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Attorney General Marshall Applauds Senate's Passage of HB 82
Law Deters False Reporting to Law Enforcement with Enhanced Penalties

(Montgomery, Ala) – Attorney General Steve Marshall applauds the Alabama Senate's passage of House Bill 82, enhancing the penalties for falsely reporting a crime to law enforcement.

Currently, false reporting of a crime is a Class A misdemeanor. HB 82 increases the penalties for false reporting of a crime that poses imminent danger to a person or to the public by making it a Class C felony. The bill also expands the ability of the state to seek restitution to local, state, and federal authorities for the costs incurred while investigating false reports.

"Last summer, Alabama's law enforcement around the state were exploited, and local communities terrorized, when an individual falsely reported being kidnapped. After an immediate multiagency response, the frightened public was outraged to learn that the entire situation was a hoax. This action cost taxpayers millions of dollars and took away critical resources from those who desperately needed law enforcement support," said Attorney General Marshall. "The goal of this legislation is to create a deterrent for those who blatantly lie in reporting a crime, so that those who do, experience the full force of the law. I applaud the Legislature for listening and working with law enforcement on this issue and hope to refocus our attention on those who are victims of crime in the short-term and long-term."

The bill was sponsored by Representative Mike Shaw (R-Jefferson) and was passed unanimously in the House of Representatives in February. Senator April Weaver (R-Brierfield) carried the bill through the Senate where it was passed unanimously. The bill now goes to the Governor for her signature.

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