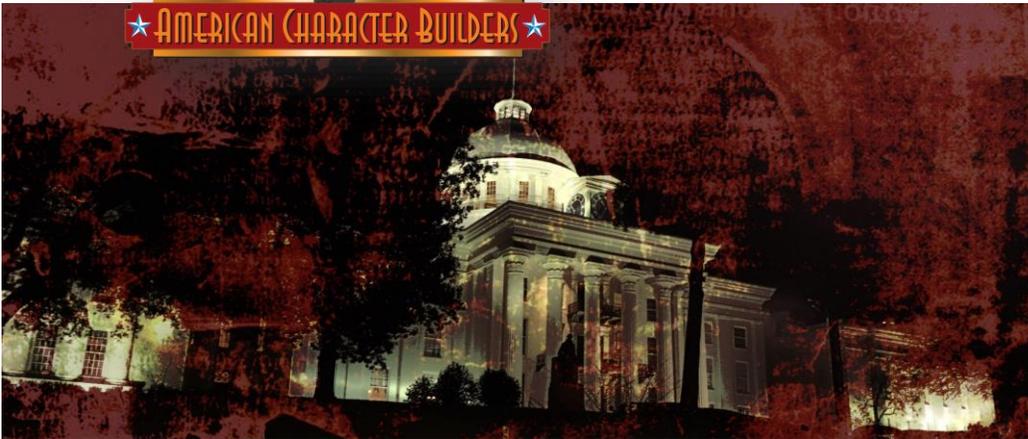


★ AMERICAN CHARACTER BUILDERS ★



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

2 Thessalonians 3:13  
(NKJV)

## 2021 Legislative Session looks to be a “reboot” of 2020 regarding gambling, yoga and “medical” marijuana

STATEWIDE — Because the 2020 Regular Session of the Alabama Legislature was cut short due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the only bills that passed were the Education Trust Fund Budget and the General Fund Budget, as well as a handful of local bills (some of which expanded the sale and availability of alcoholic beverages). As a result, we are expecting gambling, marijuana, yoga (see article on page 3) and several other bills to be reintroduced in the 2021 Regular Session – bills which ALCAP will continue to oppose. However, we also anticipate at least one pro-life bill (perhaps more) to be introduced and we will, of course, support all pro-life bills.

Concerning the issue of gambling, you may remember that Governor Kay Ivey formed a Gambling Policy Study Committee before the pandemic hit our state. This committee met in person one time in

order to organize themselves.

After that initial meeting, they had a series of online meetings, one of which ALCAP provided two speakers who talked about the negative aspects of expanding gambling in Alabama. Also, ALCAP provided each committee member (with the help of Les Bernal, national director of Stop Predatory Gambling) a brief document that gave the facts about the negative impact that state-sponsored and state-sanctioned gambling will have on our state, and thanks to the financial support of churches throughout the state, we were able to provide each committee member a DVD entitled, “Out of Luck: Where Does the Lottery Money Go?” (Educational Edition).

We anticipate that this committee’s report will provide an outline for legalizing expanded gambling in Alabama. ALCAP will do everything

we can in order to oppose any attempts to expand gambling and we will keep you informed of all legislation on this issue that will, undoubtedly, be introduced. IT WILL BE UP TO CHURCHES AND ALL OPPONENTS OF GAMBLING TO LET YOUR LEGISLATORS KNOW HOW YOU FEEL.

On a different aspect of gambling, ALCAP also opposes a state compact with the Poarch Creek Indians (PCI). In such a compact, PCI will likely demand the right to build two new casinos in the state: One in Birmingham and one in Huntsville. This is an expansion of gambling that will be devastating to the economy of Alabama.

For more information on all legislative issues, visit our website...

[www.ALCAP.com](http://www.ALCAP.com)

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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.



## American Character Builders News

**Updates on resources provided by American Character Builders**

BIRMINGHAM, AL— American Character Builders resources continue to be available at our website...

[www.AmericanCharacterBuilders.org](http://www.AmericanCharacterBuilders.org)

We have downloadable materials that address alcohol, tobacco, other drugs, bullying and our newest packet of resources on the opioid crisis (which appears on our homepage). American Character Builders has received grants to update our program on alcohol and, after a delay of several months due to the pandemic, we are currently working with faculty and students at Samford University to produce a short video (or possibly, a series of videos) and improved materials on this subject.

All of our resources are designed for use in public schools, but we also provide Bible studies for use in local churches. Church leaders may want to offer to teach one or more of our programs at local middle and high schools and then offer follow-up programs at

their church for parents, school officials and community leaders. At the church event, biblical principles can be introduced.

This is a great way for churches, schools and local civic and government entities to partner together in addressing the growing alcohol and drug problems that are confronting all demographic groups in our state and nation.

For more information, or to discuss hosting a training opportunity in your church or community, contact Cheryl Corley at **205.985.9062** or by email at [ccorley@alcap.com](mailto:ccorley@alcap.com).



## New Alcohol Recommendations from the CDC

*The following is copied by permission from an article in the MICAP/RECAP Newsletter, published by the Michigan Council on Alcohol Problems (MICAP) and was written by Vernon Smith, PhD, and a member of the MICAP Board*

The biggest news in decades about recommendations for alcohol use came from the CDC in August 2020. In an 835-page report, the CDC indicated that it is making significant changes to its recommendations on alcohol use, and the recommendation is clear: consume less alcohol.

Regarding alcohol consumption, the ["2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans"] report makes two major changes to previous guidance. Until this year, the Dietary Guidelines recommended no more than "moderate" alcohol intake, defined as no more than one drink per day for women, and two drinks per day for men. The new report will change that recommendation to no more than one drink per day, eliminating the distinction between men and women. Equally significant, the new Guidelines will omit any mention of potential benefits of moderate alcohol consumption. Past reports have alluded to potential benefits. However, recent scientific findings have repeatedly pointed to the role of alcohol in a range of health issues, especially cancer and liver disease, and these risks are now seen as outweighing any small potential protective heart benefits of moderate alcohol use.

**The evidence suggests there is no "safe limit," and the risk of adverse health effects increases with each drink.**

*For a .PDF of the entire article, visit [www.ALCAP.com](http://www.ALCAP.com)*

## Can Yoga Be Secularized?

*By Clete Hux, Director of Apologetics Resource Center*

Yoga: Physical exercise or religious spirituality? Legal or illegal? Those are some questions that the State Legislature needs to consider with regards to practicing or not practicing yoga in Alabama schools K-12. The Alabama Administrative Code (AAC), Rule 290-040-040-.2 that bans the practice of yoga and meditation in its public school system has been in place for almost three decades. It was for good reason this was passed due to the intrinsic and inseparable relationship of yoga and Hinduism. In addition there is the issue of the establishment clause of religion in the First Amendment.

One thing learned in research into various curricula over the last few decades is how subtly the religious practices including yoga and meditation were introduced. For example, back in 1986, New Age leader and activist, Dick Sutphen, stated, "One of the biggest advantages we have as New Agers is, once the occult, metaphysical and New Age terminology is removed, we have concepts and techniques that are very acceptable to the general public. So we can change the names and demonstrate the power. In so doing, we can open the door to millions who normally would not be receptive."

Such subtleties have been making their way into this issue of education mostly because we don't understand Eastern mystical beliefs and practices, i.e., yoga and meditation. The truth is that it is hard enough for us to understand Eastern mysticism, but even more so when meaning is shifted away from original meaning to a replacement meaning in disguise. The result can be a complete change in a person's worldview.

Knowingly or unknowingly, the proponents of any legislation allowing yoga in public schools are doing the same thing by trying to distance the practice of yoga away from its religious origin, attempting to redefine it with a secular basis, again devoid of its true meaning. The question should be asked, "What gives us the right to do that"? Answering, "because it is so popular that everyone is doing it" is not a legitimate reason nor is "because we want to give it a different meaning." Intent does not change meaning. Even the Hindu American Foundation, which is all for promoting Hinduism and yoga in our country, is upset with pragmatists who try to redefine yoga as merely physical exercise thus covering up its religious heritage and meaning.

The 2020 bill, sponsored by Rep. Jeremy Gray (D-Opelika), to lift the ban on yoga, admitted to the Montgomery Advertiser, "I had to make it where it's more about stretching, breathing and meditation as opposed to embodying the whole concept of yoga." In other words, he had to translate something that is religious by nature into something that is only physical. Notice he used the words stretching and breathing, but he also included meditation which the "in place" rule prohibits because of its Eastern religious connotation and its dissociative nature. Gray, again, affirmed that meditation was included when on February 5, 2020, through his Facebook account, "Fix the man, fix the world." #InsideJob, he posted, "It was a great honor and privilege to talk to the at-risk teenagers at 'Second Chance' this morning about the importance of implementing yoga, mindfulness, meditation, and control breathing into their daily routine."



And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

*John 1:14 (KJV)*

## **PLAN TO SCHEDULE A “FORGOTTEN COMMAND” CONFERENCE IN 2021...**

Christ’s call to become His followers carries with it three assignments – THE GREAT COMMANDMENTS (to love God and to love others), THE GREAT COMMISSION (to make disciples) and THE GREAT CALLING (the often “forgotten command” to be salt & light). To neglect any one of these is to fail to follow Christ completely. ALCAP is now offering a FREE video series built around this theme of “THE FORGOTTEN COMMAND.” In the introductory video and the six-sessions that follow you will discover how each of these assignments are intertwined in the purpose and mission of Christ’s Church. Each video is accompanied by a discussion guide and the series can be presented in a one or two-day conference or retreat setting, or as a six-week study. It is available to download for free on our website, [www.ALCAP.com](http://www.ALCAP.com).

The series can also be presented in person as a weekend conference or a revival series. To schedule a conference or series of messages, feel free to contact me at [jgodfrey@alcap.com](mailto:jgodfrey@alcap.com) or call our ALCAP and American Character Builders office at 205.985.9062.

## **MERRY CHRISTMAS FROM THE ALCAP & AMERICAN CHARACTER BUILDERS STAFF!**

As we close out 2020 and prepare for what we all hope will be a better year in 2021, ALCAP and American Character Builders are grateful for your continued prayers and financial support. Like many ministries, ALCAP and American Character Builders are facing financial challenges. Please consider a year-end contribution to help us begin the new year on a good foundation. We have sought to be good stewards of the gifts you have given in the past, and we will continue to do our best to accomplish as much as we can with limited resources, but we need your help. If you are an individual who would like to contribute, make your checks payable to *American Character Builders* in order to get a tax deduction. If you represent a church, we request that you make your checks payable to ALCAP. You may also visit our websites ([www.ALCAP.com](http://www.ALCAP.com) and [www.AmericanCharacterBuilders.org](http://www.AmericanCharacterBuilders.org)) to make contributions online. If you are interested in including American Character Builders in your estate planning, please contact our office to discuss this option.