

# SOUTHEAST LAW INSTITUTE™

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April 2004

Dear Friends and Supporters,

This month's Educational Update is a little bit different than usual. We wish to take the opportunity to commend Bill Pryor's service as Attorney General and recommend to you our new Attorney General, Troy King. We had an extraordinary opportunity to work with Bill Pryor during his tenure. We expect the same opportunity to work with Troy King. We believe he will be an excellent Attorney General.

In last month's Educational Update we explained the efforts in Alabama on the same sex marriage issue. We have just completed writing language which we hope will be substituted in one or more of the pending legislative bills. We do not believe there should be a partisan effort over this very important and necessary legislation. It appears the issue may ultimately be one of pure politics. The leading bill called for a voter referendum in 2006. Democrats are afraid a 2004 referendum during the general presidential election will bring out more conservative "republican" voters than democrats. Republicans insist that the bill be voted on in 2004. We believe as many democrats, as republicans, will come out to vote for this legislation. Same sex marriage is a problem that affects all of us and is not unique to either party. We fear a delay could bring illegal challenges in the meantime and, possibly, make passage more difficult at the later date. Please pray these issues will be favorably resolved.

SLI has been assisting legislators on the analysis and ramifications of the legislative bill called "Bingo for Books". Our research indicated this legislation is very misleading, will result in few dollars to the benefit of students, yet result in a significant financial windfall monopoly for the state's private gambling interests. All this is aside from the inherent evil of gambling and its problems to society. Dr. Dan Ireland and others are making valiant efforts to oppose this legislation.

Religious liberty is SLI's first commitment. Please pray for us when we deal with this most important issue. Recently, we spoke to medical students at UAB on their religious rights. On April 16, we will speak at the Eagle Forum conference on the religious rights of students in public schools. We appreciate the opportunity to render these educational services.

Please continue your prayer and financial support for us. We are always grateful for your trust. With personal regards, I,

Sincerely,

A. Eric Johnston  
General Counsel

AEJ/mc

*The Southeast Law Institute, Inc.™ is a 501(c)(3) organization providing legal counsel on constitutional and public policy issues.*

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

**To: SLI Supporters**  
**Date: April 2004**  
**From: A. Eric Johnston**  
**Re: Bill was the "Pryor" Attorney General, Now Troy is the "King" Attorney General**

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Bill Pryor is no longer Attorney General. On February 21, 2004 he was sworn in as an appellate judge on the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals. Governor Bob Riley appointed Troy King as Attorney General to complete the term through 2007. In all likelihood, Troy will run for Attorney General when that term expires. The purposes of this update are twofold: (1) to thank Bill Pryor for his effort; and (2) to encourage Troy King.

**WHAT IS THE ATTORNEY GENERAL?**

Most citizens do not know much about the Attorney General. He is the chief law enforcement officer of the state, both for criminal law and civil law. The Attorney General holds a position of such responsibility and influence that he can have more influence on the state than any other elected official. The Attorney General gives legal opinions on the meaning of the law and how it effects Alabamians. He decides when lawsuits are brought and he defends the state against lawsuits of others. He is often the officer who stands between the legislature and the judiciary, two of the most active branches of government.

**ATTORNEY GENERAL BILL PRYOR**

Bill Pryor served as Attorney General from 1997 until 2004. He was first appointed to take Jeff Sessions' place when Jeff was elected U.S. Senator. Bill ran for a full term and was elected by a substantial margin. How good was Bill Pryor? In our opinion, he was the best Attorney General we have had in recent times, say over the last thirty or forty years.

Law and politics divide people into liberal and conservative, with a few in between. The term "liberal" is usually reserved for certain politicians. On the other hand, conservative is used on not only anyone who is not liberal, but also for those who believe in traditional historic America. Have you noticed recently how it is "conservative" people who are opposing gay marriage? Then, there are a few who actually understand what it means to be conservative. They understand government, law, the constitution and America. Bill Pryor is one of those people. He is one who not only knows why he believes what he does, but puts it into action.

So what has he done? Recently, he has been at odds with many of us due to his position in the Roy Moore saga. Also, SLI did not agree with his opinion that the state education system could be used for political support of the recent tax referendum. What about the rest of the time:

- Bill supported our efforts to pass the Alabama Religious Freedom Amendment, perhaps one of the most important religious freedom actions taken in the history of the state of Alabama. He also represented the state effectively in the Dekalb County student religious freedom case, resulting in an important Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals opinion protecting public school student's religious rights.
- He supported The Woman's Right To Know Act in the legislature and successfully shepherded it through the legal process. He also represented the state effectively on the Partial Birth Abortion and Post Viability Ban Laws.
- He has been an opponent of legalized gambling, rendering opinions and legal assistance on a multitude of questions which have arisen.
- He has been supportive of efforts to prohibit same sex marriages in the state of Alabama.

**ATTORNEY GENERAL TROY KING**

Troy King has a wealth of experience in state government. He served on Governor Fob James legal staff, was an Assistant Attorney General under Bill Pryor, and until his appointment, served as legal advisor to Bob Riley. Politically, he ran in the 2002 Republican primary for Secretary of State.

Very importantly, Troy has the proper values to serve as the state's chief law enforcement officer. As a person with a Christian world view, Troy King has the necessary insight and interpretive ability to apply values to everyday requirements. We have seen this in well written attorney general opinions on gambling and other moral issues. Throughout the years, we have worked with Troy on various issues and we know his strengths.

We believe Troy King will win the same praise we have given to Bill Pryor. Many of the same type issues noted above will also be issues with which Troy will deal in the coming years. We have no doubt he will take the proper positions and work with us to achieve protection of the rights and liberties of Alabama citizens.

Please pray for them both in their new duties and even drop notes of encouragement.

*This statement is for educational purposes only. It is not intended to provide legal advice. We hope if you have questions or know of those who do, you will contact us and we can assist through referral to one of our cooperating attorneys.*