

**AN EDUCATIONAL UPDATE FROM
THE SOUTHEAST LAW INSTITUTE™, INC.**

To: Interested Persons
Date: July 2023
From: A. Eric Johnston
RE: Report on the 2023 Alabama Regular Legislative Session

Following is a list of a number of bills, sponsors and the progress they made. SLI is privileged to provide legal support on many of these bills. Our expertise covers sanctity of life, religious freedom, parental rights and other constitutional issues. Our services are provided to legislators and other groups without charge.

1. HB208 (Kiel) & SB401 (Allen) – This bill would have provided ten million dollars in Alabama tax credits for support of pregnancy resource centers (“PRC”). This would have been a dollar-for-dollar tax deduction and an encouragement for giving. With the passage of Alabama Human Life Protection Act (“AHLPA”) prohibiting abortion, the PRC’s are seeing an increase in the number of needy families. Abortionists did not oppose the bill, rather it was those controlling tax issues, saying with the reduction of grocery tax, tax credits cannot afford to be given.

2. HB298 (Sells) – Most children have some sort of handheld communication device. Through these devices they can access pornography and other “material harmful to minors.” This bill would have required phone manufacturers to switch on a filter for all phones sold in Alabama. Opposition was from the device makers and, likely in the shadows, those who profit from the porn industry. The bill died.

3. HB261 (Roberts) – ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance) has become a tool of the LGBTQ+, Greens and others to manipulate businesses and to engage in liberal policies. This bill became law and now protects Alabama from “woke corporations.” It prohibits state contracts with businesses that boycott Alabama businesses. This should help remove opposition to Alabama policies when we pass laws like the AHLPA and VCAP (protecting minors from sex change procedures).

4. SB202 (Stutts) – Known as the PRICE Act, this was a detailed bill providing for non-public school choice with state financial assistance to parents. It would have been particularly helpful to low-income-based families who cannot afford tuition at non-public schools. There was significant opposition by the education community. The bill did not make it out of the Senate. Although it was lobbied very hard by all interested parties, there were bridges too far that would not permit the bill to advance. Hopefully, it will return next year in some form that will have the cooperation of all parties.

5. HB261 (DuBose) – Everywhere in sports transgender males are trying to compete with females. This bill became law and prohibits public K-12 schools and two and four year colleges from permitting biological males to participate in athletic team or sport designated for females.

6. HB401 (Mooney) – The Alabama Anti-Obscenity Enforcement Act would be amended to clarify that sexually charged demonstrations, *e.g.*, drag queen, cannot be permitted in places where minors are present. The “harmful to minors” standard is a long held constitutional test for keeping minors from being exposed to pornography and other inappropriate activities. Significant transgender demonstrations took place at the state house. The bill was filed late and did not make progress, but will be advanced next year.

7. HB101 (Shaver) – This bill was years in the making and had contributions from many legal interests in the state to streamline adoption procedures. Adoption is a very valid alternative to abortion. This will facilitate the process for placement of children.

8. HB473 (Givens) – Known as a “safe-haven” bill, it expanded an existing law to permit a person to anonymously leave a recently born infant at a place such as a fire station. Previously, the infant must be left within 72 hours, but is now been extended to 45 days. This bill became law and will be a very good alternative to women who may wish to make this decision. We had hoped for additional features in the bill, but there were some unfortunate lack of communication on getting all that would have been helpful.

9. HB454 (Yarborough) – We reported on this earlier. This bill would make mothers who abort their children murderers in the criminal code. The Alabama Pro-Life Coalition (APLC”) and the pro-life community generally steadfastly condemn this effort. It is misdirected, uninformed and unfortunate. It is based on the argument that women are ordering abortifacients from out of state and aborting their children legally in Alabama. While women are not prosecuted under the AHLPA, the remedy is to stop the abortifacients and not to put mothers in jail. See the May APLC update.

10. HB17 (England), SB34 (Figures), & SB35 (Figures) – Respectively these bills would repeal the 19th Century Alabama Abortion Prohibition Law which is still in effect, repeal the AHLPA, and alternatively add rape and incest, exceptions. They were opposed by the APLC. None passed.

11. SB324 (Singleton) – Would have allowed unlimited computerized gambling in the guise of pari-mutual wagering in Greene County. The bill died.