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# Legislation Imposes Harsher Penalties on Illegal Drag-Racing

*Violators Subject to Increased Fines, Probation, and Driver's License Suspension*

MONTGOMERY – *June 29, 2015* – Alabamians who live and work along rural roads can thank **Rep. A.J. McCampbell** and **Sen. Bobby Singleton** for a new law designed to increase safety on these byways.

Illegal drag-racing has been a growing problem, especially in Black Belt counties. There is danger to drivers as well as spectators. And the threat is high for unsuspecting, law-abiding motorists, who have no reason to expect vehicles moving at high speeds to take over both lanes on an otherwise quiet country road.

A bill imposing harsher penalties on illegal drag-racing participants was signed into law by Gov. Robert Bentley earlier this month. The legislation was co-sponsored by **Rep. A.J. McCampbell** (Eutaw) and **Sen. Bobby Singleton** (Greensboro) after several Black Belt counties noted an increase in drag-racing activities.

Under the law, known as Act 2015-318, persons convicted of drag-racing on a public road would have their driver's license suspended for *up to* six months for their first drag-racing conviction, and *up to* one year for any subsequent convictions. Additionally, vehicles involved in an illegal drag-race could be impounded at the scene of the race, and the following penalties would be imposed on the driver:

- For the first conviction: A fine of \$500 with 30 days probation;
- For the second conviction: A fine of \$3,000 with six months probation;
- For the third, and any subsequent conviction: A fine of \$6,000.00 with 1 year probation.

Persons choosing to watch drag-racing activities would also face fines up to \$500 under Act 2015-318. "One of things that encourages drag-racers is the crowds of people who come out to observe the races. We realized that if we really want to stop this activity, those spectators also need to face some type of penalty," said Rep. McCampbell, who sponsored the House version of the legislation.

Legislators across the state supported this bill, with several noting increased drag-racing activities in both rural and urban communities. The bill passed in the Senate by a vote of 27-0, and in the House by a vote of 103-0. The law went into effect on June 3, 2015.

"It's rare that a bill has such strong bipartisan support like this one," said Sen. Singleton. "I think everyone—both Democrat and Republican—recognized that this legislation could truly save lives."

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