

Sue Ella Deadwyler, “*She hath done what she could.*” Mark 14:8a

April 20th: National Day of Silence Mainstreams LGBTQQ in Schools

Since Georgia law, specifically, authorizes the observance of only one minute of silence at the beginning of each public school day, why allow a day of silence for alternate lifestyles?

The 16-year-old day of silence observance was initiated by University of Virginia students in 1996 to promote and affirm alternate lifestyles. The Gay, Lesbian Straight Education Network (GLSEN) picked up the tab in 2001 by becoming the day’s official sponsor providing, staff and volunteers to expand outreach. By 2008 GLSEN claimed that 7,500 K – 12 schools had been registered by a student, teacher or administrator. Incidentally, official consent from the school is not required for registration.

Gay-Straight Alliance Clubs, Day of Silence, Coming Out Day, Ally Week

The statements “*Change attitudes, Change Behaviors, Change Directions, Change Lives, Change Policies, Be an Ally, Be the Change*” were emboldened on the front of yellow T-shirts distributed October 22, 2011 by Gay-Straight Alliance Clubs at the National Coming Out Day celebration that preceded “Ally Week.” The T-shirts were provided as tools for students and teachers to wear during Ally Week, as a way to identify students and staff who agree with and are *allies* of LGBTQQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and questioning).

Though the T-shirts left no doubt about the expected results of LGBTQQ strategies in public schools, overtly homosexual symbols were the décor during school lunch time on Coming Out Day. Students ate cake with rainbow-colored stripes atop white icing and were given rainbow flags, pride wristbands and other rainbow accessories, to affirm their support for LGBTQQ.

The double standard practiced in public schools is glaring when a proliferation of rainbow symbols is lauded as freedom of expression, but public schools squelch expressive freedoms at Christmas, by prohibiting the use of red and green colors, candy canes and greetings. Christian expressions on clothing, jewelry, posters, exhibits and artifacts are prohibited under the notion that atheists might be offended, but promotion of alternate lifestyles is protected, despite the undisputed possibility of unique health hazards and offenses to society as a whole.

Lambda Legal, a homosexual firm, provides a day of silence Q & A sheet to document the right *not* to speak, while emphasizing student/staff rights to *wear* LGBTQQ buttons or T-shirts and *display* in school pro-homosexual posters, exhibits, and other alternate lifestyle promotions.

The Georgia Safe Schools Coalition, a major supporter of alternate lifestyles, has an online course, *LGBTQQ Youth 101: A Comprehensive Manual for School Counselors*, funded in 2009 by the University of Georgia Vice President’s Office of Public Service and Outreach. Therein, GSSC explains that it fosters safe and affirming school environments for LGBTQQ youth and families, with no mention of this critical fact: Affirming LGBTQQ requires suppressing the freedoms of speech and expression of people that oppose mainstreaming alternate lifestyles.

ACTION – Ask teachers and administrators at local schools whether the day of silence will be observed there.

Georgia General Assembly

40-Day Session for 2012 Began January 9th, Ended March 29th

Current members of the Georgia General Assembly ended the second session of their two-year terms, but will continue in office until the second Monday of next year, January 14, 2013. Until then, some will campaign for reelection, since members of the Senate and House run for office in even-numbered years (*e.g.* 2012) and begin their two-year terms in January of the upcoming odd-numbered year, when incumbents and newly elected legislators take the oath of office.

However, 17¹ legislators have announced they will not run for the same office again this year.

- At 9:30 a.m. March 29th, the 180-member Georgia House of Representatives commenced the 40th and last day of the 2012 legislative session, working until midnight to wrap up its annual business. Among the 210 pieces of legislation – 111 bills and 99 resolutions – handled in the House that day were 89 uncontested* resolutions that passed as a group without debate.
- At 10:00 a.m. March 29th the 56 members of the Senate, also, convened for business on the 40th and last day of the session. At the end of the day, the Senate had made decisions on 73 bills and 85 resolutions. 79 of those resolutions* were uncontested and passed as a group.

Uncontested* resolutions. At the beginning of each legislative day's rules calendar is a section called "Uncontested Resolutions." They do not have the force of law, are not opposed, are not debated, and always pass en masse. Some may establish study committees and similar bodies that never materialize, because such appointments are not always mandatory. Other resolutions are commemorative. They name or rename roads, streets, highways, parks, bodies of water, bridges, institutions, buildings, structures, and other geographical landmarks. They may commend individuals, businesses, schools, athletic teams, beauty queens, clubs, anniversaries, birthdays, etc. and, when appropriate, they offer condolences or designate special observances.

Examples of resolutions requiring individual votes. Among resolutions requiring separate votes are those that invite individuals, families, consulates or special groups to visit the General Assembly. Such is H.R. 1443 extending condolences for the death of Corporal John Stalvey and inviting his family to the House of Representatives. Another is H.R. 1466 commending the Kingdom of Denmark and inviting representatives of Denmark to the House. H.R. 1467 invited Macon officials to the House to observe Macon Day on February 29th, which was Leap Day.

Resolutions affecting law require separate votes. Such is S.R. 730, by Senator Chip Rogers, urging the rejection of policies and funding of Agenda 21 that deems national sovereignty a *social injustice*. Agenda 21 requires extreme environmentalism, social engineering and global political control as initiated in 1992 by the UN in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Operating under the guise of sustainable development, smart growth, wildlands projects, resilient cities, regional visioning, and green or alternative projects, Agenda 21's goal is to destroy private ownership of property, single-family homes, cars, farms, and eliminate personal travel choices. *S.R. 730 died.*

S.R. 926 introduced by Senator Josh McKoon prohibited the use of laws that are incompatible with laws and policies of the U.S. and Georgia. It was deliberately delayed. *S.R. 926 died.*

ACTION – None. All bills and resolutions that did not pass this session died at the end of day 40.

¹ Rep. Roger Lane is Judge, Superior Court, Brunswick; Rep. Mark Hatfield is seeking the seat Senator Greg Goggans is vacating; Rep. Lee Anderson is running for Congress, 12th district; Representative Doug Collins is running for Congress, 9th district; Representatives not running again: Roberta Abdul-Salaam; Amos Amerson, Stephanie Benfield; Elly Dobbs; Joe Heckstall; Sistie Hudson; Billy Horne; Lynmore James; Gene Maddox; Martin Scott; Tommy Smith; Roger Williams.

Selected Bills Passed This Session

“In God We Trust”

S.B. 293, by Senator Bill Heath, was the first bill introduced in the 2012 session. The original language required the national motto, “In God We Trust,” to be *printed* on license plates and made a county name decal available to individuals who wanted to cover the motto. However, the final version of the bill requires tags to “contain a [blank] space for an authorized decal” and allows license plate purchasers to choose a free “In God We Trust” decal or a free county decal.

Passed the last day, when the Senate agreed to the House floor amendment.

Charter Schools

H.B. 797 introduced by Representative Jan Jones is the enabling legislation that would govern state charter schools if the proposed constitutional change outlined in H.R. 1162 passes in the November General Election. It authorizes and establishes an appointed state-level commission to resume the work of the State Commission on Charter Schools that was ruled unconstitutional by the Georgia Supreme Court last summer. H.B. 797 will be more fully outlined later.

Passed the last day, when the House agreed to a Senate committee substitute amended on the floor.

H.R. 1162, introduced by Representative Jan Jones, (a) makes chartering schools constitutional whether chartered by locally elected school boards or by a state-appointed commission and (b) gives the General Assembly policy-making power over public schools. If voters approve this proposal in November, state appointees would enjoy unprecedented control of public education.

Passed March 19th, sent to the governor April 2nd, becomes law with or without his signature.

Pro-Life

H.B. 954, introduced by Representative Doug McKillip, prohibits abortion after 20 weeks of gestation, unless the life of the unborn child is diagnosed as medically futile. H.B. 954 defines the term “medically futile” as follows: “in reasonable medical judgment, the unborn child has a profound and irremediable congenital or chromosomal anomaly that is incompatible with sustaining life after birth.” Fact: It’s important to note that at 20 weeks gestation or earlier, pain receptors appear throughout the body, but the ability to regulate or lessen pain does not develop until after birth. Therefore, unborn babies, actually, feel pain more intensely than newborns or older children and adults. Another fact: In 2009, four percent of the total abortions in Georgia occurred after 19 weeks from fertilization.

Passed the last day, as both House and Senate agreed to the conference committee report.

Assisted Suicide

H.B. 1114 introduced by Representative Ed Setzler replaces the former assisted suicide law that the Georgia Supreme Court ruled unconstitutional last fall. H.B. 1114 prohibits an intentional and willful termination of one’s own life (suicide) and authorizes a felony charge against any person who knowingly and willfully *helps* another person commit suicide. Upon conviction, violators will be sentenced to one to ten years in prison. Attorney fees and litigation expenses could be recovered in civil actions wherein assisted suicide is proven. However, penalties for health care providers that assist in suicide would include revocation of the license, certification, registration or other authorization to work in the provider’s occupation. H.B. 1114 does not minimize the power of documents such as a living will, durable power of attorney or advance directive for health care or written order not to resuscitate.

Passed the last day, when the Senate agreed with the House amendment to the Senate substitute.

4-Pronged Unique Strategy Used to Revise Georgia Tax Code

Three Sessions, a Special Appointed Council, Select Legislators, Abnormal Process

Tax Upon Tax

H.B. 386 extensively revised – adds some, reduces some, increases some – Georgia taxes. State income tax rates were made more marriage friendly but freezes retirement income tax exclusion at current rates – \$65,000 for a single filer, and \$130,000 for joint filers. Divisions of H.B. 386: Part I. Motor Vehicle Tax Reform, pp. 2-17; Part II. Income Tax Revisions, p. 18; Part III. Conservation Easement Credit Revisions, pp. 21-27; Part IV. Film Exemption Elimination, pp. 27-28; Part V. Manufacturing and Agriculture Exemptions, pp. 28-32; and Part VI. E-Fairness and Sales Tax Holiday, pp. 50-54. (Page numbers may be helpful if you choose to do personal research.)

Passed March 22, 2012, the 37th day, when the Senate passed the House Committee Substitute.

Zero-Based Budgeting (ZBB)

S.B. 33 introduced in 2011 by Senator Shafer, authorizes certain agencies and programs to submit a ZBB analysis at least once every ten years, not more than once every eight years, that will be reviewed by the Joint Fiscal Affairs Subcommittee. Included in the bill is the Board of Regents, as well as the Department of Education that must submit a ZBB for January 2013.

Passed the last day, March 29 2012, when both House and Senate adopted the conference committee report.

S.B. 483 by Senator Jeff Mullis requires the five PSC commissioners to elect each new chairman to a two-year term, effective January, 2013. They, currently, rotate to serve one-year terms as chairman. PSC commissioners run statewide and are elected to six-year terms.

Passed the last day, when the Senate agreed to the House Committee substitute.

Turkish American Day at the Capitol

H.R. 1468 by Representative Mike Cheokas of Americus designated February 21st as Turkish American Day at the Capitol, where a Turkish cultural display occupied an entire wing of the second floor. Legislators and guests visiting the display could have “a taste of Turkish cuisine.” Eight governors from Turkey were scheduled for a photograph session with Governor Deal.

Passed the House February 21st. It pertained to the House only and needed no Senate action.

H.B. 685 by Representative Gene Maddox redefines dog classifications as (a) a dangerous dog, (b) a potentially dangerous dog and (c) a vicious dog. As introduced, the bill removed the one free bite rule, but it was restored in committee. An owner is allowed only one vicious dog and it must be registered and equipped with a microchip ID. The bill requires a court order for euthanasia of dogs that have bitten humans more than once. Felons are not allowed to own vicious dogs. The bill provides exemptions for law enforcement or military dogs, hunting dogs and a dog that attacks a trespasser.

Passed the last day, after the House agreed with the Senate substitute and floor amendment.

H.B. 861 by Representative Michael Harden requires drug testing of TANF applicants as a condition of eligibility to receive welfare benefits. Failing a drug tests renders the individual ineligible for *one month* or until another test is negative. For two positive results, recipients are ineligible for *three months* or until a negative retest. Third or subsequent positive drug tests mean ineligibility for *one year or until a negative retest*. The Department of Human Services will adopt rules and regulations to implement the requirements.

Passed the last day, when the House agreed to committee and floor changes made in the Senate.

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