

NEWS RELEASE

# Luther Strange

Alabama Attorney General



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Page 1 of 1

## AG ANNOUNCES HOUSE PASSAGE OF METAL THEFT BILL

(MONTGOMERY)--Attorney General Luther Strange announced that the Alabama House of Representatives has approved a bill in his legislative package to combat the proliferation of metal theft crimes in Alabama. The House voted this afternoon 83 to 8 in favor of the bill.

"Criminals are striking at homes, small businesses, churches, schools, and sometimes even defacing graves and memorials, wreaking serious damage throughout Alabama to steal material that will be sold as scrap metal," said Attorney General Strange. "We need a strong law that gives law enforcement effective tools to fight this increasingly widespread problem."

House Bill 278 is sponsored by Rep. Bill Poole. A companion bill, SB 35, sponsored by Sen. Ben Brooks and Rep. Cam Ward, has passed the Senate and has been assigned to the House Judiciary Committee.

This legislation arises from concerns expressed to the Attorney General by manufacturers, secondary recyclers, business, law enforcement, church leaders, and others who have been impacted by metal theft. It provides for a statewide digital database to be created and maintained by the Alabama Criminal Justice Information Center. In addition, the bill increases criminal penalties, puts limits on case transactions, and provides other safeguards.

"I am pleased to have passed HB 278 out of the House today," said Rep. Poole. "This bill will make a statement that we will not tolerate the damage and destruction to our churches, schools, businesses, homes, farm equipment and all other property damaged by copper and metal theft. This bill provides law enforcement with additional and vital tools needed to stop this destructive activity. I look forward to continuing to move this important bill toward enactment into law."

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