

1 HB607  
2 130667-1  
3 By Representatives Jones, Beckman, Canfield, Johnson (K),  
4 Nordgren, Collins, McClendon, Fincher, Gaston, Long, Clouse,  
5 Newton (C), Buttram, Chesteen, Baker, Wallace, Shiver and Mask  
6 (Constitutional Amendment)  
7 RFD: Judiciary  
8 First Read: 04-MAY-11

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8 SYNOPSIS: This bill proposes an amendment to the  
9 Constitution of Alabama of 1901, to prohibit the  
10 application of foreign law in violation of rights  
11 guaranteed natural citizens by the United States  
12 and Alabama Constitutions, and the statutes, laws,  
13 and public policy of this state.

14 This amendment would not apply to a  
15 corporation, partnership, limited liability  
16 company, business association, or other legal  
17 entity that contracts to subject itself to foreign  
18 laws.

19  
20 A BILL  
21 TO BE ENTITLED  
22 AN ACT

23  
24 Proposing an amendment to the Constitution of  
25 Alabama of 1901, to prohibit the application of foreign law in  
26 violation of rights guaranteed natural citizens by the United

1 States and Alabama Constitutions, and the laws and public  
2 policy of the state, without application to business entities.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

4 Section 1. The following amendment to the  
5 Constitution of Alabama of 1901, as amended, is proposed and  
6 shall become valid as a part thereof when approved by a  
7 majority of the qualified electors voting thereon and in  
8 accordance with Sections 284, 285, and 287 of the Constitution  
9 of Alabama of 1901, as amended:

10 PROPOSED AMENDMENT

11 (a) This amendment shall be known and may be cited  
12 as the American and Alabama Laws for Alabama Courts Amendment.

13 (b) The law of Alabama provides:

14 (1) The State of Alabama has developed its unique  
15 public policy of laws based on the United States Constitution,  
16 as protected by Amendment 10 to the United States  
17 Constitution.

18 (2) Upon becoming a state in 1819, Alabama adopted  
19 its first constitutional and statutory enactments, upon which  
20 it has built the rights, privileges, obligations, and  
21 requirements of its government and citizens.

22 (3) Both the provisions of the Alabama Constitution  
23 and the statutes and regulations of the State of Alabama, with  
24 interpreting opinions by its courts of competent jurisdiction,  
25 have developed the state's public policy.

26 (4) The public policy of the State of Alabama  
27 protects the unique rights of its citizens beginning with

1 Article I, Section 1 of the Constitution of Alabama of 1901,  
2 guaranteeing the equality and rights of men. Except as  
3 permitted by due process of law and the right of the people to  
4 vote for self-determination, the rights, privileges, and  
5 immunities of the citizens of the State of Alabama are  
6 inviolate.

7 (5) Different from the law of the State of Alabama  
8 is foreign law, which is any law, rule, or legal code, or  
9 system established, used, or applied in a jurisdiction outside  
10 of the states or territories of the United States, or which  
11 exist as a separate body of law, legal code, or system adopted  
12 or used anywhere by any people, group, or culture different  
13 from the Constitution and laws of the United States or the  
14 State of Alabama.

15 (6) Alabama has a favorable business climate and has  
16 attracted many international businesses. While Alabama  
17 business persons and companies may decide to use foreign law  
18 in foreign courts, the public policy of Alabama is to prohibit  
19 anyone from requiring Alabama courts to apply and enforce  
20 foreign laws.

21 (7) The public policy of this state is to protect  
22 its citizens from the application of foreign laws when the  
23 application of a foreign law will result in the violation of a  
24 right guaranteed by the Alabama Constitution or of the United  
25 States Constitution, including, but not limited to, due  
26 process, freedom of religion, speech, assembly, or press, or  
27 any right of privacy or marriage.

1           (8) Article IV, Section 1, of the United States  
2           Constitution provides that full faith and credit shall be  
3           given by each state to the public acts, records, and judicial  
4           proceedings of other states. Provided, however, when any such  
5           public acts, records, and judicial proceedings of another  
6           state violate the public policy of the State of Alabama, the  
7           State of Alabama is not and shall not be required to give full  
8           faith and credit thereto.

9           (c) A court, arbitrator, administrative agency, or  
10          other adjudicative, arbitrative, or enforcement authority  
11          shall not apply or enforce a foreign law if doing so would  
12          violate any state law or a right guaranteed by the  
13          Constitution of this state or of the United States.

14          (d) If any contractual provision or agreement  
15          provides for the choice of a foreign law to govern its  
16          interpretation or the resolution of any dispute between the  
17          parties, and if the enforcement or interpretation of the  
18          contractual provision or agreement would result in a violation  
19          of a right guaranteed by the Constitution of this state or of  
20          the United States, the agreement or contractual provision  
21          shall be modified or amended to the extent necessary to  
22          preserve the constitutional rights of the parties.

23          (e) If any contractual provision or agreement  
24          provides for the choice of venue or forum outside of the  
25          states or territories of the United States, and if the  
26          enforcement or interpretation of the contract or agreement  
27          applying that choice of venue or forum provision would result

1 in a violation of any right guaranteed by the Constitution of  
2 this state or of the United States, that contractual provision  
3 or agreement shall be interpreted or construed to preserve the  
4 constitutional rights of the person against whom enforcement  
5 is sought. If a natural person subject to personal  
6 jurisdiction in this state seeks to maintain litigation,  
7 arbitration, an administrative proceeding, or a similarly  
8 binding proceeding in this state, and if a court of this state  
9 finds that granting a claim of forum non conveniens or a  
10 related claim violates or would likely lead to the violation  
11 of the constitutional rights of the nonclaimant in the foreign  
12 forum with respect to the matter in dispute, the claim shall  
13 be denied.

14 (f) Any contractual provision or agreement incapable  
15 of being modified or amended in order to preserve the  
16 constitutional rights of the parties pursuant to the  
17 provisions of this amendment shall be null and void.

18 (g) Nothing in this amendment shall be interpreted  
19 to limit the right of a natural person or entity of this state  
20 to voluntarily restrict or limit his, her, or its own  
21 constitutional rights by contract or specific waiver  
22 consistent with constitutional principles. However, the  
23 language of any such contract or other waiver shall be  
24 strictly construed in favor of preserving the constitutional  
25 rights of the natural person in this state. Further, no  
26 Alabama court shall be required by any contract or other

1 obligation entered into by a person or entity to apply or  
2 enforce any foreign law.

3 (h) Without prejudice to any legal right, this  
4 amendment shall not apply to a corporation, partnership,  
5 limited liability company, business association, or other  
6 legal entity that contracts to subject itself to foreign law  
7 in a jurisdiction other than this state or the United States.

8 (i) Where the public acts, records, or judicial  
9 proceedings of another state violate the public policy of the  
10 State of Alabama, the State of Alabama shall not give full  
11 faith and credit thereto.

12 Section 2. An election upon the proposed amendment  
13 shall be held in accordance with Sections 284 and 285 of the  
14 Constitution of Alabama of 1901, now appearing as Sections 284  
15 and 285 of the Official Recompilation of the Constitution of  
16 Alabama of 1901, as amended, and the election laws of this  
17 state.

18 Section 3. The appropriate election official shall  
19 assign a ballot number for the proposed constitutional  
20 amendment on the election ballot and shall set forth the  
21 following description of the substance or subject matter of  
22 the proposed constitutional amendment:

23 "Proposing an amendment to the Constitution of  
24 Alabama of 1901, to prohibit the application of foreign law in  
25 violation of rights guaranteed natural citizens by the United  
26 States and Alabama Constitutions, and the statutes, laws, and

1 public policy thereof, but without application to business  
2 entities.

3 "Proposed by Act \_\_\_\_\_."

4 This description shall be followed by the following  
5 language:

6 "Yes ( ) No ( )."