



SB 55: Allowing ALEA to issue hardship driving permits makes sense for Alabama

Suspending driver's licenses hurts thousands of Alabamians every year. One of the greatest obstacles to employment is the lack of a driver's license. Thousands of people in Alabama have their driver's licenses suspended every year for convictions unrelated to driving.

These Alabamians risk losing their jobs in a nation where 90 percent of us need to drive to work. And the challenges go further: Mothers with suspended licenses cannot go buy groceries, drive to the doctor, or drop their children off at school. People undergoing addiction treatment cannot legally drive to see their sponsors to get help in preventing a relapse.

SB 55, sponsored by Sen. Clyde Chambliss, R-Prattville, would go a long way toward fixing these problems by allowing people who have had their licenses suspended or revoked, but who still need to drive, to drive on a limited basis. These Alabamians could obtain a hardship driver's license by demonstrating to the satisfaction of the Alabama Law Enforcement Agency (ALEA) that they are not a risk to public safety and cannot obtain other reasonable transportation.

This bill would allow people who need to take their children to school, go to the doctor, or help family members see a doctor to do so without breaking the law. SB 55 is a reasonable, common-sense response to a problem that hurts thousands of Alabamians every year.

BOTTOM LINE: SB 55 would remove unnecessary obstacles to essential participation in society for people who need to drive to work, go to the grocery store and attend to other everyday tasks. Allowing ALEA to issue limited driver's licenses makes sense and would help tens of thousands of people throughout Alabama.