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News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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March 31, 1993

93-57

HOUSTON -- Pastors' Conference program.
HOUSTON -- Pastors' Conference to focus on America's need for revival.
BERLIN -- Baptist leader classifies, offers guidelines on para-church groups.
BERLIN -- BWA leader warns against individualistic strategy.
WASHINGTON -- Pro-lifers decry president's plan to kill Hyde Amendment.
WASHINGTON -- Bills requiring warnings in alcohol ads reintroduced.

SOUTHERN BAPTIST PASTORS' CONFERENCE

Annual Meeting

June 13-14, 1993

Second Baptist Church and George R. Brown Convention Center

Houston

Theme: "... Heal Our Land"

Scripture: 2 Chronicles 7:14

Sunday afternoon -- Second Baptist Church

- 1:30 Musical Praise -- Newsong, music evangelists, Atlanta
- 1:50 Prayer -- Scott Rambo, associate pastor, First Baptist Church, Bossier City, La.
- 2:00 Message -- Michael Hailey, pastor, First Baptist Church, Lakeland, Fla.
- 2:25 Praise/Worship -- Jerry Ables, minister of music, First Baptist Church, Bossier City, La.
- 2:30 Musical Praise -- Joe Atkinson, music evangelist, Dallas
- 2:35 Message -- Jay Strack, evangelist, Dallas
- 3:05 Prayer/Offering -- Joe Tilley, deacon, First Baptist Church, Bossier City, La.
- 3:10 Musical Praise -- Alan Green, music evangelist, Houston
- 3:15 Message -- Harold O'Chester, pastor, Great Hills Baptist Church, Austin, Texas
- 3:45 Musical Praise -- Newsong
- 3:50 Message -- Adrian Rogers, pastor, Bellevue Baptist Church, suburban Memphis, Tenn.
- 4:20 Benediction -- Shane Craven, pastor, Mount Rachel Baptist Church, Dalton, Ga.

Sunday evening -- George R. Brown Convention Center

- 6:00 Choral Praise -- Choir and Orchestra, First Baptist Church, Bossier, La.
- 6:15 Welcome -- Fred Lowery, president, Pastors' Conference; pastor, First Baptist Church Bossier City, La.
- 6:20 Scripture and Prayer -- Wayne Dubose, pastor, Summergrove Baptist Church, Shreveport, La.
- 6:25 Choral Praise -- Choir and Orchestra, First Baptist Church, Bossier City, La.

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- 6:30 Message -- Cal Thomas, political columnist, Los Angeles Times Syndicate, Los Angeles
- 7:00 Praise/Worship -- Jerry Ables
- 7:10 Musical Praise -- First Light Trio, First Baptist Church, Bossier City, La.
- 7:15 Message -- John Maxwell, pastor, Skylane Wesleyan Church, Injoy Ministries, San Deigo
- 8:10 Praise/Worship -- Starlet Crosby Harbin, soloist, Snellville, Ga.
- 8:20 Prayer/Offering -- Kenny Alford, pastor, Morrison Heights Baptist Church, Clinton, Miss.
- 8:25 Choral Praise -- Choir and Orchestra, First Baptist Church, Bossier City, La.
- 8:35 Message -- Jerry Vines, pastor, First Baptist Church, Jacksonville, Fla.
- 9:15 Benediction -- Sam Jones, pastor, First Baptist Church, Pittsburg, Texas
- Monday morning
- 8:30 Musical Praise -- Choir and Orchestra, First Baptist Church, Woodstock, Ga.
- 8:50 Scripture/Prayer -- Landrum P. Leavell II, president, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, New Orleans
- 8:55 Praise/Worship -- Keith Martin, minister of music, First North Mobile, Saraland, Ala.
- 9:00 Musical Praise -- Keith Martin
- 9:05 Message -- Danny Gray, pastor, Brushy Creek Baptist Church, Easley, S.C.
- 9:35 Musical Praise -- First Light Trio
- 9:40 Message -- Joe Brown, pastor, Hickory Grove Baptist Church, Charlotte, N.C.
- 10:10 Prayer/Offering -- Michael Catt, pastor, Sherwood Baptist Church, Albany, Ga.
- 10:15 Musical Praise -- First Baptist Church Ensemble, Bossier, La.
- 10:25 Message -- Fred Wolfe, pastor, Cottage Hill Baptist Church, Mobile, Ala.
- 10:55 Praise/Worship -- Keith Martin
- 11:00 Musical Praise -- Michelle Gage, soloist, Rodney Gage Ministries, Euless, Texas
- 11:05 Message -- Rodney Gage, evangelist, Rodney Gage Ministries, Euless, Texas
- 11:35 Benediction -- Cecil Taylor, pastor, West Monroe Baptist Church, West Monroe, La.
- Monday afternoon
- 1:15 Musical Praise -- Say So, singing group, Norman, Okla.
- 1:25 Praise/Worship -- Jerry Ables
- 1:30 Scripture/Prayer -- Mark Brister, pastor, Broadmoor Baptist Church, Shreveport, La.
- 1:35 Musical Praise -- Dave St. Andre, minister of music, First Baptist Church, Ruston, La.
- 1:40 Message -- Ronnie Floyd, pastor, First Baptist Church, Springdale, Ark.
- 2:15 Praise/Worship -- Jerry Ables
- 2:20 Musical Praise -- Pat Keith, soloist, First Baptist Church, Bossier City, La.
- 2:25 Message -- Dwight "Ike" Reighard, pastor, New Hope Baptist Church, Fayetteville, Ga.
- 3:00 Prayer/Offering -- John Yarbrough, secretary, Pastors' Conference; pastor, Tabernacle Baptist Church, Cartersville, Ga.
- Musical Praise -- Say So
- 3:10 Election of Officers
- 3:30 Message -- Johnny Hunt, pastor, First Baptist Church, Woodstock, Ga.
- 4:05 Musical Praise -- Mark Temple, soloist, Putnam City Baptist Church, Oklahoma City
- 4:10 Message -- E.V. Hill, pastor, Mt. Zion Missionary Baptist Church, Los Angeles
- 4:45 Benediction -- Michael Hamlett, pastor, First Baptist Church, Lakeland, Fla.

Monday evening

- 6:10 Choral Praise -- Choir and Orchestra, First Baptist Church, Woodstock, Ga.
 6:30 Praise/Worship -- Jerry Ables
 6:35 Scripture/Prayer -- David Hankins, pastor, Trinity Baptist Church, Lake Charles, La.
 6:40 Musical Praise -- Newsong
 6:45 Message -- Charles Lowery, pastor, Hoffmantown Baptist Church, Albuquerque, N.M.
 7:25 Welcome -- Edwin Young, SBC president; pastor, Second Baptist Church, Houston
 7:30 Praise/Worship -- Jerry Ables
 7:40 Prayer/Offering -- Ondi Brum, evangelist, Dallas
 7:45 Musical Praise -- Choir and Orchestra, First Baptist Church, Woodstock, Ga.
 7:50 Message -- Gary Smalley, president, Today's Family, Phoenix, Ariz.
 8:30 Choral Praise -- Choir and Orchestra, First Baptist Church, Woodstock, Ga.
 8:35 Message -- Charles Stanley, pastor, First Baptist Church, Atlanta
 9:15 Introduction of New Officers
 Benediction -- New Conference President

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Pastors' Conference to focus
 on America's need for revival

By Art Toalston

Baptist Press
 3/31/93

HOUSTON (BP)--Nationally syndicated conservative columnist Cal Thomas and Christian family psychologist Gary Smalley will be among the speakers amplifying the Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference " ... Heal Our Land" theme in Houston.

The annual conference is slated June 13-14 prior to the June 15-17 meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in Houston's George R. Brown Convention Center.

The " ... Heal Our Land" theme, said Fred Lowery, Pastors' Conference president, is drawn from the Old Testament 2 Chronicles 7:14 passage: "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land."

"We have a moral and spiritual crisis in America today," said Lowery, pastor of First Baptist Church in Bossier City, La., explaining the nation is suffering from abortion, homosexuality, "you name it."

"To me, our choices are revival or judgment," Lowery said.

The theme emerged from prayer and discussion with his church staff, Lowery said, recounting that at one point 2 Chronicles 7:14 was mentioned and "I knew that was the direction we needed to go. Somewhere we have to draw the line and say, 'Here we stand. Regardless.' I don't think there's a greater need than the healing of America."

The conference's initial session, Sunday afternoon, June 13, will be at Houston's Second Baptist Church. Subsequent sessions through Monday evening will be at the George R. Brown Convention Center.

Cal Thomas, of suburban Washington, will be among the featured speakers Sunday evening; Gary Smalley, of Phoenix, Ariz., will be among those at the closing session Monday evening.

Among others scheduled to speak are pastors who have not had wide exposure among Southern Baptists, Lowery said, such as Johnny Hunt, pastor of First Baptist Church in Woodstock, Ga.; Danny Gray, pastor of Brushy Creek Baptist Church in Easley, S.C.; Joe Brown, pastor of Hickory Grove Baptist Church in Charlotte, N.C.; Ronnie Floyd, pastor of First Baptist Church in Springdale, Ark.; and Michael Hailey, pastor of First Baptist Church in Lakeland, Fla.

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And there will be speakers "the pastors love to hear over and over," Lowery said, referring to Adrian Rogers, former SBC president and pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church in suburban Memphis, Tenn., who will speak during the opening session; Charles Stanley, pastor of First Baptist Church in Atlanta, the conference's closing speaker; and E.V. Hill, pastor of Mt. Zion Missionary Baptist Church in Los Angeles.

Evangelists on the program are Jay Strack of Dallas, current SBC first vice president, and Rodney Gage of Euless, Texas, co-chairman of the "reaching children and youth" study group under the SBC-wide self-study initiated by Houston pastor and SBC President Ed Young last fall.

Each speaker has been asked to focus his message on some aspect of the 2 Chronicles 7:14 passage, Lowery said.

Beyond dealing with issues affecting the nation, and how pastors might address them, the speakers also will seek "to encourage and help our pastors as they deal with hurting people," Lowery said, adding, "The path of our society is causing incredible problems in the lives of our people."

Especially helpful to pastors, Lowery said, will be John Maxwell, pastor of Skyline Wesleyan Church in San Diego. Lowery said he heard Maxwell at a conference about a year ago, and "he's the best guy on leadership and encouraging pastors of anybody I've ever heard." Cassette tapes of staff meetings Maxwell leads at his church are circulated to 20,000 pastors, Lowery noted.

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Baptist leader classifies, offers
guidelines on para-church groups By Wendy Ryan

Baptist Press
3/31/93

BERLIN (BP)--"While most of the more than 1,000 para-church organizations operating in Eastern Europe have the aim of leading men and women to faith in Jesus Christ, when it comes to methodology, ecclesiology, doctrines and finances, Baptists along with other Christian churches are concerned," according to Denton Lotz, general secretary of the Baptist World Alliance.

"We are concerned about the integrity of the Gospel and authentic and meaningful evangelism," Lotz told more than 250 Baptist leaders gathered for a church growth conference in Berlin, March 25-28.

"We want to prevent any false gospel from finding its way into our churches or confusing the people who so desperately are searching and in need of the authentic word of God," Lotz said.

Lotz described seven different para-church groups, five with which he said, "Baptists can cooperate very well."

These include charitable and service organizations; Bible and Christian literature distribution groups; educational organizations; personal evangelism groups and church-related mission groups.

Lotz described two other groups which he says, "have a different view of the church, evangelism and doctrine that we cannot cooperate with and in fact would warn our brothers and sisters to avoid."

"Lone-ranger" individual evangelists, and sectarian and heretical types are two groups Lotz warned against.

Lotz described "lone-ranger" evangelists as "individuals who feel called to ministry in Eastern Europe, start their own evangelistic associations, hire a translator, visit churches and begin to preach wherever they can gain access."

While these persons may be "baptistic," they often lack any relationship to a BWA-related Baptist group, Lotz said.

"This tendency towards independence threatens the national unity of the convention," Lotz said, "and often is a poor and unequal use of resources that should be shared through the union."

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"No cooperation is possible" with groups that are either "sub-Christian, non-Christian or heretical," Lotz warned. "They mislead people and preach another gospel."

Lotz described the dangers of "unnecessary entanglement with para-church organizations and even sometimes other Baptist groups," for Eastern European Baptists in the BWA.

"The great danger of working with any mission agency outside of one's own country is paternalism," Lotz said.

Lotz said paternalism is usually seen when one national group claims superior knowledge, wisdom or finances than the national group they want to work with.

Lotz listed money, cultural irrelevancy, disloyalty to national groups, lack of strategy and independent pastors and churches as five dangers of paternalism.

"Groups that come in to help with a lot of money often unknowingly use money as a form of bribery to do what they want to do, not what you want to do," Lotz said.

"Unfortunately, many organizations with fine and warm hearted evangelical zeal come into our countries with no knowledge of the language, history or culture. As a result," Lotz said, "their presentation of the Gospel often misses the mark, and in fact, by emphasizing certain foreign or cultural doctrines lead people astray and destroys the fellowship."

Because "many overseas organizations do not work through the national headquarters but choose outstanding churches, pastors and friends as their channel for financial and spiritual aid, the national convention is weakened and unable to coordinate or oversee what is actually going on," Lotz said.

Lotz also warned about the disparity among pastors in this type of work.

"One pastor may end up with two cars and another none," Lotz said.

The individual loyalty of a pastor to "the out of country guest" weakens the national organization and leaves it vulnerable to the criticism, "you never get us any money, or Bibles ... the way the other group does," Lotz warned.

All of this leads to "a lack of national strategy for evangelism and mission," Lotz said, because "everyone does what is right in their own eyes."

"Only in the collective sacrifice of the ego to the greater good of the country through leadership in national conventions will a national strategy be developed," Lotz said.

Lotz warned "complete reliance on outside help and loyalty to outside leadership ... leads to alienation from the national movement of Baptists and eventually to a break and the forming of independent congregations."

"Can a Baptist church really be independent of others," Lotz asked.

"Historically, Baptists have always answered 'No!'," Lotz said, "because being a Baptist means seeking association and working with other Baptist churches in the region and country."

However Lotz said "if the New Testament pattern of partnership" is followed, receiving help from outside "is not only a positive but a Biblical and necessary part of mission."

Helpful personnel, Bibles and literature, relief and construction work, reaching the unreached, and developing strategy are some of the advantages Lotz saw in partnership.

"Missionaries and partners from abroad bring new skills and necessary educational level help which will build up the body," Lotz said, "but these should be taught for a short period of time."

"We are grateful to all organizations which have helped in bringing the Bible to the people," Lotz said. "We need all the help we can get in printing Bibles now in the country and producing national Christian literature."

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Because many local congregations "have the will to build" but no supplies, "aid from abroad is welcome and necessary," Lotz said.

Relief work cannot be done without outside help Lotz said, and the vast global needs overextend Baptist mission agencies and churches.

Speaking of new mission work, Lotz said, "often national evangelists are so set in their ways, they miss out on communicating to other people groups, as well as other intellectual groups."

"A missionary can often reach the unreached in a significant way," Lotz said. By establishing new Bible study groups and forming new churches, "the overall national movement is strengthened and broadened."

"Generally, the missionary movement around the world has been a major force for alleviating suffering, educating people, defending human rights and broadening the horizons of Christian believers," Lotz said.

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BWA leader warns against
individualistic strategy

By Wendy Ryan

Baptist Press
3/31/93

BERLIN (BP)--"When independent type thinking comes not only to Baptist individuals, but to each level of Baptist unity, lack of cooperation, re-duplication of efforts and even conflict occurs," said Denton Lotz, Baptist World Alliance general secretary.

"When this begins to happen on a wide scale," Lotz said, "one has to ask, 'Are we at the point where the structures of Baptist life no longer serve us?'"

Lotz spoke on the need for cooperation and partnership for Baptists and of the implications of an individualistic mission approach for Baptists, at a March 25-28 church growth conference sponsored by the Union of Evangelical Free Churches in Germany.

"Are we experiencing a paradigm shift in mission?" Lotz asked.

"If the answer is yes," Lotz said, "we need a serious reconsideration across the board as to how we as Baptists do missions and understand the church."

"The chaotic and revolutionary period in which we live may have forced us to do this already," Lotz said.

Lotz described the confusing political situation currently in a post-Communist Eastern Europe and the lukewarm support for religious freedom by former state churches in Eastern Europe and the proliferation of para-church groups as challenges for Baptist partnership.

Lotz then described "the Baptist way of partnership" to this group of older and newer Eastern European Baptist leaders and pastors.

"While every Baptist entity from the individual to the international level has the responsibility and right to do mission and evangelism," Lotz said, "certain principles of cooperation have developed over the years which have led Baptists to agree that cooperative efforts are best suited for truly reaching the whole community, nation and world."

"However," Lotz said, "you cannot force any Baptist congregation to conform to a particular way of action."

"This is our burden and our strength. This is a strength because it puts responsibility to witness rightly in the hands of the individual believers."

"On the other hand, it is our weakness," Lotz said, "because if everyone goes off and does 'their own thing' unity and cooperation often become impossible, or at least more complicated."

While not recommending Baptists change their belief in the autonomy of the local church, Lotz said that very autonomy necessitated meetings such as the Berlin meeting, "to pray, think, study, consult and agree on cooperative action."

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Pro-lifers decry president's
plan to kill Hyde Amendment

By Tom Strode

WASHINGTON (BP)--The White House's intention to rescind a 16-year ban on Medicaid funding for abortion ignited another skirmish in the ongoing war over abortion.

President Clinton's plan to repeal the Hyde Amendment will result in more abortions and in pro-life Americans being forced to pay for the taking of unborn life, abortion opponents said. The proposed action will end unfairness to poor women who cannot afford to exercise their reproductive rights, abortion rights advocates said.

News of Clinton's intention to keep a campaign promise to rescind the Hyde Amendment came a week before his budget was to be submitted the first full week of April. The White House confirmed March 30 the Hyde Amendment would not be included in the budget.

The proposal is expected to result in a volatile battle in Congress, where some pro-choice members oppose taxpayer funding of abortion.

The president's proposal "comes as absolutely no surprise," said Rep. Henry Hyde, R.-Ill., author of the amendment. This decision and the expected proposal to add abortion "as a mandated benefit to the Clinton health care proposals ... are predictable, given the zealously of this administration towards the abortion ethic."

"President Clinton has once more demonstrated his commitment to choice and the dignity of women by calling for an end to the callous and discriminatory government policies that deny the right to choose abortion to low-income women, particularly minority women," said Kate Michelman, president of the National Abortion Rights Action League, in a written statement. "This kind of coercive policy has no place in a nation that values individual rights and liberties."

The Hyde Amendment, first enacted in 1976, prevents Medicaid and other programs under the Labor, Health and Human Services and Education departments from funding abortion except when the life of the mother is endangered. Attempts in recent years to weaken the amendment to include rape and incest as exceptions have failed.

Pro-lifers contended abortions were sure to increase from the estimated 1.6 million each year.

"For a politician who says his abortion policy is meant to decrease the number of abortions in America, he has a strange way of showing it," said James A. Smith, director of government relations for the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission. "It is inconceivable that the number of abortions in the country will not increase when the federal government gets back into the abortion business."

When Clinton rescinded four pro-life policies and initiated the repeal of another Jan. 22, he said, "Our vision should be of an America where abortion is safe and legal, but rare." At the time, pro-life leaders said his actions would increase abortions in the United States and overseas.

Pro-lifers differed on how many additional abortions would be done as a result of repealing the Hyde Amendment. Hyde estimated about one million annually. Doug Johnson, legislative director of the National Right to Life Committee, said it would be about 300,000.

Medicaid paid for about 300,000 abortions a year prior to the Hyde Amendment's adoption. In 1990, only 69 abortions were paid for by Medicaid under the Hyde guidelines.

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"Under the Hyde Amendment, each state has the option to fund whatever abortions it chooses, but only 13 do so," Johnson said in a prepared statement. "Repealing the Hyde Amendment would mandate that all states participate in providing abortion on demand."

The additional cost is uncertain. The "full financial implications are unclear," said George Stephanopoulos, White House communication's director.

"It's bad enough for abortion to be legal in the first place," the CLC's Smith said. "However, forcing pro-life Americans to pay for this reprehensible practice with their taxes is unconscionable. Thomas Jefferson called this type of policy sinful and tyrannical.

"I'm still waiting for this president to say no to the abortion lobby. He hasn't said no yet, and he doesn't show any signs of doing so in the future."

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Bills requiring warnings
in alcohol ads reintroduced

By Tom Strode

Baptist Press
3/31/93

WASHINGTON (BP)--Legislation requiring warning messages to be included in alcohol advertising was reintroduced in Congress March 30 in the face of what appears to be increased opposition.

The Sensible Advertising and Family Education Act, introduced for the third consecutive Congress, would require health and safety warnings in all alcohol ads broadcast on radio and television or printed in newspapers, magazines or promotional displays.

In the Senate, the bill is S. 674. No number had been assigned yet in the House of Representatives.

This year's legislation calls for seven rotating messages rather than the five in previous bills. The print warnings contain more information than the broadcast ones and also include a toll-free phone number providing more details on alcohol use. The broadcast messages, all in a "surgeon general's warning," form are:

- If you are pregnant, don't drink alcohol. Alcohol may cause mental retardation and other birth defects.
- If you are under the age of 21, it's illegal to buy alcoholic beverages.
- Alcohol is a drug and may be addictive.
- Drive sober. If you don't, you could lose your driver's license.
- Don't mix alcohol with over-the-counter, prescription or illicit drugs.
- If you drink too much alcohol too fast, you can die of alcohol poisoning.
- Drinking increases your risk of high blood pressure, liver disease and cancer.

Sponsors of the SAFE Act hope they can "simply change the atmosphere that surrounds alcohol" and "create an idea that there is at least a down side to taking a drink," said Rep. Joseph Kennedy, D.-Mass., and chief sponsor in the House at a March 30 press conference.

While the alcohol companies should be given some credit for advertising campaigns such as "Know when to say when," Kennedy said, "the reality is those moderation efforts are nothing compared to the continuous pummeling" by the "best ads on television.

"Unless we act now to protect the American people and get them the whole story on alcohol, our kids will continue to grow up thinking that they need alcohol to get ahead in life. In fact, it's already happening. Four and one-half million youths are already dependent on alcohol or (are) problem drinkers," Kennedy said.

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Other damaging effects of alcohol, Kennedy said, are: alcohol-related deaths through disease, automobile accidents and homicides; fetal alcohol syndrome; costs from work absenteeism and health care.

The legislation will cost the alcohol industry little, "but it will be of great benefit to those who heed the warnings in this bill," said South Carolina's Strom Thurmond, lead Republican sponsor in the Senate, at the press conference.

A new coalition of brewers, broadcasters, advertisers and labor unions announced its opposition, however, in a statement released at the press conference.

"Because health warnings would take up a significant portion of the commercial, brewers would severely curtail their advertising," said Jeff Perlman of the American Advertising Federation in the statement. "This would lead to a loss of market share and jobs.

"Unfortunately this legislation would limit the very effective moderation messages that the beer companies already produce and replace them with cluttered messages that are far less effective. This proposal would further result in the removal of all beer advertising from television causing many programs, especially sports, to move to pay-per-view. TV cannot begin to replace the dollars that will be lost by the removal of beer commercials."

Members of the Coalition to Protect Jobs and Free Speech include Miller Brewing Co.; National Association of Broadcasters; the Teamsters, among at least three labor unions, and at least three advertising organizations.

The Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission is represented on the steering committee of the 85-member Coalition for the Prevention of Alcohol Problems, which supports the legislation.

The SAFE act "provides a much-needed and long-overdue counterbalance to dangerously misleading alcohol ads," said Richard Land, the CLC's executive director, in a statement released at the press conference.

"Despite the claims of the alcohol and broadcast industries, advertising does increase consumption, and education alone is insufficient to curb alcohol-related problems. Common sense tells us that the alcohol industry's \$2 billion annual, pro-drinking campaign far exceeds the occasional public service announcement on the risks of alcohol consumption."

Other members of the coalition include the National Association of Evangelicals, American Medical Association, National PTA, United Methodist Church, American Academy of Pediatrics, Center for Science in the Public Interest and Mississippi Baptist Christian Action Commission.

In addition to Kennedy and Thurmond, other prime sponsors of the legislation are Rep. John Conyers, D.-Mich., and Sen. Paul Simon, D.-Ill. Last year, Al Gore, now vice president, was the lead Democratic sponsor in the Senate.

They are "very hopeful that we'll see some help and support from the (Clinton) administration for this kind of effort," Kennedy said.

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