

First Year delegates show no fear

By Eden Hipps and Trinity Hunter
 TomorrowTODAY writers

When the First-Year chamber opened, Chaplain Drew McKeown reminded delegates that God tells us not to be afraid in anything. The delegates took his devotion to heart.

The first bill up was **FYB17**, The Second Chance Act, which would create a rehabilitation program for previously incarcerated people. Many delegates showed no fear as they stepped up to debate.

Delegate Chloe Kinderman of Mountain Brook High School spoke against the bill because too much money is spent on prisons as is. However, Delegate



PHOTO BY ERICA GAGE / LAMP. Montgomery

First Year delegates confer on legislation Friday.

William Robertson of the Montgomery Academy said it offers programs to help the previously incarcerated learn skills necessary for them to thrive after prison.

FYB24 by Jack Burt to prohibit the death penalty in Alabama also ignited the fire in First Year. Tionna Bradford of

Huntsville said many view the death penalty as an easy way out. Burt ended his remarks by saying Jesus says to love others and love does not involve killing.

One thing all First Year delegates had in common was confidence; there was no trace of fear anywhere in the chamber.



TomorrowTODAY staff

From left Trinity Hunter, Hollis Floyd, Kayleigh Hand, Emma Strickland, Eden Hipps, Erica Gage, Emmy Stevens, Meagan Holloway-Ragland, Amelia Blair, Anna Claire Bullard and Ashleigh Long.

Governor signs 20 passed bills into law

HB32 by Julia Holmes, Vestavia Hills High School – Requires all Alabama public schools to adopt the probable cause search standard.

HB54 by Camp Spain, The Montgomery Academy – Deals with emergency situations involving the mentally disabled or impaired.

HB60 by Luckett Robinson, St. Paul's Episcopal School, Mobile – Limits Alabama legislators to two terms.

HB103 by Bailey Hope and James Courtney, Trinity Presbyterian School, Montgomery – Lottery-funded scholarships for private and public school high school students to attend college.

SB23 by Olivia Westfall, Vestavia Hills High School – Bans execution by electrocution in Alabama and requires the destruction of any remaining electric chairs in Alabama prisons.

SB45, Child First Adoption, by Grace Friedman, Spain Park High School, Hoover – No longer makes relatives have a longer waiting period than any other prospective adoptive parent.

SB47 by Kenya Harris, Spain Park High School, Hoover – Prison reform.

SB46 by Claudia Hubbard, St. James School, Montgomery – Establishes levels of expulsion for Alabama college students.



PHOTO BY AMELIA BLAIR / Brewbaker Tech. Montgomery

Governor and **HB32** author.

SB57 by Anne Mitchell Welch, Mountain Brook High School – Allows in-state tuition at Alabama colleges for boarding school students who have to completed two or more years in Alabama boarding schools, one being their senior year.

FYB3 by Lucy Bowling, Mountain Brook High School – Prohibits medical practitioners from subjecting minors to conversion therapy.

FYB5 by Laura Hadley Bryant, Mountain Brook High School – A statewide lottery for public schools.

FYB10 by Amanda Jones, Mountain Brook High School – reduces carbon emissions.

FYB11 by Libby Kerr, Mountain Brook High School – bans

smoking in cars with children under the age of 16.

FYB12 by Chloe Kinderman, Mountain Brook High School – Prohibits the dumping of perfluorooctanesulfonic acid and perfluorooctanoic acid into waterways and lowers the recommended levels of both chemicals from 70 parts per trillion to 40 parts per trillion.

FYB17, The Second Chance Act, by Tate Record, Mountain Brook High School.

FYB19 by Mark Waller, Mountain Brook High School – Requires schools that are in the bottom 50 percent of K-12 statewide public education to make all their classrooms have below 18 students by 2020.

FYB32 by Joe Higgins, St. James School, Montgomery – Changes the apportionment of electoral college delegates in Alabama from a winner-take-all system to a proportional system.

FYB34 by William Robertson and Mac Main, The Montgomery Academy – Establishes a state lottery.

FYB35, Medicinal Cannabis for Alabama MSAs, by Cyprian Dumas and Wilson Butler Montgomery Academy.

FYB37 by Trinity Streeter, Spain Park High School, Hoover – Provide school systems with a third-party arbiter for determining fair and adequate punishment when needed.

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PHOTO BY KAYLEIGH HAND /Cherokee County Student Y-Club

The visiting Minnesota delegates are from left Meredith Kleve, Jane Guidera, Sabrina Ali, Hayden Schutt, Taylor Hvidsten and Tyler Zitzewitz.

Minnesotans polish their debate skills in Alabama

TomorrowTODAY interviewed Tyler Zitzewitz, the 2017 Minnesota youth governor who attended Alabama's program this weekend with five other Minnesota youth legislators.

By Emma Strickland
TomorrowTODAY writer

How does this conference compare with the one in Minnesota?

"It's very different. This one is smaller. In Minnesota, there are 1,400 delegates. There are many different houses and senates, and there is a full judicial system. You have some aspects that we don't have. One aspect we tried to bring back with us last year is the challenging of the constitutionality of bills, which I think is a really cool way to take out the bills that can't necessarily be in legislation."

How do the political views differ?

"In Minnesota, I would say it's about 80 percent liberal and 20 percent conservative. We come here and most of us

are liberal. It's really fun for us to come here because we don't feel challenged in our ideology back home, so when we do debates it's mostly liberal, and they pass easily. It really helps polish our debate skills because we are constantly arguing against the opposing side."

Is there anything you would suggest bringing from Minnesota to this conference?

"One thing we do when it comes to elections is we have a town hall debate. Because we have such a large program, the entire state doesn't vote for all of the officers except for governor, lieutenant governor and secretary of state. Everyone running gets on the stage and essentially has a debate. There is a question, and everyone has to answer it. I think that's something that would be good to add to the conference in Alabama. It helps you compare and contrast all of the candidates with the way they see youth in government and different issues. It really helps the voter make a better decision.

Supreme Court declares HB7 constitutional

By Anna Claire Bullard
TomorrowTODAY writer

During a 2 p.m. Friday public hearing, the youth justices of the Alabama Supreme Court heard arguments on the constitutionality of HB7 by Rep. Russell Weas of Mountain Brook High School.

The bill requires students to take a philosophy class in public schools. The class would teach five basic forms of philosophy: philosophy of ethics, political philosophy, free-will philosophy, philosophy of knowledge and the philosophy of religion. Two textbooks are recommended for the class and the school is required to buy these textbooks out of their funds.

An issue with this bill is whether or not it would interfere with the First Amendment right to Freedom of Religion. Weas shut down this argument by stating that it is illegal for teachers to preach in class. Weas states that religion plays a major role in today's society, so it is necessary for people to



PHOTO BY TRINITY HUNTER / St. James School. Montgomery AGs confer on HB7 at hearing.

learn the foundations of it. Instead of preaching religion, the class focuses on religious texts and teaches how they have affected modern society and government.

Attorney General Olivia Pride argued this bill is unconstitutional because the textbooks are biased and discuss topics that will make students question their religion. The textbook also touches on many controversial topics such as capital punishment and abortion.

After the Supreme Court discussed the bill privately, Supreme Court Justice Addison Smith announced that the bill is constitutional as long as the students have freedom of religion and the material remains secular.