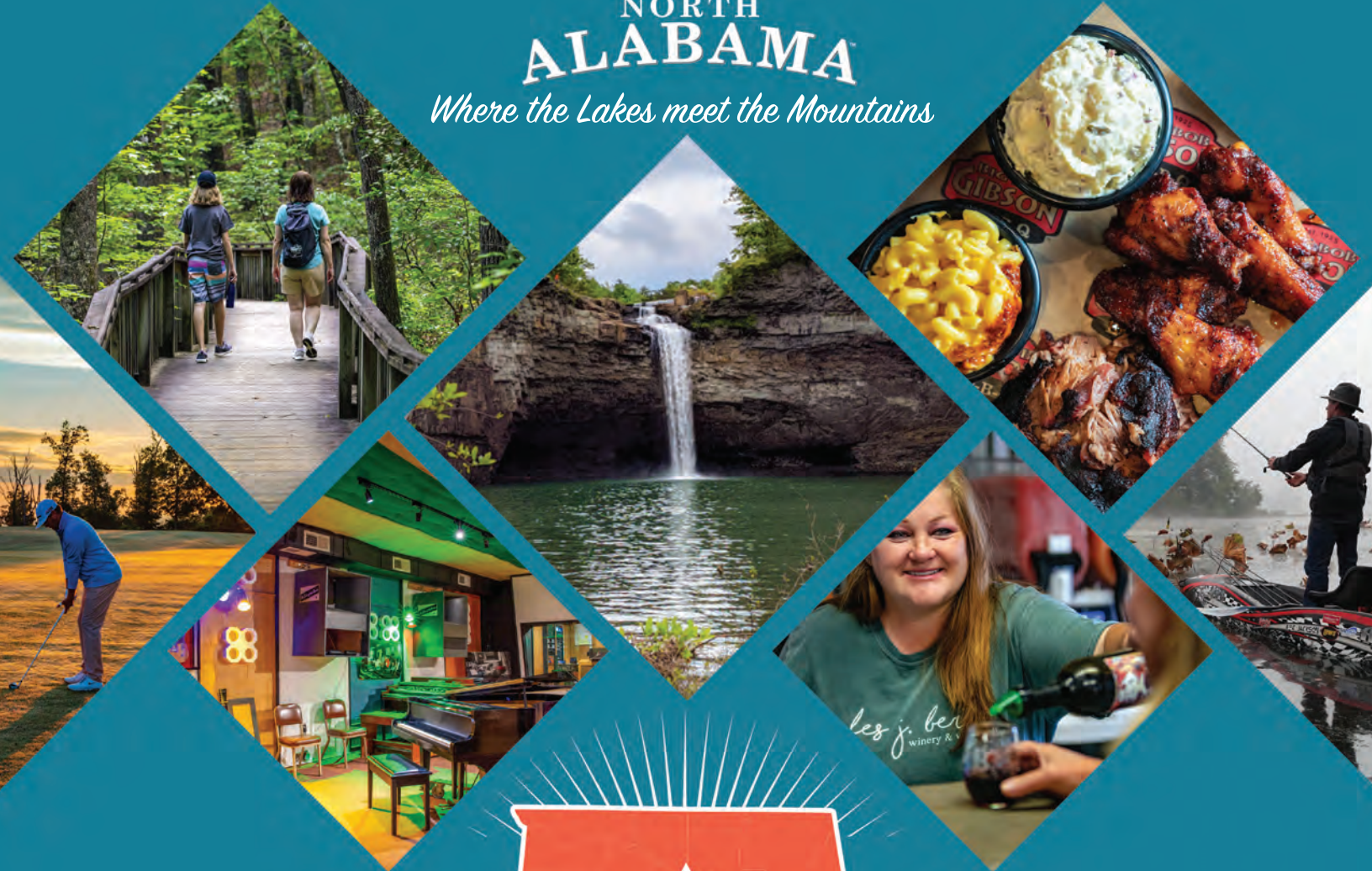
Through the Live Locally Alabama campaign, these cities show that stepping up—by volunteering, supporting local businesses or simply showing up—makes a hometown stronger and brighter. Living locally is not just about where you live; it is about how you help shape the future of your community.

For more information on the ALM Live Locally Alabama campaign, including municipal and citizen resources, visit <https://almonline.org/LiveLocallyAlabama>. ■

A large graphic for the 'Live Locally Alabama' campaign. The background is a photograph of a city street at dusk with colorful light trails from cars. Overlaid on the image is a large white outline of the state of Alabama. The words 'LIVE LOCALLY' are arched over the top of the state outline, and 'ALABAMA' is written in large, bold, white capital letters across the middle. Below this, a dark green banner contains the text 'Encourage civic engagement, locally!' in white. On the left side, there is a vertical stack of four smaller images with text overlays: 'WORK LOCALLY' (with a factory image), 'SHOP LOCALLY' (with a storefront image), 'PLAY LOCALLY' (with a family image), and 'SERVE LOCALLY' (with a fire truck image). At the bottom right, there is a QR code and a location pin icon. Text at the bottom center reads: 'Visit almonline.org/LiveLocallyAlabama or scan the QR code for more information'.

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2025 **COACH SAFELY ACT** STRENGTHENS COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS FOR UNPAID AND VOLUNTEER YOUTH COACHES OR TRAINERS

SCOTT HARRIS, M.D., M.P.H., FACP, FIDSA | STATE HEALTH OFFICER | ADPH

Coaches and trainers who volunteer with young people in sports play a critical role in youth development. By enhancing these individuals' knowledge and skills, they can better protect the young children and teens they coach by responding effectively to potentially serious injuries.

In 2018, the Alabama Legislature passed the Coach Safely Act, which required unpaid or volunteer coaches or trainers associated with youth athletics for children under age 14, or children who have yet to be admitted to seventh grade, who practice or play on public property to complete five training requirements on an annual basis.

Since the 2018 enactment of this law, annual instruction about how to properly respond to and prevent serious injury in children and youth has been mandatory. The 2025 Coach Safely Act was passed to increase safety standards and impose penalties for sports leagues that fail to comply with training requirements. This law became effective on October 1.

High-risk youth athletic activities are defined as any organized sports in which a youth athlete is likely to sustain a serious physical injury. These sports include, but are not limited to, football, basketball, baseball, volleyball, soccer, ice or field hockey, cheerleading and lacrosse.

A "coach" is defined as any individual, whether paid, unpaid, volunteer or interim, who has been approved by the association to organize, train or supervise a youth athlete or team of youth athletes. An "association" is defined as any organization that administers or conducts high-risk youth athletic activities on property owned, leased, managed or maintained by the state, an agent of the state, or a political subdivision of the state. "Athletics personnel" are "athletic directors and other individuals actively involved in organizing, training or coaching sports activities for individuals age 14 or under and who have not yet been admitted to seventh grade."

All unpaid or volunteer coaches and athletics personnel must complete "a didactic, online or residence course" **within 30 days of becoming actively engaged in, or serving as, athletics personnel or a coach for the association.** Youth injury mitigation training on all five of the following health and safety areas, at a minimum, is required each year:

- 1 Emergency preparedness, planning and rehearsal for traumatic injuries
- 2 Concussions and head trauma
- 3 Heat and extreme weather-related injury familiarization
- 4 Physical conditioning and training equipment usage
- 5 Heart defects and abnormalities that can lead to sudden cardiac death



Each youth league may decide which set of courses it wants its coaches to take to fulfill each of the five required subject areas. In addition to established courses, leagues are allowed to select Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) approved courses on their own, which may vary depending on their sport. Links to training options that youth leagues can use to meet those requirements may be viewed on the ADPH website by scanning the QR code below.

Health care professionals with acute life support training may be exempted from the course requirements. These include, but are not limited to, the following: licensed and certified athletic trainers, physicians, nurses and first responders.

PENALTIES ARE NOW LEVIED FOR NONCOMPLIANT YOUTH ATHLETIC ASSOCIATIONS

Meetings have been held with organizations involved in youth sports, and public comment has been sought to assist ADPH in revising its proposed rules and statutes to implement the act. Chapter 420-11-3, Youth Injury Mitigation Training, specifies minimum course requirements. Youth leagues must maintain records of course completion by individual coaches and trainers. The law is challenging to implement because the numerous youth athletic organizations in the state are difficult to identify, access and attest that they are certified.

Sports organizations must submit required information to the ADPH statewide database, which can be accessed by using the QR code. This searchable database lists coaches' names, cities, zip codes, certification dates, sports and organizations for the training in which they participate. Information must be submitted within 30 days of new coaches/athletics personnel being active with youth sports.

If the ADPH determines that a youth athletic association is not in compliance with these rules, the following procedures apply, subject to the availability of funding and staffing:

- After the first year of noncompliance, the department will privately notify the association in writing of its failure to comply. The notice will include instructions on how to comply and an explanation of the consequences of continued noncompliance.
- If the noncompliance is not remedied after a second consecutive year of noncompliance, the department will notify the association in writing of its continued failure to comply and post a copy of the notice on the department's public website.
- After a third consecutive year of noncompliance, the department will issue a fine against the association.
 - For a youth athletic association with less than 100 coaches, \$200.
 - For a youth athletic association with 100 or more coaches, \$10 per coach.
- After a fourth consecutive year of noncompliance, the youth athletic association may not administer or conduct any youth athletic activities on property owned, leased, managed or maintained by the state, an agent of the state, or a political subdivision of the state for a period of one year.

ADPH encourages all elected officials, especially those in municipal government, to share this article with their respective staff involved with youth athletics, community leaders and the public. For more information, go to alabamapublichealth.gov/injuryprevention/youth-athletics.html by scanning the QR code. ■



Scott Harris, M.D., M.P.H., has served as Alabama's state health officer since 2018. Formerly in private practice in Decatur, he has worked to improve public health through challenging and complex health policy initiatives and community health campaigns, including those focused on infant mortality, opioid mitigation and emergency preparedness.

THE COACH SAFELY ACT

In 2018, the Coach Safety Act, passed the legislature. It required unpaid or volunteer coaches or trainers associated with youth athletics for children under age 14 who practice or play on public property to complete five training requirements on an annual basis. The goal is to offer instruction to volunteers about ways to properly respond to and prevent serious injury in children and youth.

Coaches must receive training on all of the following areas each year:



Emergency preparedness, planning and rehearsal for traumatic injuries



Heat and extreme weather-related injury familiarization



Concussions and head trauma



Physical conditioning and training equipment usage



Heart defects and abnormalities that can lead to sudden cardiac death

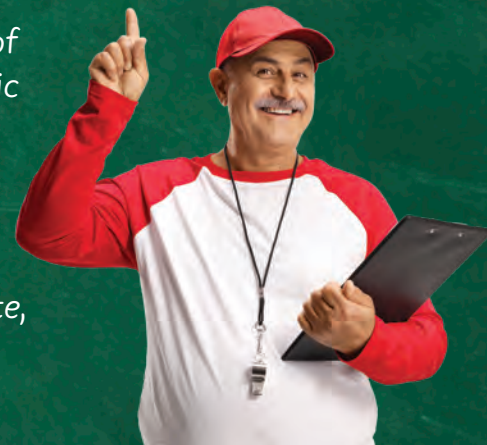
Youth leagues must maintain records of course completion by individual coaches/trainers. ADPH houses a database of information submitted by the sports organizations.

To review the resources and for more information, scan the QR code.



A link on the site includes a searchable database of the names of volunteer coaches and the trainings they have completed.

The Coach Safely Act was passed to add penalties for noncompliant youth athletic associations. The Alabama Department of Public Health was required to notify youth athletic associations of noncompliance with the training requirements for children under age 14 and if the noncompliance is not remedied after two years, a fine against the association would be levied. After a fourth consecutive year of noncompliance the youth athletic association may not administer or conduct any youth athletic activities on property owned, leased, managed, or maintained by the state, an agent of the state, or a political subdivision of the state for a period of one year.



The Coach Safely Act defines high-risk youth athletic activities as any organized sport in which there is a significant possibility for a youth athlete to sustain a serious physical injury, including, but not limited to, the sports of football, basketball, baseball, volleyball, soccer, ice or field hockey, cheerleading, and lacrosse.

The ADPH is updating rules and statutes to implement the 2025 Coach Safely Act which took effect on October 1, 2025. **For more information, visit alabamapublichealth.gov/injuryprevention/youth-athletics.html.**

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◇ **November 5 – 6**
Huntsville

◇ **October 29 – 30**
Montgomery*

◇ **November 12 – 13**
Daphne

* Montgomery location includes the 2025 League Graduation & Awards Ceremony.

The Alabama League of Municipalities will host four regional orientation trainings for **new and veteran** municipal officials during October and November. These trainings are hosted every four years following the majority of municipal elections to provide an overview of ALM's mission, services and programs as well as legal, finance and ethics training from League staff and the Alabama Ethics Commission. These orientations also serve as an opportunity to introduce elected officials to new laws and regulations, current municipal issues, contacts and resources for solving day-to-day problems and provide an opportunity to discuss municipal problems with fellow officials.

This year's League Graduation and Awards Ceremony (usually held after the Municipal Leadership Institute) will be held following the orientation session in Montgomery on October 30.

Orientation topics will include:

- Municipal Finances
- Authority to Expend Municipal Funds
- Council Meeting Procedures
- Ethics Training
- General Powers of Municipalities
- Duties of the Mayor and Council
- Open Meetings Act

Who Should Attend:

ALL elected officials (newly elected and incumbent mayors and councilmembers) are encouraged to attend. Municipal employees are welcome to participate too. However, only elected officials will be awarded credit hours in the CMO Program.

Find more information and Register

Register for one of four locations offered around the state (*officials only need to attend one event in their respective location*). Detailed information for each location, including parking, hotel availability and driving directions can be found on the League's website, www.almonline.org, or by scanning the QR code.

View our refund policy online when you register, and please note that each location has a different registration deadline.





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Who is eligible to use the MIS system?

Only municipal entities within Alabama are eligible to use the MIS system. This includes cities, towns, certain utility boards, housing authorities and hospitals. **For more information, visit: www.alintercept.org.**

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2025

Fall Municipal Law Conference Continues to Educate and Enrich

The ALM legal team and ALM staff recently hosted the 2025 AAMA/AMJA Fall Municipal Law Conference at the Lodge at Gulf State Park in Gulf Shores. Over 250 municipal attorneys, municipal judges and municipal prosecutors attended the three-day conference to learn more about municipal law topics.

The conference provided 12 hours of continuing education including one hour of professional responsibility. The mission of the Alabama Association of Municipal Attorneys (AAMA) and Alabama Municipal Judges Association (AMJA) is to foster communication and education for attorneys and judges to the unique aspects of municipal law.

During the event, AAMA presented the Ken Smith Lifetime Achievement award for the first time, in honor of former ALM Executive Director Ken Smith. The inaugural presentation was to Brenda Smith, widow of Ken, former attorney with the attorney general's office and long-time contributor to the League's law conferences.

We thank all who participated and supported this event. We especially appreciate Attorney General Steve Marshall for taking time out to present at the conference.

Learn more about AAMA and AMJA by scanning the QR codes below. ■



Alabama Association
of Municipal Attorneys

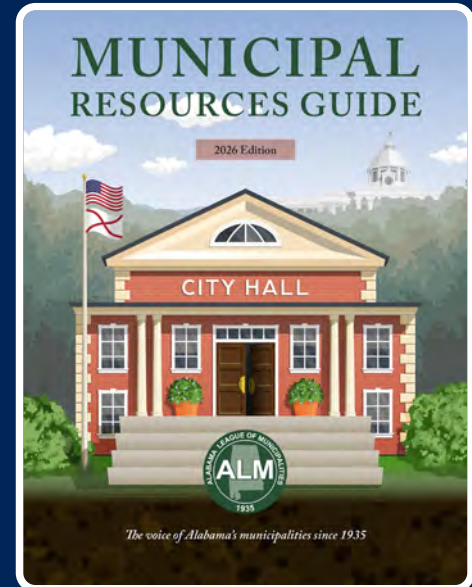


Alabama Municipal
Judges Association



The Alabama League of Municipalities has recently updated the ***Municipal Resources Guide***!

As part of the mission to support our members, the League created the ***Municipal Resources Guide*** as a one stop guide to navigating the dozens of resources Alabama provides for local governments across several state agencies. While this guide does not include all the information about a program, it does provide an overview of valuable resources including program description, matching requirements, contact information and deadlines. This guide (along with its companion piece, the ***Municipal Reporting Guide***, see page 27) is a living document that will be updated each year. Members, legislators and other elected officials are encouraged to share these great resources. It can be accessed online at almonline.org or by scanning the QR code.



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almonline.org/CMOProgram

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Make plans to join the League for training in 2026!

- Legislative Advocacy Day – January 21 | Montgomery
- NLC Congressional City Conference – March 14-18 | Washington, D.C.
- ALM Convention and Expo – April 28 - May 1 | Montgomery
- CMO Regional Trainings –
 - February 26 – Trenholm State CC | Montgomery
 - March 12 – Beville State CC | Sumiton
 - May 21 – Northwest Shoals CC | Muscle Shoals
 - June 25 – Jeff State CC | Birmingham
 - July 16 – Coastal Alabama CC | Fairhope
- In-State Congressional Luncheons – August (full details TBD)
- Standing Committees Meeting – Fall (full details TBD) | Montgomery
- Municipal Leadership Institute and ALM Graduation Ceremonies – October 20-22 | Mobile
- NLC City Summit – November 18-21 | Nashville, TN

**Visit almonline.org for ALM training and registration information
or nlc.org for upcoming NLC events.**

Congratulations, President Sherry Sullivan

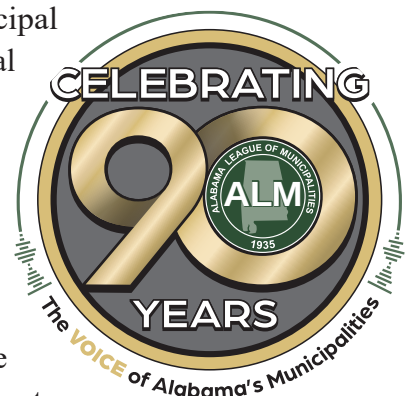
on being selected as a Yellowhammer
News 2025 Woman of Impact.

Yellowhammer News recently
recognized Mayor Sherry Sullivan of
Fairhope for her dedication to public
service, her vision for Fairhope and
her commitment to strengthening
Alabama's communities.



JOIN THE TEAM, TODAY! BECOME A SPONSOR!

At ALM, we are not only dedicated to advocating for strong municipal policies, but we are committed to educating both new and veteran municipal officials about best practices in doing their jobs and giving them the resources to develop innovative ideas. We want every one of Alabama's municipal leaders to have a firm foundation, so they can better serve their communities and that is where you come in. As a strategic partner, sponsor or exhibitor, you will play a special role in supporting our mission to strengthen local leadership. Your partnership will assist us with hosting strategically crafted events and programs throughout the year. We hope that you will join us in our journey to make Alabama's communities the best places to live, work and play.



Scan the QR code to view a video message from our Deputy Director Kayla Bass about the benefits of the Sponsorship Program!





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- \$ Offer no financial return to the community
- ? Lack transparency or auditing
- ↓ Add unnecessary cost without added value

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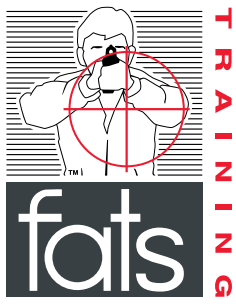
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The Firearms Training System (FATS) is an excellent training tool designed to develop and sharpen a police officer's discretionary skills as well as reinforce their conflict resolution abilities.

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Contact the Loss Control Division at (334) 262-2566 or email Deena Pregno at dpregno@almonline.org to find out when FATS will be in your area. You can also request the FATS system by completing the online form at losscontrol.org.



Pricing for FATS training:

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MWCF Member	\$25.00 per person
ALM Only Member	\$50.00 per person
Nonmember Rate	\$100.00 per person

View the FATS in action by scanning this QR code!



Scan this QR code to access the FATS system request form.



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