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The Diplomat

"If you would persuade, you must appeal to interest rather than intellect." Ben Franklin

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THIS WEEK

Regular Session Resumes

THE SENATE

Cloture

THE HOUSE

Slower Start

IN COMMITTEE

This Week

**House Reconvenes
Tuesday, April 2- 1:00 p.m.**

**Senate Reconvenes
Tuesday, April 2- 2:00 p.m.**

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THIS WEEK
Regular Session Resumes

The gas tax is in the legislative rearview mirror. A well-executed plan along with strong advocacy by sponsors, Representative Bill Poole (R-Tuscaloosa) and Senator Clyde Chambliss (R-Prattville), is credited for the gas tax passage in the minimum 5-legislative days. The Legislature returned this week to resume the 2019 regular session, completing legislative days two, three and four, before taking next week off for spring break. Still to be determined is if consequences will be administered to those 26 legislators who opposed leadership and voted “No” on the gas tax increase. It is unlikely that freshmen members will be punished. But, three of those “No” votes came from seasoned House committee chairs. They are not expected to lose their chairmanships, but may lose other assignments and may encounter future roadblocks in passing legislation.

Sen. Jim McClendon (R-Springville) filed two bills this week that would create a “clean” lottery, not allowing for casinos or table games. Half the proceeds would go to Education Trust Fund Budget and half to the General Fund Budget. Sen. Pro Tem Del Marsh (R-Anniston) is expected to introduce his own lottery bill.

THE SENATE
Cloture

Several committees approved bills Tuesday afternoon. This put the Senate in position to discuss bills Wednesday on the Senate floor. It did not take long before the Democratic minority hit the brakes when Senate President Pro Tem Del Marsh brought up SB22 for passage. This bill would allow taxpayers to donate a portion of their tax refunds to build a border wall. It was eventually carried over, but reappeared Thursday and with overwhelming GOP support the majority approved a cloture petition to end debate and passed the bill sending it to the House for its consideration. Also passing in the Senate, was SB69 by Sen. Greg Albritton (R-Range). This bill would allow two people to submit affidavits requesting marriage to a probate judge. The marriage would be considered to take place the day the individuals signed the affidavit, eliminating the requirement for a ceremony by the probate judge.

The second cloture petition of the day came, when despite opposition by the business community and Senate Democrats, the Senate passed SB119 also sponsored by Sen. Del Marsh. The vote was 23-7. This legislation would repeal Common Core standards in Alabama schools. It now goes to the House for debate.

THE HOUSE
Slower Start

This week the House got off to a slower start with no bills to consider for passage until Thursday. They then considered and passed a dozen local bills and 15 Sunset bills.

IN COMMITTEE
This Week

- **SB37** by Sen. Greg Reed/**HB45** by Rep. April Weaver – both received a favorable report from their respective Health Committees. The bills would authorize the Alabama Board of Nursing to award advanced-practice nurse loans to those who recently completed a graduate program and went to work in medically underserved areas. The Senate bill passed the full Senate Thursday and now goes to the House for consideration.
- **SB38** by Sen. Greg Reed – received a favorable report from the Senate Health Committee. The bill would allow the Board of Nursing to enter into the Enhanced Nurse Licensure Compact as a means of providing uniformity in licensing requirements throughout reciprocity states.
- **SB52** by Sen. Shay Shelnett – received a favorable report from Senate Banking & Insurance Committee. The bill requires an insurer domiciled in Alabama to provide information annually regarding the corporate governance practices of the insurer and authorizes a \$1,000 penalty per day, not to exceed \$100,000, to be recovered by the Commissioner of Insurance from each insurer or insurance group that fails to file in a timely manner.
- **SB54** by Sen. Shay Shelnett/**HB101** by Rep. Kerry Rich – received a favorable report from the respective insurance committees. The bills would require insurers to maintain an information security program and to report certain cybersecurity events to the Commissioner of Insurance.
- **SB62** by Sen. Rodger Smitherman – received a favorable report from Senate Banking & Insurance Committee. The bill gives consumers additional time to opt out of a roofing contract if an insurance claim is denied. The bill passed the Senate Thursday and goes to the House for consideration.
- **HB49** by Rep. Lynn Greer – received a favorable report from the House Judiciary Committee. The bill provides that a person is not criminally liable for using physical or deadly force on church premises under certain conditions.
- **HB6** by Rep. Allen Farley – received a favorable report from the House Committee on Public Safety & Homeland Security. The bill would require the use of hands-free devices while operating a vehicle and strengthen penalties for driving with a phone in hand.
- **HB98** by Rep. Corley Ellis – received a favorable report from the House County & Municipal Government Committee. The bill would allow the state to utilize the federal concept of waiver valuations instead of appraisals, to determine the value of real property for the purpose of right-of-way acquisitions.
- **HB106** by Rep. Chip Brown – received a favorable report from House Insurance Committee. The bill would authorize the Commissioner of Insurance to create educational programs for consumers regarding matters regulated by the department and add hurricane and non-hurricane wind and hail to the list of perils for which information is provided by insurers to the department.



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