

May 2013

Dear Friends and Supporters,

You do not hear much from us these days on the gambling issue. In the days when the Legislature was dominated by Democrats, gambling was the state's most important issue. The Republican leadership has not entertained passage of any law that would expand gambling.

At the same time, gambling opponents have hoped for some legislation that would give the Attorney General the ability to close down the unlawful gambling venues. As you will recall, Governor Riley's Task Force had a continuous battle to keep the places closed. One of the problems is that the penalties are misdemeanors. The fines and associated legal costs become just a part of doing business. However, there has been a bill in the Alabama Legislature sponsored by Senator Bryan Taylor, SB446, which would restore significant penalties for having gambling devices. It would make possession a felony. With the session soon drawing to a close, we do not know if that bill will have a chance to pass, but we hope it will.

This month's Educational Update addresses another facet of the gambling issue. There was a great deal of criticism of former Governor Bob Riley for not prosecuting Indians. Attorney General Luther Strange received some of the same criticism. He filed a lawsuit against them. The lawsuit has a very good chance of stopping Indian gambling in Alabama. We have addressed these issues in earlier Educational Updates. Attached is a letter we sent to Representative Spencer Bachus about our concern for a bill he was sponsoring. The bill would protect the Indians from the Attorney General's lawsuit and virtually any future efforts to stop illegal Indian gambling.

We are very glad to report that The Woman's Health and Safety Act, Act 2013-79, was signed into law by Governor Robert Bentley on April 9, 2013. During debate of the bill, those opposing it stated a lawsuit will surely be filed against it. We have not heard anything to this point.

This bill is very important to improve the healthcare of women. It will keep substandard abortion clinics, like New Woman's in Birmingham, closed. This new law will be a significant improvement in the standard of healthcare for women in Alabama.

We will give a full report on the legislative session at its conclusion, probably our June Educational Update. If you have any questions or concerns in the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact us. If we can be of any service to you, please let us know. Thank you for your continuing prayerful and financial support.

Yours very truly,

A. Eric Johnston