

## Alabama Eagle Forum Candidate Questionnaire 2018

Thank you for offering yourself for public service through elected office. Since only an informed electorate can make sound decisions, we ask you to state your positions so that we can distribute them to your potential constituents. Please indicate your position with an A (Agree) or D (Disagree), fill in appropriate blanks, and sign each page. If you wish to clarify or expand on any question, please do so with an attachment. Only fully completed questionnaires will be shared by Eagle Forum of Alabama.

Candidate Name John H. Merrill

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Candidate for Secretary of State

PLEASE RETURN BY April 15, 2018. You may mail to: Eagle Forum of Alabama, 4200 Stone River Circle, Birmingham, AL 35213. You can also scan and e-mail the questionnaire to [deborah@alabamaeagle.org](mailto:deborah@alabamaeagle.org). For clarification or questions, call 205-879-7096.

### State Government

1. There is a great need to control government spending and reduce waste in government programs at every level. I pledge to reduce spending and increase accountability in state government spending. Here are three state government programs or agencies I would cut in Alabama.

- Agree 1) State Auditor 2) Prerty of Acts of Alabama <sup>(Disagree)</sup> 3) Code Book Distribution (Disagree)

Disagree We have zeroed the office of the Secy of State from the State General Fund and through cost savings we have saved \$2,419,021.21 cash money since Jan 17, 2015.

2. The 10th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution limits the powers of the federal government by reserving all powers not explicitly granted to it for the states. I will oppose all federal grants or any legislation seeking control or involvement from the federal government.

- Agree
- Disagree

3. I do not support calls for an Article V convention, which could put the rights guaranteed by our U. S. Constitution in jeopardy. I understand that while the states can request a convention, Article V says that the convention must be called by Congress and therefore Congress would set the rules for the Convention, not the states. I oppose state legislation which claims to control any proposed constitutional convention.

- Agree
- Disagree

### Sanctity of Life

4. An unborn child has a fundamental right to life which cannot be infringed. I pledge to work to fully defund Planned Parenthood at the state level and all other abortion providers receiving state funding. Life clearly begins at conception. I disagree with the majority opinion of Roe v. Wade. I support its being overturned by the United States Supreme Court.

- Agree

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Disagree

### Family Issues

5. Gambling corrupts government, adds no product to the economy, is not a dependable source of government revenue, and is addictive and detrimental to family and community life. I oppose all efforts to expand gambling, and I support enforcement of present criminal laws.

Agree

Disagree

6. Preschoolers prosper best in the consistent loving care of parents or relatives. I will oppose any proposals that mandate attendance at a universal state baby-sitting program in the guise of prekindergarten. I will also oppose expansion of pre-k to include earlier years of a child's development.

Agree

Disagree

7. I support the protection of parental rights regarding any underage child who wishes to pursue transgender identity and/or treatment against the will of the parent.

Agree

Disagree

### Education

8. Parents have a fundamental right and responsibility to direct the education of their children. Schools should therefore be required to get prior informed consent from parents (opt-in, not opt-out) before they can conduct any surveys, physical or psychological exams, or provide immunizations, medication or referrals.

Agree

Disagree

9. I support local/state control of education curriculum and therefore oppose the Common Core State Standards Initiative (renamed in Alabama as the Alabama College and Career Ready Standards) that centralizes education decisions at the national level. Therefore, I commit to vote for the repeal of Common Core (ACCRS). Instead of improving academic achievement nationally or in Alabama, by every measure common core has drastically lowered student scores, reversing an upward trend in our state. There is no Constitutional authority for national standards, national curriculum or national assessments. Schools should be accountable to parents and students. I commit to work for repeal of Common Core and advocate on this issue in my position.

Agree

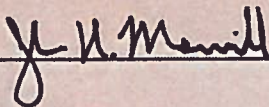
Disagree

10. I support passing legislation at the state level to provide privacy protections for students and their families. I oppose the creation of any type of state longitudinal data system regardless of what state agency controls the system. I oppose the collection of PII (personally identifiable information) unless it is directly used for a legitimate academic purpose with consent.

Agree

Disagree

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11. Alabama statute (16-40A-1) requires abstinence-based education whenever sex education is included in public school curricula. I fully support this law and the requirement of abstinence education for our students. I do not support groups such as Southern Poverty Law Center or Planned Parenthood teaching any classes or providing lesson plans in Alabama's schools.

- Agree
- Disagree

12. Parents and all voters have the right to vote for their elected members of the State Board of Education and thus to hold them accountable for the policies they enact. I oppose all efforts to remove this right from the people by moving to an appointed board.

- Agree
- Disagree

### Property Rights

13. Private property rights and private ownership of real property must be protected.

I support an amendment to the Alabama Constitution and/or statutory changes to ensure private property rights are protected from eminent domain abuse.

- Agree
- Disagree

### Taxation

14. I will oppose all tax increases including a gas tax, infrastructure tax, or education tax instead I will support cutting wasteful government programs to meet needs. Our state government agencies and programs have grown too large and most should never have been created in the first place.

- Agree
- Disagree

15. Tax incentives and economic regulations should be applied to all companies equally so that no companies benefit while others bear the financial burden. Crony capitalism violates free market principles by allowing select businesses to benefit from government regulation. The free market system can only work when we cut government regulations and ensure businesses have the freedom to fail as well as the freedom to succeed. The free market when allowed to flourish results in greater economic prosperity for all.

- Agree
- Disagree

16. We must eliminate many occupational licenses because they interfere directly with a private citizens' right to work and keep families in poverty. Name one occupational license that currently is a requirement in Alabama that you would eliminate now.

- Agree
- Disagree

- 1) I prefer the elimination of all occupational licenses. I passed legislation in the House to prevent the expansion of occupational licenses and amend Constitutional Amendments - Statewide (debated by House Leadership) but passed one for Tuscaloosa County that was approved by the voters.
- 2) I would eliminate all occupational licenses.

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J. N. Merrill

