

March 2021

Dear Friends and Supporters,

In spite of COVID concerns, the Alabama Legislature has been passing bills which should require more public involvement. In the beginning, we understood the legislature would concentrate on the important bills, see how the session progressed, and adjust as necessary. Our hope was that contentious bills would not find their place in early proceedings. That has not been the case. Who would think gambling in Alabama a priority? That is the subject of this month's Educational Update.

The medical marijuana bill (SB 46) passed the Senate. It will legalize the use of marijuana for certain medical purposes. This is seen as the first step toward overall legalization of the drug for recreational use. A bill updating sex education in Alabama Public Schools (HB 385 and SB 196) are making their way through the process. The sex education statutes need to be updated. However, this legislation leads in the wrong direction and is not as comprehensive as it needs to be in light of today's changing and liberating sexual mores.

One bill of significant importance which should and did have a priority was the VCAP bill (HB1 and SB10) which criminalizes sex change operations on minors. Those bills passed both Senate and House committees. A minor amendment was put on the House version which may require some further attention. This bill would have passed early in the session last year had it not been for the intervening pandemic. We believe members will vote for this bill and make it a law to protect minors from the misguided Frankensteinian procedures.

Finally, on the national level, HR1, the Equality Act, passed the U.S. House. This is one of the most dangerous bills that we could possibly imagine. It rewrites federal laws related to sex and sex discrimination and makes major steps in favor of the LGBTQ+ agenda. It will damage religious freedom and free speech rights significantly. We are glad to report that all members of the Alabama House delegation, except Rep. Terri Sewell, voted against this bill. We expect Alabama Senators to vote against the bill. However, the balance of power in the House and Senate and the fawning Biden Administration will work to get this bill passed into law. Encourage our Alabama officials and if you have contacts of persons in other states, encourage them to contact their officials to oppose this very dangerous legislation.

Thank you for your continuing support of our efforts. Let us know if you have any questions. With personal regards, I am,

Yours very truly,

A. Eric Johnston