

Georgia insight

Sue Ella Deadwyler, 4168 Rue Antoinette, Stone Mountain, Georgia 30083

"She hath done what she could." Mark 14:8a

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Social Services Funded by Federal & State Grants Change Them Into God-Free Zones

H.R. 1345 Provides State Grants for church, sect, cult, religion and sectarian institution
Faith-based grants provide federal and state tax money to fund religious social services. That sounds like such a great idea, but gag orders, rules and red tape accompany government money. Right now, the State Constitution *prohibits* federal grants from going *directly* to religion or cults, so current federal faith-based grants are sent to State agencies that forward them to recipients in Georgia.

H.R. 1345 would change that. First, it would (a) allow *federal* faith grants to go *directly* to religious entities in Georgia. At the same time it would (b) free-up *State* money so state taxes could fund religious social services. The State Constitution would be changed by adding the underlined words below to Article I, Section II, Paragraph VII, to legalize (a) and (b) above:

"Except as permitted or required by the United States Constitution, as amended, no money shall ever be taken from the public treasury, directly or indirectly, in aid of any church, sect, cult, or religious denomination or of any sectarian institution."

- **Major Problem: Faith-based grants shrink religious influence in the following ways:**
 - (a) Religious influence would be eliminated in every service funded by faith-based grants.
 - (b) Religious entities *could not evangelize or teach Bible* as a condition for receiving services.
 - (c) Faith or *lifestyle could not be used to screen job applicants or volunteers*. (Think about that.)

- **Major Problem: Taxes would support cults, as well as, groups in alternate lifestyles.**
Key Fact: If H.R. 1345 passes, the State Constitution would authorize grants, not only to churches but, to *sects, cults and sectarian institutions*. See above-quoted State Constitution. Therefore, groups eligible for faith-based grants would include witches in *Wiccan* churches, *Church of Satan* Lucifer worshipers, *atheists, Humanists, Muslims¹, Buddhists, Hindus, etc.* A group of homosexuals in Savannah received the first federal faith-based grant in Georgia.

Background. *The first faith-based grant bills* in Georgia were introduced in January 2004. To show support for President Bush's faith-based initiative, the Senate rushed to pass S.R. 560 because he was coming to town. The Senate vote was 40-14, but the bill died in the House. S.R. 560 would have accomplished exactly what H.B. 1345 is intended to do this session. H.R. 941, also introduced in 2004 was the House version of S.R. 560. It died in the House, too. *Another faith-based bill* was introduced as S.R. 49 in 2005. The Senate defeated it twice – on the first floor vote and again on reconsideration. So, that bill died in the Senate last year.

H.R. 1345 is this year's effort. Now it's back and *still* bad for religion. H.R. 1345 amends the State Constitution "to prevent discrimination in the public funding of social services by allowing religious or faith-based organizations to receive public aid, directly or indirectly."

ACTION – Oppose H.R. 1345. It passed House Human Relations & Aging Committee by a vote of 4 to 3, February 23rd and is in House Rules now. That's such a huge committee, please contact these few members: Representatives Ehrhart, Ch., 404 656-5141, eaeh@facilitygroup.com; Burmeister, V-Ch., 656-5024, sue.burmeister@house.ga.gov; Mills, Sec., 656-5099; Graves, 657-8440, repdavidgraves@hotmail.com; Keen, 656-5052, jlkeen@bellsouth.net; Lane, 656-5115; Lewis, 656-9198; Lunsford, 656-7146, john.lunsford@house.ga.gov; and Rice, 656-5912, tqrice@aol.com

¹ In Putnam County United Nuwaubian Nation of Moors leader, was convicted of racketeering and child molestation.

Border War

U.S. Justice Department Reports Bloody Conflict over U.S.-Mexican Border May, 2005. The May 31, 2005 *WorldNetDaily* article “Mexican Commandos Seek Control of Border” reported men switching sides after the U.S. Army at Fort Benning trained them to combat drug cartels. Now known as Mexican commandos or “Los Zetas,” they kill anyone fighting their attempt to monopolize smuggling of drugs and aliens into the U.S., as well as everyone who refuses to pay a ten-percent commission on goods smuggled along route I-35. They’re, also, suspected of murdering smugglers, hit men, civilians, soldiers and police on both sides of the 2,000-mile U.S.-Mexico border. Since switching sides, they’ve become more violent and make bold cross-border runs into the U.S. in military-style vehicles armed with automatic weapons. Los Zetas members have been active in Dallas since 2003 and are now in Houston, San Antonio, California, Oklahoma, Tennessee, *Georgia* and Florida.

January 2006. Homeland Security Secretary Chertoff warned, “When civilians go down to the border, they are taking a huge chance with their lives.” *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* reported contract-style hits on federal agents. A confidential federal memo warned border patrol agents they could be targets of assassins hired by smugglers of illegal aliens. The large and deadly Juarez cartel has had a bounty of \$200,000 on American federal agents. Congressman Tom DeLay said border problems are “a clear and present danger to the security of the U.S.” Congressman John Culberson’s chilling comment was, “You don’t have to go to Badhddad” to find terrorist activity. U.S. intelligence agencies say there are narco-terrorist training camps near the Mexican City of Matamoros. MS-13, a drug enforcer gang spread from El Salvador into at least 31 states, is a major threat to U.S. agents, law enforcement and U.S. citizens.

February 2006. *WorldNetDaily’s* article, “Grenades, Bombs Found at Border,” covered a report from Julie Myers, Assistant Secretary of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement about the February 3, 2006 raid in Laredo, Texas by a federal task force. Cooperating in that raid on an enormous cache of weapons were Immigration and Customs Enforcement, FBI, local authorities and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. Just prior to that seizure, weapons had, also, been found in *homes* during January 12, 26 and 27 searches.

February 14, 2006. Phyllis Schlafly gave specifics about that raid, wondering why Americans weren’t told at once. Seized were two fully assembled Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) and materials for 33 more, military-style grenades, 26 grenade triggers, large amounts of AD-47 and AR-15 assault rifles, 1,280 ammunition rounds, silencers, machine gun assembly kits, 300 primers, bullet-proof vests, police scanners, sniper scopes, narcotics and cash.

The Val Verde County chief deputy said drug traffickers help terrorists with possible al Qaeda ties cross into the U.S. The Department of Homeland Security now admits that, during ten years, they had previously dubbed as “accidental” 231 documented incursions into the U.S. by Mexican military or police, or drug or alien smugglers dressed in military uniforms.

Sheriff’s deputies spotted a military-style Humvee near El Paso, Texas, with a mounted .50-caliber machine gun escorting a caravan of SUVs smuggling illegal drugs. The highway patrol and the sheriff’s deputies were out-gunned, but they took pictures. A just-discovered sophisticated 2,400-foot tunnel runs under our border to a San Diego warehouse stocked with two tons of marijuana. No one knows how long it’s been there or how much drugs it housed.

H.B. 1302: A Strange Mix of Gangs & Parents The Parent Part Must Be Deleted

H.B. 1302, introduced by Representative Casas, creates the Georgia Street Gang Terrorism and Prevention Act. Gangs and terrorism aren't new to Georgia. In fact, a Gainesville-Hall County Gang Task Force formed in 1998 identified 24 gangs with almost 1,000 members in Hall County alone. Most were Mexican immigrants. Of eleven murders committed in 2002 in Hall County, five were gang-related. By December 2003 the Task Force had reduced the number of gangs from 24 to twelve or 14 and membership was down to 300.

Federal agents from the FBI, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms and U.S. Immigration are working with the Gainesville Police Department and Hall County Sheriff's Department to stop the crime. Gainesville law enforcement warns that action must begin early to nip the gang problem in the bud. "Early" is when graffiti is first seen. Graffiti is their method of "tagging" property in communities they claim as their turf. Other gangs understand graffiti as the equivalent of a "posted" sign that shouts, "Don't trespass on *our* territory."

H.B. 1302 lists crimes that will be classified as criminal gang activity – graffiti; sex crimes; stalking; racketeering; jail-breaks; helping or encouraging a child to escape custody; and having or using a weapon. For those crimes, this bill increases prison time to at least five years with a maximum of 15. Minimum fines will increase from \$5,000 to \$10,000, while maximum fines increase from \$10,000 to \$15,000. Gang-related crime sentences would be *added* to other sentences and each offense would be considered a separate crime.

Parents and Gangs, Not Germane, Should Not Be in the Same Bill

Some say rules are made to be broken. Maybe that's the case here, but rules in the General Assembly require subjects in the same bill to be germane. The legal definition of germane is "closely allied, relevant." The original word translated into English, literally, means "having the same parents, closely akin." A synonym is "relevant," while the antonym is "foreign."

H.B. 1302 contains two entirely different subjects – each completely foreign from the other. While some parents may be or might have been gang members, a vast majority is law-abiding and should not be treated as criminals. That's especially true of parental presence in schools where their influence is always encouraged. Or is that only lip service?

The gang-related portion amends Title 16 of the criminal law. Then, the bill jumps into Title 20, which governs education. Current law allows parents, grandparents or guardians to be on school property without being charged with a crime. H.B. 1302 strikes that provision and makes it clear that parents, grandparents and guardians *will be treated as trespassers* if they don't leave school when asked to do so. It's likely that any parent that goes to school and *won't* leave has a very good reason *not* to obey the order. But, that parent will be treated as a criminal and charged with a misdemeanor of a high and aggravated nature for refusing to go.

ACTION – Oppose unless Section 4(b) about parents is deleted. Contact House Judiciary Non-Civil Committee Representatives Ralston, Ch., 404 656-5943, dralston1@tds.net; Mumford, V-Ch., 656-0254; Setzler, Sec., 656-0126, lesetzler@mactec.com; Abdul-Salaam, 656-0325; Bearden, 656-0287, bearden4house68@aol.com; Benfield, 656-7859, stuckey@mindspring.com; Bordeaux, 656-6372; Byrd, 656-0126, charbyrd20@yahoo.com; Cooper, 656-5024; Everson, 656-0188; Franklin, 656-5087; Jacobs, 656-0325, mike@meetmikejacobs.com; Knox, 656-6831, tknox@legis.state.ga.us; Mangham, 656-0126, rmangham@mindspring.com; Randall, 656-0109, nrandall@legis.state.ga.us

Unruly Child Bill Could Stop Gang Activity, One Child at a Time

Incorrigible children are, certainly, unruly and prime candidates for gangs. So, Representative Day's bill is a child-by-child attempt to intervene before unruly becomes more than mischief. So-called "childhood mischief" could be the first step into gangs that breed violence. Habitual participation in violence could be the catalyst into criminal acts. When that happens, the unruly child becomes a full-blown criminal that won't get to go home with mommy and daddy after 72 hours.

H.B. 1396 is Representative Day's bill to amend the law governing the treatment of unruly children. When you think about street gangs in small increments, you really have a group of individuals that get together for various reasons, some for fun and others for violence. Trying to control an entire gang at once could take a SWAT team of trained officers working full time. But Representative Day has introduced a bill that attacks the problem, one member at a time. His H.B. 1396 doesn't mention gangs or crime, but focuses on the child who won't obey the rules at home or anywhere else. Representative Day wants to amend Georgia Code Section 15 with only 44 words that modify the treatment of an unruly child. Current law defines unruly by several acts, such as being habitually truant from school without a good reason. In other words, he plays hooky. The unruly child, probably, is uncontrollable and habitually disobeys parents. He might commit an offense that applies only to a child or he runs away from home or wanders or loiters about city streets or highways or other public places between midnight and five a.m. Children that do that are breaking the curfew law and are categorized as unruly.

A child caught doing any one of these things may be put under court-ordered supervision.

Then, if he refuses to obey the court, he enters a new level of unruly. If he possesses alcoholic beverages or patronizes a bar where alcohol is sold and his parent or guardian isn't with him, he's unruly. If he commits a delinquent act, he's obviously an unruly child. Any of these situations could mean the child is taken into custody and judged in juvenile court.

H.B. 1396 doesn't change any of that, but addresses the problem of curfew violation and increases the time an unruly child 14 or older can be detained after being arrested. Right now, the maximum a child can be held informally is twelve hours. H.B. 1396 multiplies that by six, allowing law enforcement to keep the unruly child in custody for 72 hours.

Counties and municipalities make every effort to contact parents or guardians of detained children and don't put them in a cell or separate them from other children unless they become disruptive or unruly while they're in juvenile detention. At that point, this bill makes another change. It allows 16-year-olds to be put in a cell apart from other children.

H.B. 1396 was assigned to Representative Ralston's Non Civil Judiciary Committee on February 21st, the 21st day of the session. Now it's almost March. With only a couple weeks left in this session, this needs to move fast. It won't be held until next session because bills that don't pass this year are automatically dead.

ACTION – Support. Contact House Judiciary Non-Civil Committee Representatives Ralston, Ch., 404 656-5943, dralston1@tds.net; Mumford, V-Ch., 656-0254; Setzler, Sec., 656-0126, lesetzler@mactec.com; Abdul-Salaam, 656-0325; Bearden, 656-0287, bearden4house68@aol.com; Benfield, 656-7859, stuckey@mindspring.com; Bordeaux, 656-6372; Byrd, 656-0126, charbyrd20@yahoo.com; Cooper, 656-5024; Everson, 656-0188; Franklin, 656-5087; Jacobs, 656-0325m mike@meetmikejacobs.com; Knox, 656-6831, tknox@legis.state.ga.us; Mangham, 656-0126, rmangham@mindspring.com; Randall, 656-0109, nrandall@legis.state.ga.us

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