

August 2017

Dear Friends and Supporters,

As we come to the end of summer, we see an unusual political campaign season taking place in Alabama. This was as a result of Senator Jeff Sessions being appointed to the position of U.S. Attorney General and the resulting vacant seat. Former Governor Robert Bentley sought to delay the election until November 2018. This was seen to favor his appointee Luther Strange. Many objected to this. But, when Bentley resigned, his successor, Governor Kay Ivey, immediately set the election date for November 2017. It is a hotly contested race with a number of candidates, some of whom would represent Alabama well.

We remind you of our important civic duty to inform ourselves and to vote intelligently. There are multiple candidates from both the Republican and Democrat Parties. The primary date for both parties is August 15, 2017. If a runoff is required for either or both, that date is September 28, 2017. The general election is December 22, 2017.

This month's Educational Update addresses two very important bills that passed the Alabama Legislature last session. One is the Alabama Child Placing Agency Inclusion Act. This law protects religious child placing agencies from discrimination because they may not want to make adoption placements that would violate their religious beliefs, such as, in a same sex home. It was a contentious and difficult process over three years. However, we have ended up with a very important law.

We also report on HB440, a new law that will provide oversight and regulation to residential facilities that house minor children. These are for troubled children of some type. The facilities are usually located in rural places. While many felt this was an encroachment on church ministry, except for one, which is already licensed, we were unaware of any legitimate church residential operations. We hope this Educational Update adequately explains this new law.

If you have any questions on either of the new laws that are addressed in this month's Educational Update, please do not hesitate to contact us. We want everyone to understand the meaning of laws, particularly as relates to religious freedom.

As we enjoy the summer, please remember us with your financial contributions. Your support makes our efforts possible. Thank you.

Yours very truly,

A. Eric Johnston