

ALABAMA CITIZENS' COMMITTEE FOR SCHOOLS
40 Commerce Street
Montgomery, Alabama

MEMORANDUM TO ALABAMA SCHOOL LEADERS:

There have been many requests for materials useful in the campaign for the School Amendments to be voted on December 6.

Accordingly, your Citizens' Committee sends the following items:

1. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS RELATING TO THE CRISIS FACING THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF ALABAMA.
2. Editorials from The Progressive Farmer and the Lee County Bulletin.
3. A sample speech for use before civic clubs, school groups, and all types of voter assemblies. (Note, however, that this is an actual speech which was presented to a Rotary Club. It should be adapted to the interests of the particular audience being addressed.)

Your Committee suggests that you have this information reproduced so that your workers for the School Amendments may study the facts carefully and then grasp every opportunity to present them to the public. If we can get the facts to the people, they will vote "Yes."

We suggest also that school workers everywhere send to the state committee their ideas and inspirations. We need them and want them.

ALABAMA CITIZENS' COMMITTEE FOR SCHOOLS

/s/ Truman Hobbs, Chairman

October 3, 1955

ALABAMA CITIZENS' COMMITTEE FOR SCHOOLS
40 Commerce Street
Montgomery, Alabama

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS RELATING TO THE CRISIS FACING THE
PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF ALABAMA

Question: Are Alabama schools facing a crisis?

Answer: Yes. Every responsible state official, including members of the Legislature, acknowledge that the public schools in Alabama are facing a crisis.

Question: What has brought on this crisis? Who is to blame?

Answer: No individual is to blame. The two basic elements of our difficulty are (1) lack of money with which to attract and hold qualified teachers needed to serve the vastly greater numbers of children who each year are entering Alabama schools, and (2) lack of school buildings in which to teach these children.

Alabama's school crisis, however, is not by itself. It is part of the school emergency hitting every state in the union as a record crop of war babies and postwar babies continue to enter school. (See LIFE, September 26, 1955.)

Question: Just how much has school enrollment increased?

Answer: During the 10-year period from 1944-45 to 1954-55, total enrollment increased by 80,856. Incomplete figures for 1955-56 indicate an additional increase of about 20,000 children.

Question: Is there a real shortage of school buildings?

Answer: Yes. An increase of 100,000 students in 11 years certainly requires many, many new classrooms as well as more teachers.

Furthermore, our existing school buildings in Alabama are far below standard. In fact, one out of every six schools in use today is not publicly owned, but a makeshift arrangement. Schools are operating today in 255 churches! And 532 other schools are operating in nonpublicly owned buildings of one kind or another--one of them in a school bus!

29,000 Alabama children are in schools without electric lights.
27,000 Alabama children are in schools with NO toilet facilities.
222,000 Alabama children are in schools with only outdoor privies.
186,000 Alabama children are in schools with NO fixed washing facilities.

We must face up to the unhappy fact that the value of school property per pupil is lower in Alabama than in any other state in the United States.

Question: What is the proposed remedy for this situation?

Answer: The Legislature, after study of many proposals, chose to present for the people's approval these amendments to the Constitution:

1. The School Income Tax Amendment--Amendment No. I--which it is estimated will provide \$29,000,000 annually for education.
2. The School Building Bond Amendment which will provide for the issuance of \$110,000,000 in bonds for the construction of school buildings.

Question: If the Bond Amendment passes, can the bonds be issued even if the Income Tax Amendment fails?

Answer: No. The \$110,000,000 in school buildings is dependent upon the Income Tax Amendment for necessary revenues.

Question: Why should Alabamians have to pay another tax? Don't we already pay as much tax as other states?

Answer: No. Alabama has the lowest per capita tax of any state in the union. We pay \$74.98. The national average is \$134.60. Mississippi pays \$81.12, and Georgia pay \$96.08.

Question: Isn't it possible that our low rank among the states in per capital tax is simply the result of our low income?

Answer: No. Alabama ranks next to lowest among all the Southern States in per cent of income paid in taxes.

Question: Don't we already spend about as much on our Alabama children as other states spend?

Answer: No, we don't. We've been spending \$118 a year per pupil, which is less than half the national average of \$247. And states like Georgia, spending \$176, and Florida, spending \$214, are attracting scores of our best teachers away from Alabama by offering them more pay.

Question: What states are able to compete most effectively for our Alabama teachers?

Answer: Florida, with an average teacher salary of \$3,725, has been the greatest attraction to Alabama teachers, who in 1954-55 received average pay of \$2,729. Louisiana also has lured away many of our teachers with an average salary of \$3,850. Alabama is well below the national average of \$3,816.

Question: Just what schools and educational institutions will benefit from the proposed amendments?

Answer: Every school and educational institution will receive direct and substantial benefit. While city and county schools will receive by far the largest share of new revenue, a part will go to the Trade Schools, Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind, and the state institutions of higher learning.

Question: Would you explain the proposed Income Tax for schools?

Answer: It is simply a tax based on income after payment of business expenses. It is not a gross income tax. If no income is made, no tax is paid. There is no tax on property.

Let's assume that you make \$1,000 a year after deducting your business expenses. Your tax is \$5 a year, or less than 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ ¢ per day. If your income is \$4,000 a year, the cost to you and your family is \$22.50--less than \$2 a month, or some 6¢ a day. That's about the price of a cold drink a day for an adequate school program. You have to make more than \$6,000 a year to pay as much as 11¢ a day for our schools under the proposed Amendments. (See attached chart for tax rate on other incomes.)

Question: Will Alabama taxpayers get any benefit by a deduction of this tax from their Federal Income Tax?

Answer: Yes. On an average, \$2 out of every \$5 that Alabamians would pay under the proposed Income Tax for Schools would be saved to them on their Federal Income Tax and would remain in Alabama. In effect, the Federal Government, therefore, will pay \$12,000,000 of the \$29,000,000 that will be provided for Alabama's schools.

Question: Does this tax for schools apply only to individuals?

Answer: No. It applies also to corporations. Estimates are that about 47 per cent of the total revenue from this law will be paid by corporations.

Question: Is it possible that this new school revenue might be diverted to other uses?

Answer: No. The proposed law says this revenue "shall be used exclusively for educational purposes." This money is guaranteed for the education of the youth of Alabama.

Question: Can the rate on this Income Tax for Schools be increased?

Answer: No. The rates prescribed are maximum. They may be lowered by the Legislature, but not increased.

Question: We hear it said that Alabama schools likely will close next spring, several months short of a full school year, unless new tax money is provided. Is it good policy to make such a threat?

Answer: This is no threat. It is a plain statement of fact. The Citizens' Committee for Schools believes it has the clear responsibility for laying the facts before the people of Alabama. Failure to do so would be a deception, and a cruel one because the boys and girls of Alabama would pay the cost.

Here is the story: Dr. A. R. Meadows, State Superintendent of Education, testified this year before the Legislature that unless Alabama teachers' salaries were raised--at once--the State was in danger of losing 2,000 of its best-trained teachers to neighboring states offering higher salaries, or to better job opportunities in Alabama. He had facts to back him up. (Indeed, between June 1 and July 16 of this year, 460 teachers did withdraw their money from the Teachers' Retirement System, indicating their decision to quit teaching in Alabama.)

Whereupon the Legislature appropriated sufficient money to permit an average raise of \$600 a year per teacher, and the State Board of Education adopted a 1955-56 budget which includes these raises. If the School Amendment should fail, then the schools would be short \$29,000,000 and would be forced to close down about March 1 unless the Legislature should provide a $1\frac{1}{2}\%$ increase in the sales tax, or get the revenue from some other source not now in prospect.

Question: Don't you know the people of Alabama will never let their children go without full-term schools?

Answer: Yes, that surely is the general sentiment of our people. But hard economic facts just as surely will close our schools this year short of a full-term unless new revenues are found. And if this proposed Income Tax Amendment fails, there is serious question whether the Legislature will have either the time or the plan to save the situation.

Remember--the Legislature studied many other proposals for months before voting for the School Income Tax Plan.

This is the plan that an overwhelming majority of the Legislature considered fairest and most practical. It deserves the most careful consideration of Alabama citizens.

October 3, 1955

THE SCHOOL SITUATION
(Lee County Bulletin-August 25, 1955)

This newspaper takes it that teachers, PTA members, educational leaders and all others interested in the welfare of the schools will stump the State in favor of the Goodwyn Plan to raise \$30,000,000 for education. For that reason we are not as pessimistic as some of the newspapers about the Goodwyn Amendment's chances of ratification. If all those individuals and groups which have urged the necessity of rescuing education from poverty now turn to battle for the plan offered by the Legislature to accomplish that very purpose, then there should be little doubt that the people will vote the \$30,000,000 in new tax revenue.

In the package deal for education which the Legislature either has enacted or will enact before adjournment these things are provided: teacher pay raises averaging \$600 a year, new school building construction in the amount of \$100,000,000, scores of new school buses, sizeable salary increases for college and university teachers, and new buildings for the institutions of higher learning.

These are the things friends of education have been wanting. They cannot be provided without a vastly accelerated tax program. Everyone has known that all along. And despite the objections raised by some, we believe the Goodwyn Plan is about as sound a method of raising the money as any. Surely it is more to be desired than increasing the sales tax to four cents. With the exemptions for insurance companies and perhaps all financial institutions removed, the Goodwyn Plan looks more and more equitable.

ALABAMIANS, KEEP AN OPEN MIND
(The Progressive Farmer-October, 1955)

Alabamians have two months to decide what they will do about their schools, their state colleges, their program of vocational education, their agricultural extension work, and many related services. We urge every citizen of the State to take these weeks before the several school amendments are voted on in December to carefully study all that is involved. Specifically would we urge all farm folks to be thinking about these things:

1. The most important issue is not taxes but educational services and the education of the State's children. Alabama cannot continue to lose teachers to other states as it is now doing.

2. Those with net incomes will pay the taxes. None of the proposed funds will be raised by either sales taxes or property taxes.

3. Of the expected income of \$28,800,000 from the Goodwyn Amendment if adopted, we estimate that somewhere between \$11,000,000 and \$13,000,000 will be paid by increased deductions from federal income taxes. In other words, between \$1 in \$3 and \$1 in \$2 will not be increased taxes at all.

4. The surest guarantee of racial good will in school affairs is adequate buildings and equipment for Negroes as well as whites. That's what the \$110,000,000 school bond issue will provide. Without the Goodwyn Amendment, there are no funds to finance the bond issue.

5. Alabama, as is true with every other state, will have more and more children in its public schools and colleges for many years to come at least. Do the mothers and fathers, property owners, business interests, and all others dependent on continued progress and growth in the State dare risk the future of their boys and girls through an inadequate less effective educational system than they have today?

SAMPLE OUTLINE FOR A SPEECH

1. Everyone who has studied Alabama's school problems agrees that our schools are in a distressing financial situation. State funds for operating schools will be completely exhausted after only a seven months' school term, and schools will have to be closed all over Alabama after only seven months unless new sources of revenue are found. Alabama's school children deserve an even start with children from Georgia, Tennessee, California, or Connecticut. But the plain fact is that unless more money is provided, Alabama's children won't get it.

2. Why does Alabama face a crisis in its schools? Don't we pay as much in taxes as the next state? No, we don't. This will probably surprise you, but Alabama pays the lowest per capita tax of any state in the United States.

This is not explained by a relatively low income. Even taking into account our low income, there is only one state in the South that pays a smaller proportion of its income in taxes.

The current expenditure per pupil in Alabama is among the lowest in the nation. Alabama spends less than half of the national average on its school children and not much more than half as much per pupil as such Southern states as Louisiana, Florida, Oklahoma, and Texas.

A recent survey by the United States Chamber of Commerce points up an interesting fact. (This survey by the Chamber of Commerce was not made by professors or theorists; it was made by hard-headed businessmen.) This survey shows that in every one of the 48 states the income of the citizens of a state is in direct proportion to the amount of money that the state is spending for schools. The more money spent for schools, the greater the wealth earned by the citizens of that state. The survey also shows that the income of the citizens of a state is in direct proportion to the average number of school years granted to the children of that state. The greatest resource of any state is its children, and the survey of the Chambers of Commerce shows that a proper development of that resource pays dividends. Nowhere is it more true than with schools, that "whatsoever ye sow, that shall ye also reap."

3. Alabama faces a sharp increase in number of school children. The 1954 enrollment was 18,000 more than 1953, and the 1955 enrollment appears to be 20,000 more than 1954. The projected enrollment shows a continued increase.

Alabama is like the old woman who lived in the shoe--except that in Alabama we do know what to do--we must have more schools and more teachers.

Examples of crowded classrooms and over-flowing schools are obvious. In Montgomery, the capital city, school children in some of the elementary grades are going to school in shifts. The first shift from 7:30 to 12:00; the second shift from 12:30 to 5:00.

Many parents have felt compelled to take their children out of such conditions and place them in private schools--at expense they cannot afford. The question is not whether Alabama can afford adequate schools; the question is whether Alabama can afford not to develop our greatest resource.

4. How do the amendments propose to relieve the situation? One of the amendments is a bond issue. The bond issue is \$110,000,000 and it is for school buildings. The buildings that are constructed by this bond money will serve Alabama's children for generations. The buildings are badly needed, and the amendment should be passed.

A survey has shown that Alabama has the poorest school facilities in the United States. You may not believe it, but one of every six buildings being used for schools in Alabama is not a school building. Children are going to schools in churches, office buildings, and in one instance even a school bus.

The revenue to support this bond issue largely depends on the so-called Goodwyn bill or the income tax amendment. This amendment if passed will provide \$28,000,000 for schools in Alabama. The money so raised is absolutely guaranteed for schools. It cannot be detoured elsewhere.

5. What does it cost you, the individual? (Distribute rates to audience)
The tax begins on your income after deducting your business expenses. Let's assume that you make \$1,000 per year after making business deductions. Your tax is \$5.00 per year or 41¢ per month. If your income is \$4,000 per year, the cost to you and your family is less than \$2.00 per month or 6¢ per day. That's the price of a Coca-Cola a day for an adequate school program. You have to make more than \$6,000 a year to pay as much as 11¢ a day for our schools under the proposed amendments.

6. A fact that will interest you is that Alabamians on the average will save from \$1 to \$2 of every \$3 paid under the proposed tax amendment; for this tax money is deductible for federal tax purposes. Thus, Alabama schools will get the use of \$3 of your money at a cost to you of less than \$2.

7. The proposed amendment applies to both corporations and individuals. It is estimated that approximately 47 per cent of the total revenue that would be raised by the tax will be paid by corporations. The corporations' share of a sales tax because of exemptions, would be a fraction of this share.

8. It would take a 1½¢ additional increase in the sales tax to provide the same revenue that will be provided under the proposed income tax amendment. The cost of such an increase in sales tax to the person of moderate income is several times greater than the cost of the proposed school amendment.

9. The proposed amendment is fair, honest, and small. If you make no income, you pay no tax. If you make a small income, you pay a small tax, but relatively more than the person with a smaller income.

10. Everyone with whom I have talked agrees that something must be done for the schools. The danger is that everyone has his own preferences as to the way money should be raised. It will be the school children of Alabama who will suffer from our indecisions. The proposed amendments will give Alabama good schools at an average cost per citizen of less than 3¢ a day. Where could we make a wiser investment?

PROPOSED AMENDMENT NUMBER I

A N A C T

Proposing an amendment to the Constitution of Alabama authorizing the Legislature to levy and collect a special tax on incomes, fixing the rates at which the tax may be levied, and dedicating the proceeds thereof for educational purposes.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

Section 1. The following amendment to the Constitution of Alabama is proposed, and shall become valid as a part thereof when approved and proclaimed as prescribed by law:

Proposed Amendment

"The Legislature shall levy and provide for the collection of additional taxes for educational purposes on incomes from whatever source derived within the State, including income derived from salaries, fees, and compensation paid from the State, county, municipality or federal government, and any agency or creature thereof, and incomes not otherwise taxed pursuant to Amendment XXV submitted July 18, 1933, and proclaimed ratified August 2, 1933, for the calendar year 1955, and thereafter. The Legislature shall have the power to designate and define the incomes to be taxed. Such tax shall be based on the adjusted gross incomes of individuals and corporations, as defined by the Legislature. The tax shall be imposed on the incomes of individuals and corporations at rates not to exceed the following:

If the adjusted gross income is:	The tax shall be:
Not over \$2,000 but more than \$1,0000050 of the taxable income.
Over \$2,000 but not over \$3,000.	\$10.00, plus .0060 of excess over \$2,000.
Over \$3,000 but not over \$4,000.	\$16.00, plus .0065 of excess over \$3,000.
Over \$4,000 but not over \$5,000.	\$22.50, plus .0070 of excess over \$4,000.
Over \$5,000 but not over \$6,000.	\$29.50, plus .0075 of excess over \$5,000.
Over \$6,000 but not over \$7,000.	\$40.00, plus .0080 of excess over \$6,000.
Over \$7,000 but not over \$8,000.	\$48.00, plus .0085 of excess over \$7,000.
Over \$8,000 but not over \$9,000.	\$56.50, plus .0090 of excess over \$8,000.
Over \$9,000 but not over \$10,000	\$65.50, plus .0095 of excess over \$9,000.
Over \$10,000 but not over \$12,000.	\$75.00, plus .0100 of excess over \$10,000.
Over \$12,000 but not over \$14,000.	\$95.00, plus .0150 of excess over \$12,000.
Over \$14,000 but not over \$16,000.	\$125.00, plus .0200 of excess over \$14,000.
Over \$16,000 but not over \$18,000.	\$165.00, plus .0250 of excess over \$16,000.
Over \$18,000 but not over \$20,000	\$215.00, plus .0300 of excess over \$18,000.