

Georgia insight

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

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Midnight, Plus Three Minutes

When the clock struck 12:03 a.m. April 21st, the 2007 session's last day, that was officially April 20th, slipped three minutes *beyond* its 40-day constitutional limit. However, the official clock was not, literally, stopped as happened in time past.

A Bit of "Down Home" History

In the '60s Representative Denmark Groover, Jr., actually, dangled from the gallery rail to stop the clock before it passed midnight on the 40th day. Although the legislature's last issue was extremely important that year, it was not nearly as sensational as Groover's escapade, that was pictured for posterity as part of the next day's headline story.

The newspaper photographer might not have known it then, but he had a historical photograph. That picture of Groover – his left leg and arm firmly clamped around the protective banister no one's supposed to touch, much less climb over – is encased in a glass cabinet for all to see on the fourth floor of the Capitol, just outside the House gallery. Little did the daring representative know his antics would be front-page news, memorialized for future generations.

Just hours later, *The Atlanta Journal's* February 22, 1964 issue trumpeted, "Redistrict Plan Passes in Wild House Scene. Clock Stopped, Deadline Beaten." The article by Charles Pou explained, "Either very late Friday night or very early Saturday morning the Georgia Legislature passed a congressional redistricting bill. It was done in the wildest moments at the capitol since Ellis Arnall and Herman Talmadge tried to be governor at the same time. Fulton and DeKalb counties get a congressman each under the bill recorded in the Georgia House of Representatives as having won approval 113 to 69 at 11:50 p.m. – 10 minutes before the midnight adjournment deadline.

"But the hands on the official clock in the house gallery were stopped at 11:50 p.m., and not permitted to run again until some 15 minutes later, two speakers argued the bill and the vote was taken. In the interlude, opponents of the compromise measure – mainly hard shell Marvin Griffin men – tried in vain to get the attention of the presiding officer . . . to protest the clock stopping." Although stopping the clock is *not* part of the constitutional mandate for a 40-day session, that clock-stopped vote stands 'til this day.

Since Representative Groover was a fighter pilot in the World War II brigade of misfits nicknamed the "Black Sheep Squadron," the clock attack was right up his alley. He and other pilots were sent to the Black Sheep Squadron for unmilitary-like behavior and who knows what else. Once in that squadron, he flew with distinction and earned both the Purple Heart and the Air Medal. Back in civilian life, he completed law school, practiced in Macon and was recognized as one of the most knowledgeable and effective attorneys in Georgia.

Though no longer in the legislature in the 1997-98 term, Groover was invited to appear before the House of Representatives to receive a copy of H.R. 220 that honored his unique service to the House he had served for some part of each decade since the 1950s.

Thanks to You, A Good Bill Passed: H.B. 147

Representative James Mills of District 25 introduced **H.B. 147**, the Woman's Ultrasound Right to Know Act. It dealt with pregnancy, so, appropriately, its passage was laborious and long, having been introduced January 25th, but not passed until the last day of the session. S.B. 66, the Senate ultrasound bill, was scuttled along the way. Both original versions of H.B. 147 and S.B. 66 *required* pregnant females to get an ultrasound before an abortion, but they could freely choose *to view or not to view* the image. But "offer" soon replaced "require" in the bill.

To get an ultrasound bill, H.B. 147 underwent drastic amendments before passing the House March 19th and the Senate's work to pacify abortion supporters didn't alter the opposition's strategy. They continued attacking each version of the bill until the final vote was registered.

As an opponent of ultrasounds, Senator Steve Henson called the bill unnecessary, claiming there is no reason for it, calling it intentional interference by the state into personal decisions, making abortionists agents of the state. Senator Henson's protests prompted Senator David Shafer to remind Henson of Henson's own "do-pass" motion to vote it out of committee.

Senator Nan Orrock voiced her fear that ultrasounds cause fewer abortions. She said, "This is an effort to convince women *not* to have abortions if they look at that sonogram." While rejecting sonograms that could save babies, she voiced her preference for state-provided free-of-charge morning-after pills, contraception and comprehensive sex education, but ignored critical facts. (a) Public health clinics *already* provide contraception and morning-after pills. (b) Comprehensive sex education is mandated for students K – 12. Then, she made her major point: "It's unfair for us to mandate this for people who don't share your [pro-life] beliefs."

Ultrasounds not required. By the time she said that, the mandate for ultrasounds was gone. The final version of H.B. 147 *allows* physicians to *offer* females the *opportunity* to undergo an ultrasound, if such is available. In any case, the expectant mother is not required to see or hear whatever the ultrasound reveals.

List not required to be provided. The original bills *required* physicians to give pregnant females a list of services that provide free-of-charge ultrasounds, but that was changed, too. The final bill requires physicians to *tell* patients "*how to obtain* a list of health care providers" of ultrasounds free of charge, but *does not require lists to be given* pregnant females.

DHR to produce a list. Under H.B. 147, the Department of Human Resources must produce by ZIP Code (a) geographically indexed lists with contact numbers for ultrasound services. Then (b) provide forms on which doctors record the number of females given an opportunity to view ultrasound results and how many, actually, viewed the images and heard the heartbeats.

Conference Committee Reports 1, 2: When both House and Senate insisted on their versions of the bill, a conference committee was appointed to work out the differences. The Senate rejected the first conference committee report at 3:55 p.m. It was three short of passage. Conferees were given one hour to amend the bill and present it again, which they did.

Late in the evening of April 20th, that version passed the Senate 31-17 and the House 116-54. It's now on the governor's desk awaiting his signature. So, effective July 1st pregnant females seeking abortions may *choose to accept* the offer of free-of-charge ultrasounds or abort their baby without knowing its dimensions, the sound of its heartbeat or its stage of development.

S.B. 211, State Hate Crime Bill Died, Federal Bills Must be Defeated

Legislators said, “It ain’t gonna happen!” “It won’t pass. There’re too many eyeballs watching for it.”

Georgia Bill. Again we fought the hate crime bill and those legislators were right. We won! But S.B. 211 is worse than other versions. It provides special civil rights status for sexual orientation as well as gender identity, which includes cross-dressers and people with surgical sex changes. Our state bill died, but the same provisions are in hate crime bills in Congress.

Federal Bills. S. 1105 and H.R. 1592 would provide money so states can implement the Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Prevention Act of 2007, which gives civil rights protection for *sexual orientation, gender and gender identity*. Gender is natural-born sexual identity – either male or female – while both sexual orientation and gender identity indicate preferences.

H.R. 1592, called “the most dangerous legislation in America,” is said to have 137 co-sponsors. Only one is from Georgia, Representative John Lewis, a Democrat from Atlanta. Of 100 U.S. Senators, 42 co-signed S. 1105. Georgia’s Senators Chambliss and Isakson *did not* co-sign it.

Both bills would suppress free speech and religious liberty. The House Judiciary Committee, actually, admitted that a pastor’s sermon about homosexuality could be punished as a hate crime. That’s what *could* happen, but it’s *already happening* under state law in *Philadelphia*, where two grandmothers were jailed for sharing the gospel on public sidewalks.

Under both bills, everyone, including pastors, could be investigated and prosecuted for sharing the gospel. In *Canada* preachers are afraid to read Bible passages against homosexuality. In both *Canada and France* legislators were fined for publicly criticizing homosexuality and in *Sweden* a pastor was sentenced to a month in jail for preaching that homosexuality is a sin.

A British couple denied the right to adopt was told their Christian faith might prejudice them against a homosexual child placed in their care. In the United States, Catholic Charities of *Boston* stopped all adoption proceedings after being told the state pro-gay nondiscrimination law allows the state to license only agencies that put children in homosexual-led households.

ACTION – Call Congressman John Lewis at 404 659-0116 and ask him to withdraw as a co-sponsor of H.R. 1592.

Preschool Certification Requires Curriculum Designed to Confuse Gender Identity

Gender identity is the latest effort to cultivate alternate lifestyles, especially, in children. That’s evident in curriculum required for certified daycare centers, preschools and kindergartens. If you saw “20/20” on ABC News April 27th, you were introduced to so-called “gender identity disorder” (GID). Barbara Walters interviewed three GID children ages 6, 10 and 16, along with their parents. Her subject: “My Secret Self: A Story of Transgender Children.”

GID didn’t just drop from the wild blue yonder. Curricula such as The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) *Anti-Bias Curriculum: Tools for Empowering Young Children* deliberately confuse kids about what or who they are – male, female or trans. Since 1985, NAEYC has certified early childhood programs, including those in Georgia.

Page 2 raises several questions, such as, “*Will I always be a girl or a boy? If I like to climb trees, do I become a boy? If I like to play with dolls, do I become a girl?*” You and I would answer Yes to the first question and No to the second and third. But that’s not what NAEYC does. Page 51 directs facilitators to encourage more cross-gender play in order to redirect gender socialization. To do that, play areas are physically rearranged and weekly cross-gender play days are scheduled until no child’s play is gender specific. It is cross-gender.

Another Good Bill Passed: S.B. 23 Citizenship Status of Criminals

Senator John Douglas knew about terrorist recruitment of prisoners. He knew that the millions of illegal aliens include thousands of dangerous criminals. He knew they weren't all up-standing citizens who meekly cross the border to earn an honest living. He knew something had to be done to get a handle on the situation and he knew Georgia officials are responsible for protecting the state's citizens. He thought long and hard about the situation before introducing S.B. 23 as a new Code Section of law because new problems demand new laws. With the passage of S.B. 23, judges and the State Board of Pardons and Paroles will be authorized to check the backgrounds of convicted criminals before they're sentenced, paroled or pardoned. Information found in background checks will determine what happens next to criminals. At the discretion of the judge or the board, any criminal in this country illegally could be deported or kept in the United States to serve prison time or fulfill probation here. The retroactive provision allows the same scrutiny of criminals who committed crimes before S.B. 23 becomes law. But if that section is found to be unconstitutional, it can be deleted without affecting the other provisions. Thanks to S.B. 23, by July 1st the *state* can better judge criminals, but the situation needs to be handled on the federal level, as well.

Federal Report: Crime Along the Southern Border

Most of us never heard of a 38-page 2006 report prepared and released last fall by the U.S. House Committee on Homeland Security's Subcommittee on Investigations. Committee Chairman Michael McCaul, of District 10 in Texas, publicly introduced it on CNN's Lou Dobbs "Tonight" show on October 18th. Its executive summary outlines the alarming rise in crime and violence along the 2,000-mile U.S./Mexican border, where syndicated criminals smuggle drugs, people, weapons and cash into California, Arizona, New Mexico and Texas. Of the 1.2 million illegal aliens the border patrol caught in 2005, 165,000 were *not* Mexicans. Some were career criminals forced out of their own country and 650 were from countries known to export terrorists. Land crossings get media attention, but no one's talking about the 43 water ports of entry from Mexico into the U.S. Eighteen of the ports are in Texas, easily accessible to interstate highways used by Mexican drug cartels to cross the border with drugs and illegal aliens. They make tons *more* money by coordinating with smugglers of humans. I can't begin to explain the entire report, but pages 8 and 9 display photographs of trains en route from Central America and Mexico to the United States. The trains are said to be 90 to 160 railroad cars long. They appear to be much like cattle cars. However, their small loads of cargo allow them to over-fill with people. Aliens that couldn't get inside are clinging to the train tops, sides and couplings on their way to Brownsville, McAllen, and Laredo, Texas. These facts aren't readily publicized, but this report explains why our Georgia legislature must pass bills such as S.B. 23 to get a smidgen of control over the illegal alien invasion.

Conclusion. Sieve-like borders and lax law enforcement have allowed South America's extremely powerful, sophisticated, and violent criminal networks to grow into big business as they successfully smuggle drugs, weapons, money and illegal aliens into the United States. They've set up shop in hundreds of U.S. locations to expand gang turf. Added to that sinister reality is a horde of terrorists sneaking in as aliens. But those terrorists aren't here to get jobs.

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