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## What Happens If Common Sense Takes a Holiday?

- I. Voting Age May be Lowered, H.R. 345
- II. Marriage Age May be Raised, H.B. 228
- III. Marijuana May be Grown/Sold In-state, H.B. 324
- IV. Hemp Marijuana May be Grown/Sold In-state H.B. 213

**I. H.R. 345 Lower Voting Age**, introduced February 25, 2019 by Representative El-Mahdi Holly, is a proposed constitutional amendment to authorize U.S. citizens who reside in Georgia to vote at age 17, instead of 18. Therefore, most high school seniors could vote, along with school 17-year-old drop-outs. If H.R. 345 passes the General Assembly, voters would decide the issue in the 2020 General Election.

**ACTION – Oppose H.R. 345. Call Governmental Affairs Committee Representatives** Rynders, Ch., 404 656-6801; Jones, V-Ch., 656-0213; Blackmon, Sec., 463-7853; Burnough, 656-0116; Collins, 656-1803; Gravley, 463-8143; Gullett, 656-0177; Lumsden, 656-5087; Nguyen, 656-0314; Oliver, 656-0265; Powell, Alan, 463-3793; Powell, Jay, 656-5141; Shannon, 656-7859; Taylor, 656-0109; Trammell, 656-5058; Turner, 656-0152; Williams, M., 656-0287; Williams, R., 656-0287; Williamson, 656-5024; Fleming, 656-5125.

**II. H.B. 228 Marriage Age: Increase from 16 to 17**, that was introduced February 12<sup>th</sup> by Representative Andrew Welch, removes parental consent for emancipated minors who have completed premarital education, provided neither prospective spouse is more than four years older than the other. Sexually active minors are considered emancipated in the state of Georgia. Would that presumption be deemed sufficient for this purpose? If H.B. 228 passes, persons under age 17 could *not* get married, although they are sexually active.

**ACTION – Oppose H.B. 228. Call Juvenile Justice Committee Representatives** Ballinger, Ch., 404 656-7153; Dubnik, V-Ch., 656-0213; Collins, J, Sec., 656-1803; Blackmon, 463-7853; Cantrell, 656-0152; Clark, 656-0298; Dickerson, 656-0314; Efrstration, 656-5105; Gravley, 463-8143; Gullett, 656-0177; Holcomb, 656-6372; Howard, 656-6372; Hutchinson, 656-0287; Jones, S., 656-0126; Kendrick, 656-0109; Lott, 651-7737; Oliver, 656-0265; Reeves, 651-7737; Sharper, 656-0126; Thomas, 656-7859; Welch, 656-5912; Werkheiser, 463-7857; Wilkerson, 656-0116.

**III. H.B. 324 THC Oil: Produce, Manufacture, and Dispense** introduced February 15<sup>th</sup> by Representative Micah Gravley allows (a) each of five *Class 1 production licensees* to produce, manufacture, dispense, and (b) operate up to five low THC oil retail outlets with home delivery. Likewise, (c) five *Class 2 production licensees* could operate three retail outlets each and do the same. (d) The total Class 1 outlets could be 25; the total Class 2 outlets could be 15; (e) totaling up to 40 retail stores dispensing low THC oil in Georgia.

**ACTION – Oppose H.B. 324. Call Regulated Industries Committee Representatives** Powell, Alan, Ch., 404 463-3793; Jones, Jeff, V-Ch., 656-0178; Hawkins, Sec., 656-7855; Bennett, 656-0202; Caldwell, 656-0152; Carpenter, 656-1803; Collins, J, 656-1803; Cooke, 656-0188; Cooper, 656-5069; Ehrhart, 656-0152; Harrell, 656-5103; Jasperse, 656-5943; Jones, Jan, 656-5072; Kirby, 656-0177; Martin, 656-5064; Mitchell, 656-0126; Ridley, 656-0325; Rogers, 651-7737; Rutledge, 656-0254; Smith, M., 656-0265; Stephens, 656-0265; Washburn, 656-0152; Welch, 656-5912; Williams, Rick, 656-0287; Williamson, 656-5024.

**IV. H.B. 213 Hemp (Marijuana) Farming Act** introduced by Representative John Corbett on February 11<sup>th</sup> lists six intents, the second of which would have Georgia "Explore expansion of the state's hemp industry and allow farmers and businesses to begin to cultivate, handle, and process hemp and sell hemp products for commercial purposes."

**ACTION – Oppose H.B. 213. Call Agriculture and Consumer Affairs Representatives listed on page 2.**

## Reasons NOT to Grow Hemp

*Georgia could be on the brink of farming hemp that contains THC<sup>1</sup> and produces flowers and leaves that can be dried and smoked for a hallucinogenic “high.”*

Hemp “a tall Asiatic herb (*Cannabis sativa*) of the hemp family grown for the tough fiber in its stem (b) the fiber, used to make rope and sailcloth etc. (c) a substance such as **marijuana, hashish, etc.** made from the leaves and flowers<sup>2</sup> of this plant.”(Emphasis added)

*Webster’s New World College Dictionary, Fourth Edition*

**H.B. 213**, if passed, could put Georgia on the brink of farming hemp that may produce high-level THC, instead of the expected low-level THC. Hemp may be grown for its tough fiber, but regardless of low- or high-THC, hemp flowers<sup>2</sup> and leaves<sup>2</sup> may be dried and sold to smoke recreationally. Farmers depending on a hemp harvest do so at great risk, since *nowhere in the world is viable certified cannabis seed available* that guarantees crops will contain 0.3 percent THC. That fact, alone, makes additional research mandatory before hemp is loosed on culture.

H.B. 213 defines “hemp” as the *cannabis sativa* L. plant and its parts, including seeds, and all derivatives that have the federally defined lower-level THC. H.B. 213 authorizes hemp and describes its cultivation as “to plant, water, grow, and harvest a plant or crop.” The stated goal of the bill is, “Ultimately move the state and its citizens to the forefront of the hemp industry.”

H.B. 213 would require the state to issue an (a) *unspecified number of qualified agricultural producer licenses* for \$1,000.00 per year for licensees to “handle and cultivate” hemp, plus (b) *twelve hemp processor permits* for \$100,000.00 for the first calendar year, renewable at \$25,000.00 per year. Also, (c) permit holders may be issued a license to grow hemp, (d) operate under written business agreements with at least four other licensees and (d) handle out-of-state hemp that’s grown under U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDOA) regulations.

**Is hemp illegal?** Hemp and cannabidiol (CBD), derived from hemp (*cannabis*) flowers, remain illegal under the Controlled Substances Act. CBD is cannabis oil that, currently, is used as a medicinal drug. Although marijuana remains federally illegal, and certain cannabis was removed from Schedule I, the 2018 Farm Bill assigned hemp to the USDOA to be regulated.

**Hemp and marijuana are indistinguishable.** Only laboratory tests revealing THC levels can distinguish between cannabis grown for industrial hemp and cannabis grown for recreational use. Whether it has low-level or high-level THC, all cannabis produces (a) flowers for CBD oil. Also, all cannabis (b) flowers and leaves may be dried for recreational “highs.”

**CBD drug has FDA approval.** In June, 2018, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved the Epidiolex® (cannabidiol CBD) oral solution for treating severe forms of epilepsy in patients age two and older. However, although it is a pure form of CBD, Epidiolex® has adverse effects<sup>3</sup>. Expressly, *FDA did not approve over 80 other active chemicals in marijuana.*

**ACTION – Oppose H.B. 213. Call Agriculture and Consumer Affairs Representatives** McCall, Ch., 404 656-5099; Holmes, V-Ch., 656-5132; Dickey, Sec., 463-2246; Bentley, 656-0287; Burns, 656-5052; Cooke, 656-0188; Corbett, 656-0213; Dukes, 656-0126; Dunahoo, 656-0152; England, 463-2245; Gurtler, 656-0188; Hogan, 656-0177; Jasperse, 656-5943; Kirby, 656-0177; LaRiccia, 651-7737; Mathis, 656-0152; Meeks, 656-0177; Pirkle, 656-0188; Pullin, 656-0188; Tankersley, 656-7855; Taylor, 656-0109; Turner, 656-0152; Watson, 463-2246; Wilson, 656-6372.

<sup>1</sup> THC is tetrahydrocannabinol, tetrahydrocannabinolic acid, or a combination of the two.

<sup>2</sup> Flowers and leaves produced from hemp may be harvested for various uses, including recreational smoking.

<sup>3</sup> Epidiolex® side effects: hepatocellular injury (pertaining to liver cells), somnolence and sedation, suicidal behavior and ideation, hypersensitivity reactions, and withdrawal from antiepileptic drugs.

## Education and Legislation

**H.B. 53 Student and Educator Faith Protection Act** introduced by Representative Kasey Carpenter January 29<sup>th</sup> would assure students and faculty freedom of religious speech in public schools. It would protect (a) their right to express religious beliefs in homework, artwork, and all written/oral assignments without discrimination based on religious content. (b) Students and staff could pray or participate in religious activities or religious expression before, during, and after school. (c) They could organize prayer groups, religious clubs, “see you at the pole” gatherings, or other religious gatherings before, during, and after school. (d) Religious groups could access school facilities accessible to other groups and (e) advertise and/or announce their meetings. (f) Students could freely wear accessories, clothing, and jewelry displaying religious messages or religious symbols.

### **H.B. 53 Religious Policy Required by 2019-2020 School Year**

*Article I.* Student Expression of Religious Viewpoints

*Article II.* Student Speakers at Non-graduation Events

*Article III.* Student Speakers at Graduation Ceremonies

*Article IV.* Religious Expression in Class Assignments

*Article V.* Freedom to Organize Religious Groups and Activities

**ACTION – Support H.B. 53. Call House Education Committee Representatives** Jasperse, Ch., 404 656-5943; Cheokas, V-Ch., 656-0152; Benton, Sec., 656-5126; Belton, 656-3947; Cantrell, 656-0152; Carter, 656-0220; Dickerson, 656-0314; England, 463-2245; Erwin, 656-0188; Evans, 656-0109; Glanton 657-1803; Hill, 656-0325; Howard, 656-6372. Jones, Jan, 656-5072; Jones, Todd, 656-0213; LaRiccica, 651-7737; Lopez, 656-6372; Nix, 656-516; Nguyen, 656-0314; Paris, 656-0109; Setzler, 656-7857; Stovall, 656-0314; Tanner, 656-9210; Wilson, 656-6372.

**H.B. 389 Student Excused Absence to Vote** introduced by Representative Mike Wilensky on February 21<sup>st</sup> would amend election law with this: “A student who is registered and eligible to vote in a primary or election in which there are candidates for state-wide office on the ballot shall be granted an excused absence for the day of such primary or election for the purpose of voting in such primary or election.” This could prompt the transporting of busloads of 17-year-olds from school to polls and does not prohibit biased political influence by school staff.

**ACTION – Oppose H.B. 389. Call Education Committee Representatives listed above under H.B. 53.**

**H.B. 414 Mandatory Kindergarten for Five-Year-Olds** introduced by Representative Greg Kennard February 22<sup>nd</sup> (a) lowers the age of compulsory school attendance from age six to age five in public school, private school and home school programs, and (b) requires all children to attend kindergarten for one school year before enrolling in first grade.

**ACTION – Oppose H.B. 414. Call Education Committee Representatives listed above under H.B. 53.**

**H.B. 252 Same-Day Registration and Voting for Students and Others** was introduced by Representative Kim Alexander on February 12<sup>th</sup> to authorize (a) same-day registration and voting for advanced voting, for primaries, elections, and future elections. Also, (b) residential students in higher learning institutions could register and vote by provisional ballot in the voting district where the college or university is located.

**ACTION – Oppose H.B. 252. Call Governmental Affairs Committee Representatives** Rynders, Ch., 404 656-6801; Jones, V-Ch., 656-0213; Blackmon, Sec., 463-7853; Burnough, 656-0116; Collins, 656-1803; Gravley, 463-8143; Gullett, 656-0177; Lumsden, 656-5087; Nguyen, 656-314; Oliver, 656-0265; Powell, Alan, 463-3793; Powell, Jay, 656-5141; Shannon, 656-7859; Taylor, 656-0109; Trammell, 656-5058; Turner, 656-0152; Williams, M. F., 656-0287; Williams, R., 656-0287; Williamson, 656-5024; Fleming, 656-5125.

## **Danger: Constitutional Convention would be Self-Governing and Unlimited**

“The Congress, whenever two-thirds of both Houses shall deem it necessary, shall propose amendments to this Constitution, or, on the application of the legislatures of two-thirds of the several States, shall call a convention for proposing amendments, which in either case, shall be valid to all intents and purposes, as part of this Constitution, when ratified by the legislatures of three-fourths of the several States, or by conventions in three-fourths thereof, as the one or the other mode of ratification may be proposed by the Congress.... And that no State without its consent, shall be deprived of its equal suffrage in the Senate.”

– *The Constitution of the United States, Article V*

**S.R. 237 Requests Article V Constitutional Convention (Con Con)** introduced by Senator Cowsert February 25<sup>th</sup> would term-limit U.S. Representatives and U.S. Senators. Article V, as quoted above, authorizes Congress to pass a call for a Con Con to be convened, if it is ratified by three-fourths of the states. Once convened, a Con Con is unlimited and self-governing.

*The first and only Con Con* was called under the Articles of Confederation, but the attending delegates cast that aside and adopted *The Constitution of the U.S.* Soon, the ten amendments of the Bill of Rights were added. To those ten amendments add the sixteen ratified since then for a total of 26 times the Constitution was amended *without* a dangerous Con Con, AVC, or COS.

**ACTION – Oppose S.R. 237. Call Rules Committee Senators** Mullis, Ch., 404 656-0057; Hill, V-Ch., 656-5038; Jones, B., Sec., 656-0082; Beach, 463-1378; Burke, 656-0040; Butler, 656-0075; Cowsert, 463-1366; Harper, 463-5263; Henson, 656-0085; Jones, H., 463-3942; Tate, 463-8053; Unterman, 463-1368; Dugan ExO, 463-2478; Gooch, ExO, 656-9221; Kennedy, ExO, 656-0045; Miller, ExO, 656-6578;.

### **Questions without Answers**

1. Who presides over a Con Con?
2. Must every state be invited?
3. How many states must attend?
4. How many delegates may attend?
5. Must delegates be U.S. citizens?
6. Where will it be held?
7. Will it be open to the public?
8. What rules of order will be followed?
9. Will delegates make the rules?
10. How many issues could be handled?
11. How long would it last?
12. Who pays for it?
13. Are delegates paid?
14. What qualifies for being a delegate?
15. Will there be ex officio members?
16. Are state Con Con rescissions valid?
17. Could the Constitution be replaced?
18. Could it replace U.S. government?
19. Will it convene/meet in the U. S.?
20. Could spectators or media attend?

### **Legal Opinions**

- Supreme Court Chief Justice Warren Burger opined: “There is no effective way to limit or muzzle the actions of a Constitutional Convention.... After a Convention is convened, it will be too late to stop the Convention if we don’t like its agenda.”
- Former U.S. Supreme Court Justice Arthur J. Goldberg said, “Proponents for a convention offer assurances that it can be limited to a single issue [by calling it for] the ‘sole and express purpose’ of drafting a ... balanced budget amendment.... [Proponents] should be reminded that the convention of 1787 was called ‘for the sole and express purpose’ of revising the Articles of Confederation.... [But delegates] **discarded the Articles and drafted the U.S. Constitution, despite [the convention’s] limited mandate.**”
- Gerald Gunther of Stanford Law School declared, “In my view, a convention cannot be effectively limited. But whether or not I am right, it is entirely clear that we have never tried the convention route, that scholars are divided about what, if any, limitations can be imposed on a convention, and that the **assurances about the ease with which a single issue convention can be had are unsupportable assurances.**”

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