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ALABAMA YOUTH IN GOVERNMENT

Special order calendars set for 2018 session

These special order bills for the 2018 Alabama YMCA Youth Legislature will take precedence over all other bills and will be debated first in their respective chambers.

HOUSE

1. **HB40** by Joe Higgins, Saint James School, Montgomery – Repeal of Alabama’s 2011 Voter ID Law.
2. **HB6** by Chloe Kinderman, Mountain Brook High School, Birmingham – Rural Hospital Support Act – a 25-cent cigarette tax to supplement Medicaid reimbursement to rural hospitals.
3. **HB67** by Luckett Robinson, St. Paul’s Episcopal School, Mobile – Abolish Judicial Elections – Gives the governor judicial appointment authority based on recommendations of a nonpartisan committee with approval of the Alabama Senate.

SENATE

1. **SB19** by Hayden Sledge, Mountain Brook High School, Birmingham – A Necessity for Any Life – Public and private schools that donate leftover food to local shelters receive a tax break.
2. **SB22** by Katherine Voorhees, Spain Park High School, Hoover – Bans solitary

confinement as a punishment for juvenile offenders and for those with mental disabilities. Limits solitary confinement for adult prisoner to 14 days.

3. **SB36** by Addison Smith, St. Paul’s Episcopal School, Mobile – Rural Development Act – Under certain circumstances, grants businesses a \$3,000 credit for each new full-time employee and a \$2,750 credit for each \$50,000 net gain in qualified investment when they expand within a county with a population of less than 25,000.

FIRST YEAR

1. **FYB2** by Virginia Cobbs, Mountain Brook High School, Birmingham delegation – The Energy Revival Act – taxes bituminous coal, subbituminous coal and lignite to encourage expansion of nuclear power in Alabama.
2. **FYB40** by James Snead and Easton Strickler, The Montgomery Academy – Requires recycling pickup service manned by nonviolent prisoners.
3. **FYB71** by Hannah Hale, The Montgomery Academy – legalizes physician-assisted suicide for those with terminal illnesses.

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Tomorrow TODAY

Building Tomorrow’s Leaders TODAY

It is the relationships that you’ll remember, youth governor says

By Claudia Hubbard
2018 Youth Governor

Hello and welcome to the 70th Youth Legislature Conference! It’s finally time for all of the preparation you put into this weekend to be put into action. I cannot wait to see everybody in action throughout our time here at Youth Legislature.

This weekend you’re going to face surprises, tiredness and nerves. Push yourself and work-through all of it. Our time together for this conference will fly by. You’re going to want to be fully present.

Throughout my time in Youth in Government, I’ve learned that you can choose how you experience the weekend. You can choose to let disappointments let you down, like your bill not passing in chamber or not getting called to speak on a



Claudia Hubbard of Montgomery poses outside the Alabama State House during her 2017 gubernatorial campaign.

bill you were passionate about during debate.

You could also choose to raise your placard high again and continue to stay positive. I hope that you choose the latter.

You are surrounded by young leaders from all across the state. Take time this weekend to not only focus on your role here but to also reach out and make new friends. Sit next to someone you

don’t know in chamber or strike up a conversation with someone new at lunch.

It’s the relationships that you make through YIG that you’ll truly remember in years to come.

Claudia Hubbard is an 18-year-old senior at St. James School in Montgomery. She is the daughter of Bryan and Sabrina Hubbard. Learn more at alyig.org/blog

Q & A with 2019 gubernatorial candidates

The TomorrowTODAY staff asked each candidate the same three questions. Read their responses below:



JARED SCHAFFER



JAMES TORBERT



MAGGIE SPARKS

How can Alabama make more fresh food available to low-income families?

James Torbert: Many families are forced to travel long distances to find healthy food options. Alabama should provide economic incentives, specifically tax breaks, for major fresh food corporations to work with smaller localized markets in rural areas. Alabama can make healthy food more affordable by slightly increasing the income maximum for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and simplifying the application process.

Jared Schaffer: All around the world people do not have access to fresh food. Volunteer work really does make a difference. It is crucial that we help those less fortunate than us, because everyone deserves at least food and water. We can encourage people to volunteer and increase job opportunities like the new car plants that will be stationed in Alabama. Working together to ensure the well-being of our neighbors is how we will end hunger.

Maggie Sparks: Currently, low-income families on food stamps can already purchase fresh foods from any grocery store, and some farmers markets are even beginning to accept food stamps. However, as it concerns people not on food stamps, I would think the best way is to make a sin tax on unhealthy products, therefore making fresh products cheaper and forcing many companies to make their products healthier to avoid the tax as well.

Should Alabama have a lottery? Why or why not? For what purpose?

Jared Schaffer: The state of Alabama should have a lottery. In states that have lotteries today, a percentage of the money brought in is taken out to benefit such needs as education and public safety. The states around us that have lotteries have had enormous benefits from enacting them, benefits that the state of Alabama could also have.

Maggie Sparks: Alabama should have put a lottery in place years ago. Many states have had lotteries for at least 30 years and good has come from them. When used the right way, lotteries can bring in immeasurable amounts of money to deserving people. Initially, there will be start-up costs, however, the amount of revenue brought in will far out way the initial cost. Recent years have proven, through polls and the amount of people flooding to other states that this state wants and is ready for a lottery. Lastly, seeing as we are the second worst education system in America, I believe it is our job to do everything we can to better our school systems and a lottery is a great first step!

James Torbert: Alabama needs a lottery to rejuvenate its many struggling institutions. A lottery should be established with 50 percent of the profits from ticket sales going to the winners, and the other 50 percent being divided between failing schools and a scholarship program. Forty percent should go to the Department of Education to revitalize our failing school systems. Ten percent should be used to establish a scholarship program for underprivileged students, much like Georgia's HOPE scholarship, that provides financial assistance to high school graduates looking to attend colleges and universities in the state.

What do you consider your biggest character flaw? How are you working to overcome it?

Maggie Sparks: For years, I allowed myself to be held back by my fear of what others think of me. This program and every single person involved have helped me overcome this. Break out of your comfort zone and don't worry about what others think. Your voice matters and needs to be heard.

James Torbert: Driven ambition, which can make me high strung. I am detail oriented and meticulous. This has made group work a difficult process for me at times. I can be controlling when out of my comfort zone, but through YIG I have learned the importance of teamwork, respect and leading by listening.

Jared Schaffer: I want things to be perfect. I spend three hours on what takes my peers 30 minutes. Every time I finish something, I add something more. I've found other people are exactly like me and most want to be perfect also. I have learned to listen to what others say and value their opinions, as much I do my own.

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