

### Eagle Forum First Vice President Reflects on the Life and Legacy of one of America's Great Conservative Leaders

Eunie Smith, 1st Vice President of Eagle Forum and President of Alabama Eagle Forum, issued this statement on September 5, 2016, on the passing of Phyllis Schlafly:



“Today, Phyllis Schlafly has gone home to be with her Lord after a long illness. America has lost a great stateswoman, and we at Eagle Forum and among the conservative movement have lost a beloved friend and mentor, who taught and inspired so many to fight the good fight in defense of American values. I have personally lost a dear friend of over forty years.

Known as the “sweetheart of the silent majority,” and the matriarch of the conservative movement, Phyllis Schlafly has been a visionary, a unifier, and a voice of conscience for more than six decades.

Phyllis has been credited with doing the impossible, when she and the army of grassroots volun-



teers she led and trained defeated the so-called Equal Rights Amendment, which had passed both houses of Congress and seemed destined for certain ratification among the states.

Also previously thought impossible, Phyllis not only brought together people of various faiths that historically worked separately, she brought these people of faith into the political process like never before, creating a crucial voting block of values voters.

Following the defeat of the Equal Rights Amendment, many of the volunteers Phyllis trained became leaders in the organization she named Eagle Forum. The name was inspired by Isaiah 40:31, an encouragement to the battle weary that those who wait upon the Lord will mount up with wings like eagles.

Phyllis and her beloved Eagles are known for fighting tirelessly and for mobilizing political power for principle, not prestige

or profit. For decades under Phyllis’ leadership, Eagle Forum has led the pro-family movement through such diverse and important battles as defending the unborn, defending traditional marriage, defending American workers from unfair trade and immigration policies, defending individual inventors from losing their intellectual property to large corporations, defending women from being drafted into military combat, defending full-time homemakers, defending conservatives and grassroots activists from establishment kingmakers, defending children from politicized public education, defending American taxpayers from out-of-control federal spending and defending against threats to American exceptionalism.

There will never be another Phyllis Schlafly. Today is a day to

*Phyllis Schlafly shares how any citizen can make a big difference in the direction of our local, state, and federal governments:*

**"The only way they can join the elite group which makes things happen is to plunge into political action."**

*from "The Vital Political Role of Conservative Women," by Phyllis Schlafly, printed in Human Events, April 12, 1969*



celebrate her amazing legacy and to remember the profound difference she made in the conduct of American public policy. Thank you, Phyllis. **We will not grow weary."**

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# Alabama Elects to March Toward True Progress in Education

By Betty Peters, Alabama State Board of Education, District 2

On August 11, 2016, the Alabama State School Board selected Michael Sentance of Massachusetts for State School Superintendent; September 8, we approved his contract. One of six finalists, Sentance won my support



during his 55-minute interview on August 4. I don't think anyone in the crowded room was expecting what he said. Sentance gave us a brief but clear outline for his vision of education, modeled on the highly successful reform effort he had been part of in Massachusetts back in the early 1990s. As he answered our questions, I looked around the room and saw the expressions on people's faces and noticed a light of hope in the eyes of fellow board members. When the governor passionately asked him, "Why hasn't anyone else told me this before (regarding AL's assessment system)," it dawned on me this man from Massachusetts had a real chance of being selected. For the first time in my 12 plus years on the state school board, I believed Alabama could be successful in turning around our educational system and improving students' lives

as Massachusetts had done. As Sentance had explained about Massachusetts' success, I knew an endeavor this massive would require years of close cooperation among k-12, 2 and 4 year institutions, colleges of education, pre-k, business and industry, and of course parents, the Governor and the Legislature. I wondered hopefully would we in Alabama be willing to join together to take advantage of this unique opportunity, one that might not come along again for a long time?

As I researched his work in Massachusetts, I really liked what I learned. For example, in the fall of 2001 when Sentance left his position as senior education advisor to the governor, the state's upward trajectory had begun. It culminated by 2007 when Massachusetts ranked first on the NAEP scores on all four assessments - a status never previously attained. Called one of the nation's most competent K-12 leaders and a Federalist, Sentance has since 2010 valiantly objected to the misguided Common Core regimen. He argued for rigorous, proven standards that are developed by teachers and academics in a state. He believed "the states should be doing this work as it allows for creativity and the pioneering innovation that states can provide.... It's why we were able to introduce engineering into our science standards in 2000—something still lacking in any depth in the Next Generation Science Standards. So I believe that standards should always be established by states without the coercion from the federal government."

I read that Mr. Sentance also recognized that while the 1993 Massachusetts Education Reform Act focused on the academic aspect of school improvement, the career-tech sector was largely ignored. As he worked through the issue of improving career-tech programs, there was pressure from some sources to set up something like the European model for determining a student's work future, but he resisted such moves and they did not accept that model. He said, "The focus was to provide a strong academic education for all students. While there was initial resistance to increasing the academic requirements in career-tech programs, eventually a group of career-tech superintendents courageously embraced the challenge of our standards and significantly improved their programs. And, this was done without tracking or pre-determining the destiny of any student."

In an interview with AP after the vote, our new superintendent explained, "My goal is to raise the achievement of students in Alabama so whatever people think about Alabama, they know that their schools are good and improving.... I'm excited about the challenge... It's going to take a lot of work. It's going to take the trust and faith of educators to work with me. So that is something I have to earn. I understand that."

The AP article quoted Gov. Bentley: "I am not excited that we are 40th in 4th grade reading...46th in 8th

*Continued on page 3*

# Lottery Dies in Special Session

grade reading and 50th in 8th grade math.” I join with the governor who asked the public to give Sentance a chance because our school scores must improve.

As C. S. Lewis once wrote, “If you are on the wrong road, progress means doing an about-turn and walking back to the right road; and in that case the man who turns back soonest is the most progressive man.”

I have faith that Alabamians will indeed work together and turn our schools around. Our students don’t deserve the status quo. We must turn back to the time when we were progressing in order to march toward true progress. After all, the children of Alabama truly are our future.

## BP Settlement Passes in Special Session

After the lottery bill failed in special session, the legislature passed its Plan B, using the BP settlement payments to fund the shortfall in the budget. They will sell bonds, using the BP payments to repay the bonds.

The bond proceeds, estimated at \$640 million will provide:

- \$162 million to repay the General Fund Rainy Day Account
- \$238 million to the Alabama Trust Fund for amounts transferred in 2013-15 to support the budget
- \$120 million to the Alabama Medicaid Agency
- up to \$120 million would go to Mobile and Baldwin counties for road improvements

The bill passed 87-9 in the House and 22-8 in the Senate.



On the way to passing Governor Bentley’s lottery proposal, SB3, which he said would cure Alabama’s financial woes for years to come, the bill met unexpected obstacles. First, it only passed the Senate by 21 votes, which is the 3/5 minimum needed to pass a constitutional amendment. This was after Senator McClendon’s more comprehensive bill, SB 11 had completely failed.

Then the real battle began when the bill was sent to the House. Lottery opponents in the House had delayed the bill for two days past the deadline for it to even be on the November 8 ballot. Three times they blocked cloture motions by lottery supporters to shut off debate, and even had enough strength to vote the whole thing down. It took a second vote in which three legislators changed their vote to yes for the measure to pass by the minimum number of votes for passage. After 11 hours of debate, the House passed the bill with an amendment to allow only paper lottery games. As Brandon Moseley wrote in the Alabama Political Reporter:

*“If the legislators put a definition of lottery that restricted it to paper tickets in the Alabama Constitution; then an Alabama lottery could find itself becoming increasingly obsolete as older less sophisticated lottery players died off. Also, certain influential gambling interests had hoped a lottery would mean that the dog tracks could do some sort of a deal in the yet to be written enabling legislation or with the yet to be appointed Lottery Commission for virtual lottery machines (VLMs). VLMs had been included in SB11. Rep. Connie Rowe’s definition ended any illusion that VLMs would be allowed anywhere ever.”*

This was totally unacceptable to the pro-gambling forces since it would have forbidden video lottery games and casinos. As one Senator said on the floor, “that is where the money is.”

So, with the pro-gambling Republicans and the Democratic caucus members (who have always supported gambling legislation) in opposition along with those stalwart opponents of gambling in any form, the Senate proceeded to vote 23-7 to Non Concur with the House version of the bill. Since they were, in essence, at a complete impasse, the leadership announced the bill was DEAD for this session.

Of course, the battle will continue. In announcing that the bill was dead for the Special Session, Senate Pro-tem Del Marsh said that it would be brought up again in the next regular session. So, we must continue to educate the public on the harmful aspects of such state run gambling.

**M**arine Lance Corporal Monifa Sterling was punished for displaying a favorite Bible verse at her desk. She appealed based upon her understanding of the 1st amendment. In its 4-1 opinion, the U. S. Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces turned away Sterling's case. The Court said, "We reject the argument that every interference with a religiously motivated act constitutes a substantial burden on the exercise of religion." Sterling, along with the First Liberty Institute, plan to appeal to the Supreme Court. Kelly Shackelford, president of First Liberty Institute, said, "A few judges decided they could strip a Marine of her constitutional rights just because they didn't think her beliefs were important enough to be protected."

*Town Hall.com 8/12/2016*

**T**he State of Alabama is once again [asking a federal court to intervene](#) on the issue of Syrian refugee resettlement, arguing that the Obama administration is violating the Refugee Act of 1980, which requires that states be consulted before refugees are placed within their borders. A federal judge dismissed a previous suit, prompting the state's appeal.

The governor has filed an appeal to the United States Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit after the dismissal of Alabama's suit against the federal government on July 29, 2016. Gov. Bentley said that the District Court based its dismissal on a technicality, a finding that Alabama may not sue to enforce the Refugee Act; the District Court did not find that the federal government was fulfilling its obligations under the Act.

*Source: YellowhammerNews.com August 31, 2016*

**A** study from the Education Intelligence Agency revealed that union membership for Alabama teachers is down 31.6 percent over the last five years, and 16 percent in the 2014-2015 school year alone. This is a trend that is occurring nationwide. The AEA's loss of political clout became evident after the 2014 election cycle. They spent roughly \$7 million in the primaries, but the AEA won zero statewide races, zero state senate races and only a handful of state house races. The group is now spending every dollar it earns paying down its massive debt.

*Yellowhammernews.com 6/23/2016*

**A**labama Secretary of State John Merrill participated in a conference call with several other secretaries of state after learning about the breach of voter data bases in Arizona and Illinois. After offers by the Homeland Security Department to "help" states in this area, Merrill said that the power to secure and properly maintain election records and data bases should remain in the hands of the states. He did say that they had completed an internal review of Alabama systems and verified that no breach has occurred. They continue to work with their vendor to ensure that the systems and data are secure.

*YellowhammerNews.com August 31, 2016*

"God is in control, but that doesn't mean that He wants us to lean on a shovel and pray for a hole." *Congressman Louis Gohmert at the 2016 National Prayer Breakfast*

The germ of dissolution of our federal government is in...the federal judiciary; an irresponsible body ...working like gravity by night and by day, gaining a little today and a little tomorrow, and advancing its noiseless step like a thief, over the field of jurisdiction, until all shall be usurped from the States."

*Thomas Jefferson in a letter to Mr. Hammond in 1821.*

"I entirely concur in the propriety of resorting to the sense in which the Constitution was accepted and ratified by the nation. In that sense alone it is the legitimate Constitution. And if that be not the guide in expounding it, there can be no security for a consistent and stable...exercise of its powers."

*James Madison in letter to Henry Lee, June 25, 1824.*

"America is the ONLY NATION in the world that is founded on creed. That creed is set forth...in the Declaration of Independence... that all men are equal in their claim to justice, that governments exist to give them that justice. It certainly does condemn...atheism, since it clearly names the CREATOR as the ultimate authority from whom these equal rights are derived."

*Judge Learned Hand in speech quoting G. K Chesterton.*

*When you become entitled to exercise the right of voting for public officers, let it be impressed on your mind that God commands you to choose for rulers, "just men who will rule in the fear of God." The preservation of government depends on the faithful discharge of this duty.*

**Noah Webster, 1758-1843**



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## ‘Sexuality and Gender: Findings from the Biological, Psychological, and

## 8 Reasons to Homeschool

A study entitled “Sexuality and Gender: Findings from the Biological, Psychological and Social Sciences” conducted by world renowned Johns Hopkins University scientists Dr. Lawrence S. Mayer and Dr. Paul R. McHugh, is a meta-analysis of data from over 200 peer-reviewed (and left-leaning) studies regarding “sexual orientation” and “gender identity.” It was published in the fall 2016 edition of *The New Atlantis* journal and is, far and away, the most objective, exhaustive and comprehensive study on the topic to date.

The research established, among other things:

- “The understanding of sexual orientation as an innate, biologically fixed property of human beings – the idea that people are ‘born that way’ – is not supported by scientific evidence.”
- “Sexual orientation” in adolescents is “fluid over the life course for some people, with one study estimating that as many as 80 percent of male adolescents who report same-sex attractions no longer do so as adults.”
- “Compared to heterosexuals, non-heterosexuals are about two to three times as likely to have experienced childhood sexual abuse.”
- “Gay”-identified people are “at an elevated risk for a variety of adverse health and mental health outcomes.”
- “Gay”-identified people experience “nearly 2.5 times the risk of suicide.”
- “The hypothesis that gender identity is an innate, fixed property of human beings that is independent of biological sex – that a person might be ‘a man trapped in a woman’s body’ or ‘a woman trapped in a man’s body’ – is not supported by scientific evidence.”
- “Studies comparing the brain structures of transgender and non-transgender individuals ... do not provide any evidence for a neurobiological basis for cross-gender identification.”
- “[S]ex-reassigned individuals [are] about five times more likely to attempt suicide and about 19 times more likely to die by suicide.”
- “[T]he rate of lifetime suicide attempts across all ages of transgender individuals is estimated at 41 percent, compared to under 5 percent in the overall U.S. population.”

“Only a minority of children who experience cross-gender identification will continue to do so into adolescence or adulthood.”

While the liberal talking point that so-called “homophobia” leads to high rates of suicide and other devastating consequences of the “LGBT” lifestyle, a recent study from “gay”-affirming Sweden dispels this myth. The research, published in the May issue of the *European Journal of Epidemiology*, found that people entering into a “gay marriage” were, as mirrored above, nearly three times as likely to commit suicide than their heterosexual counterparts.

Considering the above non-biased, replicated, empirical and irrefutable scientific *facts*, it’s little wonder that an earlier study in the *International Journal of Epidemiology* (IJE), determined the “life expectancy at age 20 years for gay and bisexual men is 8 to 20 years less than for all men.” *From article by Matt Barber on TownHall.com, 8/28/16*

Homeschooling is growing by leaps and bounds in America, including in Alabama. The National Home Education Research Institute reports that there are now over 2 million school-aged students being schooled at home.

Edward B. Driscoll, Jr. wrote an article published on *WorldNet-Daily.com* on May 30, 2016, that lists 8 very good reasons to homeschool children today. He references an e-book entitled: “Homeschooling: Fighting for My Children’s Future.”

1. Parents teach the values, not the state: No required politically motivated lectures about marriage equality or global warming.
2. Hands-on learning is encouraged: Homeschoolers have the freedom to learn by doing.
3. Education is not tied to a schedule: Parents are free to adapt the schedule to the family’s needs.
4. Classes are not segregated by age: Homeschoolers interact with people of all ages, including adults.
5. Parents pick the curricula: They can change directions at any time to meet the needs of a particular child.
6. Bullying is not allowed: If sibling rivalry shows up, the parent can control it.
7. Homeschooling improves the family dynamic: Children are more influenced by parents than their peers and naturally enjoy being together.
8. Homeschoolers excel in education and civic life: The score in the 75th-85th percentile on standardized tests. They are more involved in their communities and are more likely to vote later.

## Dumbing Down Has Reached College Level

Charles Sykes, a senior fellow at the Wisconsin Policy Research Institute, and author of “Fail U: The False Promise of Higher Education”, published an enlightening article on this subject at *Town-Hall.com*. He makes the case that the dumbing down in America’s education systems has reached the colleges and universities of America.

He concedes that many students find their college years enlightening and enriching, but that it is hard not to notice the overall condition of learning in colleges today.

Sykes quotes Derek Bok, the former president of Harvard, as saying that for all their many benefits, colleges and universities “accomplish far less for their students than they should.” Bok admitted that too many graduates leave school “without being able to write well enough to satisfy employers.”

Sykes writes that “a recent study of the nation’s top-ranked private universities by the American Council of Trustees and Alumni found that only nine of them required an economics course for graduation; just five required a survey course in American history; and only 10 required that students take a literature course.”

Also, according to Sykes, most

seniors were unable to identify the Magna Carta, Reconstruction, or the Missouri Compromise. They were unfamiliar with Jane Austen’s *Pride and Prejudice*, Dostoevsky’s *Crime and Punishment* and Martin Luther King’s “Letter from a Birmingham Jail.”

Sykes also references the widely cited book *Academically Adrift*, by Richard Arum and Josipa Roksa who concluded that 45 percent of students “did not demonstrate any significant improvement in learning” during their first two years of college. More than a third (36 percent) “did not demonstrate any significant improvement in learning over four years of college.”

“An astounding proportion of students are progressing through higher education today without measurable gains in general skills,” they wrote. “While they may be acquiring subject-specific knowledge, or greater self-awareness on their journeys through college, many students are not improving their skills in critical thinking, complex reasoning, and writing.”

So how does this happen and why? Former Harvard president Bok is willing to admit that administrators have few incentives to

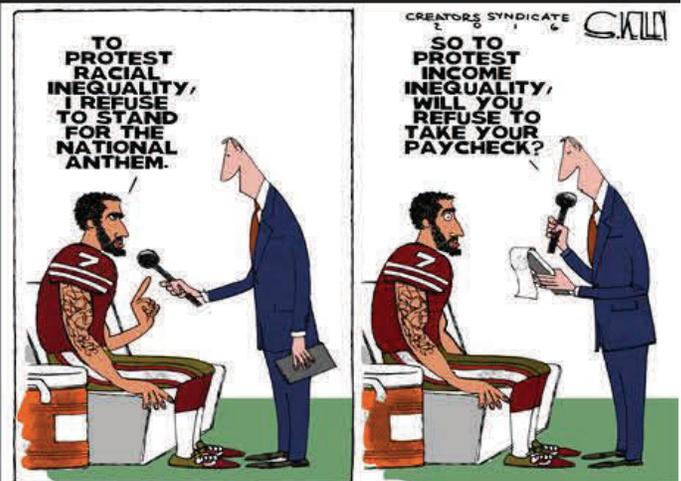
worry about something as irrelevant as student achievement because student learning can’t be monetized and doesn’t do anything to advance academic careers. “After all,” he writes, “success in increasing student learning is seldom rewarded, and its benefits are usually hard to demonstrate, far more so than success in lifting the SAT scores of the entering class or in raising the money to build new laboratories or libraries.”

Sykes concludes by adding, “There are, of course, other factors at work. The dumbing down of elementary and secondary education has made its way to the collegiate level; too many unprepared students are admitted despite their inability to do college-level work. Nearly four out of 10 college faculty now agree with the statement ‘Most of the students I teach lack the basic skills for college-level work.’ This inevitably contributes to the flight from teaching (few professors want to teach remedial courses) and the overall lowering of standards.

This general indifference to what, if anything, students learn is embodied in the modern curriculum that enables students to study just about anything, without necessarily learning much at all.”

### Feds Spend Millions Fighting FOIA Lawsuits

The Government Accounting Office (GOA) reports that Federal agencies have spent millions of dollars opposing lawsuits by Americans seeking public records under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). While they don’t know the entire amount spent on the 112 cases from 2009 to 2014 in which the plaintiffs prevailed, the GOA reports that of the 57 lawsuits they could follow, agencies spent \$1.8 million. But, agencies estimated to the GOA that they spent \$144 million fighting 3350 FOIA lawsuits during the years they studied. Not surprisingly, the State Department is the slowest agency in responding to requests for public documents. *The Daily Caller.com 09/08/2016*





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## **INSIDE THIS ISSUE**

***Third Quarter, 2016***

- **Eagle Forum First Vice President Reflects on the Life and Legacy of one of America’s Great Conservative Leaders**
- **Alabama Elects to March Toward True Progress in Education**
- **Lottery Dies in Special Session**
- **Classroom Technology: Drawing the Line between Tool and Tyrant**
- **‘Sexuality and Gender: Findings from the Biological, Psychological, and Social Sciences’**
- **8 Reasons to Homeschool**
- **Dumbing Down Has Reached College Level**
- **Feds Spend Millions Fighting FOIA Lawsuits**