

April 2017

Dear Friends and Supporters,

As every legislative year rolls around, we never cease to be amazed at new and unexpected issues. This year, there is a renewed effort for the state to regulate church daycare ministries. This month's Educational Update explains this threat to religious freedom. This very issue was among religious freedom issues that resulted in formation of religious liberty groups like the Southeast Law Institute.

Working with the Alabama Pro-Life Coalition, we drafted three bills: *viz.*, HB96 – Assisted Suicide Ban Act (Rep. Mack Butler); HB95 – Healthcare Rights of Conscience Act (Rep. Arnold Mooney); HB24 – Alabama Child Placing Agency Inclusion Act (Rep. Rich Wingo). The Alabama House of Representatives set March 16, 2017 as “Pro-Life Day.” Unlike earlier years when a rally was held outside, this year supporters were asked to come into the State House where they had refreshments, sat in the gallery, and mingled with Representatives. The entire day was committed to these pro-life bills. Legislators were enthused to see so many people. At the end of the day, each of the bills passed. It was a success.

There are Senate counterparts: *viz.*, SB198 – Assisted Suicide Ban Act (Sen. Phil Williams); SB185 – Healthcare Rights of Conscience Act (Sen. Paul Sanford); SB145 – Alabama Child Placing Agency Inclusion Act (Sen. Bill Hightower). These bills have passed the Senate Health Committee and now must be placed on the Senate calendar for a vote.

We are grateful to the leadership of the House. Supporters of life need to express their gratitude to Speaker Mac McCutcheon and their respective Representatives. Similarly, for the Senate, we need to encourage Senate leadership and respective Senators to place these bills on the calendar for a vote.

These bills were a concerted effort by members of the APLC. SLI was privileged to participate in the drafting of the bills. These bills are important to the progress made for sanctity of life. Those who watched any of the U.S. Senate confirmation hearings for Supreme Court nominee Judge Neil Gorsuch and the discussion of legal “precedent” will realize just how difficult the fight for the sanctity of life remains. While many seem to think Trump's nominee would simply go on the Supreme Court and reverse *Roe v. Wade*, the reality is that it is a long and difficult road. *Roe* is a daunting foe. We need to be praying for the continuing process of approval of Judge Gorsuch, as well as other federal judges at all levels.

Thank you very much for your continuing support and prayers. With personal regards, I am,

Yours very truly,

A. Eric Johnston