



Capitol Recap: Justices’ gambling decision could be immigration ruling

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May 18, 2018

The U.S. Supreme Court decision to overturn a ban on sports gambling could reach well beyond that gridiron clash between North Central A&M and Springfield State.

It could go straight to sanctuary cities, The Associated Press reports, which might be why the Trump administration opposed it.

The AP pointed out that seven of the nine justices — five from the conservative side of the bench and two of the court’s liberals — “backed a robust reading of the Constitution’s 10th Amendment,” the one that says “powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the states, are reserved to the states respectively, or to the people.”

Yeah, the states’ rights one.

Justice Sam Alito, in his majority opinion, wrote that the federal anti-gambling law was unconstitutional because “it unequivocally dictates what a state legislature may and may not do.”

“It’s as if federal officers were installed in state legislative chambers and were armed with the authority to stop legislators from voting on any offending proposals,” Alito said.

Ilya Shapiro, a senior fellow in constitutional studies at the libertarian Cato Institute, said that could apply to sanctuary cities, which do not help ensure enforcement of federal immigration law..

“In the immigration context,” Shapiro told the AP, “this means (the federal government) can’t require state or local officials to cooperate with federal immigration authorities.”

Meanwhile, back in Georgia: What that means at the state level remains up in the air.

But Lt. Gov. Casey Cagle wants an answer.

Cagle has been pressing a complaint to the state’s Immigration Enforcement Review Board that the city of Decatur is violating state law by barring its law enforcement officers from cooperating with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement in deporting immigrants in the country illegally.

Decatur has a policy that prohibits city police from arresting, detaining or transporting anyone based solely on a detainer from ICE. The detainers ask sheriff's offices and similar agencies to hold people for up to 48 hours beyond when they would normally be released so ICE can pick them up and seek to deport them. Some federal courts have noted that the detainers create problems affecting Fourth Amendment protections against unreasonable searches and seizures — so we've now worked our way through one-fifth of the Bill of Rights.

Cagle vs. Decatur got a bit chippy.

Decatur City Attorney Bryan Downs, noting that Cagle did not show up at the board's hearing, said the lieutenant governor and front-runner in the GOP race for governor was not "man enough" to appear.

A Cagle spokesman responded that the lieutenant governor/candidate had to skip the hearing to attend other scheduled events.

The board tabled Cagle's complaint.

A borderline promise: Immigration appeared to be the theme of the week for Cagle, who also said that Georgia National Guard troops would be headed for the U.S.-Mexico border if he were governor.

Cagle said in a statement this past week that he, like President Donald Trump, is frustrated "that the illegal border crossings continue." He pledged to join Mississippi, Missouri, South Carolina and other states that have sent military units to the southwest border.

"Illegal immigration has undermined the rule of law, strained local tax resources and endangered communities," Cagle said. "Finally we have a president who recognizes the severity of the problem and is going to actually do something about it. Georgians want to be a part of the solution."

Trump in April requested that states send about 4,000 National Guard members to the border to fight what he's called a crisis of illegal border crossings and crime.

Gov. Nathan Deal's office said he has no immediate plans to dispatch troops. It said the Georgia National Guard has not received a specific request about its needs for the operation.

Predictions of local pain: In the eyes of a certain major bond-rating firm, Stockbridge is not the only Georgia community that loses under legislation Deal signed into law allowing a section of that Henry County city to be chopped off and turned into a new city of Eagles Landing.

Supporters of the severing say Stockbridge had long neglected to provide services such as parks and roads, and that piecing together a more affluent city in Eagles Landing will attract higher-end options.

Displaying some symptoms of separation anxiety, Moody's Investors Service warned this past week in a four-page analysis that the partitioning creates a "credit negative for local governments in Georgia."

The new law establishes "a precedent that the state can act to divide local tax bases, potentially lowering the credit quality of one city for the benefit of the other," the analysis states.

While pain could be universal, Stockbridge is still getting the worst of it.

The city stands to lose nearly one-third of its population — 9,000 of its 28,000 residents — and one-half of its tax revenue. That’s going to make it difficult for Stockbridge to pay off more than \$14 million in outstanding debt. Critics of the Eagles Landing plan urged Deal to veto the legislation because it did not include a way to reapportion that debt.

In the analysis, Moody’s stated, “Because the bills did not allocate a portion of the outstanding debt to the new city or to Henry County, Stockbridge would likely be liable for all outstanding debt service payments.”

None of this happens, however, if voters reject Eagles Landing’s departure. But those would be the voters who would live in the new city without any of the outstanding debt.

New friends: Carol Porter ran as a Democrat for lieutenant governor in 2010 against the incumbent, Cagle.

So it turned heads when Carol Porter Stewart — she remarried — joined her husband, Brother Stewart, in holding a fundraiser for Cagle early this month at their Macon shooting preserve.

She told GeorgiaPol.com that it was a matter of economics.

“I have always voted based on the issues and I think there’s only one issue in this election and it’s the economy — which is going stronger than I remember since Bill Clinton,” she said. “Nathan Deal has a huge popularity rating for a reason and I think Cagle will continue Deal’s legacy on economic progress.”

They do differ on some issues.

“However,” she said, “I have come to believe the person who puts the most money back into the pockets of the people is the person who ends up helping them the most.”

Candidates, endorsements, etc.:

— Former U.S. Rep. Lynn Westmoreland is throwing his support behind Cagle in the governor’s race.

— Chatham County Commission Chairman Al Scott has announced his support for three Democratic candidates in Tuesday’s primary: Stacey Evans for governor, Sarah Riggs Amico for lieutenant governor and John Barrow for secretary of state.

— State Sen. David Shafer, in his bid to become the GOP nominee for lieutenant governor, picked up a number of endorsements this past week. He now claims the support of the Georgia Taxpayer Alliance; GRA-PAC, a political action committee led by former U.S. Rep. Paul Broun and affiliated with Georgia Republican Assembly; FRC Action, a political action committee affiliated with the Family Research Council; former presidential candidate Gary Bauer; and the Campaign for Working Families.

— The Georgia Right to Life PAC is backing Republican state Sen. Josh McKoon’s run for secretary of state.

— Democrat Lindy Miller landed endorsements from former Atlanta Mayor Andrew Young, environmental activist Laura Turner Seydel and Jon Ossoff, who lost last year's special election in the 6th Congressional District.

— The eyes can deceive. Sabrina McKenzie, who is running against state Senate Minority Leader Steve Henson in Tuesday's Democratic primary, has put out a campaign ad that features a picture of her with Ossoff. That would indicate Ossoff is backing McKenzie's candidacy, but he actually is supporting a bevy of state legislative candidates, including Henson.