

1 HR492
2 142104-1
3 By Representative McCutcheon
4 RFD:
5 First Read: 16-MAY-12

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8 DESIGNATING THE RECIPIENT OF THE 2012 SHROUD AWARD.

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10 WHEREAS, once again it is time for the unique
11 self-mocking ceremony known as the Shroud Award, a highly
12 anticipated sine die tradition in which the DEADEST Bill of
13 the year is revealed. Some say it's the Alabama Legislature's
14 version of the Academy Awards. In view of this chamber's
15 recent taste of Tinsel Town, as provided by a proud Alabama
16 gal who hasn't forgotten the home folks, this comparison is
17 appropriate. However, there are a couple of big differences.

18 First. The bright, lovely, and talented Academy
19 Award winning actress Octavia Spencer won't be returning.
20 That's really a shame, because our group of losers could sure
21 use all THE HELP they can get.

22 Second. Because it's all about glitz and glamour,
23 images of nominees will not be seen on the jumbo screen. You
24 ladies look your usual spectacular selves, but what's up with
25 the men? You guys are wearing the same old boring clothes you
26 wear every other day. Forget about legislative compensation,
27 you definitely need a clothing allowance.

1 Third. Unlike those back-stabbing Hollywood types,
2 you people like each other, you really like each other. Yes,
3 we believe it, but we're not sure Security is buying it.

4 Fourth. Unlike the Oscar's there is no hairless
5 golden statuette to present. However, the winner is entitled
6 to stand by Clerk Pappas and his beautiful bald head.

7 Fifth. There won't be any song and dance number. We
8 had one planned, but Paul Beckman has a sore throat, John
9 Rogers pulled a hamstring, and Joe Hubbard just can't handle
10 any more hecklers.

11 And Finally. There was no way the Speaker was going
12 to walk down a Crimson Red Carpet.

13 Like the Oscars, the Shroud Award not only names the
14 ultimate winner, but we also shine the spotlight on the
15 runners-up, those bills whose performances were bad, just not
16 bad enough to capture critical scorn as the worst. Consolation
17 prizes go to:

18 House Bill 146 by Representative Joe Hubbard,
19 replacing "Heart of Dixie" with "State of Champions" on
20 automobile license plates. This effort was all about
21 recruiting; we're just not sure if it was industrial or
22 athletic. In a tradition-laden state, this legislation was
23 truly the Sophie's Choice of Signage. Southern heritage versus
24 sports stardom. It was like asking do you prefer grits or
25 cornbread; home-grown maters or turnip greens; Southern fried
26 anything or Southern fried anything. It is just impossible to
27 choose. Some wags from West Alabama suggested the numbers on

1 such a tag should read 14 to 2; but we suspect the other side
2 of the state would call a counter play and limit language to
3 the letters C, A, and M. Bama fans have seen that TRICK PLAY
4 before. The Public Safety and Homeland Security Committee,
5 fearing they would get beat no matter who won, took a knee and
6 refused to place this lose-lose game plan on the schedule.
7 Undeterred, the Montgomery plate poet plans to narrow his
8 focus. He is now concentrating on only a couple of numbers. He
9 wants residents in House District 73 to keep a 3 on their car
10 tag. He claims a Shelby County 58 just does not make CENSUS.
11 Lots of luck with that redesign.

12 House Bill 326 by Representative Jeremy Oden
13 requiring that local superintendents of education be appointed
14 by the local board of education rather than being elected.
15 Supporters argued it was good government to keep politics out
16 of the role of the local superintendent. Opponents responded
17 that you don't need no book learning to know if the
18 superintendent is a good ole boy or girl. They argued citizens
19 are smart enough to elect their public officials, after all,
20 look who they put in the Legislature. While earning an A for
21 effort, the Vinemonter proved no SUPERMAN. Lacking a SUPER
22 MAJORITY, his SUPER INTENTIONS were SUPER DEAD.

23 House Bill 489 by Representative Mike Jones
24 extending the primitive weapon and archery hunting season for
25 whitetail deer through the first two weeks after the close of
26 the regular gun season. Did you hear the one about the two
27 avid hunters who came upon a pair of impressive tracks? The

1 first hunter said, "Those are deer tracks, and since its deer
2 season, we should follow them and bag us a big buck." The
3 second hunter said, "You got to be nuts. Those are wild boar
4 tracks, and boar isn't in season. If we follow those tracks,
5 we will waste the entire day." Each believing they were
6 absolutely right rigidly stuck to their guns They were
7 still arguing when the train hit them Sounds familiar
8 doesn't it? Deer hunters are a stubborn lot and are not
9 inclined to camouflage their opinions. When it comes to this
10 issue everyone is an authority and there is no herd mentality.
11 Making matters worse, it's awfully difficult to reason with a
12 guy carrying a 15 gauge with a night scope. Fearing that this
13 moving target was just too difficult to hit, members declined
14 to take a DEER STAND. This time, the BUCK DIDN'T STOP HERE.

15 House Bills 434, 439, and 494, by Representative
16 Jack Williams dealing with city council meetings, athlete
17 agents, and animal abuse. Fortunate is the fellow who has back
18 to back to back bills on the ten minute special order
19 calendar. Even more lucky is the man who has a fourth bill
20 concerning the environment a couple of notches down. Being in
21 such an advantageous position, the hardworking sponsor
22 rightfully expected to add to his impressive passage count.
23 After all, bills on the Dime List usually are not
24 controversial and basically boil down to a popularity contest.
25 Besides, only a mad man would oppose legislation protecting
26 Democracy, clean water, All American athletes, and defenseless
27 puppy dogs. Uh, listen. We don't want to scare anybody,

1 but there are some real mad men in here, and we don't
2 necessarily mean in a crazy sense. It seemed the so-called
3 pals of the Jeffersonian gentleman would not stop talking
4 behind his back, as well as in front of it, giving him the
5 dreaded non-silent treatment. By the end of the agenda, the
6 Hoover Hopeful was a dismal Zero for 4. And we thought it was
7 the Democrats who could not get anything passed. While we are
8 hesitant to interfere with what is apparently a family feud,
9 we offer a couple of suggestions. To the sponsor: Keep working
10 on those people skills. To the opposition: Perhaps, YOU JUST
11 DON'T KNOW JACK; and

12 WHEREAS, having named this sorry group of
13 runners-up, each of whom should not expect any sponsoring
14 roles in the near future, it is time to announce the recipient
15 of the Annual Shroud Award. The envelope please. The deadest
16 bill of 2012 goes to:

17 A bill that proved the adage that history always
18 repeats itself.

19 That caused opponents to claim that the sponsor did
20 not have enough GRAY matter.

21 That had supporters repeatedly running into a Stone
22 Wall.

23 That caused some to look at a revered symbol and see
24 Stars while causing others to head to the nearest Bars.

25 And that once more proved that in Alabama, this
26 definitely is not a Lost Cause.

1 Think you got it? Better be careful, as your fiscal
2 commander in chief can still order a full financial
3 court-martial. The 34th annual winner of the Shroud Award is
4 House Bill 610 which would reallocate the Confederate
5 veterans' and widows' tax to various historical sites rather
6 than exclusively to Confederate Memorial Park. You know who
7 the sponsor is. He's the poor soul who wanders around
8 muttering, "Why in the world did I take this chairmanship? I
9 don't have any money but I sure have rocks in my head. After
10 these long hours I need some serious R and R. I deserve to go
11 somewhere that's quiet and stress free, like the Seventh
12 Floor. You would think these guys owe me. But what do they do?
13 They kick the living Bull Run out of me."

14 When he wasn't talking to himself, the sponsor
15 proposed funding as many Civil War and Civil Rights related
16 memorials and museums as possible. He argued that all of our
17 history was equally important and needs preserving. But the
18 opponents did not want to hear any lessons from the Barton
19 Academy. Refusing to share the wealth, they displayed a take
20 no prisoners mentality and a hard core Robert E. ME
21 philosophy. Proponents even accused the opposition of being
22 unable to see the Nathan Bedford FORREST for their own tree.

23 The Mountain Creek Militia argued only they were the
24 legitimate heir of the tax proceeds and that the reallocation
25 of funds would turn their beloved park into a graveyard. Maybe
26 we are mistaken, but we thought it already was one. On line
27 and on the floor the assault was savage. Things got so bad

1 that we began to worry that the TRUE SURVIVING WIDOW in all
2 this was going to be the sponsor's wife. Proud Southern
3 descendents all but called the cash starved Chairman a
4 traitor. Actually, if you think about it, that's one of the
5 nicer things folks have said about him. Undeterred, the brave
6 Mobile Bayer borrowed a phrase from another leader and cried
7 Damn the Torpedoes, full speed ahead. Opps, that was a
8 mistake. The BIR vote was not just a SHILOH, it was brutal.
9 The casualty count was 34 Yeas to 52 Nays. Woosh, the
10 sponsor's solution was Gone With the Wind; now therefore,

11 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF
12 THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA, That the winner of the 2012 Shroud
13 Award is House Bill 610, a bill attempting to reallocate tax
14 proceeds that currently are exclusively paid to Confederate
15 Memorial Park. The time has come to stop whistling Dixie and
16 request the sponsor of this historic proposal to march forward
17 and accept the symbolic shroud. Chairman Jim Barton, now is
18 your opportunity to launch a final counterattack.