

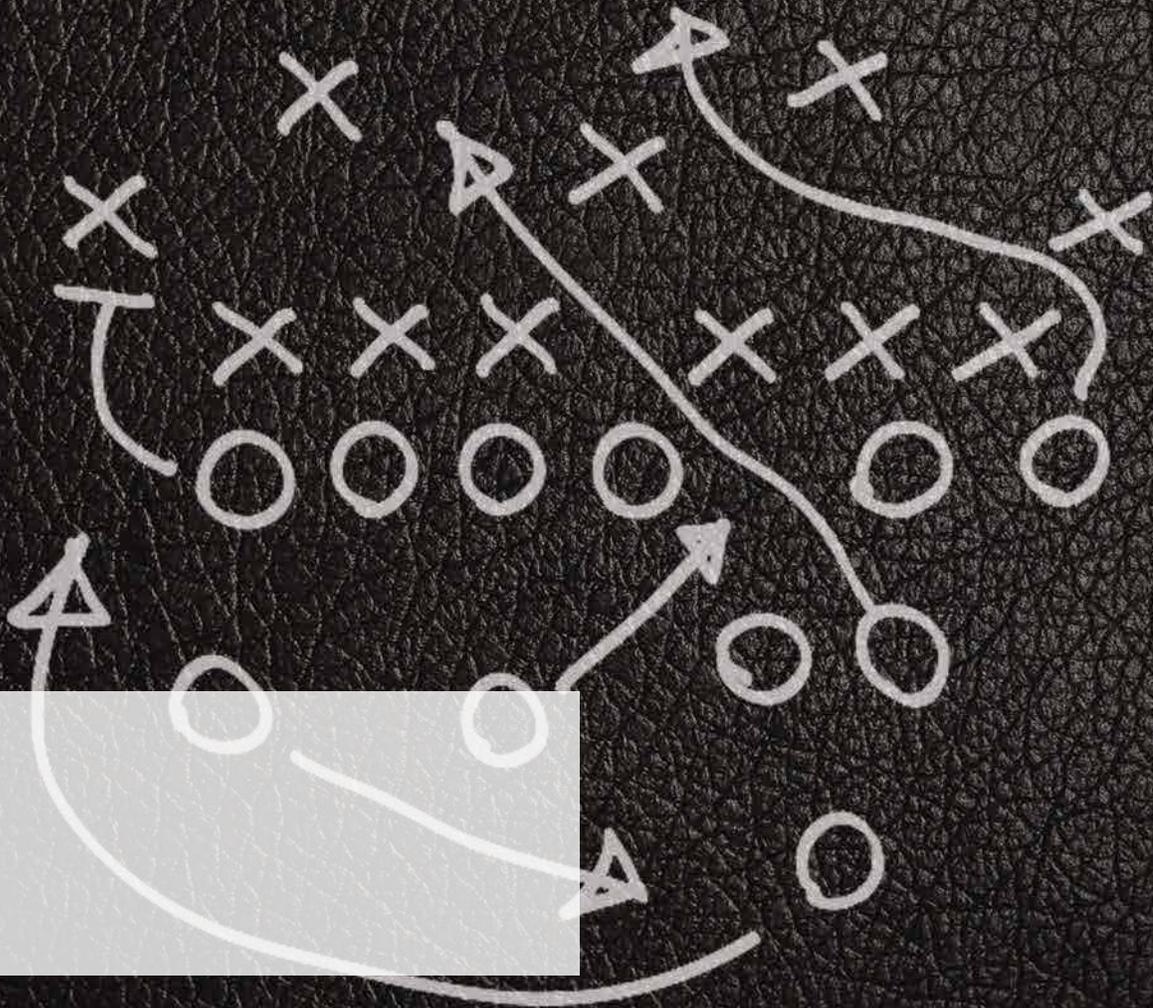
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COUNTY COMMISSION

Volume 62, Number 1
Jan/Feb 2018

2018

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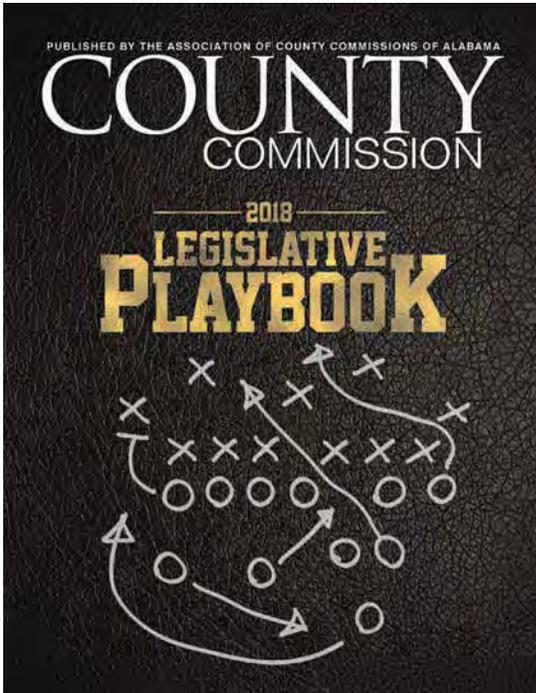
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in this **issue**

VOLUME 62, NUMBER 1



Here is your 2018 Legislative Playbook, with everything county leaders need to turn hard-hitting, pre-season preparations into success at the Alabama Statehouse during the legislative session. #OneVoice #ALpolitics



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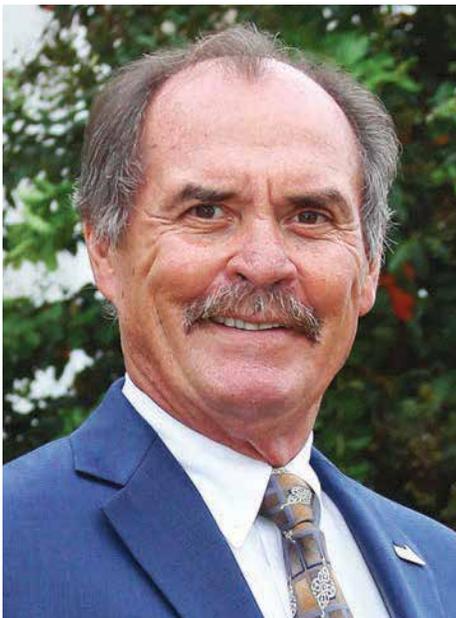
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Hon. Steve McKinnon
President

Put on Your Game Face

We are the only ones fighting for county government.

In a matter of days, state lawmakers will gather on Goat Hill to kick off yet another legislative session. Months of preparation are about to be put to the test, so if you haven't already, put on your game face.

This session, I'm asking every member of county government to give their all to the process. The County Team can only be successful if every team member is ready. Why, you ask. We are the only ones representing and fighting for county government. When we get tired, when we need a break, there is no second or third string for county government. It is only us. That's why we must ALL be in it to win. If we're not, the final result will be on us, no one else.

The County Team Captains who preceded me have paved the way for us to be the No. 1 team in public policy. Now it's up to me, to all of us, to seal the deal and push us to the No. 1 spot. So, as this year's County Team Captain, I'm urging each member of the County Team to perform three simple tasks.

1. Learn the Playbook

Study and know the 2018 County Platform and our 2018 Legislative Priorities, both of which are provided in this issue of the magazine. *(Turn to pages 7 and 24.)* To contribute to the team this year, you must know the issues, and these documents let you know where we stand and where we want to go. Members of the County Team put in a great deal of time and effort in crafting these principles and priorities. The least we can do is learn them so that we can communicate them to others.

2. Connect with the Key Players

Interact with your state legislators. Call them. Email them. Text them. Meet with them. Connect with them on Twitter and Facebook. Participate in County Days. It's never too late to establish a relationship – or build upon your current relationship – with your legislators. Your position in county government is important and influential, so stay in touch with your legislators; let them know where county government stands on the issues. If you don't speak up for county government, no one else will.

3. Perform the Play Calls

Do what's asked of you when it's asked of you. Throughout the session, you'll receive calls to action from the ACCA staff, the ACCA leadership and your county's ACCA Legislative Committee member via email and the ACCA67 mobile app and over the phone. Be on the lookout for these play calls, and be ready to respond. You won't be able to stop the clock during the Legislative Session to ponder your next move.

If we all perform these three simple tasks, I'm certain there's nothing we can't achieve. But it will take all of us. Again, we are the County Government Team. No one else is representing us, whether we like it or not. But we have the opportunity to be victorious, thanks to the decades of hard work put in by many. We simply need the commitment of every member of the County Team.

Won't you join us this session in giving your all? ■

Word to the Wise



If you have a question about the legislative process, don't be afraid to ask.

The legislative process is like the most bizarre football game you can think of – with players trying to move footballs, basketballs, tennis balls and golf balls down the field, all at the same time, with different rules for each one. Sounds crazy, doesn't it? Like I said before, don't be afraid to ask if you have a question. The technicalities can make you or break you.

– Steve McKinnon

• **GENERAL BILL**

The most common type of legislation. Proposes a new law or changes existing law. Applies to the entire state.

• **GENERAL CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT**

Also applies to the whole state. Proposes a change to the Constitution of Alabama. After going through both chambers of the legislature, skips the governor's desk and goes straight to voters, who get to settle the question.

• **LOCAL BILL**

Applies to one county or one city. Must be advertised ahead of time. Goes through a completely separate committee process – with different rules – from a general bill. Needs unanimous support from local legislators.

• **LOCAL CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT**

Proposes a change to the state constitution that applies only to one county or one city. No advance advertising. Moves through the same committee process as a local bill. Needs unanimous support from local legislators. Ultimately decided by voters, usually only in the affected local area.

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2018

Legislative Priorities

The 2018 Legislative Priorities were presented to the ACCA Board of Directors and approved at its meeting on December 6, 2017. The Board of Directors directed the ACCA Staff to actively pursue passage of legislation on any or all of the strategic goals.

Infrastructure: Funding for Roads and Bridges

The need for construction, maintenance, and repair of county roads and bridges continues to exceed available revenues for counties to undertake necessary projects. The Association proposes to continue, working with a coalition of business leaders, the Alabama Department of Transportation, and other interest groups, in pursuing legislation to provide adequate funding for state and local road and bridge projects utilizing the current gas tax formula.

Medicaid Reimbursement Cap for Inmates

Sen. Greg Reed introduced legislation last session that would have capped inpatient and outpatient inmate medical costs at the Alabama

Medicare rate. While the bill was voted out of the Senate, the Legislature adjourned sine die before the legislation reached the House floor. The Association staff has been in negotiations with the Alabama Hospital Association with the goal of proposing legislation to cap the inpatient and outpatient inmate medical costs to counties at the Medicaid rate – potentially saving millions in inmate medical costs for counties.

Workers' Compensation Claims

The Association proposes to introduce legislation that would allow local government workers' compensation programs to process claims through the Local Government Health Insurance Program (LGHIP) utilizing BlueCross BlueShield. In order to

implement this program adjustment, legislation is needed to expand LGHIP's authority to include the processing of workers' compensation claims. Amending the current law will potentially be a significant cost benefit to counties and improve efficiency with the current system.

Purchasing Air Units for Local Governments

Last session, Rep. David Standridge carried an Association priority bill to allow counties and other local entities to utilize the National Association of Counties' (NACo) purchasing program for the procurement and installation of heating and air conditioning units. Despite being introduced late in the session, the bill was in good position to pass the House and had strong support among the membership. The Association proposes to reintroduce this legislation that would allow counties and other local entities to utilize this national cooperative for the procurement and installation of heating and air conditioning units while remaining in compliance with the public works law.

Improving Emergency Response in Alabama

In the midst of a natural disaster, external conditions often make it difficult for local government bodies to convene a quorum, which delays their ability to make critical decisions that protect the community. The Association proposes legislation that would authorize the county commission chairperson to declare that emergency conditions exist in the county, following an official declaration by the Governor's Office. This change would allow local governments to be more prompt and

efficient in the delivery of services to citizens during emergency situations.

Additionally, the Alabama Disaster Recovery Program currently provides financial assistance to counties and municipalities following certain disasters. The Association, working with the State Emergency Management Agency, proposes legislation that would also authorize the Alabama Disaster Recovery Program to provide financial assistance to individuals and certain nonprofit facilities following certain disasters and to cover costs related to specific pre-disaster protective measures.

Updates to Simplified Sellers Use Tax (SSUT)

The Association, in collaboration with the Department of Revenue, supports technical changes to the SSUT law that will ensure the efficient collection of this emerging revenue source for state and local governments. These technical changes will ensure out-of-state online retailers do not have a competitive advantage over in-state businesses. ■

Note
FROM THE
COACH

**House Version and Senate Version
of ACCA Priority Legislation**

Many times, legislators will introduce identical legislation – one bill in the House of Representatives and another in the Senate – called “companion bills.” It is not necessary to pass both. Using the strategy gives two vehicles to accomplish the goal, which provides flexibility if progress stalls on one of them.

An exception is bills that raise revenue, which must originate in the House.

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GAME

CHANGING

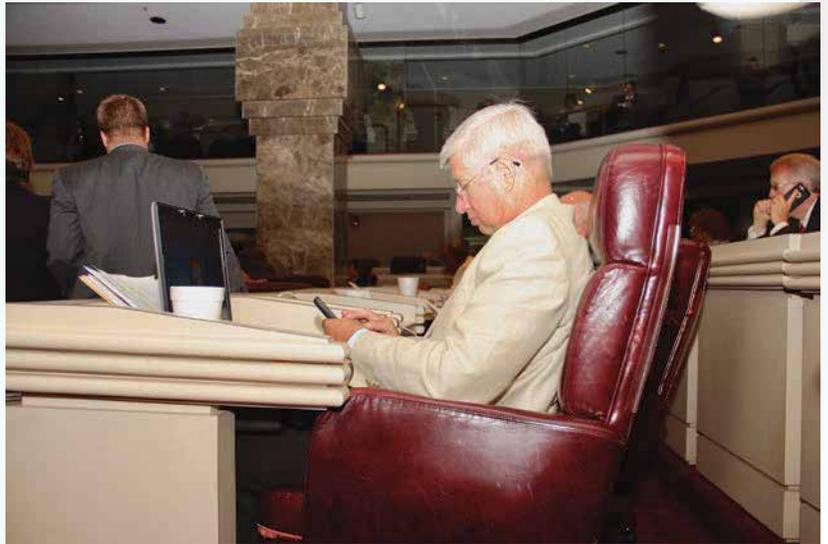
SOCIAL MEDIA

Once upon a time, legislators on the House or Senate floor were, well, insulated.

When the body was in session, the only people in the room were elected officials, their staff and a few journalists.

Visitors who made the drive to Montgomery observed from a glassed-in balcony. If you had an urgent message, you asked a young page to deliver a handwritten note.

These days an awful lot of that insulation is gone, peeled away by social media. It's as if any constituent could waltz into the chamber, carrying a big sign emblazoned with "Vote YES for SB 1," followed by a few or a hundred others with opinions on the bill, all talking at once.



If you are watching the action on the House or Senate floor, you will likely see a lot of this. Just like everyone else, legislators are constantly checking their mobile devices. This image shows Rep. Alan Baker working on the last day of the 2017 Regular Session. Photo: Dionne Whetstone | Alabama House of Representatives

Some 60 percent of the Alabama Legislature is on Twitter, according to the latest information. It's a number that continues to grow; and it represents enough votes to pass a bill.

Twitter and Facebook have become an integral part of how legislators do their work. Some provide play-by-play coverage in real time from the floor, discussing each bill brought up for consideration

and generating a steady stream of feedback. Others use social media to poll voters, getting an instant read on support or opposition among citizens. Still others use social media to provide information – sharing basic facts about how a proposed gas tax would work, for example, or circulating the



list of bills expected to come up on the floor the next day.

It should come as no surprise that ACCA is mounting a full-court press to boost social media engagement among county leaders during the legislative session.

"We definitely need to meet legislators where they are," said Abby Luker Fitzpatrick, ACCA Director of Communication and Engagement.

“If you’re not there to be in the conversation, then someone else will be – and they may not share the same views that we do.”

Social media matters to lawmakers because they find it authentic, it holds them accountable to their constituents and it allows for more meaningful interactions.

From an advocacy perspective, it clearly makes an impact on legislative decisions. According to a survey released by the Congressional Management Foundation, 80 percent of congressional communication directors indicated that it would take less than 30 social media responses to get their congressmen and women to reconsider their position on a piece of legislation.

“At the national level, only 30 retweets or 30 comments rocks the boat,” said Jeannie Gaines, ACCA Public Relations Manager. “It really

doesn’t take that much.”

For local officials, social media is an important tool to ensure that citizens get information that is accurate and timely. “People get their news from social media, and you want it to come from your mouth,” she said.

Six in 10 Americans get news on social media, according to a 2016 survey by the Pew Research Center. That represents a 13 percent increase compared to 2012, and



there is little reason to think the trend has slowed down.

The Association’s game plan has three major components.

- During the session, ACCA will send out **draft social media posts** when there is an issue that needs attention.
- The **ACCA's Studio 67** is now

available for members who want to film brief videos that can be shared with constituents. *(Turn to page 15 for more on Studio 67)*

- In addition, there's the **ALCountiesTweet** contest, which is a friendly competition to recognize the county that is most active on Twitter during the session. *(Turn to page 13 for more on ALCountiesTweet)*

Enhanced social media will complement – not replace – other ways of communicating. There will still be a need for face-to-face meetings and phone calls, and the strategies are designed to work together.

“This is important,” Gaines said. We’ve done a lot of research on social media’s impact on the legislative process, and it works.” ■

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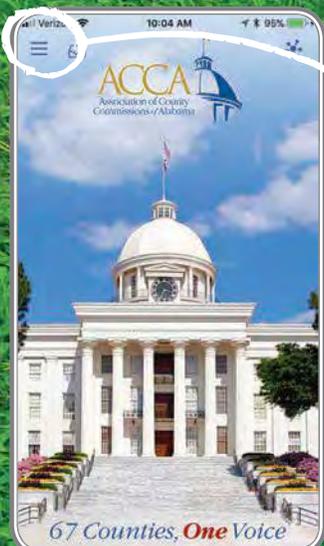
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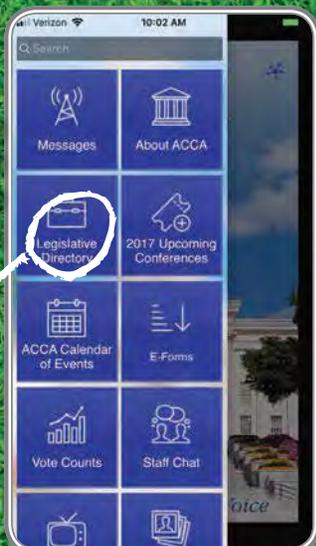
Note FROM THE COACH

The ACCA67 mobile app will help you make all-important social media connections with legislators.

Need help with the app?
Call ACCA (334-263-7594) and ask for Jeannie Gaines (jgaines@alabamacounties.org)



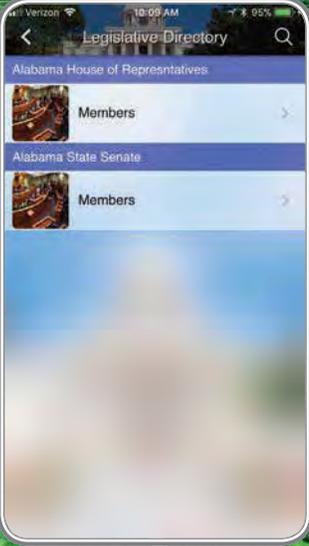
Open the ACCA67 app. Tap the icon in the upper left corner.



On the menu, tap Legislative Directory.



Here we find England's contact info - including social media



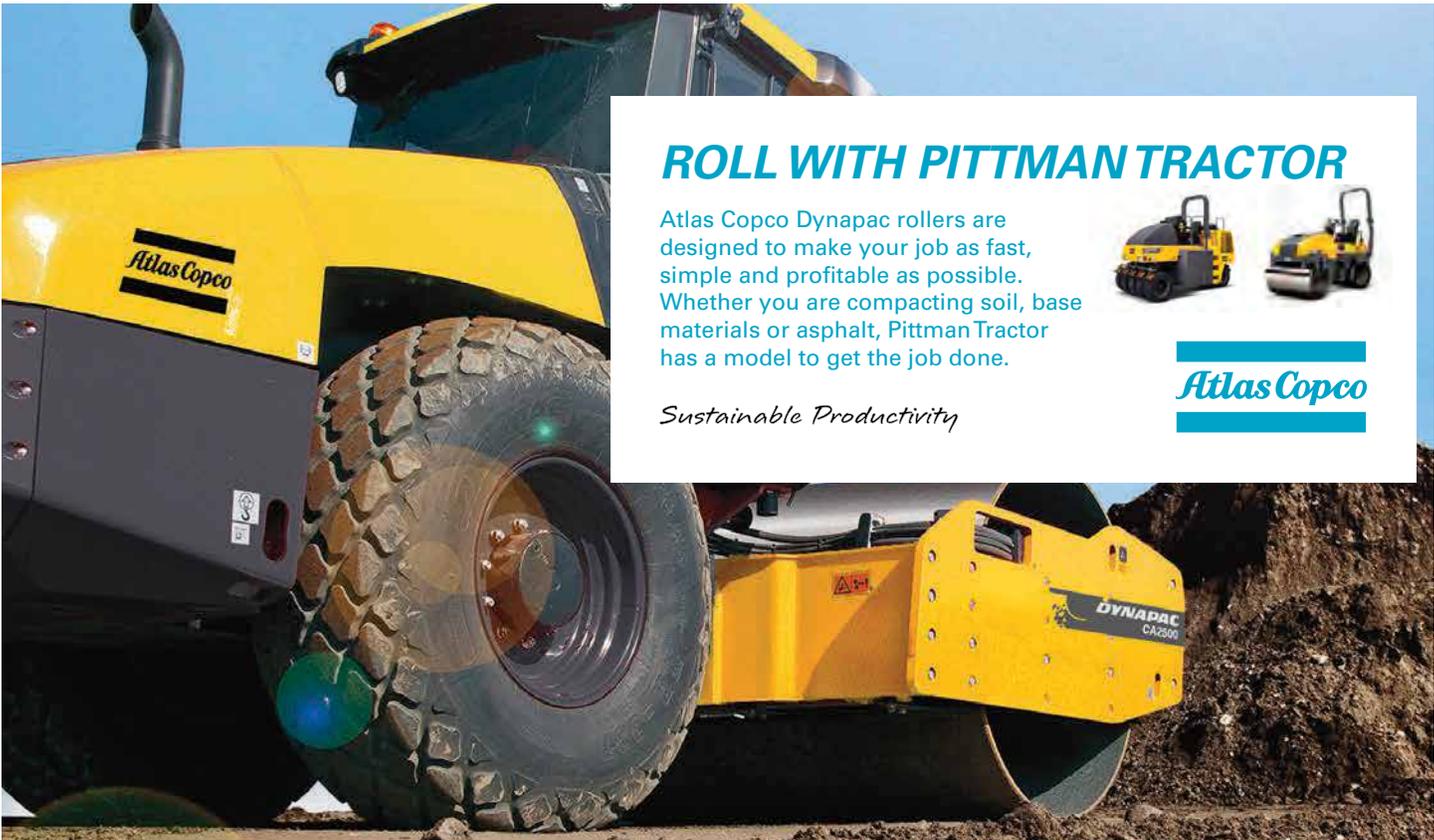
Choose House or Senate



The next screen gives an alphabetical listing of legislators. Let's check out Rep. Christopher England from Tuscaloosa.



Tapping those links takes you straight to his Twitter and Facebook.



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FAQ: *ALCountiesTweet*

Q. *What is ALCountiesTweet?*

A. Twitter is the playing field for a friendly competition among counties, designed to find out which county is most actively using the social media platform for legislative advocacy.

The winning county will be announced at the ACCA Annual Convention in August.

Q. *Why?*

A. "This platform is the future, and this is where legislators are paying the most attention to their constituents," said Jeannie Gaines, ACCA Public Relations Manager. "We don't want to miss this opportunity."

Q. *What can I do to help my county?*

A. Sign up for Twitter, if you have yet to do so.

Tweet your legislator. Tweet about important legislation. Tweet your support of or opposition to bills. Be sure to use #ALpolitics and #YourCounty

Example: Urging @SenTomWhatley to please vote YES on HB987 for better rural broadband and a stronger local economy #ALpolitics #Russell

Q. *How does the competition work?*

A. The winning county will be chosen based on the number of tweets to legislators and the number of legislative-focused tweets.

Q. *Who can participate?*

A. Every member of the county family – elected officials and staff members. Plus, tweets and retweets from friends, family and community members count too – as long as the

#ALpolitics and #YourCounty hashtags are there.

Q. *When does ALCountiesTweet take place?*

A. The competition begins and ends with the 2018 Regular Session of the Alabama Legislature.

Q. *Help! What should I say in my tweets?*

A. Think of it as a team sport, and ACCA has got your back. The Association will provide sample tweets throughout the session. You will have the inside

track on the hot topic of the moment. 67 Counties, ONE Voice!

Have another question? Call ACCA at 334-263-7594 and ask for Abby Luker Fitzpatrick (afitzpatrick@alabamacounties.org) or Jeannie Gaines (igaines@alabamacounties.org).



Want ACCA's Jeannie Gaines to walk you through setting up a Twitter account? Just do a Google search for "ALCountiesTweet" (all one word). You'll find a 14-minute YouTube video with step-by-step advice.

GOT TWITTER?

ALCountiesTweet

Get your county involved in the ACCA ALCountiesTweet Twitter competition!

- 🐦 Tweet your legislator.
- 🐦 Tweet about important legislation.
- 🐦 Tweet your support of or opposition to bills.

Be sure to use #ALpolitics and #Your County in every tweet.
(Ex. #Autauga, #Winston)

The competition will begin and end with the 2018 Legislative Session. The winning county will be announced and awarded at the ACCA Annual Conference in August 2018.

*The winning county will be chosen based on the number of tweets to legislators and the number of legislative-focused tweets.

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New Studio 67 for ACCA Members



The next time Association and affiliate members are in Montgomery, they will definitely want to plan a stop at the new Studio 67.

Located right on North Jackson Street, members will find everything they need to create a short, shareable video clip about county issues. And that includes an ACCA staff member behind the camera who can edit your footage and format it for use on social media.

ACCA Public Relations Manager Jeannie Gaines said, “We hope that anytime you find yourself in Montgomery, you feel comfortable coming to our video studio and letting us make a video for you, so you can put it on your social media, your website, share over email – or just show your family and friends and community members.”

The one-room facility is located on the second floor of the insurance



Jeannie Gaines, ACCA's Public Relations Manager, turns the Studio 67 camera on Abby Luker Fitzpatrick, ACCA's Director of Communication and Engagement.

building, next door to ACCA headquarters. Furnishings are simple and professional. There's a backdrop bearing the Association

logo and “67 Counties, One Voice.” A patterned rug on the floor helps with sound quality. A pair of chairs is available for filming in a conversational, question-and-answer format.

Technology is there to take the production quality up a notch or two above the average cell phone video. The camera is mounted on a tripod for steady shots, and small microphones clip on your collar to make for better audio.

Gaines said she expects the studio to be particularly popular on County Days, when large numbers of county officials and staff leaders advocate for county issues at the Statehouse. Commissioners might want to film a short video to inform community members about efforts to expand rural broadband – and what they can do to help.



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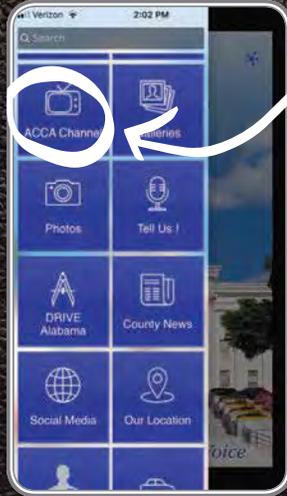
“They could go over ‘this is happening next week, here’s what this bill is, here’s what it does, here’s what I want you to do,’” said Gaines, noting that she can add on-screen text with bill numbers and contact info for legislators.

That’s just one approach, and Gaines said members will have their own ideas and insights about what would be useful to them. There is no charge for ACCA and affiliate members who use the studio, and the goal is for someone to receive their finished video the same day it was filmed.

“Someone from our team will always be available to you to come in and ask you questions so you can talk about the issues you want to address for your community members. We think Studio 67 is going to be really helpful to you, and hope that you all are excited about it,” Gaines said. “We’ve worked really hard putting this together for you, and we think it is a great new addition.” ■

//TRAINING TIP//

What’s the easiest way to view (and share) the latest videos from the new ACCA studio? The ACCA67 app, of course! As leaders from throughout the 67 counties make their own videos, you will be able to find those clips there too, in addition to messages from the staff.



In the ACCA67 app menu, tap the button “ACCA Channel”



The next screen provides a scrollable list of video clips. You can view, comment on and share them – right from your mobile device.



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LEGISLATIVE PROCESS in ALABAMA



HOUSE FLOOR



BILL INTRODUCED

BILL PLACED ON COMMITTEE AGENDA

i In general, bills can start in the House or the Senate. Bills that raise revenue must start in the House.

Bill may die from inaction.

■ HOUSE ■ SENATE GOVERNOR
⚙️ CHANCE FOR BILL FAILURE i EXTRA INFO

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE

PUBLIC HEARING
if needed

BILL PLACED ON COMMITTEE AGENDA



SENATE FLOOR



BILL RECEIVED

BILL DEBATED & AMENDED OR SUBSTITUTED

Bill may die from inaction.

i Both chambers must pass the bill in identical form.

Any Senate amendments to House bills sent back to House for approval

COMMITTEE VOTE

Majority vote needed



Bill may die from inaction.

SENATE RULES COMMITTEE

PICKED FOR SPECIAL ORDER CALENDAR

SENATE FLOOR



PROCEDURAL VOTE KNOWN AS BIR
if needed

Requires 3/5 supermajority

DEBATE, AMEND, SUBSTITUTE
Full body must vote on changes made in committee.

VOTE

Simple majority needed to pass most bills.

ENROLLMENT

TURN TO NEXT PAGE FOR DEFINITIONS OF SOME POPULAR LEGISLATIVE LINGO.

HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE

PUBLIC HEARING
if needed

BILL DEBATED & AMENDED OR SUBSTITUTED

COMMITTEE VOTE



i Bills that propose constitutional amendments generally follow the same process except that floor votes must pass by supermajorities (63 in the House, 21 in the Senate).

Simple majority needed to pass most bills.

Majority vote needed.

Bill may die from inaction.

PICKED FOR SPECIAL ORDER CALENDAR

HOUSE RULES COMMITTEE

HOUSE FLOOR

VOTE

DEBATE, AMEND, SUBSTITUTE
Full body must vote on changes made in committee.

PROCEDURAL VOTE KNOWN AS BIR
if needed

Requires 3/5 supermajority

Failure to concur with Senate amendments

i Bill can become law without the governor's signature if Legislature is in session, as Constitution provides.

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

Failure to reconcile differences

If not repassed by both chambers, bill is dead.

SIGNED BY PRESIDING OFFICERS IN BOTH CHAMBERS

GOVERNOR

GOVERNOR VETOES

GOVERNOR SIGNS

GOVERNOR TAKES NO ACTION

LAW

Legislative Lingo

AMENDMENT An alteration made, or proposed to be made, to a bill or resolution by adding, changing, substituting or omitting language.

BIR Abbreviation for Budget Isolation Resolution. A BIR is attached to every House and Senate bill approved in committee. They must be adopted before the respective bill can be debated. Consideration of BIRs discontinue when both state budgets have passed the legislature and have been transmitted to the governor.

CALENDAR A list of bills which have been reported out of committee and are ready for the third reading.

- Regular Order Calendar A list of bills in the order that they were reported out of committees for third reading. It reflects the order for considering bills.
- Special Order Calendar A list of bills selected from the regular order calendar that selected by the Rules Committee for priority treatment.
- Consent Calendar A list of non-controversial bills which have been through the consent calendar process in the House Rules Committee and are to be considered before the regular order calendar on each legislative day.

COMMITTEES

- Standing Groups of senators or representatives appointed by the presiding officers or Senate president pro tem to act on bills in a certain area of interest. The committees last for the entire length of a legislative term (4 years).

- Conference Committee composed of 3 members (conferees) of each house appointed by the presiding officer in the House and the Committee on Assignments in the Senate to resolve differences between the two houses on an amended instrument. Said committee reports amendments back to the legislature for further action.
- Rules Committees in each house responsible for setting the daily calendars of the House and the Senate.

ENROLLMENT The final processing of a bill or resolution, incorporating all amendments, after passing both houses. This is the document that is signed by both presiding officers and the governor. Constitutional amendments do not require the governor's signature.

READING Milestone in the legislative process. Term is a holdover from era when there was only one written copy of a bill.

- 1st Reading The reading of a bill by title upon introduction, after which the presiding officer refers same to an appropriate standing committee for study.
- 2nd Reading The reading of a bill when it is reported out of committee, along with announcement of committee action. The presiding officer then orders said bill placed on the calendar for the next legislative day.
- 3rd Reading The reading of a bill when it comes up for consideration on the floor. It is at this point that amendments are considered, and the bill is passed or defeated. If it is passed, it is then transmitted to the other house.

SUBSTITUTE An amendment in the form of an entire bill. When adopted, a substitute becomes the bill. ■

// TRAINING TIP //

When county officials and staff leaders talk to one of their legislators about an important bill, they pick up invaluable information about where those legislators stand on an issue. These tidbits may not seem like much, but they can be very useful.

The ACCA67 app provides an easy way to relay this info to your ACCA Policy Team – in a voice memo that is automatically routed to the right person.

In the ACCA67 app menu, tap the button "Tell Us!"



On the next screen:

- 1 Tap the microphone icon to record a message, just like voice mail.
- 2 Tap the upload icon to send the message on its way.



"This is Commissioner Brantley over in Jones County. Just talked to Sen. Hamilton about HB123, and he was real enthusiastic about supporting us. Our other senator – Sen. Kelly -- was leaning our way but still had some questions."

County Days at the Legislature Begin January 31

As an important part of ensuring that the Alabama Legislature is constantly hearing from “67 Counties, One Voice,” the Association will once again be hosting County Days during the 2018 Legislative Session.

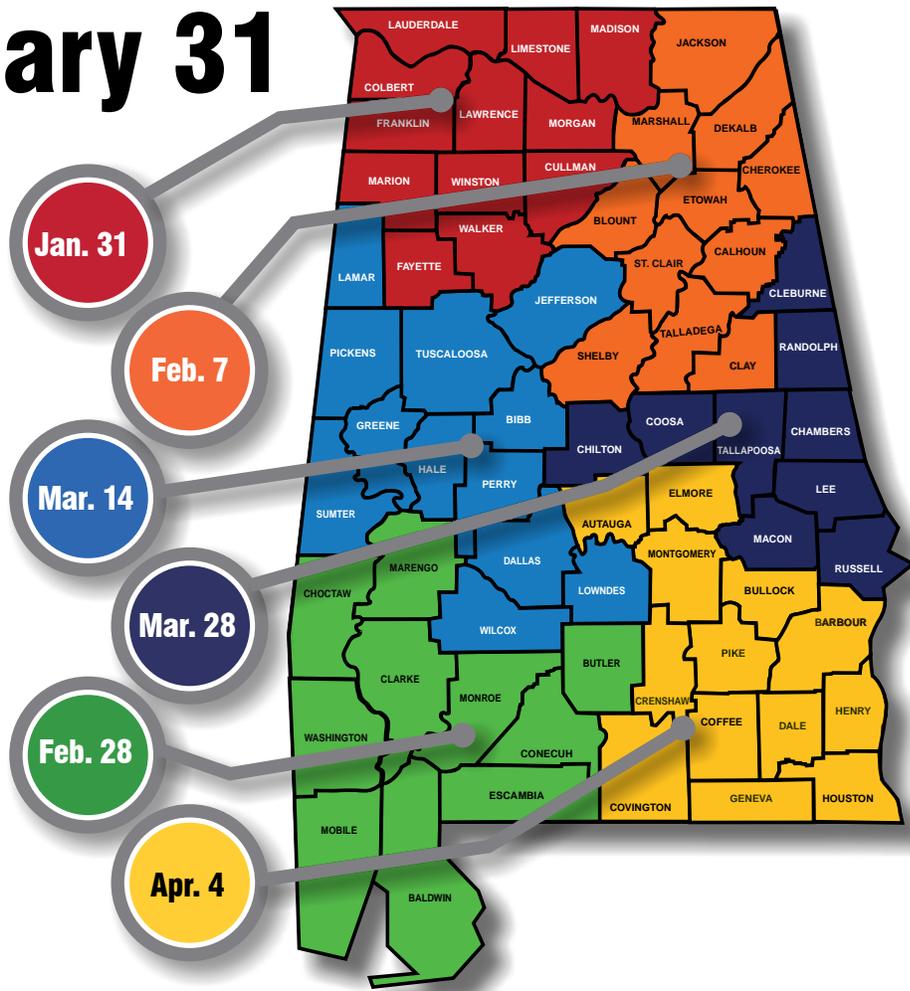
Each county has been assigned one day to come to Montgomery and “walk the halls” to help make sure all your legislators are aware of – and supporting – the interests of county government when considering legislation. All county commissioners and all key staff are encouraged to participate and join us at the Statehouse on your day.

An overnight stay should not be necessary. The schedule begins at 11 a.m. in the ACCA office with lunch and a briefing from ACCA staff. Participants will receive a notebook with up-to-the-minute information on the status of ACCA and Danger Bills.

At noon, the group will walk down the hill to the Statehouse for lobbying and afternoon committee meetings.

There is no registration fee for County Days, but ACCA will get a head count for the day to facilitate lunch.

More details will be distributed as each County Day draws near, but please get this date on your calendar and make plans now to participate in this important event. For any legislators that your county would like to meet with, you are encouraged to contact the legislators at least one week in advance of your County Day to make sure they will have time to meet with you. ■



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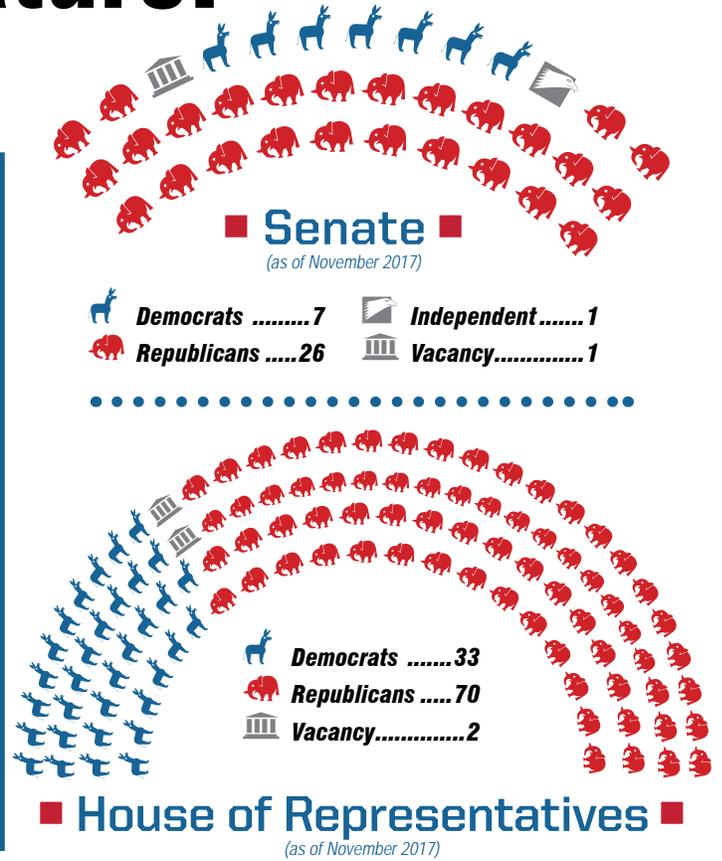
Alabama Legislature: By the Numbers

How many votes are needed...?

You've got to know the rules if you want to get in the game. And the rules can vary from one chamber to another and from one type of legislation to another.

		Alabama House of Representatives	Alabama Senate
VOTES NEEDED	Number of Members	105	35
	Quorum	53	18
	To Pass a Bill AKA "approve third reading"	Majority of those voting	
	To Pass a Constitutional Amendment AKA "approve third reading"	63	21
	To Pass a Budget Isolation Resolution (BIR)	Three-fifths of those voting	
	To Cut Off Debate AKA "cloture"	Three-fifths of those voting	21

Source: Alabama Legislature



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Master the Fundamentals

Here are five of the best ways to stay informed and maximize your impact during the 2018 Regular Session of the Alabama Legislature.

GOAT HILL BULLETIN

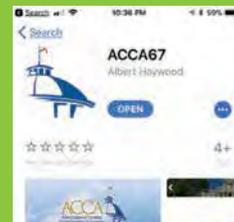
- Goat Hill Preview on Monday
- Goat Hill Alerts as needed
- Goat Hill Recap on Friday (video report from Sonny Brasfield)



ACCA67 PHONE APP

- Search “ACCA67” in app store
- Puts Legislative Directory at your fingertips
- Need help? Call ACCA at 334-263-7594 and ask for Jeannie

Turn to page 11 for more info on ACCA67



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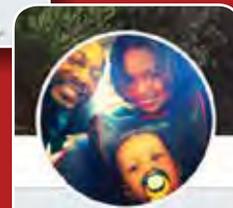
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PRESEASON TIMELINE

Athletes and coaches know that excellent preseason preparation is a central piece of a successful season, and the same is true when ACCA is getting ready for the 2018 Regular Session of the Alabama Legislature. And the “preseason” period – when county leaders use input from all 67 counties to shape the Alabama County Platform and Priorities – is just as pivotal.



AUGUST 2017

Member counties vote to expand ACCA Legislative Committee to 67 members, one representative per county



OCTOBER 2017

10/4-5 | Inaugural Legislative Committee Workshop to report policy issues identified at the county level, hear from key legislators and review the Alabama County Platform

10/10-10/30 | Fall District Meetings to engage county leaders on major issues and strategies for the 2018 session



DECEMBER 2017

12/6 | ACCA Board of Directors adopts final 2018 Alabama County Platform, forwards it to full ACCA membership

12/7 | Full membership approves 2018 Alabama County Platform during ACCA Business Session

12/6-7 | During ACCA Legislative Conference, county officials and staff leaders prepare to advocate on priority

SEPTEMBER 2017

9/21 | Legislative Committee convenes by webinar to begin work

9/25-11/16 | Affiliate and minority leaders meet to discuss legislative issues in their areas of expertise and formulate recommendations to the ACCA Legislative Committee

NOVEMBER 2017

11/29 | Legislative Committee webinar to discuss recommendations from the Minority Issues Steering Committee and affiliate group legislative committee and to finalize proposed 2018 Alabama County Platform

JANUARY 2017

1/9 | Opening Day of the 2018 Regular Session*

**As many as 30 legislative days over 105 calendar days. Final adjournment (“sine die”) must be no later than April 23.*

1/9 | ALCountiesTweet Contest Begins



Developing Good Legislative Relationships

You've already saved legislators' cell numbers and email addresses in your phone. You previewed important county issues with members of your county's delegation *before* the session began. Now what? Here are some professional-level tips from **Chase Cobb, ACCA Governmental Relations Manager, Twitter @ChaseCobb67**

DURING THE SESSION

Keep up with how your legislators vote on county issues – both in committee and on the House/Senate floor. Remember to say “thank you” when they support counties. If they tell you they are going to vote one way but end up voting another way, *reach out to them to discuss why they changed their mind.*

To feel more comfortable making contact with legislators, you can: 1) Review the ACCA-prepared “*blue sheet*” summaries of the bill beforehand; 2) Contact an ACCA policy team member for

clarification if you have questions; 3) *Don't panic* if a legislator asks a question you can't answer. Respond by saying, “I'm not sure about that, but I will find out and get back in touch with you.” Then contact the ACCA policy team for additional information.

If your legislator sits on a committee that will review an ACCA bill or a DANGER bill, speak with your legislator about how the bill would impact counties. Then ask them to support your position.

Keep the lines of communication open with your local legislators throughout the legislative session

-- by social media, phone call, text, email AND *face-to-face* contact. Keep the ACCA staff informed about where your legislators stand on county issues. And if you and one of your legislators develop a strained relationship, work to repair it as quickly as possible.

Attend your ACCA County Day. You are encouraged to contact the legislator(s) you want to meet with at least ONE WEEK prior to your visit to ensure they schedule time for you. And make sure key staff attend as well.

AFTER THE SESSION

Follow up with legislators to thank them for their support. Engage them about their overall impression of the legislative session – and promise to work with them on local issues throughout the year. ■



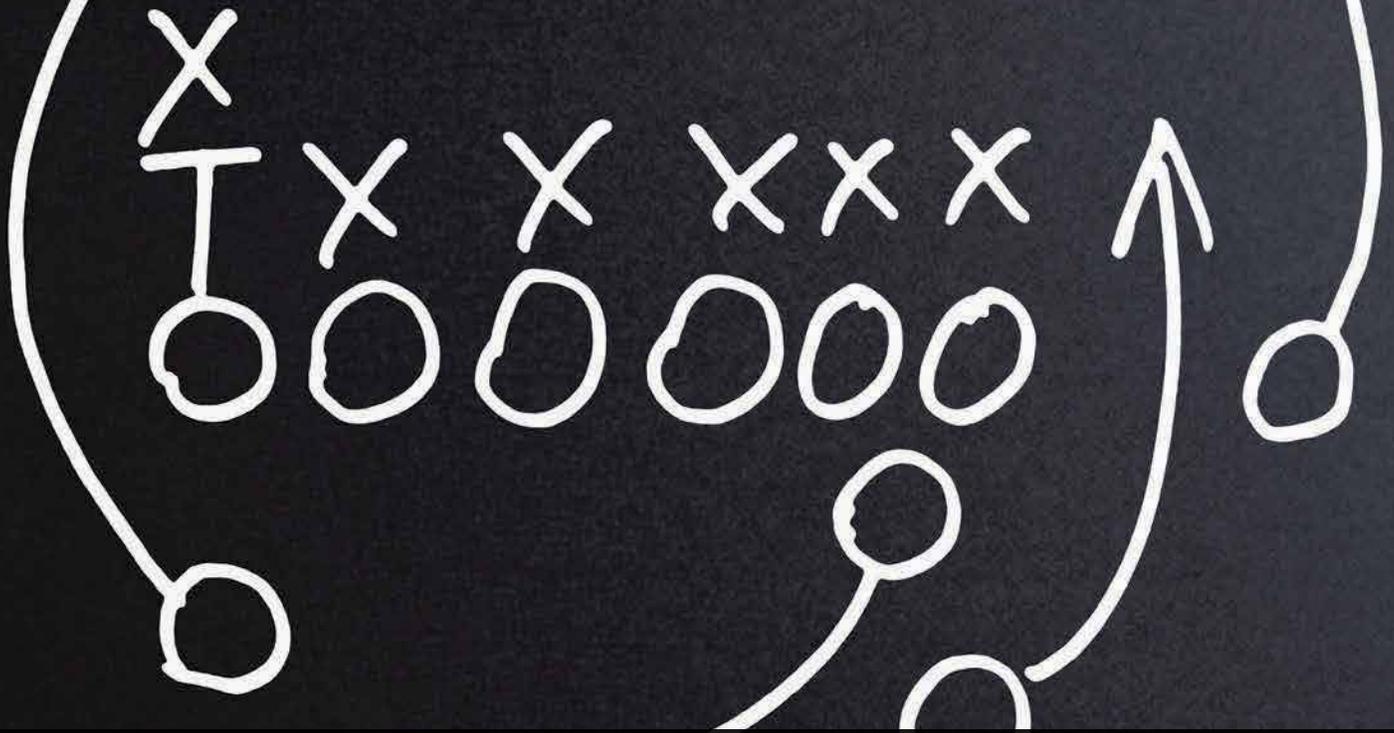
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2018 ALABAMA COUNTY PLATFORM



The 2018 ACCA Alabama County Platform is based on the final recommendations of the ACCA Legislative Committee, as approved on November 29, 2017. In making its recommendations, the Legislative Committee considered feedback from each of the Association's five affiliate groups, as well as the Minority Issues Steering Committee. The Alabama County Platform was approved by the ACCA Board of Directors on December 6, 2017, and then by the ACCA membership on December 7, 2017.



COUNTY EXPENDITURES FOR COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

Foundation Principle

The County Commission is charged with making the budgeting decisions necessary to provide the most effective and efficient services to the citizens within the revenue available in each of the 67 courthouses. Legislatively-mandated adjustments in salary and benefits pose a threat to the delivery of such services. For this reason, the Association opposes any legislation which mandates any expenditure of county revenues for the payment of compensation, salary supplements, expense allowances, or benefits for current or former government officials or employees.

Strategic Goals

In furtherance of this Foundation Principle, the Association will actively pursue the passage of legislation to accomplish the following strategic goals:

- To reform Alabama's workers' compensation law by reasonably reducing medical costs while not subjecting employers to increased payments or expenditures.
- To amend the statute regarding the appointment of members



to the Board of Control of the Retirement Systems of Alabama to more closely reflect the employing agencies of the participating members of the system.

Legislative Policy

In addition to its strategic goals, the Association has adopted the following legislative policy consistent with this Foundation Principle:

- Support for the Omnibus Pay Act in its current form and opposition to any requirement to provide or increase compensation, benefits, or county-paid salary supplements for state or local officials.
- Opposition to mandated and unfunded requirements to provide or increase compensation or benefits for any county-paid personnel or volunteers.
- Opposition to shifting responsibility for the payment of the employee-share of retirement contributions for probate judges to the counties.
- Support for the elimination of all supernumerary programs and opposition to any mandated and unfunded increases in payments made under existing programs.



- Support for authorizing cost of living increases for state and local retirees provided such legislation only applies to retirees in a particular county if approved by the county commission.
- Belief that any retirement program changes should not apply to local participants without approval of the county commission.
- Support for authorizing counties to establish civil service systems provided the creation of such systems does not provide for collective bargaining.

ALABAMA GOVERNMENTAL STRUCTURE

Foundation Principle

The relationship between Alabama counties and the Alabama Legislature is established in constitutional and statutory law. The preservation of a constitutional relationship between the State of Alabama and its counties as well as a workable and productive statutory allocation of responsibilities between the state and the counties is essential to the delivery of services. Therefore, Alabama counties encourage the Alabama Legislature to fully fund

state agencies and opposes the shifting of costs and administrative responsibility of state functions to the local level through the state budget process.

Strategic Goals

In furtherance of this Foundation Principle, the Association will actively pursue the passage of legislation to accomplish the following strategic goals:

- To shift the statutorily-required publication of legal notices from a “newspaper”



to publication on a website maintained by the state or by each individual county.

- To provide a constitutional amendment to ensure open debate of local legislation.

Legislative Policy

In addition to its strategic goals, the Association has adopted the following legislative policy consistent with this Foundation Principle:

- Opposition to removing or impeding local control of the county department of human resources.

- Opposition to abolishing regional planning commissions.
- Support for continued application of current constitutional and statutory provisions providing that elected officials can only be removed from office through the process of impeachment.
- Support for Alabama’s current structure for enacting or amending state general or local laws and belief that no provision allowing for citizen referendum should be enacted.
- Belief that individual property rights must be balanced with adequate means to protect the

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Front Suspension	20,000 lb.	20,000 lb.
Rear Axle Capacity	46,000 lb.	46,000 lb.
Diff Locks	Yes	Yes
Double Frame	Yes	Yes
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health, safety, and welfare of all citizens.

- Belief that any additional restrictions on the use of constitutional and statutory procedures for condemnation of private property for necessary governmental purposes will serve to harm the collective well-being of all citizens.



- Opposition to restricting or limiting a county commission's authority to independently make decisions related to county property.
- Opposition to shifting the control of county property to the oversight of a legislatively-established committee or state agency. Specifically, the Association strongly opposes the requirement that movement or renaming of monuments, buildings or streets be approved by such a committee.
- Support for local legislation providing for six (6) year terms of office for County Commissioners.

MANDATED AND UNFUNDED LEGISLATION

Foundation Principle

Without the authority to levy taxes or even collect fees for services, Alabama counties constantly struggle to provide an adequate level of services to ensure health, safety and prosperity of local citizens. Alabama's constitution provides protection from the enactment of mandated and unfunded responsibilities onto county government to ensure the financial integrity of the commission. The Association strongly supports the intent of Alabama's constitutional language prohibiting the enactment of unfunded mandates and opposes the establishment of such mandates through federal or state administrative actions.



Strategic Goals

In furtherance of this Foundation Principle, the Association will actively pursue the passage of legislation to accomplish the following strategic goals:

- To amend the unfunded mandate constitutional amendment to provide that the exemption for defining crimes apply only to provisions of the law defining or amending a crime.



Legislative Policy

In addition to its strategic goals, the Association has adopted the following legislative policy consistent with this

Foundation Principle:

- Opposition to federal and state efforts to require county government to assume any financial or programmatic responsibilities that are currently financed and/or administered at the federal or state level.
- Opposition to any mandated and unfunded requirement that counties assume new programs established by the federal or state government.
- Opposition to any federal or state legislative, administrative, or regulatory directives requiring county government to assume inspection, public safety, permitting responsibilities or other duties currently performed by the state or federal agency.
- Opposition to any legislative or regulatory directives requiring counties to provide housing, supplies, equipment or other expenses for a county coroner or other county officers.
- Opposition to state agencies administratively eliminating state services within a county for budgetary or other reasons without legislative approval.

COUNTY OPERATIONS AND BUDGET AUTHORITY

Foundation Principle

The county governing body serves as both the legislative and administrative branch of government at the local level – carrying out both budgetary duties as well as providing administrative leadership for many functions. The budgetary, personnel and administrative functions carried out by the county commission are essential to the financial and operational health of county government in Alabama. The Association opposes any efforts that will obstruct the commission’s ability to effectively govern and to maintain the administrative and financial well-being of the services delivered by the county commission.



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Strategic Goals

In furtherance of this Foundation Principle, the Association will actively pursue the passage of legislation to accomplish the following strategic goals:

- To provide that the county commission sets the hours of operation of county offices.
- To clarify statutory language related to use of county warrants and bonds.
- To require municipalities to

provide animal control services within its jurisdictional limits or contribute a pro rata share of services provided by the county.

Legislative Policy

In addition to its strategic goals, the Association has adopted the following legislative policy consistent with this Foundation Principle:

- Opposition to changes in the current CDARS Program and public depository law that could result in greater risk to the stability of county deposits.
- Belief that the existing Open



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Records Law adequately protects a citizen’s right to access of public documents.

- Support for the protection of counties, officials, employees, or agents against liability for official actions provided there is no change in the statutory damage cap for awards against counties.
- Opposition to any efforts to require counties to pay the attorney fees of those filing actions against county governments, its officials, or employees.
- Support for the county commission role in adopting and enforcing the county budget and opposition to any efforts to weaken or direct the county commission’s exercise of this legislative authority.

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- Opposition to any legislation requiring the county commission to vote or take action on a particular measure or issue.
- Support for limiting use of out-of-state cooperative programs for purchases available on county joint bid list.



Strategic Goals

In furtherance of this Foundation Principle, the Association will actively pursue the passage of legislation to accomplish the following strategic goals:

- To eliminate the requirement that the county commission set and fund school tax elections for municipal school systems.
- Support legislation amending Alabama law reforming the current Board of Registrar system to provide more accountability, state and local oversight, and minimum qualifications for appointments.

- To allow the county commission, in its discretion, to assume responsibility for the absentee election function when there is a change in the office of circuit clerk.

- To allow the county commission, in its discretion, to assume responsibility for the absentee election function when there is a change in the office of circuit clerk.

Legislative Policy

In addition to its strategic goals, the Association has adopted the following legislative policy consistent with this Foundation Principle:

- Encourage the Alabama Legislature to reject changes to any election laws without closely reviewing, considering and debating the financial and administrative impact on county government.
- Opposition to eliminating a

runoff election except in the most extreme circumstances where the outcome of the primary is inevitable.

- Support for any legislative or administrative efforts aimed at eliminating waste and reducing state and county election expenses provided such efforts maintain the integrity of the election process.
- Support for authorizing counties to satisfy election-related publication requirements by posting information on a public website and making copies available at the courthouse.

ELECTION ADMINISTRATION

Foundation Principle

Alabama’s election laws must maintain an unquestioned level of integrity and objectivity while avoiding the wasteful spending of limited local and state resources. Likewise, the reporting and disclosure requirements placed on candidates only serve to bolster such efforts to garner public confidence in the election process. The Association supports efforts to eliminate many of the unenforceable and overbroad provisions of Alabama’s election law while not generating additional unnecessary costs or burdens at the local level.



ENVIRONMENT, LAND USE, AND PUBLIC WORKS

Foundation Principle

County government’s role in the effective administration and enforcement of Alabama’s law affecting environmental issues, land use and public works administration is often confusing. Counties lack land-use authority, but are required to grant initial approval for landfills. Counties seek to enhance the delivery of services by improving their public facilities and programs, but often are impeded by federal and state



regulations, inspections, and prohibitions that do not serve the public's best interests. The exercise of extra-jurisdictional powers by municipalities further clouds the role of county government. The Association seeks legislative and administrative solutions to these conflicts and encourages all related agencies to interact with counties to ensure the proper delivery of services and the enforcement of requirements and regulations.



Strategic Goals

In furtherance of this Foundation Principle, the Association will actively pursue the passage of legislation to accomplish the following strategic goals:

- To amend the existing Alabama Disaster Recovery Program procedures to provide direct financial assistance to individuals and certain nonprofit facilities, as well as counties and municipalities following certain disasters to cover costs of certain emergency protective measures.



Legislative Policy

In addition to its strategic goals, the Association has adopted the following legislative policy consistent with this Foundation Principle:

- To limit the exercise of municipal powers or taxation outside the jurisdiction's corporate limits.
- Opposition to any statutory or administrative increase in fees charged by a state agency if such increases will be paid by county government or county-established agencies.
- Support for sufficient funding and administrative expertise for



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flood plain management and geospatial services at the state level to ensure more effective implementation by all 67 Alabama counties.

- Opposition to municipalities using unconventional annexation procedures to avoid the legal responsibility to maintain public roads included in newly-annexed areas.
- Support for increasing the minimum cost of a construction project amount which requires the county to employ the services of a licensed general contractor or architect.
- Opposition to relaxing or eliminating competitive bidding requirements for construction projects or granting a contractor sole responsibility for selecting the successful bidder.
- Opposition to allowing a project manager to approve construction contract changes without approval of the governing body and/or compliance with the public works law.
- Support requiring the Forever Wild Board to make annual payments from its Stewardship Account in an amount equal to the ad valorem taxes lost by the



purchase of lands previously held by private ownership.

REVENUE PROTECTION

Foundation Principle

Counties are partners with the State of Alabama in the collection of revenue and the delivery of services funded by the collection of such revenue. Many taxes collected by the counties as well as the state are earmarked for distribution between the two levels of government to ensure the provision of services. Likewise, the Legislature considers the abatement or exemption of many taxes levied by or on behalf of the county commission. County services cannot be funded during either the short- or long-term if the necessary revenue is interrupted.

The Association opposes mandated abatement or exemption of the local proceeds of any taxes as well as the alteration of the allocation formula used to distribute tax proceeds between the state and its counties.

Strategic Goals

In furtherance of this Foundation Principle, the Association will actively pursue the passage of legislation to accomplish the following strategic goals:

- To create a more fair

and equitable ad valorem tax system provided it does not eliminate annual reappraisal, reduce tax revenues or increase current exemptions.

- To remove any defects in state tax laws resulting in a discriminatory tax structure provided it eliminates discrimination without creating new or expanding exemptions or tax credits.
- To ensure there is no cost to local government for use of the ONE SPOT sales tax remittance system.
- To amend Alabama law relating to the enforcement of delinquent licenses to increase the minimum fine to \$10.00 or the minimum cost of enforcing the fine.

Legislative Policy

In addition to its strategic goals, the Association has adopted the following legislative policy consistent with this Foundation Principle:

- Opposition to altering the current interest rate on tax sale proceeds unless such change will not result in a decrease in purchaser participation in tax sales or reduction in tax sale proceeds paid to counties.
- Support for apportioning ad valorem tax collection costs among all entities entitled to a portion of the proceeds of the tax.



- Support for modernizing the business licensing process provided it does not result in a loss of state or local revenue or repeal existing local business licensing laws.
- Opposition to authorizing a local legislative delegation or legislatively-created committees to direct how local revenues should be distributed.
- Support for the work of the Streamlined Sales and Use Tax Agreement Commission provided there is no effort to repeal or restrict counties' authority to collect, audit and/or enforce local taxes.
- Support legislation allowing

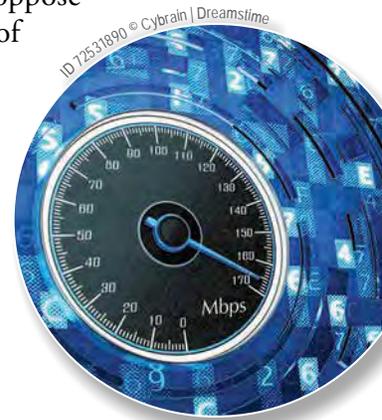
collection of unpaid debts due the county by other governmental entities by intercepting the entity's portion of ad valorem taxes.

- Support legislation or administrative rules to clarify that lodging tax applies to rooms rented, whether or not a person actually sleeps in the room.
- Support amendment of the Taxpayer Bill of Rights to provide that following an audit which uncovers that taxes were wrongly paid to another entity, the auditing entity may take action against the other entity if the wrongly-paid tax is not refunded within 6 months.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND THE ALABAMA TRUST FUND

Foundation Principle

Alabama counties play an ever-growing and vital role in the state's economic development efforts; providing services, financial support and community leadership necessary to attract and retain important employers. Counties must be able to access the revenue necessary to carry out this function and must be included in any reforms and initiatives that alter Alabama's law regarding economic incentives and requirements. Revenue from the Alabama Trust Fund is essential to meeting these goals and must be protected from unnecessary raids and expenditures. The Association will actively oppose any removal of revenue from the Alabama Trust Fund and seeks to be a partner in those economic development efforts that emphasize a partnership between the state and its counties.



- Support revisions of the definition of tangible personal property to ensure that goods delivered digitally are subject to sales or use tax collections.
- Oppose legislation that would allow income producing properties to be treated as residential housing for the purpose of ad valorem taxation.

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In compliance with Alabama State Bar requirements, no representation is made that the quality of the legal services to be performed is greater than the quality of legal services performed by other lawyers.

Strategic Goals

In furtherance of this Foundation Principle, the Association will actively pursue the passage of legislation to accomplish the following strategic goals:



- To shift 20 percent of the corpus and future oil lease and royalty payments of the Alabama Trust Fund into the County and Municipal Government Trust Fund which would thereafter operate as a separately-maintained Trust Fund for counties and municipalities.

Legislative Policy

In addition to its strategic goals, the Association has adopted the following legislative policy consistent with this Foundation Principle:

- Support for legislation to establish an application process for granting tax credits and tax abatements for the expansion of high speed internet broadband services to the underserved unincorporated areas of counties with county commission consent for any local tax abatements.
- Opposition to the withdrawal or diversion of money currently earmarked for Alabama Trust Fund.
- Opposition to any economic development legislation or programs that mandate the expenditure of county revenues or abate county taxes without county commission consent.

crisis duplicated on daily basis in each of the 67 county jails. The watchful eye of the federal courts, the never-ending expense of providing jail services, the growing costs of health care and the training and compensation for officers presents a challenge well beyond the reach of a county commission devoid of revenue-generating powers. On the other hand, an efficient local law enforcement agency and jail is necessary to maintain order and to ensure the safety of all Alabamians. The Association is gravely concerned that all reform efforts, statutory changes or administrative rules be considered only in light of direct, indirect and unintended consequences generated at the county level.

Strategic Goals

In furtherance of this Foundation Principle, the Association will actively pursue the passage of legislation to accomplish the following strategic goals:

- To clarify that persons on parole, probation or participants in diversion programs are legally and financially state inmates for all purposes even when held for temporary confinement in the county jail or awaiting hearing or transfer

to a state facility.

- To amend Alabama law to limit the medical service costs for an individual in county custody at an amount not exceeding Alabama’s Medicaid rates and fees.

Legislative Policy

In addition to its strategic goals, the Association has adopted the following legislative policy consistent with this Foundation Principle:

- Opposition to requiring mandatory training for sheriffs, sheriffs’ deputies, or other county employees without county commission approval.
- Opposition to any prison reform implementation activities that significantly increase costs of or create unsafe conditions in the county jail.
- Support for any legislation necessary to correct any consequences of prison reform implementation that negatively impact the operation of the county jail.
- Opposition to pleading down Class D Felonies for the purposes of convicted persons serving time in county jails.
- Support for providing that non-indigents serving sentences in the county jail be required to pay a portion of the cost of incarceration, including medical expenses.

ALABAMA’S PRISONS AND COUNTY JAILS

Foundation Principle

Alabama’s prison system faces a crisis not unlike the



- Support for U.S. Congress repealing the requirement that persons detained in state or county correctional facilities forfeit their Medicaid benefits immediately upon arrest.
- Opposition to any requirement that county government pay for the use of state inmate labor.
- Opposition to imposing mandated and unfunded jail standards or other procedures.
- Opposition to changing current law providing for feeding of prisoners unless the changes provide that the state pay all costs of feeding prisoners.
- Opposition to legislative or administrative efforts to put reserve deputies in regular law enforcement position.
- Opposition to amending Alabama’s work release law to allow wages paid to the county to be expended for purposes other than just the costs of the individual inmate’s incarceration.
- Support for comprehensive legislation to clarify and/ or implement procedures for county inmates working outside of the jail either through work release or other programs.

JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY

Foundation Principle

The State of Alabama is responsible for administration

of state courts and public safety agencies and for providing public health and mental health services for the citizens of this state. The Association believes the Alabama Legislature should adequately fund each state agency responsible for delivery of these critical government services and opposes any legislative or administrative efforts that mandate counties to assume any responsibility for these state functions or that force county government to assume state functions due to the state’s failure to adequately meet its financial or administrative responsibilities. Additionally, since local government plays an important role in providing emergency services at the local level, the Association urges the Legislature to ensure there is adequate funding for local programs and that state and local agencies work in partnership for the safety and well-being of all citizens of this state.

Strategic Goals

In furtherance of this Foundation Principle, the Association will actively pursue the passage of legislation to accomplish the following strategic goals:

- To amend current Alabama law allowing the statewide 911 Board to expend administrative funds to support the funding and operation of next generation technology

projects a secure statewide network to connect and deliver 911 communications.

- To clarify the procedures by which a county government may declare a local state of emergency following a formal declaration from the Governor’s Office.
- To improve and expand spay-neuter services throughout the state, provided there is no requirement that counties fund such services.
- To establish a state-wide uniform pistol permit fee provided that current local laws on distribution are not repealed and all fees are distributed to local government.
- To amend current Alabama law to create a more equitable financial allocation between local and state governments for the housing, medical care, and transportation of juveniles participating in the juvenile justice system.

Legislative Policy

In addition to its strategic goals, the Association has adopted the following legislative policy consistent with this Foundation Principle:

- Opposition to any juvenile justice reform efforts that would result in increased cost or administrative responsibility



on a county without the county commissions consent.

- Support for legislative or administrative procedures to reduce or eliminate county costs for transportation of mental health patients.
- Opposition to prohibiting state law enforcement officers from conducting investigations or providing other services on county roads.
- Support to provide adequate funding to ensure that ambulance services are available throughout the county.
- Support to protect the county commission against the payment of any costs or penalties issued as a result of any local elected official defying a validly-issued court order.
- Opposition to any legislation authorizing a person to carry a firearm in a vehicle without a valid pistol permit.
- Support for shifting regulation of certain prefabricated storm shelters from the Department of Finance to the Alabama Manufactured Housing Commission.
- Belief that the statewide 911 Board should conduct only those activities delegated by the Legislature.



- Belief that 911 services are best provided through locally operated and administered boards without statewide coordination and encouraging the statewide 911 Board to seek meaningful input from existing 911 district boards and personnel in developing any proposed reforms or initiatives.
- Support for restoring state EMA revenues in the state general fund budget to ensure both state and county EMA programs receive proper funding.
- Support for adequate funding of state supplements paid to counties with a certified county EMA director.
- Support ensuring the State has sufficient resources to assist county governments with the protection of the public's health and safety in the event of an environmental emergency.
- Support for legislative and administrative efforts to implement state-funded video conferencing for certain court appearances and to expand the



- use of video court proceedings in the state.
- Belief that debris placed on the right of way of a state road following a disaster event is the State of Alabama's responsibility and should be removed at state expense.
- Support legislation requiring that a driver's license testing office be open in each county for no less than two days per month.
- Support authorizing Emergency Management Agency vehicles to utilize emergency lights and sirens as other emergency vehicles.
- Support legislation to clarify that the County Commission is not liable for the improper expenditures of funds authorized by law to be expended at the "sole discretion" of a particular elected official.
- Support legislation amending Alabama law to remove the requirement that the sheriff must be appointed conservator or guardianship of an incapacitated person if no other suitable person qualifies as general conservator.
- Support for legislation imposing an express duty to require service providers to collect and remit the monthly statewide 911 fee from all of their

applicable customers, and further authorize the statewide 911 Board to take audit and collection actions, as necessary, to enforce such collections.

RURAL TRANSPORTATION

Foundation Principle

The county commission is responsible for proper construction, maintenance, and repair of all roads and bridges in the county road system. The Association believes it is essential that the county commission have adequate federal, state, and/or local funding to meet the many needs of its rural transportation system. Additionally, the Association believes that, in order to keep roads and bridges properly maintained for the safety and well-being of the traveling public, the county commission must have broad regulatory authority related to the use of county-maintained roads and bridges, including the ability to collect reimbursement from persons or entities causing damage to those roads and bridges.



Strategic Goals

In furtherance of this Foundation Principle, the Association will actively pursue the passage of legislation to accomplish the following strategic goals:

- To provide adequate funding of road and bridge projects, provided counties receive an equitable portion of funding utilizing the current gas tax formula.
- To establish the Alabama Transportation Rehabilitation and Improvement Program 2 (ATRIP-2) providing a \$1.2 billion bond issue for the rehabilitation and improvement of county and municipal roads and bridges.
 - To amend the Alabama bid law to exempt the repair of brand name equipment by the factory- authorized dealer.

Legislative Policy

In addition to its strategic goals, the Association has adopted the following legislative policy consistent with this Foundation Principle:

- Support for allowing the county commission to call a local referendum to impose a renewable temporary local gasoline and motor fuel tax to fund specified local road and bridge projects.
- Opposition to any measures, including budget appropriations, which would divert taxes currently earmarked for roads and bridges to other state functions.
- Opposition to reducing the current level of federal or state funding for county road and bridge projects.
- Opposition to weakening Alabama's law related to weight or axle-spacing restrictions on state and county roads or to add new exemptions to such laws.
- Support for providing that fines collected from persons convicted of driving overweight vehicles on county roads and bridges be distributed to the county's road and bridge fund.
- Opposition to establishing a commission to administer the Alabama Department of Transportation.
- Opposition to any changes to current law setting speed limits on unposted county roads.
- Support for amending current motor fuel and gasoline tax statutes to include taxation of any alternative fuels utilized to propel any motorized vehicle.
- Support for amending Alabama's severance tax law to ensure that counties receive proceeds sufficient to ensure proper maintenance and repair of roads and bridges utilized for the transportation of materials severed within the county.
- Support amending the Alabama Public Works Law to exempt the awarding of annual in-place contracts for the paving and resurfacing of county roads. ■

// ABOUT THE ALABAMA COUNTY PLATFORM //

For 67 counties to speak with “One Voice,” there must be agreement on what will be said. Every move the Association makes on policy is grounded in the Alabama County Platform, a single document with many authors. The legislative positions and goals staked out reflect the input of every county commission as well as leaders from affiliate and minority groups.

The ACCA Legislative Committee prepared the 2018 Platform for review and approval by the ACCA Board of Directors. The board’s recommendation was then approved by a vote of the full Association membership at the Legislative Conference in early December.

Components of the Platform

The Platform is organized in three parts:

1 FOUNDATION PRINCIPLES: In just a few sentences, each of the 11 Foundation Principles states the county position in timeless, “big picture” fashion. If the only thing someone knew about Alabama counties was the Foundation Principles, that person would have a solid framework for understanding core issues and responsibilities.

Example: County Expenditures for Compensation and Benefits

The County Commission is charged with making the budgeting decisions necessary to provide the most effective and efficient services to the citizens within the revenue available in each of the 67 courthouses. Legislatively-mandated adjustments in salary and benefits pose a threat to the delivery of such services. For this reason, the Association opposes any legislation which mandates any expenditure of county revenues for the payment of compensation, salary supplements, expense allowances, or benefits for current or former government officials or employees.

2 STRATEGIC GOALS: Flowing out of the Foundation Principles are Strategic Goals, with each one representing a legislative change needed to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of county government.

Example from County Expenditures for Compensation and Benefits

To reform Alabama’s workers’ compensation law by reasonably reducing medical costs while not subjecting employers to increased payments or expenditures.

3 LEGISLATIVE POLICIES: Also flowing out of each Foundation Principle, these Legislative Policies are specific statements about how counties view detailed aspects of the issues. These are generally phrased as statements of support, opposition or belief.

Example from County Expenditures for Compensation and Benefits

Opposition to mandated and unfunded requirements to provide or increase compensation or benefits for any county-paid personnel or volunteers.

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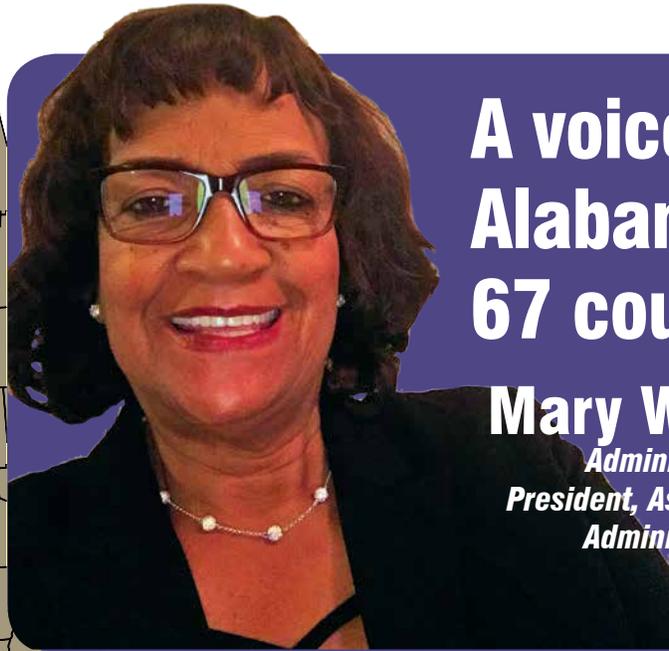
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Our attorneys have been advising County Commissions for over thirty-five years on all matters including competitive bid issues, public works issues, open meetings issues, employment matters, zoning matters, and representing commissions in litigation in both state and federal court.

Please contact
Mike Cole, Fred Fohrell,
Robert Lockwood or Mark Maclin
at (256) 232-2010.

No representation is made that the quality of the legal services to be performed is greater than the quality of legal services performed by other lawyers.



A voice from Alabama's 67 counties

Mary Wood, CCA
*Administrator, Clay County
President, Association of County
Administrators of Alabama
(ACAA)*

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FINRA

Q As you go about your responsibilities as county administrator, what is different for you when the Alabama Legislature is in session?

A My priority is to keep lines of communication open to be aware of legislative issues that affect the county. While in session, it is especially important to be alert to ensure – as the liaison to commissioners – that they are aware of issues the ACCA is supporting and also the negative effects of legislation that will harm county government.

Q What are some of the 2018 priority legislative issues for the Association of County Administrators of Alabama?

A

- To reform the current Boards of Registrars system to be more accountable.
- Develop a plan to prevent constant unfunded mandates.
- To require municipalities to provide animal control services within their jurisdictional limits or contribute a pro rata share of services

provided by the county.
Examples include digital downloads and cloud-based software.

Q What would you say are some of the biggest challenges county administrators face – challenges that are just as real in larger and smaller counties?

A

- Not enough revenues to cover requirements.
- The increase in duties required for administrators as a result of GASB (Governmental Accounting Standards Board) regulations.
- Finding a solution for restoring state EMA revenues in the state General Fund budget to ensure both state and county EMA programs receive proper funding.

Q What are the best benefits of ACAA membership?

A Building relationships with other administrators who can provide advice and share knowledge that helps to improve operations throughout the counties.



SPEED DRILL with Mary Wood

Favorite thing about Clay County? : *Clay County is a small place with a big heart. You may leave Clay County, but you will always come back.*

| Are you a fan of New Year's resolutions? *No, because I never make it a week without failing.* **| Favorite college football team:** *Auburn* **|**

Cats or dogs? *I love dogs.* **| Favorite holiday?** *Thanksgiving.* **| No. 1 quality you look for in colleagues?** *Honesty* **| First paying job?** *1966*

Higgins Slacks in Lineville, Ala., making \$1.25 an hour. **| Home-cooking or eat out?** *Home-cooking.* **| As a very young child, I wanted to be a**

dog doctor, because of my love for animals (especially dogs) when I grew up. (But when I grew up I realized the name was veterinarian.) **|**

If I had a whole day completely free of commitments and obligations, I would go back and watch every episode of "Scandal" from day one. ■

Q When someone brand-new to county administration asks for your advice, what kinds of questions do they usually have? What is your advice to them for establishing good working relationships with commissioners?

A New administrators usually ask questions on how I would handle a situation, or have I budgeted for a particular item. My advice to a new administrator would be to stay in constant contact with their commissioners. Keep them informed and updated on your operation, and ask questions.

Q What does "67 counties, One voice" mean to you?

A "67 counties, One voice" means working together. All county personnel being on the same page and in agreement on all subject matters affecting county government. "Speaking with ONE VOICE." ■



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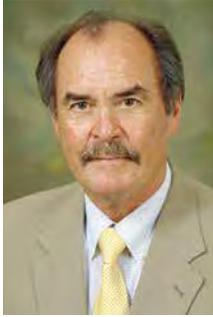
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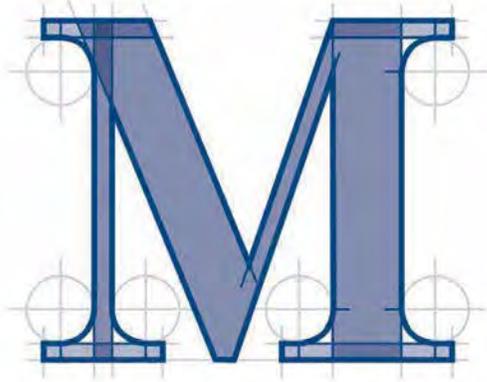


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