

**OFFICE OF GOVERNOR ROBERT BENTLEY
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Governor Bentley Details Proposal for Sales Tax Holiday on Severe Weather Preparedness Items

PRATTVILLE – Governor Robert Bentley on Tuesday outlined new legislation that would provide an annual sales tax holiday covering items related to severe weather preparedness.

“A sales tax holiday will promote readiness by giving people an extra incentive to stock up on supplies that will be needed during and after severe weather,” Governor Bentley said. “The sales tax holiday was one of the key recommendations of my Tornado Recovery Action Council, and I urge the Alabama Legislature to approve the holiday as soon as possible.”

The legislation, to be filed this week, calls for several items to be exempted from state sales and use taxes over a designated weekend. A provision also allows counties and municipalities to join the state by removing their own local sales and use taxes from the same items during the same weekend.

Items covered by the legislation include:

- Several types of batteries, including cell phone batteries and chargers
- Battery-powered radios
- NOAA weather radios
- Flashlights, lanterns, and emergency glow sticks
- First aid kits
- Duct tape
- Plywood
- Portable generators
- Gas or Diesel fuel containers
- Tarpaulins and plastic sheeting
- Any non-electric food storage cooler or water storage container
- Non-electric can openers
- Any artificial ice, blue ice, ice packs, or reusable ice
- Fire extinguishers, smoke detectors, and carbon monoxide detectors
- Ground anchor systems such as cords or rope or tie-down kits

The covered items must cost \$60 or less, except for generators, which are covered as long as they cost \$1,000 or less.

Representative Bill Poole of Tuscaloosa County and Senator Greg Reed of Walker County are sponsors of the legislation.

“On April 27 of last year, we were given a vivid reminder of the need to be prepared for when severe weather strikes,” Representative Poole said. “I am hopeful that this sales tax holiday will encourage families to think about their severe weather plans and make sure they have the items they need to weather any storm.”

“We understand how important it is to be prepared, not only for severe weather, but also for the difficult times that follow a severe weather outbreak,” Senator Reed said. “This legislation will encourage people to have the necessary supplies for times when the lights are out or an extended period of cleanup is required.”

Additional Details on Timing, Subsequent Years:

For the year 2012, the last weekend of April has been identified as the earliest possible time for the sales tax holiday. There are several reasons for that, including the time it takes to approve legislation, the time required to allow local municipalities to join, and the logistics of working with retailers across the state to ensure the sales tax holiday will be conducted smoothly.

For all subsequent years, the legislation calls for the sales tax holiday to be held during the last full weekend of February. This will place the holiday in close proximity to the annual Severe Weather Awareness Week and will encourage people to stock up on needed supplies in advance of Alabama’s primary severe weather season.

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For additional information, contact the Governor’s Press Office at 334-242-7150.