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

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**FINAL WEEK**

**Sine Die**

**THE SHROUD**

**Rep. Tommy Hanes**

**Sine Die Edition**  
(Adjournment until next session)

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**FINAL WEEK****Sine Die**

The Legislature adjourned Sine Die Friday evening leaving two legislative days unused. However, members will likely return later in the year for a special session to consider a package of bills concerning prison reform.

The Legislature met four days the final week that included many heated conversations and compromises. The Senate and House spent the final couple of days bickering back and forth, but, as usual, eventually the track was greased and everything began to move with both chambers finishing strong. Sen. Pro Tem Del Marsh called this session one of the most productive that has ever taken place.

They accomplished most of the Republican legislative agenda and even the Democrats saw a few of their priority bills pass. The biggest casualty was the lottery that passed the Senate by a single vote, but never received a final vote in the House when it was realized the votes were not there.

The well-funded \$2.1 billion General Fund and the \$7.1 billion Education Trust Fund budgets passed on the final two days of the session with relative ease, largely due to the strong economy. Included was a 4 percent pay raise for teachers and a 2 percent increase in pay for state employees.

Other significant pieces of legislation passing the final week include the Pardons and Paroles bill that will allow the Governor to appoint the Pardon and Paroles Board director; the Alabama Literacy Act requiring third grade students to take a reading test to determine if they can advance to 4<sup>th</sup> grade; and a constitutional amendment allowing voters to replace the current elected state school board with one appointed by the Governor. Not passing in the final hours was legislation mandating kindergarten attendance.

Thursday Governor Kay Ivey signed into law two bills making access to broadband internet easier and more efficient by allowing electricity providers to use electric easements for broadband purposes and increasing the amount of grants that can be awarded for broadband projects.

Legislation to strengthen Alabama's Open Records law never gained much traction and never made it out of committee, nor did a bill to make changes to the state's ethics law.

Surprising many was the passage of legislation setting up a commission to study medical marijuana implementation that passed in the final hours Friday and after several years of effort by Democrats, legislation banning wage discrimination on race and gender made it to the Governor for her signature.

Sadly, during the legislative session two House members passed away. Rep. Jimmy Martin (R-Clanton), who was serving his fifth term died Friday, having learned he had cancer only a few months ago. Rep. Dimitri Polizos (R- Montgomery) died suddenly in March.

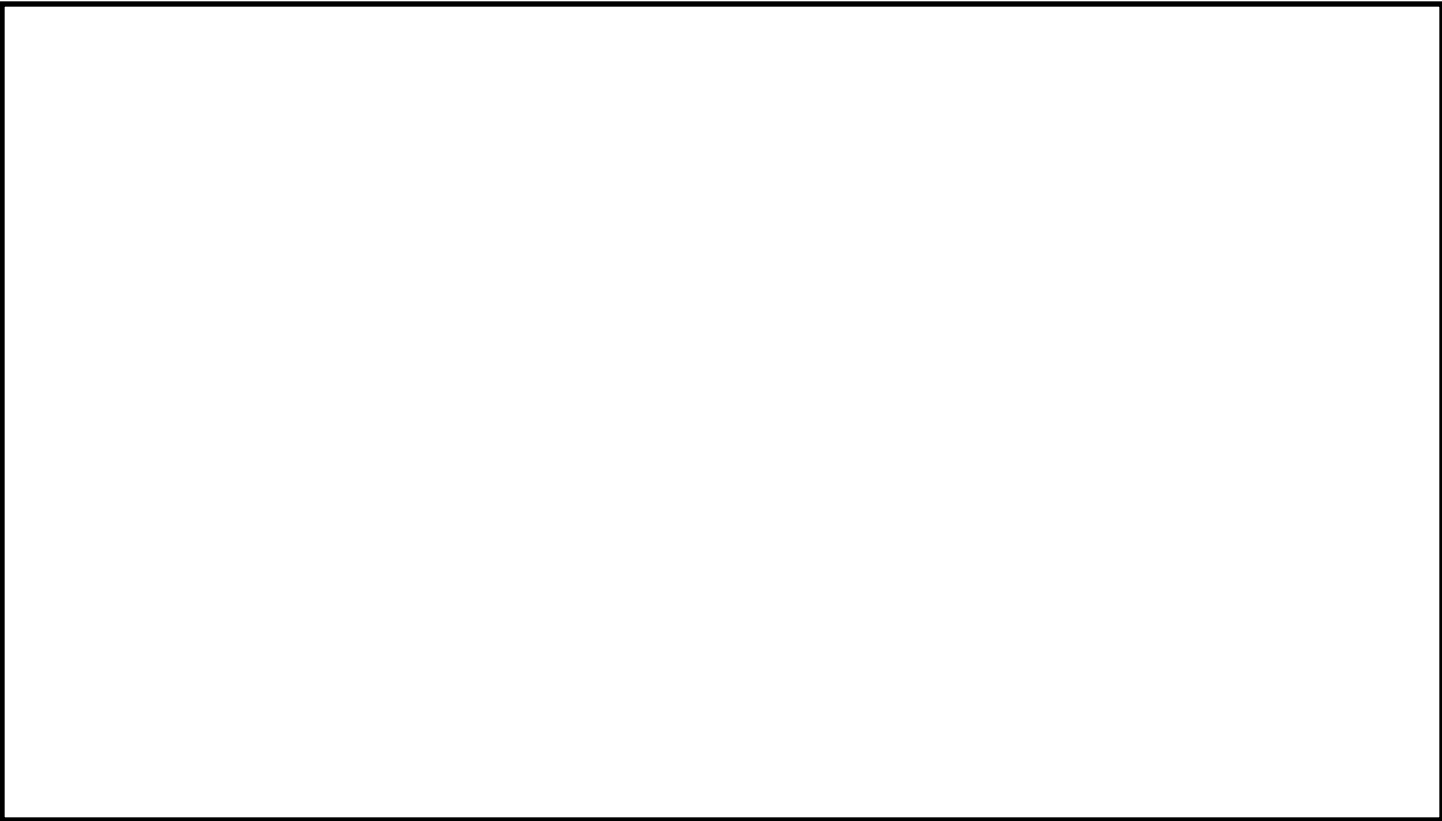
**THE SHROUD**  
**Rep. Tommy Hanes**

Rep. Tommy Hanes (R-Scottsboro) was the recipient of the annual award presented by the House of Representatives for the “deadest bill” of the session. The 40 year tradition includes presenting the winner with an empty suit framed in a cardboard box. Rep. Hanes’s bill regulating fertilizer made of human sewage beat out the runners-up that included the lottery, removing the ban to teach yoga classes in public schools and a bill that would have prevented local governments from banning or taxing the use of plastic bags.

**A WORD OF THANKS**

On behalf of the deGraffenried & Company team, thank you to all who entrust our firm to provide governmental affairs and lobbying services. We take great pride and responsibility in achieving our clients’ objectives. We are grateful for your business. Have a wonderful summer!

-Ryan deGraffenried III



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