

★ AMERICAN CHARACTER BUILDERS ★



But as for you, brethren, do not grow weary *in* doing good.

2 Thessalonians 3:13
(NKJV)

Gambling expected to dominate the 2016 Regular Session of the Alabama Legislature

MONTGOMERY, AL— Senate President Pro-Tem, Del Marsh (R-Anniston), who introduced pro-gambling legislation during the 2015 Regular Session of the Alabama Legislature, has indicated that he plans to offer similar legislation during the 2016 Regular Session, which begins February 2nd. If it passes, his bill will likely result in a vote of the people of Alabama on a Constitutional Amendment to legalize a state-sponsored lottery and full-fledged casino-style gambling at the four dog-racing tracks currently operating in the state.

Though there are still some Republican lawmakers who will continue to adamantly oppose any and all pro-gambling bills, we can no longer count on some key Republican leadership, at least in the Senate, to stand strong against gambling. This means that

churches, and especially pastors, are going to be our primary line of defense against the pro-gambling forces at work in our state.

Who is behind this push for gambling? The following is a quote from the Alabama Jobs Foundation (a misnomer if there ever was one) website:

The Alabama Jobs Foundation was created and is led by Alabama business leaders Pat Dye, former head football coach at Auburn University; Charles McCrary, retired president of Alabama Power; Raymond Harbert, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Harbert Management Corporation; and Harold Ripps, real estate developer and owner of The Rime Companies.

These business leaders have formed this foundation for the sole purpose of pushing pro-gambling legislation. They know that gambling does not lift the economy of a state, but only lifts the personal

wealth of gambling bosses who have a stake in casinos and/or the companies that operate state-sponsored lotteries, and yet they are the driving force behind this call for legalizing gambling.

Prior to “going to press” with this newsletter we learned that Sen. Marsh has indicated he may not “push” his casino/lottery gambling bill during the 2016 Regular Session unless members of the Republican Caucus demonstrate overwhelming support for such a bill. ***This gives us even more reason to contact our legislators (especially our state senators) and ask them to oppose any and all pro-gambling bills and/or procedural votes!***

Go to www.alcap.com to find the name and contact information for your legislators.

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WHO WE ARE:

The Alabama Citizens Action Program (ALCAP), originally founded in 1937 as the Alabama Temperance Alliance, serves together with local churches as Alabama's "moral compass." This ministry provides an outlet for churches throughout Alabama to fulfill God's command to His followers to be "salt & light" in our culture. (Matthew 5:13-16)

In 2010 ALCAP became a 501c4 organization (non-profit, but NOT tax-deductible) and renamed its school program "American Character Builders," a 501c3 organization (non-profit AND tax-deductible), having its own separate Board of Directors.

Churches are encouraged to support ALCAP while individuals are encouraged to support American Character Builders with their financial contributions and prayers.



Dr. Sharon Murphy (right) discusses the dangers of legalizing marijuana, as Mrs. Carissa Anthony (left) looks on during the November 11, 2015 free webinar hosted by American Character Builders and ALCAP.

American Character Builders & ALCAP cohosted a free webinar for church leaders on the dangers of legalizing marijuana

BIRMINGHAM, AL—On November 11, 2015, American Character Builders and ALCAP joined with the Alabama chapter of Smart Approaches to Marijuana (SAM) director, Dr. Shannon Murphy and the Preventive & Development Coordinator for Homewood, AL, Mrs. Carissa Anthony, to host a free webinar on the dangers of legalizing marijuana.

There were an estimated 15 participants state-wide in this event and we hope to host similar events in the future. We have also asked Dr. Murphy to consider putting her presentation on a video that can be posted on our American Character Builders website.

Dr. Murphy is a board certified Pediatrician, the Southern States Coordinator for Project SAM (Smart Approaches to Marijuana), and the Executive Director of SAM Alabama. On a national level, Dr. Murphy serves on a Practice Advisory Committee on Adolescent Substance Use for the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Currently, she volunteers her time working in drug education. She has created a

school-based program for middle and high school students regarding marijuana, and she is actively involved in developing education based community outreach programs throughout the state.

Dr. Murphy did her undergraduate work at Vanderbilt University, and she received her medical degree from Emory School of Medicine in Atlanta. She worked for over 10 years as a primary care pediatrician at St. Vincent's Hospital in downtown Birmingham.

Dr. Murphy lives with her husband and 3 children in Homewood, Alabama.

For more information on how your school or church can use resources provided by AMERICAN CHARACTER BUILDERS visit our website:
www.AmericanCharacterBuilders.org

Or, contact Sharon Cook at 205.985.9529, or email her at scook@americancharacterbuilders.org

The following excerpt is from www.StopPredatoryGambling.org. This national organization was founded in the mid-1990s and ALCAP's Director Emeritus, Dan Ireland, was among the founding members. ALCAP's current executive director, Joe Godfrey, presently serves on the Stop Predatory Gambling Board of Directors.

One of the primary arguments used by pro-gambling forces is that “people will gamble anyway and money will be recaptured from going out-of-state if we will legalize and tax those gambling dollars in our own state.”

The evidence is overwhelming that the “citizens are already going-out-of-state to gamble” argument is a continually-recycled, phony, public relations strategy to breathe life into efforts to legalize casinos and lotteries- a strategy that gambling interests have used in virtually every state in America. These are national and international casino companies who simply position state after state against one another so they can expand their market.

The “going-out-of-state” argument has been and always will be a phony public relations attempt by casinos and lotteries to evade scrutiny about what they are really doing: cheating and exploiting citizens. The facts are that regional casinos and lotteries take the bulk of their profits by turning local citizens who may have been going out-of-state a handful of times a year **into everyday gamblers.**

When less predatory gambling is available, people lose less money and gambling problems are less. For example, **South Dakota outlawed video slot machines for 100 days and the number of gambling addicts treated each month dropped by 93.5%.**

State-sponsored gambling (casinos and state lotteries) are now the most predatory operations in the country

Casinos: Leading casino operators like Caesars can trace more than 75 percent of its gambling revenue back to specific customers. People are targeted based on factors such as how fast they play a slot machine and how much they wager, information that can be collected through their “Player’s Rewards card” because many players use these cards directly in the machine. The faster someone plays, the more likely they are to play recklessly. The casino staff use statistical models to set calendars and budgets that predict when a targeted person will gamble as well as to calculate the person’s “predicted lifetime value” – the sum that each gambler is likely to lose to the slot machines over his or her lifetime. Other predatory practices used to incite out-of-control gambling include: using mail, phone and email solicitations to offer free slot machine play; giving visitors interest-free loans known as “markers” that are gambled away inside the casino; aggressively targeting people who use casino ATMs because they demonstrated a weakness to chase their losses; using “hosts” who are in constant contact with heavy gamblers away from the casino to lure them right back; enlisting “Luck Ambassadors”- casino employees who hand out small cash vouchers to losing gamblers identified by the player tracking system in an attempt to uplift their spirits and keep them in front of the gambling machine in real time on the casino floor; and providing gamblers free alcohol, free meals and free lodging.

Lotteries: State lotteries make 80% of their profits from 10% of its users. Lottery games are designed to override people’s common sense, **especially people who don’t believe they have control over their lives. Lotteries are exempt from truth-in-advertising laws.** The advertising content and practices of state lotteries **target specific groups or economic classes of people**– it’s racial-profiling, Lottery-style. And despite the willfully dishonest claims of lottery officials that “people are already gambling anyway,” **lotteries relentlessly seek to “reach people who have never played.”**

- See more at: <http://stoppredatorygambling.org/facts-research>



NOTE: The AUM study that is being used by the Alabama Jobs Foundation to argue for legalizing gambling in the state says that 11,000 jobs will be created in Alabama as a result of gambling. However, Illinois, which has far more casinos than Alabama will ever have, only employs a little less than 7,900 part-time and full-time individuals. Illinois also has over 9,000 people who have requested that the casinos exclude them due to their own acknowledged gambling addiction. That means there are more gambling addicts (who admit they are addicts) in Illinois than people employed by the casinos!



¹³ "You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men.

¹⁴ "You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all *who are* in the house. ¹⁶ Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven."

**Matthew 5:13–16
(NKJV)**

A SPECIAL MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ALCAP & AMERICAN CHARACTER BUILDERS:

As we come to the end of another year, a year of greater-than-normal challenges and expenses, our ALCAP & American Character Builders budgets are being strained. These ministries are totally dependent upon churches and Christ-followers who see the importance of God's people serving as the "salt & light" of Christ in a world that needs to hear the Good News of Jesus. Please remember to add us to your church and personal prayer lists as your missionaries to the Alabama Legislature and the schools of our state. Also, please consider adding us to your church budget and your personal giving plan during the next year.

ALCAP is a 501c4 organization, which means we are non-profit, but NOT tax-deductible. Since churches do not need tax deductions, it would be best if churches make their checks payable to **ALCAP**. If you are an individual and would like to make a contribution, or would like to contribute monthly to our ministry, you can make your checks payable to **American Character Builders**, which is a 501c3 organization that is a non-profit and IS tax-deductible.

If you would like to host an "ALCAP & American Character Builders Sunday" in which you collect a special offering for this ministry, or you would like for me, or another representative of ALCAP or American Character Builders, to speak in your church, please contact me at jgodfrey@alcap.com or by calling 205.985.9062.

May God bless you and your family during this Christmas season and the New Year!

Joe Godfrey

