**ALCAP & American Character Builders**

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Joe Godfrey, Executive Director

**LEGISLATIVE MATTERS:** Alabama has always been considered a very socially conservative state, but the 2021 Legislative Session was an embarrassment as legislators in both houses passed a number of socially liberal bills.

***Alcohol***

Since becoming a “super majority,” Republican lawmakers have demonstrated that they have never seen a beverage alcohol expansion bill they did not like. This year was no exception. A series of bills were passed and signed into law by the Governor that legalize direct shipment of alcoholic beverages to the homes of Alabama citizens. While the bills included requirements for delivery personnel to check IDs to make sure the person receiving the shipment is 21 years of age or older, ask yourself if you think FedEx or UPS delivery personnel will consistently do that. It is not likely.

***“Medical” Marijuana***

In spite of heroic efforts by several members of the Alabama Senate and the House of Representatives to stop its passage, the “medical” marijuana bill (SB46, sponsored by Sen. Tim Melson) passed both houses and was signed into law by Governor Ivey. We are disappointed, but we will do everything we can to keep marijuana legalization from continuing to expand. In many states where “medical” marijuana has been legalized, the legalization of recreational marijuana has often followed.

***Yoga***

Yoga is intrinsically tied to the Hindu religion and for that reason has been banned in Alabama public schools (K-12). But that is no longer the case. The Alabama Legislature has now voted to allow a Hindu religious practice to be taught in public schools.

***Vulnerable Child Compassion & Protection Act (VCAP)***

This bill passed the Senate, but leadership in the House refused to allow the bill to come to the floor of the House for a vote. This bill would have prohibited hormone blockers and surgical procedures to be used on children for the purpose of changing their birth sex, before being old enough to decide for themselves.

***“Born Alive” Bill***

One bright spot was the passage of the “Born Alive” Bill, sponsored by Rep. Ginny Shaver. This bill requires that medical staff do everything possible if, during an abortion, a child is born alive. This bill received bipartisan support in both the House and Senate. We applaud Rep. Shaver for her persistence in getting this bill passed into law.

***Gambling***

For ALCAP, the biggest issue during the 2021 Regular Session of the Alabama Legislature was gambling. Several gambling bills were introduced, but all failed to pass due to “greedlock” (pro-gambling factions being unable to agree). The most comprehensive bill included a state-sponsored lottery, state-sanctioned casinos, a compact with the Poarch Creek Indians that would allow them to turn their current facilities into full-fledged casinos and build a new casino in Northeast Alabama, as well as legalizing online gambling and sports betting. The legislature may try again to pass a gambling bill in a special session or during the 2022 Regular Session, which begins January 11, 2022.

**RETIREMENT ANNOUNCEMENT:** ALCAP & American Character Builders executive director, Joe Godfrey, announced his plan to retire on April 30, 2022. A search committee has been at work and may have a successor named by October 1, 2021. This person will “shadow” Godfrey during the 2022 Regular Session of the Alabama Legislature and then take over as executive director upon Godfrey’s retirement. Please be in prayer for both important ministries during these days of transition.

***Visit*** [***https://alcap.com/the-forgotten-command/***](https://alcap.com/the-forgotten-command/) ***to download the six-week video study series and discussion guides entitled,* THE FORGOTTEN COMMAND*, for FREE!***

***Both ALCAP and American Character Builders are completely dependent upon the prayers and financial support of the churches of Alabama. Please consider adding these ministries to your on-going prayer lists and to your church and associational budgets so that we can continue this important work.***