

Arise Bills of Interest 2011 Regular Session

March 4, 2011

The Alabama Legislature convened for the 2011 Regular Legislative Session on March 1. During the first three days of the legislative session, 326 bills have been introduced. There are 28 meeting days remaining in the 2011 Session. Throughout the session, Arise follows legislation that relates to our annual legislative priorities and endorsements:

Adequate state budgets

HB25 (DeMarco) – Proposes to require the Finance Department to publish on its website monthly reports regarding the General Fund and Education Trust Fund. *HB25 is in the House State Government Committee.*

HB57 (Canfield) – Proposes for the Education Trust Fund a “rolling reserve” budget process that would cap appropriations and tie annual appropriation increases to a 15-year average of ETF revenue growth. *HB57 received a favorable report from the House Ways & Means Education Committee.*

HB81/SB52 (Wren/Brewbaker) – Proposes to allow local boards of education to combine fractional teacher units to make a whole unit and allow those boards to place those teachers where needed in the school system. *HB81 is in the House Ways & Means Education Committee, and SB52 is in the Senate Education Committee.*

HB122/SB133 (Barton/Orr) – General Fund budget for FY 2012 – provides appropriations for ordinary expenses of executive, legislative and judicial departments. *HB122 is in the House Ways & Means General Fund Committee, and SB133 is in the Senate Finance & Taxation General Fund Committee.*

HB123/SB132 (Love/Pittman) – Education Trust Fund budget for FY 2012 – provides appropriations for the support, maintenance and development of public education. *HB123 is in the House Ways & Means Education Committee, and SB132 is in the Senate Finance & Taxation Education Committee.*

HB133 (Oden) – Proposes to allow the governor to reduce the number of school days by up to five when proration is declared in the Education Trust Fund budget. *HB133 is in the House Ways & Means Education Committee.*

SB51 (Brewbaker) – Proposes to decrease the minimum number of school instructional days from 180 to 175 for the 2012-13 and 2013-14 school years. *SB51 is in the Senate Education Committee.*

Health care

HB60 (Gallagher) – Proposes a constitutional amendment to prohibit mandatory participation by individuals, employers or health care providers in any health care system. *HB60 received a favorable report from the House Health Committee.*

SB46 (Ward) – Proposes to establish the right of health care providers, institutions and payers to decline to perform services that violate their consciences. *SB46 is in the Senate Health Committee.*

Taxes & tax reform

HB61 (Weaver) – Proposes to increase income tax deductions to 200 percent of amounts paid for health insurance premiums by qualifying employers and qualifying employees. *HB61 received a favorable report from the House Commerce & Small Business Committee.*

HB124/SB111 (Merrill/Orr) – Proposes a constitutional amendment prohibiting counties and municipalities from levying an occupational tax unless the tax was imposed before Jan. 1, 2011. *HB124 is in the House County & Municipal Government Committee, and SB111 is in the Senate Finance & Taxation General Fund Committee.*

HB127 (Roberts) – Proposes to move the termination date of the excise and privilege tax on coal severance from Oct. 1, 2011, to Oct. 1, 2016, unless extended. *HB127 is in the House Commerce & Small Business Committee.*

SB8 (Brooks) – Proposes, similar to SB74, to increase from \$7,500 to \$15,000 the taxable income line below which people with disabilities and the elderly are exempt from property tax on a principal residence. *SB8 is in the Senate Finance & Taxation Education Committee.*

SB9 (Brooks) – Proposes to increase the maximum homestead exemption from \$4,000 in assessed value to \$8,000 in assessed value. *SB9 is in the Senate Finance & Taxation Education Committee.*

SB 10 (Brooks) – Proposes to adjust the maximum homestead exemption annually to reflect cost of living increases. *SB10 is in the Senate Finance & Taxation Education Committee.*

SB 15 (Ward) – Proposes, similar to SB50, to authorize tax credits for certain companies that create jobs, including larger credits for jobs created in counties with high unemployment and low per capita income. *SB15 is in the Senate Finance & Taxation General Fund Committee.*

SB26 (Ward) – Proposes to exempt from state income tax any compensation for active duty military service by Alabama residents deployed outside the United States. *SB26 received a favorable report from the Senate Finance & Taxation Education Committee.*

SB50 (Ward) – Proposes, similar to SB15, to authorize tax credits for certain companies that create jobs, including larger credits for jobs created in counties with high unemployment and low per capita income. *SB50 is in the Senate Job Creation & Economic Development Committee.*

SB74 (Marsh) – Proposes, similar to SB8, to increase from \$7,500 to \$15,000 the taxable income line below which people with disabilities and the elderly are exempt from property tax on a principal residence. *SB74 received a favorable report from the House Finance & Taxation General Fund Committee.*

SB109 (Orr) – Proposes to authorize counties and municipalities to exempt food purchases from local sales tax. *SB109 is in the Senate Finance & Taxation General Fund Committee.*

SB126 (Whatley) – Proposes to authorize income tax credits to financial institutions and businesses for qualified research and development expenses. *SB126 is in the Senate Finance & Taxation General Fund Committee.*

SB150 (Williams) – Proposes to authorize income tax credits to certain telecommunications or manufacturing facilities for employee retraining or for upgrading or expanding existing facilities and equipment. *SB150 is in the Senate Small Business Committee.*

SB152 (Bussman) – Proposes to exempt companies with fewer than 100 employees from increases in non-educational property taxes for up to five years for qualifying expansion or relocation projects. *SB152 is in the Senate Job Creation & Economic Development Committee.*

SB159 (Reed) – Proposes to increase income tax deductions to 200 percent of amounts paid for health insurance premiums by qualifying employers and qualifying employees. *SB159 is in the Senate Health Committee.*

Equal Pay Commission

No legislation relating to this priority has been introduced thus far this session.

Constitutional reform

HJR34 (Newton, D.) – Proposes a statewide election in June 2012 on whether to hold a convention to revise the Constitution of Alabama of 1901. *HJR34 is in the House Rules Committee.*

SB112 (Orr) – Proposes a constitutional amendment to remove from the Constitution of Alabama of 1901 certain passages containing racist language. *SB112 is in the Senate Constitution, Campaign Finance, Ethics & Elections Committee.*

Public transportation

SB79 (Marsh) – Proposes to authorize county commissions to levy additional gasoline and motor fuel excise taxes up to 5 cents after referendum to support roads, bridges or public transportation. *SB79 is in the Senate Finance & Taxation General Fund Committee.*

Worker savings incentives

No legislation relating to this priority has been introduced thus far this session.

Death penalty moratorium

No legislation relating to this priority has been introduced thus far this session.

Other subjects

HB3 (Ford) – Proposes to increase the late charge on consumer credit transactions under certain conditions. *HB3 is in the House Financial Services Committee.*

HB6 (Merrill) – Proposes to decrease from 7 to 6 the minimum mandatory age of attendance in public schools. *HB6 is in the House Education Policy Committee.*

HB10/SB82 (England/Coleman) – Proposes to restore eligibility for TANF and food stamps for certain individuals with felony drug convictions. *HB10 is in the House State Government Committee, and SB82 is in the Senate Judiciary Committee.*

HB56 (Hammon) – Provides for enforcement of immigration laws and verification of legal status of people and creates specific crimes for activities relating to unauthorized aliens in Alabama. *HB56 is in the House Public Safety & Homeland Security Committee.*

HB59 (Mask) – Proposes to repeal the Deferred Retirement Option Plan (DROP) for teachers and state employees not already enrolled in the program. *HB59 received a favorable report from the House Ways & Means General Fund Committee.*

HB67/SB24 (Hubbard, J./Brewbaker) – Proposes a constitutional amendment increasing the legislative vote required to override a gubernatorial veto. *HB67 is in the House Constitution, Campaigns & Elections Committee, and SB24 is in the Senate Constitution, Campaign Finance, Ethics & Elections Committee.*

HB80 (Wren) – Proposes to require tenants under a rental agreement to pay certain attorney's fees under certain conditions. *HB80 is in the House Commerce & Small Business Committee.*

HB98 (Rich) – Proposes a constitutional amendment limiting members of Senate and House of Representatives to three consecutive full terms. *HB 98 is in the House Constitution, Campaigns & Elections Committee.*

HB99 (Rich) – Proposes to require certain businesses to verify employment eligibility of all employees through the federal E-Verify program. *HB99 is in the House Public Safety & Homeland Security Committee.*

HB121 (Rich) – Proposes to establish specific criminal penalties for using a fraudulent document to apply for public benefits, to require applicants for certain public benefits to prove lawful presence in the United States, and to require state agencies to verify eligibility of all TANF applicants through the federal E-Verify program. *HB121 is in the House Judiciary Committee.*

HB151 (Hubbard, J.) – Proposes to require electronic filing of campaign finance disclosures starting with the 2014 election cycle, to include Section 527 organizations within the definition of political action committees, and to disqualify candidates who do not comply with certain filing requirements. *HB 151 is in the House Ethics and Campaign Finance Committee.*

HB156 (Robinson, O.) – Proposes to regulate consumer contracts with consumer legal funding companies. *HB156 is in the House Judiciary Committee.*

HB157 (Rich) – Proposes to require random drug tests for recipients of Medicaid, TANF or food stamps, if an applicant's appearance or demeanor implies possible drug use. *HB157 is in the House State Government Committee.*

SB70 (Dial) – Proposes to increase the late charge on consumer credit transactions under certain conditions. *SB70 is in the Senate Banking and Insurance Committee.*

SB72 (Marsh) – Proposes to prohibit new participation by teachers and state employees in the Deferred Retirement Option Plan (DROP) and to limit interest paid on DROP accounts. *SB72 received a favorable report from the Senate Finance & Taxation Education Committee.*

SB95 (Taylor) – Proposes to require lobbyists to report any item excluded from the definition of a thing of value, whatever the actual cost. *SB95 is in the Senate Constitution, Campaign Finance, Ethics & Elections Committee.*

SB115 (Orr) – Proposes to prohibit certain fraudulent conduct in obtaining public assistance under any state or federally funded public assistance program. *SB115 is in the Senate Finance & Taxation General Fund Committee.*

SB127 (Pittman) – Proposes a constitutional amendment limiting members of the Senate and House of Representatives to three consecutive full terms. *SB127 is in the Senate Constitution, Campaign Finance, Ethics & Elections Committee.*

SB136 (Orr) – Proposes to require more frequent campaign finance disclosures and to require the electronic filing of disclosures starting with the 2014 election cycle. *SB136 is in the Senate Constitution, Campaign Finance, Ethics & Elections Committee.*

For the full text of these and any other bills introduced in this session, go to <http://alisondb.legislature.state.al.us/acas/ACASLoginFire.asp>