

## NEWS RELEASE

# Luther Strange

Alabama Attorney General



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 19, 2013

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## **AG LEADS "DRIVE 4 PLEDGES" CAMPAIGN IN ALABAMA, WITH ASSEMBLIES HELD TODAY AT TWO HIGH SCHOOLS**

MONTGOMERY—Speaking at two high school assemblies in Jefferson County this morning, Attorney General Luther Strange urges students to take the pledge not to text while driving, and to encourage their friends and family members to make the same commitment. The events at Mortimer Jordan High School and Gardendale High School are part of a national campaign, with today designated as "Drive 4 Pledges Day."

Attorney General Strange is leading the Drive 4 Pledges campaign in Alabama, sponsored by AT&T. Drive4 Pledges is part of "It Can Wait," a national program sponsored by wireless service providers to educate the public about the dangers of texting while driving. The Attorney General was joined today by AT&T officials, Jefferson County School Superintendent Dr. Stephen Nowlin, Kimberly Mayor Bob Ellerbrock, Gardendale Mayor Othell Phillips, as well as administrators, teachers and students of the two schools.

"Protecting the people of Alabama is my foremost priority," said Attorney General Strange. "This campaign is important because each of us can make a simple commitment—not to text while driving— and we can make a difference in saving lives. By taking the pledge, and by asking others to join us, these young people today are leading a new generation in declaring that texting while driving is dangerous and unacceptable behavior."

Attorney General Strange said the national campaign has taken hold in Alabama, with more organizations and citizens becoming involved "to change our habits and make our roadways safer. Today our focus is on young people, who typically send about five times as many texts daily as adults, but every driver needs to understand the risks of texting and driving, and join in our pledge."

Telling students today that "100,000 crashes each year are caused by texting and driving, hurting people like you and me," the Attorney General adds that "texting behind the wheel makes you at least 23 times as likely to be in an accident. Taking your eyes off the road for five seconds, the average amount of time to send a text, while driving 55 miles per hour is the equivalent of driving a football field's length *blind*."

Last year in Alabama, 10 people were killed and 362 injured in 1,005 crashes where the prime contributing circumstance was distraction by use of an electronic communication device, according to statistics from the Department of Public Safety.

Attorney General Strange extends to all Alabamians his message to those present at the school assemblies: I am going to commit myself and ask that you join me in taking the pledge to never text while driving. Your life could depend upon it. Please join me and spread the word— It Can Wait!"

For more information and to take the pledge, visit [www.ItCanWait.com](http://www.ItCanWait.com).

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