

1 HR1068
2 122024-1
3 By Representative Knight
4 RFD:
5 First Read: 22-APR-10

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8 DESIGNATING THE RECIPIENT OF THE 2010 SHROUD AWARD.

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10 WHEREAS, once more it is time for the Shroud Award,
11 a unique sine die custom of the Alabama House of
12 Representatives in which the deadest bill of the session is
13 revealed. Initially, we note that there has been a one time
14 rule change regarding this honor. The prior year's winner is
15 ineligible to win it again. Guess who made up that rule?

16 In this election year, potential Shroud candidates
17 need not be nervous. Being mentioned in this resolution does
18 not guarantee a one-way ticket straight to Buck's Pocket. A
19 few folks have overcome the shroud stigma and gone on to lead
20 a respectable political life. In researching prior
21 resolutions, we came upon an interesting SKELETON IN THE
22 SHROUD CLOSET. Way back in 1988 a very young member of this
23 body was a runner-up for the Shroud Award for legislation
24 attempting to improve our state parks. Who do you think
25 introduced that bill over two decades ago? That's right, the
26 gentleman from Covington, Representative Seth Hammett.

1 Always a big supporter of this tradition, the
2 Speaker and the Shroud Award have a lot in common. The Speaker
3 always operates with class and civility, and the Shroud Award
4 well, maybe that isn't such a good comparison. But,
5 they both favor conservative ATTIRE; both can BURY YOU; and
6 both have a hang up about TIME. The Speaker demands that
7 things RUN ON TIME and the Shroud Award happily informs you
8 when your TIME IS UP. Interestingly, both got their start
9 during the 1979 Regular Session and each has been around for
10 32 years. About the only thing that's been here longer is the
11 mold and mildew in our offices.

12 But back to that state parks bill. It's fortunate
13 that the Speaker is familiar with Alabama's natural beauty,
14 especially its rugged back country. We suspect that once he
15 hands over the gavel, those who used to listen to his every
16 word will be offering their own advice; mainly, telling him to
17 TAKE A HIKE or JUST GET LOST. Mr. Speaker, while your tenure
18 hasn't always been a WALK IN THE PARK, it has certainly been a
19 fulfilling journey. Thanks for LEADING THE WAY.

20 But enough sweetness and sentimentality, we're here
21 for satire and sarcasm. So kick back and settle in. It's time
22 for some serious BOOGEDY, BOOGEDY, BOOGEDY. As always, we
23 begin with the runners-up, a batch of bills that were bad,
24 just not bad enough. 2010 consolation prizes go to the
25 following offerings:

26 House Bill 81 by Representative Chris England,
27 providing for the expungement of records related to certain

1 felony and misdemeanor charges and convictions. In layman's
2 terms, this bill would blot out the police blotter. Last year
3 the gentleman from Bama Ville must have felt like a coach who
4 had an undefeated record, only to blow it all in a New Year's
5 Day bowl game. His 2009 offering blitzed through the House
6 with a vote of 62 to 34, with 21 co-sponsors, and then marched
7 through the Senate with a winning tally of 14 to 8, only to be
8 stopped inches from the goal line by the Head Official's
9 pocket veto. This time the tenacious Tuscaloosan planned to go
10 all the way. Getting a jump on the competition, the same game
11 plan was introduced on the first day and by day two it was out
12 of the locker room and sitting high atop the regular order
13 polls. Surely this was his year. But NOT SO FAST my friend.
14 The head cheerleader just wasn't able to regain last year's
15 momentum and as he struggled, the game clock just kept
16 ticking. For the remainder of the season there lay his bill,
17 like an overweight out-of-shape defensive lineman, as the
18 opposition repeatedly chopped blocked him on their way to the
19 special order calendar. Zero for 28 legislative days. Now
20 THERE'S A RECORD that deserves to be expunged. Things got so
21 bad that the guy has developed an AWFUL MEAN STARE. In fact,
22 it's so fierce it could scare Nick Saban; or at least Duwayne
23 Bridges. While we're not sure if friend or foe blindsided you,
24 there definitely appears to be a lot of unnecessary roughness.
25 Representative England, next season you might want to check
26 your defensive alignment, as your so-called teammates may not
27 always have your FULL BACK, or even your HALF BACK.

1 House Bill 426 by Representative Laura Hall, to
2 specify proper health and hygiene requirements for railroad
3 mobile labor camps. Running on her usual track, the main line
4 advocate has journeyed from landlords and tenants to
5 CONDUCTORS AND CABOOSES. Never leaving the station, this train
6 was stranded on a Government Operations Committee side track.
7 Interestingly, co-sponsors of the bill included the GO
8 Committee's Chair and three other committee members. We sure
9 hope those folks stopped and looked both ways BEFORE CROSSING
10 THE SPONSOR. We hear that the Huntsville engineer knows how to
11 build up a HEAD OF STEAM and you better not get on the WRONG
12 SIDE OF HER TRACKS. This vehicle definitely wasn't THE LITTLE
13 ENGINE THAT COULD. In order to keep her boxcars from being
14 uncoupled, next trip the conductor may want to use one of
15 those unseverability clauses. To be honest, we are kind of
16 disappointed this locomotive never made it to Grand Central
17 Station, better known as the House floor. We would have
18 enjoyed the Gentle Lady asking HERSELF the obligatory six or
19 seven tough questions. We would even bet that she could answer
20 most of them. Come on, give us a BRAKE MAN. Whoo, Whoo, ALL
21 ABOARD this railroad job may wish to consider alternative
22 transportation.

23 House Bills 542, 543, and 680 by Representative Jeff
24 McLaughlin, providing for nonpartisan elections of judges via
25 a statewide bill, local bills, and a local constitutional
26 amendment. What a radical proposal. Next thing you know
27 somebody is going to start refusing to accept campaign

1 contributions. Come to think of it, that might not be SUCH A
2 BAD IDEA. The judicial reformer didn't need to go to charm
3 school, much less Harvard, to learn that common courtesy isn't
4 the same as local courtesy. Southern manners just aren't what
5 they used to be. We recall a time when opponents suggested a
6 similar plan. Now a lot more picky about who wears their
7 label, the GOP, that's the GET OUT PARTY, wants to dis-ROBE
8 all Democrats. The naked truth is that they pretty much have,
9 as Elephants are weighing down almost all of our state
10 benches. In fact, the lone remaining donkey, basically
11 affirmed this opinion when she complained that the Legislature
12 was only giving her department PEANUTS. Put away the hair dye
13 Yellow Dogs, you won't be turning a neutral shade this year.

14 House Bill 814 by Representative Mike Hill,
15 concerning the control of bed bugs in multi-family dwellings.
16 The sponsor was itching to handle this bill in the worst way,
17 and he pretty much did. Please forgive us, but politics really
18 does make strange bed fellows. As the button says, We Like
19 Mike, but we have a problem with his INSECT INFATUATION. At
20 first, we thought this bill's civil immunity language was
21 aimed at those big bad blood sucking pests,THE TRIAL
22 LAWYERS. Then we figured that the sponsor wanted to one up his
23 Shelby side-kick. You may recall last year the soon to be
24 Senator had a bill trying to Save the Cocks. Representative
25 Hill, you've got it all wrong. Web Cam's bill was about COCKS,
26 as in ROOSTERS, not COCKS, as in ROACHES. But even that didn't
27 seem right. Then it hit us. The sponsor is trying to follow

1 the example of one of his fellow Republicans, the Governor of
2 California. Henceforth, the Gentleman from House District 41
3 wishes to be known as THEFUMIGATOR. Look out bed bugs,
4 HE WILL BE BAAACK; and

5 WHEREAS, having eliminated the runners-up, it is now
6 time to disclose the DEADEST BILL OF 2010. This offering:

7 Was intended to have commercial appeal.

8 Strived to modernize our appearance.

9 Concerned celestial, rather than legislative,
10 bodies.

11 Needed a fiscal note stating that it could all be
12 yours for just a song.

13 There really wasn't any doubt. This year's recipient
14 is the hard working Chair of T&T; the Travel and TUNES
15 Committee. His ill-advised efforts to UP Beat the state song
16 only resulted in a BEAT UP. Ignoring warnings from his Glee
17 Club, our musical maestro had his BATON BURNED when he
18 foolishly tried to NAME THAT TUNE. MOONLIGHT AND MAGNOLIAS
19 quickly turned into SUNBURN AND SOLARCAINE. When a
20 well-preserved Miss Julia Tutwiler floated into this chamber,
21 the sponsor started thinking "THIS CAN'T BE GOOD." For
22 once he was right. The Angel of Prisons wanted to discuss
23 CORRECTIONS of a different sort, mainly fixing the Big Mistake
24 being made by this young whippersnapper who was trying to PUNK
25 her POEM. Johnny Mack, we got to admit, it takes real talent
26 to have your bill KILLED by a DEAD PERSON. Perhaps our
27 self-designated D J should have offered as rebuttal fellow Red

1 Bayer Mac McAnally and his pal Jimmy Buffett singing their
2 home grown version of the stellar substitute. But CHANGES IN
3 ATTITUDES are rare. PARROTHEADS AND LYNYRD SKINHEADS should
4 have stopped while they were still A HEAD. Their foolish
5 fantasies were brutally decapitated by a supernova storm of
6 Music Club Matrons who demanded a song with HISTORY, NOT HOE
7 DOWN, HIP HOP, OR HONKY TONK. So what if the primary
8 proponent's preference has been performed by Guy Lombardo,
9 Ella Fitzgerald, Louie Armstrong, Billie Holiday, Dean Martin,
10 Frank Sinatra, Kate Smith, Doris Day, Mel Torme, and BOBBY
11 DENTON? Our current state song is beloved by at least six
12 Octogenarians and a couple of fourth graders who, unlike the
13 sponsor, know it by heart. You have to pity the Chief Travel
14 Agent; he was only trying to jazz up our image to attract more
15 tourists. After all, there just aren't enough FEDERAL AGENTS
16 in town to FILL ALL OUR HOTEL ROOMS. Any how, with his heart
17 beating like a hammer, Tin Pan Johnny needed a quick way to
18 SETTLE THE SCORE before his DANCING WITH THE STARS PLAN
19 waltzed into a total eclipse. So, for an encore he proudly
20 proposed putting the musical matter to an election in
21 cyberspace, allowing everyone from Vina to Venus to vote on
22 the twenty plus ballads that mention our home sweet home. Way
23 to make the HARD CHOICES, Johnny Mack. Unable to get others to
24 sing along, the sponsor's solo act wasn't strong enough to
25 carry this tune. Sadly, in his darkest hour, there was little
26 SORROW FOR MORROW. Members didn't need a telescope to clearly

1 see that this was just a PLAIN DUMB AS..teroid IDEA; now
2 therefore,

3 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF
4 THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA, That the winner of the 2010 Shroud
5 Award is House Bill 336, designating "Stars Fell On Alabama"
6 as the state song. Our good friend should cease wishing upon
7 his fallen star, and instead, Representative Johnny Mack
8 Morrow should come forth to receive the symbolic shroud.