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ALABAMA YOUTH IN GOVERNMENT



TomorrowTODAY staff

From left Kayleigh Hand, Julia Stuckey, Hollis Floyd, Baylor Belich, Daisy Bruce, Elizabeth Waldo, Ethan Saffold, Erica Gage, Ashleigh Long, Amelia Blair, Eden Roberson and Emma Cleary.

Bills Signed Into Law

because it is damaging to mental health.

In the First Year chamber, Delegate Daniel Carmichael of Mountain Brook passed **FYB11** to help combat human trafficking, coordinate strategies to prevent human trafficking and increase awareness. During debate, Delegate Sarah Lloyd from the Cherokee County Y-Club said, "Human trafficking in Alabama is a real problem. Voting in favor of this bill would allow the task force to use the money provided to set out on the road towards slowing and eventually

eliminating this horrible crime."

When it came time to vote on the bill, the chair initially ruled that that the bill had failed, but division was heard. After a standing vote, it was determined that the "yays" had indeed prevailed. The governor, seeing the merit of the bill, signed it into law.

The other bills that become law are:

- **HB67**, a bill to abolish judicial elections by Lockett Robinson, St. Paul's Episcopal School, Mobile
- **HB6**, the Rural Hospital Support Act, by Chloe

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- Kinderman, Mountain Brook High School
- **SB19**, school left-overs for homeless shelters, by Hayden Sledge, Mountain Brook High School
- **SB54**, prison reform through drug courts, by Olivia Pride, Spain Park
- **FYB40**, recycling pickup service manned by nonviolent prisoners, by James Snead and Easton Strickler, The Montgomery Academy
- **FYB2**, the Energy Revival Act, by Virginia Cobbs, Mountain Brook
- **FB71**, Death with Dignity, by Hannah Hale, Montgomery Academy

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TomorrowTODAY

Building Tomorrow's Leaders TODAY

Governor signs 10 passed bills into law

By Julia Stuckey, Kayleigh Hand and Emma Cleary
TomorrowTODAY writers

Gov. Claudia Hubbard signed 10 bills into law this weekend, several that received lively debate in the various chambers.

Among them was **SB36**, the Rural Development Act by Sen. Addison Smith of Mobile, which seeks to create new incentives for developing businesses to lower the rate of poverty and unemployment in underdeveloped counties. Delegates in opposition to this bill argued that similar programs failed in other states and that the tax credit offered is too large. Those in support argued that it would bring jobs, populate rural areas and help fulfill the American Dream.

Sen. Katherine Voorhees of Hoover successfully proposed **SB22**, the Reform Solitary Confine-



PHOTO BY ETHAN SAFFOLD / Vestavia Hills High School

Rep. Wilson Butler, Montgomery, listens intently to debate.



PHOTO BY HOLLIS FLOYD / Pike Liberal Arts School, Troy

Sen. Hayden Sledge, Mountain Brook, debates.

ment in Alabama Prisons, while solitary confinement is inhumane, so are the crimes committed to receive this punishment. Those in favor argued solitary confinement violates basic human rights

One delegate argued that

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PHOTO BY EDEN ROBERSON / Vestavia Hills High School



PHOTO BY EMMA CLEARY / The Montgomery Academy

At left, Chief Justice Richard Keith of Hoover announces the court's decision on the constitutionality of one of the bills brought before the YMCA Youth in Government Supreme Court. At right, Attorney General Russell Weas of Mountain Brook and Assistant Attorney General Cyprian Dumas of Montgomery consult the law before discussing their position with the court.

Supreme Court hears challenges to constitutionality of legislation

By Ashleigh Long and Hollis Floyd
TomorrowTODAY staff writers

"If a child thinks he is a daisy, is it acceptable for him to bury himself in his backyard and dump water on himself if his parents say it is okay? No, they will be getting a call from the government if they do that."

Despite that vivid argument made by Rep. Jason Swinson of Vestavia Hills and what the chief justice called the "best debate we've seen all week-end," the Alabama Youth in Government Supreme Court declared his bill unconstitutional. Swinson's was one of at least two bills reviewed by the top court of the youth government program and adjudicated as unconstitutional.

Swinson's bill, HB35, aimed to ban transgender hormone therapy, sex reassignment surgery and any other

irreversible method of gender transition on the grounds that "a child should not be presented with the opportunity to cause irreversible bodily harm, while they have not had time for full cognitive development."

The justices provided challenging arguments, asking Swinson if he believed his bill was "a violation of the right to privacy," "restricting the parents' right to govern the decisions of their children" and "potentially harmful to those currently in the process of transgender hormone therapy."

Swinson's compelling counterarguments swayed some justices to vote in his favor, but the majority found the bill unconstitutional on the grounds that it "violates the freedom of self-expression and the supremacy clause of the Affordable Care Act," Chief Justice Richard Keith announced.

In an earlier case before the court, another bill met with a similar fate. HB75 by Rep. Christopher Anderson of Montgomery's Carver High School delegation would have required automatic revocation of driver's licenses when the driver reaches age 50 with reinstatement only after passage of the driver's permit and driving tests.

Attorney General Russell Weas found four reasons to object to Anderson's bill, but it was the 14th Amendment that swayed the judges' decision. The amendment states that "no state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any state deprive any person of, liberty, or property, without due process of law."

As this bill would have taken away the privilege of driving, the Supreme Court ruled it unconstitutional.

Justices tour court building

By Amelia Blair
TomorrowTODAY writer

The Supreme Court spent their first morning in Montgomery touring the Alabama Judicial Building with Supreme Court Justice Tom Parker. The students were taken to the State Law Library and learned about the history of the building's architecture.

Justice Parker shared that being a part of the Supreme Court always keeps him "mentally on his toes." The students were able to ask questions and hear real-life experiences that have helped to shape his career. He suggested those who want to be involved with law to check with local lawyers for internships, interact with lawyers from different backgrounds and learn the ins-and-outs of the judicial system. Learning from different perspectives and creating relationships is important for a Supreme Court leader, he said. By being involved with the Alabama Youth in Government program, these delegates are already on the right track.