

August 2016

Dear Friends and Supporters,

This month's Educational Update is in two parts. The first part, we list many of the bills with which we were concerned in the 2016 Regular Session of the Alabama Legislature which ended in April. This list gives a bill number, sponsors, short description and status.

The second part of the Educational Update discusses some of the bills. It gives our assessment of the session. It provides some insight into what happened. If you have questions about any of this, please contact me.

Two of the bills, now laws, we report on, HB376/SB363 and HB301/SB205, both deal with abortion and have been included in a federal lawsuit. The ACLU claims these laws are unconstitutional. The former prohibits what is known as the dilation and evacuation (D&E) abortion done in the second trimester. It requires dismemberment of the unborn child. The latter prohibits abortion clinics from being within 2,000 feet of K-8 public schools.

There has been pending in the United States District Court for the Middle District of Alabama, Judge Myron Thompson's court, abortion cases for several years. Judge Thompson always seems to acquire those cases. He strikes down as unconstitutional all of the laws that come before him. The two recently passed statutes were joined with an existing lawsuit. That way, Judge Thompson keeps jurisdiction of all of the abortion cases.

On a related matter, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down a Texas law that required abortion clinics to meet ambulatory surgical care center standards and for abortionists to have admitting privileges to a local hospital. Alabama had a similar law, The Women's Health and Safety Act, drafted by SLI, passed in 2013. It is on appeal to the 11th Circuit from an unfavorable ruling by Judge Thompson. The bottom line of Texas decision is that Alabama's statute will also be unconstitutional. In fact, Attorney General Strange has dismissed the state's appeal. The purpose of these laws is to protect the healthcare of women, as well as reduce the number of abortions. We currently have a very unfavorable U.S. Supreme Court. The joining of Justice Kennedy with the four liberal justices in a majority opinion is a bad omen for our continuing efforts to deal with the abortion tragedy.

We will not grow weary in well doing. Thank you for your support. Please remember it is late in the summer and our financial support wanes. With personal regards, I am,

Yours very truly,

A. Eric Johnston