

March 2024

Dear Friends and Supporters,

Gambling remains the biggest issue before the Legislature. This month's Educational Update was provided (in a longer form) by Citizens for Better Alabama, an organization with whom we have worked since 1999 on gambling issues. This memo was shared with the Legislators with the purpose of demonstrating the monopolistic corrupt plan the gambling bill legislation presents.

That bill passed the House in record time. However, it has run into problems in the Senate. It may be the Senate goes as a straight lottery bill.

One of the things which Legislators have not considered or do not wish to consider is the affect a vote in November will have on this legislation. If a gambling bill is included in the general election, the significant advertising by gambling interests will bring out a record number of Democrats. This will result in maybe losing two of the Alabama Congressional seats up for election. This may contribute to the loss of the Republicans majority in the U.S. House of Representatives. Even if Donald Trump is elected, it will make him a lame duck from the beginning. We cannot understand how House and Senate leadership ignore such realistic possibilities. At a minimum, a different election date should be set.

One issue that has demanded immediate attention is that of the invitro fertilization case decided by the Alabama Supreme Court finding that the frozen fertilized embryo is a person within the meaning of Alabama law. Immediately, this generated international attention. It is the first such decision anywhere. Almost certainly this issue will be addressed immediately, and it needs to be. The Alabama Pro-Life Coalition is not unanimous on the issue, since there are different ideas about IVF. The thing that is important is that we recognize the several decades of existence of IVF and how many families it has helped to have children, who otherwise may not have been able to. We do not want to make IVF unlawful. What we want to do is properly regulate it. It is not regulated at all right now. At the same time, we do not want to diminish the court's decision recognizing the humanity of the embryo child. This may be a tall task. We are hopeful and prayerful that the several divergent interests will come together and do the right thing. That is usually what happens in a legislative process and we are optimistic it can be done now. We will report on this later.

Thank you for your continuing support of our efforts. With personal regards, I am,

Yours very truly,

A. Eric Johnston

AEJ/pkh