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**Calendar notes**

**Meetings**

**Auburn** Thurs., Jan. 25, Noon – 1 pm, cluster meeting, Auburn UU Busch Center

**Birmingham** Tues., Jan. 9, 6 pm, issue preview, West End Community Monthly Meeting, 801 Tuscaloosa Ave.

**Legislature**

**Tues., Jan. 9**, organizing session begins.

**Tues., March 6, 2007** regular session begins

**Hold the date!**

**Thurs., Feb. 15, 2007**

**“Let Justice Roll”  
 Arise Citizens’ Policy Project  
 Poverty & Policy  
 Conference**

Birmingham-Southern  
 College

Watch for brochure in January!

**Simone Washington  
 joins ACPP staff**

Simone Washington is our new policy analyst. Her professional background includes work with SEEDCO and the Alabama Center for Law and Civic Education’s Street Law Program. A native of Mobile, she holds degrees from Cumberland School of Law and the University of South Alabama. Welcome, Simone!

# Report

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December 6, 2006

## The new quadrennium Legislators jockey for 2007 clout

By *Jim Carnes, communications director*

**Every legislative season holds a few surprises, and the coming one may offer more than the usual share**, if recent developments are any indication. Arise’s double win in 2006 – the last year of the four-year political cycle – showed that conventional wisdom is unreliable in an increasingly divided Legislature. For example, dueling income tax reform plans in an election year would have been unimaginable four years back. What the first year of a quadrennium looks like is now up for grabs.

**All eyes will be on the Senate as the new Legislature conducts its January organizational session.** After last term’s failed attempt by disgruntled Democrats to oust Lowell Barron from the powerful president pro tem position, we wondered what enticements different factions might offer their colleagues to form a winning coalition. Then, on the heels of the November election, it was the rogue Democrats – Jim Preuitt, E. B. McClain, Tom Butler, Jimmy Holley, Larry Means and Phil Poole – who issued an invitation across the aisle. Together, these six and the 12 Republican senators would have the magic 18 votes necessary to elect a new pro tem for the 35-member body. We can expect more maneuvers and side-switching before the dust settles.

**Adding another wrinkle to the Senate power struggle is the return of Jim Folsom as lieutenant governor.** The Democrat built his successful campaign on his ability to work with all sides. Several of

the splintering Democratic senators are longtime Folsom supporters, so the emergence of a new Riley-friendly coalition could leave the lieutenant governor, who presides over the Senate, in a delicate position. The leadership struggle has fueled speculation that the Senate will restore some authority of the lieutenant governor’s office, which it sharply curtailed in 1999. Any of these changes could color the prospects for Arise’s legislative agenda (*see enclosed brochure*) next term, since important committee chairs remain in the balance.

**The November 7th election also brought a third Arise victory for the year** – the passage of Amendment 2, the “10-mill bill.” Arise members and friends distributed more than 70,000 fliers for the amendment, which requires that every school district in the state provide at least 10 mills of property tax for local schools. State officials say that 101 of Alabama’s 131 districts already meet this minimum level of stable funding. “The Amendment 2 vote sent a strong message,” said ACPP executive director Kimble Forrister. “When there’s no organized campaign to confuse the issue, people grasp the need for tax reform.”

**Policy staff position open**

**Policy analyst** on tax & poverty issues. Economic expertise, strong writing skills, working in Montgomery required. Prefer master’s degree. Salary based on experience. Health & retirement plan. Send resume, writing sample to ACPP, Box 1188, Montgomery, AL 36101. Minority applicants encouraged. *Equal opportunity employer.*

# Thank you, contributors!

*As this historic year comes to an end, we look back on 2006 with the satisfaction that, because of legislation pushed by Arise members, 2007 will be a better year for tenants and for low-income families in Alabama. And yet our work has just begun. ACPH thanks the following donors for gifts received between Oct. 1 and Nov. 28, 2006, in support of ongoing efforts to promote fairer policies for all Alabamians:*

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*In memory of Dr. A.Z. Carter, father of Arise organizer Zack Carter:*  
Mary Beth Allison, Mobile  
Melissa Oliver, Dadeville

*As a birthday gift in honor of Mary Hopkins:*  
Robert Suddoth, Springville

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Alabama Power Foundation  
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Southern Poverty Law Center

## A few words from Kimble —

Mom is asking for my 2006 highlights for our family calendar. Should I say, "I preached a wedding on a hotel rooftop overlooking the Colosseum in Rome"? Or do I say, "We won a \$40 million tax reduction for low-income Alabama families"? What a year!

Once more I'd like to brag on our members, our staff and our sponsors. This was the year of "the perfect storm" that we would not have predicted. The keen instincts of sponsor John Knight capitalized on the fine groundwork of Arise staff and members, who had created a "buzz" about that \$4,600 income tax threshold. And of course we owe credit to the editors who kept beating the drum, and the governor who was willing to call the threshold "immoral."

I was recently in an audience where they sang John Knight's praises, but then he sang ours, saying Arise gave him the bullet points he took to the microphone. It could never have happened without your advocacy, your outreach, and your financial support. You *are* Arise, and we all had a great year! Thank you!

With peace,

