



Robert L. McCurley, Jr.

The Next Legislature

Twenty-one lawyers were elected to the Alabama legislature. When the legislature convenes this month for their organizational session, there will be 12 lawyers in the senate and nine lawyers in the house of representatives. Compare this to the legislature of 30 years ago that had 25 lawyers, with 14 in the senate and 11 in the house. The number of lawyers in the legislature has remained fairly constant at around 15 percent.

The party demographics, however, have changed as more Republicans have been elected.

In the senate there are 21 Democrats and 14 Republicans. This may have less to do with the organization of the senate than with other factors. In the house of representatives there are 62 Democrats and 43 Republicans, the same as the previous legislature.

There are also 28 new members in the legislature. New senators and their districts include: (6) Arthur Orr; (5) Charles Bishop; (7) Parker Griffith; (13) Kim Benefield; (17) Scott Beason; (20) Linda Coleman; (34) Rusty Glover; and (35) Ben Brooks. Four of these were previously in the house of representatives. These include the following new lawyers who are members of the senate, **Arthur Orr**

and **Ben Brooks**.

In the house of representatives, there are 20 new members with four of them lawyers. The new lawyers are **Earl Hilliard, Jr., Chris England, Ben Lewis** and **Marc Keahey**.

The senate will be presided over by Lt. Governor Jim Folsom while, most likely, the house will continue to be presided over by Representative Seth Hammett.

The supreme court and the courts of appeal all have a large number of new members. Interestingly enough, 18 members on the appellate courts are Republicans and only one is a Democrat.

On December 4, 5 and 6, the legislature was in Tuscaloosa for their three-day orientation. There were the typical state of the state addresses by Governor Riley, Lt. Governor-elect Jim Folsom and Chief Justice-elect Sue Bell Cobb.

Legislators heard from Dr. Alan Rosenthal, a national expert on state legislatures, who discussed "Restoring Confidence in Government." Dr. Breda Bova, senior advisor to the president of the University of New Mexico, related "Understanding Your Constituents," how baby boomers and generations X and Y interpret the same message in different ways.

One of the major topics of discussion



was Alabama's energy opportunities. Dr. David Bransby, with Auburn University, and Dr. Nick Tew, state geologist, Oil and Gas Board, related Alabama's availability to both bio-fuels and fossil fuels. Eric Smith from the Tulane Energy Institute related what other states are doing to meet the energy challenges.

Another topic of concern was early childhood. Dr. Judith Rizzo, executive director of the Hunt Institute for Educational Leadership and Policy from North Carolina, was a keynote speaker. Dr. Frank Franklin from UAB discussed childhood obesity while Dr. Joe Morton related the State of Alabama's educational system.

Legislators wanted to know about areas in which the state was making advances. Dr. Robert Kimberly, UAB, discussed medical advances in Alabama; Judge David Rains from DeKalb County discussed alternative sentencing and sentencing standards; and Dr. Jeff Thompson of UAH related Alabama's transportation infrastructure.

The legislature meets January 9 for a ten-day organizational session at which time the speaker of the house will be elected along with the speaker pro tem and the pro tem of the senate. Our newly elected state officers will be sworn in inauguration day, Monday, January 15.

The 2007 Regular Session of the legislature will begin March 6 and can stay in session for 105 days, adjourning no later than June 18.

For more information, contact Bob McCurley, director, Alabama Law Institute, at (205) 348-7411 or visit www.ali.state.al.us. ■

Robert L. McCurley, Jr.

Robert L. McCurley, Jr. is the director of the Alabama Law Institute at the University of Alabama. He received his undergraduate and law degrees from the University.



A Death Penalty Seminar
"Loosening the Death Belt XI"

January 26—January 27, 2007
 Embassy Suites Hotel
 Birmingham, AL

Hear nationally acclaimed death penalty lawyers talk about successful defense techniques.
Special keynote: Rev. Dr. Joseph Lowery

- Working as a Defense Team
- Pre-Trial and Trial Motions
- Developing and Presenting Mitigation
- Jury Selection & Use of Jury Selection Experts ... and much more!

Registration: \$275 by 1/10/07 (ACDLA members)
 \$325 non-members — \$325 at door for all.

12 CLEs * Make all checks payable to:
 ACDLA, P.O. Box 1147, Montgomery, AL 36101
 (334) 272-0064 fax: (866) 665-7522
 VISA/MC accepted

Hotel: Embassy Suites
 2300 Woodcrest Place, Birmingham, AL
 (205) 879-7400 Rate: \$129.00 s/d

Efficient.

(î-fîsh' nt) adj. 1. Acting or producing effectively with a minimum waste or unnecessary effort.

That's how we define our readers. Lawyers USA is their one-stop Shop, with online and newspaper resources including:

- Hard-to find verdicts and settlements.
- New legal theories and hot new litigation practice niches.
- Cutting-edge strategies and techniques.

Call 1-800-451-9998 or visit www.lawyersusaonline.com.



How do you define success?

A6B02

FREE OFFER! GET SIX WEEKS OF LAWYERS USA RISK FREE.