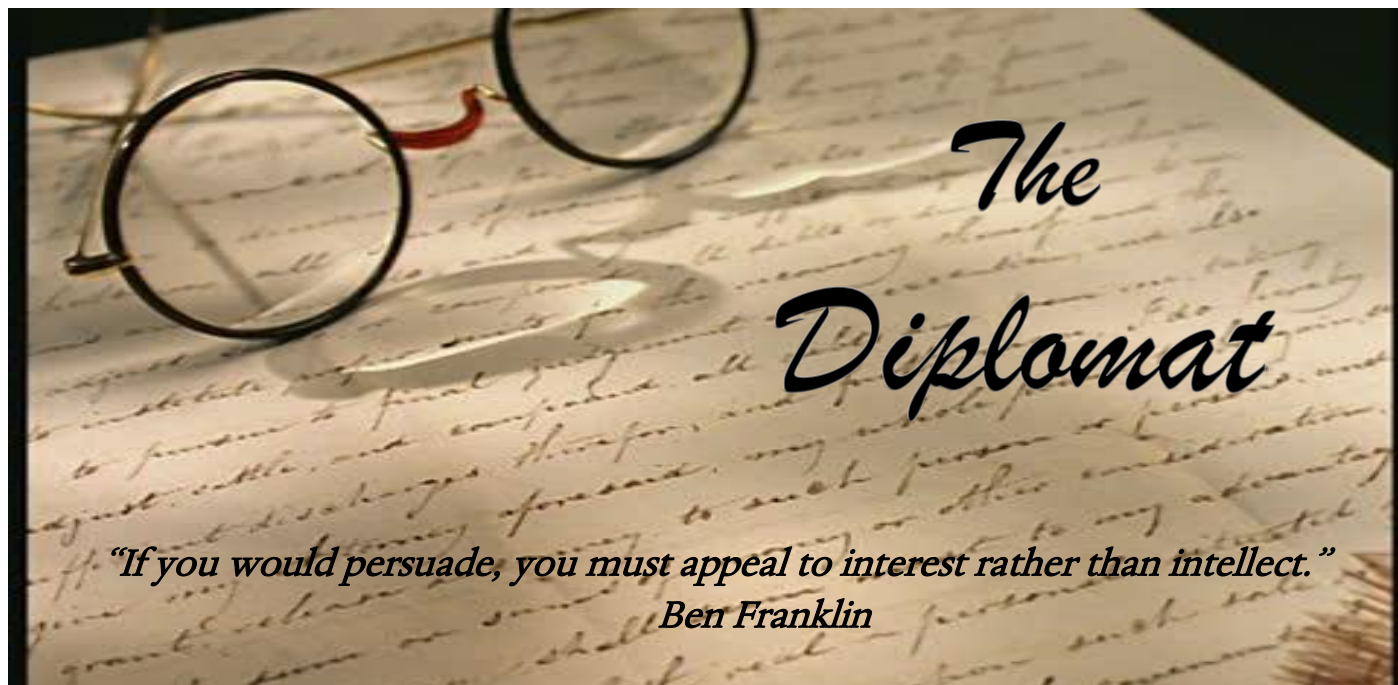


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"If you would persuade, you must appeal to interest rather than intellect."
Ben Franklin

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LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

2021 Session: Just a month away

**Our Monthly Newsletter to
keep you informed of the
happenings in the State of
Alabama.**

The 2021 Regular Alabama Legislative
Session begins February 2, 2021.

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LEGISLATIVE UPDATE
2021 Session: Just a month away

The Legislature convenes for the 2021 Regular Legislative Session on February 2nd, but beyond that there remains plenty of speculation and uncertainty as to what might happen after it gavel in. Legislative leadership has indicated the State House will be accessible to the public when the session begins, though things will be different with temperature checks, remote voting, and other changes to accompany the pandemic.

One idea floating around is the Legislature should meet for the five days it takes to pass a few agreed upon and essential pieces of legislation and adjourn until it is safer to conduct business. If it remains unsafe to resume the session during the allotted time, the Governor can call the Legislature back for several special sessions when things begin to hopefully normalize. Another suggestion being mentioned is to meet five days on and ten days off.

One thing is for certain, it is going to be very difficult to social distance and feel safe in the 60-year old State House, regardless of what safety measures are put in place. Another alternative being considered is to hold an abbreviated session at the Renaissance Hotel convention hall in downtown Montgomery, allowing the 105-member House to maintain social distancing.

The concern for safety is legitimate as many legislators are considered at high risk of dying from the virus, not to mention the hundreds of legislative employees who will be exposed. The Legislature has not been spared by COVID-19. A couple dozen members have contracted the virus, several of whom were hospitalized. Former Sen. Larry Dixon of Montgomery, and former Reps. Jack Page of Gadsden, Richard Laird of Roanoke, and Greg Burdine of Florence have all succumbed to the virus in the last month. We anticipate the well-being of legislators, staff, and the public to be a high priority regardless of when and where the legislature meets.

In election news, Rep. Kirk Hatcher(D-Montgomery) easily defeated former Rep. John Knight in a special election run-off for Senate District 26 in Montgomery to replace former Sen. David Burkette (D-Montgomery) and will face Republican William Green in the special general election on March 2nd.

Governor Ivey recently announced special election dates for Alabama House District 73, which was formerly held by Matt Fridy(R-Birmingham) who was elected to the Alabama Court of Civil Appeals and Senate District 14 previously held by Cam Ward (R-Alabaster) who was appointed Director of the Alabama Board of Pardons and Paroles. The special primary elections have been set for Tuesday, March 30, 2021; the special primary runoff, if required, for April 27, 2021; and the special general election for Tuesday, July 13, 2021.