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## **Amber Alert System Close to Implementation in Mississippi**

(Jackson, MS) – The final details of Mississippi’s Amber Alert System are coming together and the system should be operating soon, according to Governor Ronnie Musgrove. The use of the system in several high-profile child abduction cases prompted the call for the implementation of the system in Mississippi.

“Our children are our most precious resource, and we will do everything in our power to keep them safe,” Musgrove said. “Mississippi’s Amber Alert System will utilize existing emergency resources and help get kidnapped children back to their families.”

The Governor’s Office has been working with representatives from the Mississippi Highway Patrol (MHP), the Mississippi Association of Broadcasters, and the Emergency Alert System to set up the system. A cooperative agreement has been reached, with the MHP serving as the dissemination point for all Amber Alerts.

The Mississippi Association of Broadcasters has purchased and donated to the Mississippi Department of Public Safety the necessary equipment to interface with the Emergency Alert System.

The Amber Alert system is strictly for cases where a child has been abducted, and not for missing children. To implement the system, three factors must be determined by an investigating officer and a superior. First, the child must be 17 years old or younger, or mentally or physically helpless; second, the child’s life must be thought to be in danger of bodily harm or death; and third, there must be description information on the child or abductor.

Once it is determined this criteria has been met, information will be provided to the Mississippi Highway Patrol. The Emergency Alert System will then be activated and the information transmitted to participating radio and television stations around the state. The Amber Alert will be broadcast every 30 minutes for two hours, and every hour after for another three hours until an “end of alert” message is received.

“This plan would not work without a cooperative effort between the Mississippi Association of Broadcasters, the Emergency Alert System and law enforcement agencies,” said Musgrove. “I pray we never have to use it, but it’s important to have it in place.”

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