

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

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GOVERNOR



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August 24, 2009

Mr. Thomas J. Methvin
Beasley, Allen, Crow, Methvin, Portis & Miles
P.O. Box 4160
Montgomery, AL 36103-4160

Dear Tom:

On behalf of the citizens of Alabama, particularly those in Jefferson County, I want to express my appreciation for the outstanding work recently performed by the Alabama State Bar's Panel of Neutrals.

Although the issues related to the Jefferson County Occupation Tax were complex and contentious, Jim Pratt, together with Drayton Nabers, U.W. Clemon, and Mark White, provided invaluable assistance on both the legal and legislative fronts to help us forge consensus. These attorneys devoted countless hours to resolution of what amounted to a crisis of epic proportions.

Without advocating the position of any stakeholder, they served as a valuable resource to all of us. Their neutral status gave stakeholders confidence in their advice as the pressure mounted. Their guidance was both valid and without prejudice. Whether it was me, personally, calling upon Jim Pratt and members of the Panel, or whether it was legislators or commissioners, we all benefited from their efforts.

The Alabama State Bar should be proud of its decision to create this panel and I commend you for your commitment to continue offering this resource to our legislators as well as the Executive Branch.

The State Bar's motto of "lawyers rendering service" certainly rings true with this recent effort.

Thank you for a job well done.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bob Riley", written over a white background.

Bob Riley
Governor of Alabama

cc: Mr. Jim Pratt
Mr. Drayton Nabers
Mr. U. W. Clemon
Mr. Mark White

BR/el