

EAGLE FORUM OF ALABAMA

2024 Policy Conference



Speaker Bios

LES BERNAL

Les is the National Director of Stop Predatory Gambling, a 501c3 non-profit advocacy network of individuals and partner groups from all political stripes with members in all 50 states and its mission is to reveal the truth behind gambling operators to prevent more victims. He has been National Director since 2008 when the national network grew into the organization of Stop Predatory Gambling.


Les has spoken and written extensively about commercialized gambling operators and their business practices, including regional casinos, state lotteries, online gambling, and commercialized sports betting. He has been cited by more than 650 newspapers and magazines including The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, The Economist, The Washington Post, and Sports Illustrated. He has appeared on national television and radio including 60 Minutes, PBS NewsHour, CNN, Fox News Channel, The Dr. Phil Show, National Public Radio, MSNBC, The BBC and CNBC. He has also spoken before more than 1000 business organizations, college audiences and faith groups across the nation.

The national edition of The Deseret News named Les as “one of its seven heroes who made a difference in America this year.” Prior to joining Stop Predatory Gambling, Les served as a Chief of Staff in the Massachusetts State Senate and worked as a campaign strategist for more than forty federal and state campaigns. He is also a former high school and college men’s basketball coach, founder of the Robert Frost Foundation in Lawrence, Massachusetts- the hometown of America’s favorite poet – and a past chairman of the city’s Planning Board. He is a member of St. Patrick Parish, a Roman Catholic community in Lawrence.

Les graduated from Ithaca College with a B.A. in English and earned a M.P.A. from Suffolk University. Follow Les @LesBernal Phone: (202) 567-6996 x1 Email: Les[at]stoppredatorygambling.org

SCOTT CATINO

Dr. Martin Scott Catino is the President of the Faith Family Freedom Coalition Metro Mobile, Alabama, a U.S. Fulbright Scholar, and along with his wife Lisa serves as an Alliance Defending Freedom Ambassador-Alabama. He served in the United States, Bahrain, Iraq, Afghanistan, and the UAE in various supervisory, advising, and research posts for diverse entities including the Department of Defense, FBI, and private security programs. His research on civil unrest, terrorism, and insurgency has involved field studies around the world as well as numerous publications in scholarly and industry journals. His most recent



field studies (2022-2023) include researching civil unrest in Northern Ireland, Panama, and the Dominican Republic as well as researching transnational organized crime in the Bahamas.

PAT ELLIS

Pat Ellis has been an Eagle Forum Board member and Education Director of Obligation, Inc. a child advocacy group since the late 1990's. Pat's efforts working with these organizations culminated in a U. S. Senate hearing and ultimately the end of an egregious marketing program in all Alabama schools. She was honored by New York University's Department of Culture and Communication award for her work in raising awareness of the commercial exploitation of school students. Her efforts have been cited in the Alabama Association of School Boards Magazine, "The New Republic" and "Progressive" magazines. She has been a guest on state and national radio programs as well as a guest speaker locally and nationally on issues that harm children. She also worked on education and children's issues while on staff with Congressman Robert Aderholt.

Pat and her husband, George, live in Birmingham where their joy is spending time with their family, especially their four grandchildren.

KEVIN FREEMAN

Kevin D. Freeman is considered one of the world's leading experts on financial terrorism and economic warfare. He has written extensively on the subject including authorship of a New York Times best-selling book, the cover story for American Legion magazine and featured stories for multiple issues of The Counter Terrorist. He has been featured on CNBC, Fox News, The Blaze, and dozens of television and radio programs. He is CEO of Freeman Global Holdings, LLC and president of Cross Consulting and Services, LLC. Kevin is also the host of a television program, Economic War Room with Kevin Freeman.

Through Freeman Global Investment Counsel, an independent money management firm specializing in global equities, the firm serves high net worth investors and institutional clients. The firm also serves as a strategic consultant regarding the global financial industry including an expertise in economic warfare, financial terrorism and economic risk analysis. Clients include government contractors, financial services firms, technology companies, and various others. Mr. Freeman participated in multiple Department of Defense studies including a proprietary work on Economic Warfare prepared for SOLIC. He has participated in economic war games and briefed various agencies including DIA, FBI, ONA (Office of Net Assessment), DARPA, IARPA, as well as multiple members of the House and Senate.

Prior to developing his own firm, he submitted a business plan in 1990 to Sir John Marks Templeton and Templeton, Galbraith and Hansberger regarding a new company, University Investment Management, later serving as one of the first employees. Ultimately, as Managing Director, he headed the division managing nearly \$2.5 billion (renamed Templeton Portfolio Advisory), as the private client group of Franklin Templeton. Over the past three decades, he has served as Portfolio Manager, entrepreneur, management executive and consultant. Freeman holds a CFA designation and has held Series 6,7,24, 63, and 65 securities licenses.

BECKY GERRITSON

Becky is the Executive Director of Alabama Eagle Forum. She began her journey in conservative grassroots politics when she and her husband founded the Wetumpka TEA Party in 2009, which quickly grew to be the largest and most active TEA Party in Alabama. In June 2013, she garnered national attention after delivering her impassioned congressional testimony about IRS abuses of the Wetumpka TEA Party.

Becky has served as the Alabama State coordinator for Foundation for Liberty and American Greatness (FLAG) and was the National Grassroots Coordinator for Grassroots for Victory USA-National Tour. She's a member of the Stop Common Core Task Force in Alabama and was a state leader for ParentalRights.org. In 2012 she traveled the country as a media correspondent with B!G Voices Media. In 2016, her desire to serve the citizens of Alabama prompted her to run for U.S. Congress in Alabama's Second District.


Becky's high-powered energy and activism has been lauded by national conservative figures including Rush Limbaugh, Sarah Palin, Glenn Beck, Fox Business' Stuart Varney and others. She was listed in AL.com's 20 Most Influential List in 2015, received Heritage Action Sentinel's Firewall for Freedom Award (2016), was on Yellowhammer's Power and Influence List (2017), and was named in AL Today's 32 Powerful and Influential Alabamians to know (2021).

Becky's desire for freedom is fueled by her faith in God and love for her family. She and her best friend Eric have been married for 31 years. Their daughter and son-n-law, have given them 5 precious grandsons.

THERESA HUBBARD

Commander Theresa Hubbard (ret) served in the United States Coast Guard Reserve for 28 years. Commander Hubbard's experience in Naval Coastal Warfare began when she was first assigned to a Coast Guard Port Security Unit in 1998. She participated in "Link Seas 2000" at Setubal, Portugal and "Foal Eagle 2000" at Pusan, Korea. This prepared her for the call to duty on 9-11 to provide antiterrorism force protection for Navy vessels in Puget Sound, Washington. She completed a special assignment to the Republic of Georgia (a former Soviet Union Block country) in 2004, to assist the Georgian Coast Guard with modernizing their business practices and procedures. The highlight of her career was her assignment to the Navy Maritime Expedition Security Squadron Ten and an eight month deployment to Dubai, United Arab Emirates, providing antiterrorism port security for Navy vessels and shore side facilities. Commander Hubbard's final assignment was to the Naval Coastal Riverine Group Two as the Training/Operations Department Head Officer, responsible for the training and readiness for 35 personnel for contingency operations in the continental United States and overseas port security operations.

Commander Hubbard holds a Master of Arts in National Security and Strategic Studies from the Naval War College with emphasis on terrorism and Middle Eastern studies and is a graduate of the University of South Alabama with a Bachelor of Science in Accounting.



Commander Hubbard has been married to LCDR Jerry Hubbard (USCG Ret) for 32 years and they have six children and fourteen grandchildren.

MATT SHARP

Matt Sharp serves as senior counsel with Alliance Defending Freedom, where he is the director of the Center for Legislative Advocacy and focuses on state and local legislative matters.

Since joining ADF in 2010, Sharp has authored federal and state legislation, regularly provides testimony and legal analysis on how proposed legislation will impact constitutional freedoms, and advises governors, legislators, and state and national policy organizations on the importance of laws and policies that protect First Amendment rights. He has testified before the United States Congress on the importance of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act.

Sharp has also worked on important cases advancing religious freedom and free speech. He has won cases upholding the rights of students to form religious clubs, invite classmates to church, and even perform a religious song at a school talent show. He authored an amicus brief to the U.S. Supreme Court on behalf of nearly 9,000 students, parents, and community members asking the Court to uphold students' right to privacy against government intrusion.

Sharp earned his J.D. in 2006 from the Vanderbilt University School of Law. A member of the bar in Georgia and Tennessee, he is also admitted to practice in several federal courts.

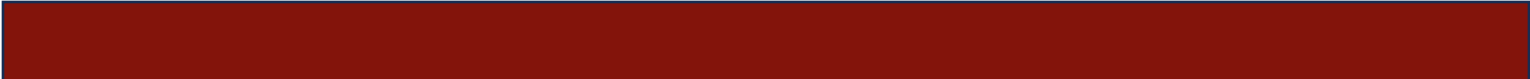
STEPHANIE SMITH

Stephanie Smith, wife of Dalton Smith and the mother of seven children, is a political advocate with twenty-five years of professional experience herding both children and politicians. Stephanie is a cum laude graduate of Auburn University and a cum laude graduate of the University of Alabama at Birmingham with a Master's Degree in Public Administration. Stephanie's professional experience includes being the Director of Governmental Affairs for Regions Financial Corporation, President of the Opelika Chamber of Commerce, Assistant Director & Deputy Director of Finance for the State of Alabama, as a campaign consultant for a multitude of political and advocacy issue campaigns, as a political contributor for statewide and national media, and as principal of Thatcher Coalition, LLC. Stephanie has been a consistent conservative political voice in Alabama politics and the greater movement since 1998. She currently serves as the President & CEO of the Alabama Policy Institute in Birmingham, Alabama.

MELEA STEPHENS

Melea Stephens is a practicing marriage and family therapist and an activist leader against sexual exploitation in her home state of Alabama. She is a board member with the National Center on Sexual Exploitation. After witnessing the detrimental effects of hardcore pornography in the lives of both children and adults she treated, Melea felt a call to raise awareness about the unacknowledged health and societal harms of this illegal material.

Since 2012, Melea has organized several city and statewide events and public awareness campaigns. She frequently partners with anti-trafficking leaders to promote education and meet the needs of survivors of sexual



exploitation. Through the help of the National Center on Sexual Exploitation and local leaders, she has been instrumental in the launch of the nation's first emergency treatment program for pediatric survivors of sex trafficking at UAB Hospital. Melea often speaks publicly on topics such as the public health crisis of pornography and enhancing sexual intimacy within the context of Christian marriage. She was also a key leader in the 2020 passage of the Alabama Resolution to Declare Pornography a Public Health Crisis.

Melea longs to see a day when the evil of sexual exploitation is fully extinguished by a clear majority in society who have grown intolerant of its immense harms and injustices. She believes through continued awareness, education, advocacy, and united activism, that day is close within our grasp.

JOI WASILL

Joi Wasill is the Founder and President of Decisions, Choices, & Options, Incorporated (DCO). Since 2002, she has led the organization to serve over 250,000 students and youth in Tennessee, Alabama and other states with public & private school based sexual risk avoidance/abstinence education programs leading them to optimal health and life success. As a public and private school teacher with 34 years of experience, Joi understands the nature of the youth population, curriculum development, instructional implementation as well as evaluation. She is a licensed secondary educator and nationally certified Sexual Risk Avoidance Education Specialist (SRAS). She is a member of Protect Child Health Coalition (PCHC) and has been a workshop leader and speaker at numerous national and state conferences.