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KATHERINE LYNN
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May 7, 2010

TO: SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS, ARCHITECTS AND ENGINEERS

**FROM: KATHERINE LYNN, DIRECTOR
ALABAMA BUILDING COMMISSION**

SUBJECT: MANDATORY SAFE SPACES IN NEW K-12 PUBLIC SCHOOLS

On April 30, 2010, Governor Bob Riley signed House Bill 459 enacting a requirement for any new contract awarded on or after July 1, 2010 for a new public school to include a Building Commission approved safe space or hallway. Pursuant to this Act (Act 2010-746), the Building Commission is adopting the *ICC/NSSA Standard for the Design and Construction of Storm Shelters* (ICC 500-2008) as the minimum building code for safe spaces. Safe spaces shall comply with the building code requirements for tornado shelters. Compliance with the building code requirements for hurricane shelters is recommended but not mandatory.

The requirement for a Building Commission approved safe space shall be included in any new public school that is constructed as an independent, self-contained, public school facility serving any grades from K-12. Renovations, additions to existing schools or auxiliary buildings added to an existing school facility are not considered a new public school. Any determination as to whether or not a new facility is considered a new public school shall be made by the State Department of Education and the Alabama Building Commission.

Plans for new public schools previously submitted and approved by the Building Commission are not exempt from compliance with this law. Plans approved by the Building Commission prior to this Act must submit revised plans or addenda incorporating ICC 500 code-compliant safe spaces if the contracts are submitted to the Building Commission on or after July 1, 2010. Contracts submitted on or after July 1, 2010 that do not comply with the Act shall be rejected.