

## 2024 Eagle Forum Policy Conference



We had a fantastic conference on January 9, 2024, held at the First Baptist Church of Birmingham. We greatly appreciate their hospitality. Over 150 people, including a number of legislators, attended to hear outstanding speakers address a wide range of subjects.

EF Executive Director Becky Gerritson did an outstanding job as MC of the event as well as in its planning. There were lots of compliments on the speakers and even the box lunches. We had speakers from within our Eagle Forum ranks as well as from out of town. They covered topics of interest to all of us here in Alabama. Those covered:

- De-banking
- Using gold and silver as legal tender
- Predatory gambling
- Reducing online porn exposure
- National security briefing
- Post Election Audit Bill Briefing
- Transforming Higher Education (General Education Act)
- Social Emotional Learning (SEL) and how school “mental health” programs can actually harm children
- Universal School Choice
- Legislative briefing
- Update on Public Libraries in Autauga County
- Abortion pill bill
- Sex Ed: Exposing shocking sex ed materials in classrooms
- 1 min clip on Supreme Court victory to restore religious memorials & restore Ten Commandments to Alabama Supreme Court building in public spaces

Thanks to all who helped with the conference and to all who attended.

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# How a Small Group of Parents Took on City Hall and Won

By Lori Herring

One morning several homeschool moms found something they never dreamed they would find in our small-town Autauga-Prattville Library.

They picked up a random book off the shelf in the children's section and were shocked to find a book written for little kids on transgenderism. This prompted them to look more closely. Before long they identified 80 books readily available to children from preschool to high school that addressed LGBTQ, transgenderism, sexual content, and even obscene depictions of deviant sex. From this list, they submitted the 7 worst books to the Head Librarian. They were given the requisite forms to challenge the books. Surely, they thought, this is just an oversight and as soon as we bring this to their attention, it will be remedied. They waited the 2 weeks that the policy said was the time needed to review and were astonished to find the library intended to do..... NOTHING. Not satisfied at all with the callous response from the staff, the parents knew they had to ratchet up the pressure. They started an online petition that garnered 350 signatures in a matter of days, brought together other parents and grandparents, and showed up in force at the next city council and county commission meetings.

The Prattville City Council claimed they couldn't get involved at all with how the library was run, even though they appointed 4 of the 7 members of the library board and provided \$355,000 of the \$700,000 budget to our small library. Not willing to let it go, at the next meeting, the parents showed up with the actual books in hand. Excerpts from the books were read publicly, causing the leaders of a Boy Scout Troop to hastily herd the boys out of the room.



As Clean Up Prattville members arrived for the next City Council meeting 2 weeks later, they were informed the council had decided to impose a new policy curtailing the free speech of those attending. The policy stated: "It is the policy of this council to no longer allow the reading of excerpts from printed material aside from matters currently pending on the council's agenda. Members of the public are welcome to send and/or discuss these matters with their councilor outside this council meeting or to

email them. The council reserves the right to remove any person who fails to follow the directions of the presiding officer."

They even had police officers present to assist in removing people who violated the new rule. The Mayor remarked on how he was "65 years old but very red-faced" at the readings that took place during the previous meeting. (Remember, the readings were from books located in the children's library where any child could pick them up and read them.) Still, we spoke out about the books.

At the next meeting, Hannah Rees, one of the founders of Clean Up Prattville, brought over a dozen pornographic books found in our children's library and began to describe their content, being sure not to read from the books. Rees was interrupted and told not to use certain language describing the books or risk forfeiting her speaking time. Undeterred, Hannah continued to describe the graphic sexual content of the book checked out from the teen section of our library. Mrs. Rees was interrupted and she was told, "You can't say these things here! This meeting is live-streamed and there could be children watching!"

Eagle Forum of Alabama has been grateful to these brave parents and citizens for standing up to those who are trying to groom our children, spoil their innocence, and make the difficult job of parenting even more difficult. We have partnered with Clean Up Prattville to form Clean Up Alabama and have formed groups

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## *What's Good About America?*

### **The Rights of the States**

By Rev. John Killian, Special Contributor

In recent weeks, as the Biden Administration continues to ignore the porous border and the continued influx of illegal aliens, Governor Greg Abbott has taken action to seal the border and end the massive illegal immigration. At last count, twenty-five states, including Alabama, have signed on to support of Governor Abbott and the Texas effort to control the border. Some states have even pledged to send their National Guard to assist the Texas plan.

Such action is not without precedent. In 1798, the Federalist-controlled Congress passed four pieces of legislation designed to curtail domestic dissent. Two of those bills, the Alien Act and the Sedition Act, forbade any criticism of Federal officeholders made “with intent to defame” or to bring them “into contempt or disrepute.”

As a result, ten Jeffersonian Republicans, mostly newspaper editors, received heavy fines and were placed in prison— all in violation of the Sedition Act. One Congressman, Matthew Lyon of Vermont, was jailed for publishing a pamphlet criticizing President Adams. Jeffersonian believers in free speech were irate at this blatant infringement of their rights. In following weeks, the Kentucky legislature passed the Kentucky Resolution, secretly (at the time) written by Thomas Jefferson. In the same year, the Virginia legislature passed the Virginia Resolution, written by James Madison.

These resolutions utilized the principle of nullification based on the premise that the states formed the Union, thus the states could nullify legislation passed by the Federal authority. While the Kentucky and Virginia Resolutions did not succeed in repealing the Federalist legislation, these resolutions stirred enough opposition that the Federalist Party vote collapsed in the 1800 election, thereby electing Thomas Jefferson as President of these United States.

Please take note that the primary author of the Declaration of Independence, Thomas Jefferson and the primary author of the United States Constitution, James Madison, were the intellectual guides of an effort to make **the rights of the states primary in governance**. So, Texas Governor Abbott and the other leaders of the twenty-five resisting states are on solid ground in nullifying the open borders policy of the Biden Administration and acting to protect their states. Those who knew our founding documents most thoroughly, Thomas Jefferson and James Madison, were the leaders against federal overreach.

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## **The Sanctity Of Extrauterine Life**

The Alabama Supreme Court reaffirmed the indisputable scientific fact that life begins at conception when it ruled that “all unborn children,” including extrauterine embryos, are humans under the state’s Wrongful Death of a Minor Act. Until now, embryos created outside of the womb with assisted reproductive technology were legally considered property, not people. The Alabama Supreme Court’s decision, however, paves the way for the sanctity of unborn life to become an important consideration for states seeking to apply their laws- especially when it comes to reproductive technologies.

Justice Jay Mitchell argued in his opinion that the wrongful death act in question specifically does not define “child” and has historically qualified an unborn baby as a “minor.” Even if it did not, Mitchell wrote that Article I, Section 36.06 of the Alabama Constitution affirms the “sanctity of unborn life and the rights of unborn children,” compels “courts to resolve the ambiguity in favor of protecting unborn life.”

The Alabama case dates back to 2020 at Mobile Infirmary Medical Center. On February 16, 2024, Alabama’s highest court rejected and reversed the 2022 circuit court ruling when it ruled that the act “applies to all unborn children, regardless of their location,” even if that is outside of a womb.

*Source: The Federalist, Feb. 20, 2024*

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National Eagle Forum has endorsed the Disengaging Entirely From the United Nations (DEFUND) ACT introduced in both the U. S House and Senate. The bill will protect our national sovereignty by withdrawing from both the United Nations and the World Health Organization. It would stop U.S. contributions to these organizations and would require Senate approval as a condition of rejoining any U. N. affiliated entity. The U.N. and its cadre of affiliated organizations allow communist countries to dictate measures that violate America's Constitution. The bill was introduced by Sen. Mike Lee (R-UT) and Representatives Chip Roy (R-Tx) and Mike Rogers, (R-AL).

According to a report from the Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression (FIRE), Free Speech on Alabama college campuses is mixed, with Auburn among the best and Alabama A&M and Troy among the worst. Most schools in Alabama fell under the "yellow light" category which is a rating for having policies that impose vague regulation on expression. Those schools were Alabama State, Athens State, Auburn U at Montgomery, Jacksonville State, University of Alabama, University of Alabama Birmingham, University of Alabama Huntsville, University of Montevallo, University of North Alabama, University of South Alabama and the University of West Alabama. Troy University and Alabama A&M were ranked "light red". This report is bad news since the legislature passed the Campus Free Speech Act in 2019 and free speech should be the rule on campuses.

*Source: 1819 News, 2-4-24*

Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton has filed suit against Pfizer Pharmaceutical for misrepresenting Covid 19 vaccine efficacy and conspiring to censor public discourse. This is Texas' second lawsuit against Pfizer. The suit focuses on alleged false claims about "efficacy", in other words, false advertising, from which it is not exempt under the PREP Act and other liability shields. The suit addresses Pfizer's claims that the vaccine was 95% effective, that it would provide *lasting* protection, that it stopped viral transmission, that it was "very effective" against the Delta variant when their data showed it was not, and that the vaccine would protect people from dying from covid.

*Source: C&C News 12 2 2023*

The GOP controlled Wisconsin legislature has forced the state university system to agree to cuts in its DEI bureaucracy in exchange for nearly \$1 billion in funds. The legislature proposed pay increases for all state employees except university employees. In negotiations with the university system, the legislature got them finally to agree to close the DEI offices and to reassign all the DEI personnel to get the raises and the building funds reinstated in the budget. It appears that the University System employees wanted their raises and the University wanted a new engineering building more than their DEI offices. The implicit admission was that DEI isn't necessary to the educational mission of the university system. The legislature played hardball and won. *Washington Stand.com 12 18 23*

"Facebook is a perfect example of socialism. You get it for free. You have no say in how it works. The guy who runs it is rich. You have no privacy, and if you say one thing they don't like, they shut you up." *Anon-*

"The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy." *Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*

"Courage is contagious. When a brave man takes a stand the spines of others are stiffened." *Billy Graham*

"Patriotism is supporting your country all of the time and your government when it deserves it." *Mark Twain*

"A constitutional convention is a horrible idea. This is not a century to write a constitution." *Justice Antonin Scalia, 5-11-2015*

"First time in history that the ineffectiveness of a medicine is being blamed on those who haven't taken it." *Dr. Robert Malone*

"Of all tyrannies, a tyranny sincerely exercised for the good of its victims may be the most oppressive. It would be better to live under robber barons than under omnipotent moral busybodies."

*C. S. Lewis, God in the Dark*

"In a room where people unanimously maintain a conspiracy of silence, one word of truth sounds like a pistol shot."

*Czeslaw Milosz, Nobel Lecture*

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# Should Alabama Gamble with the Good Life?

By Col. John Eidsmoe

Let's have a Las Vegas party right here in Alabama! We'll rent a hall, lock the doors, get out the poker tables and roulette wheels, and gamble the night away.

Throughout the night, a lot of money will change hands. But when the day breaks, there won't be one more dime of actual wealth in the room than there was when we started.

This illustrates my point: Gambling doesn't create wealth; it merely redistributes it, usually at the expense of the poor. Every dollar spent on a lottery ticket is one less dollar spent on groceries. Every job created at the casino is one less job at a factory. VictoryLand should be called LoserLand because for every big winner announced, there are many unannounced losers.

And the losers are usually those who can least afford to lose. Back in my high school and college days, I worked in a lumberyard in Sioux City, Iowa, across the Missouri River from South Sioux City, Neb., and across the Big Sioux River from North Sioux City, S.D. Iowa didn't have legalized gambling at that time, but Nebraska had dog racing and South Dakota had horse racing. Every payday, lots of my coworkers would cross the Missouri to bet on the puppies in Nebraska or cross the Big Sioux to bet on the ponies in South Dakota. Almost invariably they would lose, and next week they'd complain that their kids didn't have milk, that their electricity was going to be cut off, or that they couldn't make their house payment. "This is stupid!" I remember thinking as a teenager, and I wasn't even considering the morality issues!



My experience is far from unique. Studies repeatedly show that a disproportionate number of poor people gamble, and they spend a disproportionate amount of their income on gambling. As I note in my book, "Legalized Gambling: America's Bad Bet," a 1982 New Jersey study found that residents of low-income neighborhoods played the lottery in a proportion more than half greater than residents of high-income neighborhoods. Additionally, an Illinois study found that residents of the state's 10 highest-income zip codes spent an average of \$76 on lottery tickets, while residents of the state's 10 lowest-income zip codes spent an average of \$221. A more recent study by the Wisconsin Council on Problem Gambling reported similar conclusions.

The gambling industry knows this, and they plan accordingly. Prior to opening his Reno casino in 1946, Bill Harrah did extensive marketing research and found that his most likely clientele were low-income people. He therefore arranged a bus service to bring low-income people in from 31 cities and provided low-cost meals as an added incentive. While I was doing a radio interview on gambling in Atlanta, my host advised me that radio stations know the demographics of their audiences very thoroughly and that Georgia deliberately places its lottery ads on radio stations catering to the lowest-income segments of the population. They also concentrate their lottery billboards in the lowest-income neighborhoods.

If gambling is regressive in that it preys disproportionately upon the poor, then gambling taxes are equally regressive. And even if lottery income is earmarked for something like education – a sucker tactic often used to sell the lottery to skeptics – that often turns out to be disappointing, because it usually means education just gets less money from the general fund.

"We need to legalize gambling to drive out the illegal gamblers," some say. "Would you legalize murder to drive out the illegal murderers?" I respond. In reality, when gambling is legalized, illegal gambling increas-

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es rather than decreases. Several reasons include:

When the state says gambling is legal, people assume that means gambling is moral as well.

The illegal gambling industry often offers better odds than the legal gambling industry, and they can do so because they do not pay taxes.

The illegals send “numbers runners” to pick up people’s bets, although the internet now makes this largely unnecessary.

Unlike the legals, illegals often extend credit – and have their own ways of enforcing payment.

Even if legalized gambling were good for business – and it isn’t – is it worth the problems it brings – impoverished families, links to crime, alcohol and drugs, the mob, and the rise of compulsive gamblers?

We expect to see a slew of gambling bills in this session of the Alabama Legislature. Let’s not gamble with the good life we have in Alabama! Tell your legislators to just say NO to all forms of legalized gambling.

*Col. Eidsmoe pastors two rural Alabama churches, is Professor of Constitutional Law for the Oak Brook College of Law & Government Policy ([obcl.edu](http://obcl.edu)), and is Senior Counsel for the Foundation for Moral Law. Article first published in 1819 News 2-7-2024 Reprinted with permission.*

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*Library continued from page 2*

across the state to examine their local libraries. I am sad to say this problem exists in most of the libraries we have examined so far. While Clean Up Prattville targeted their local leaders, as Clean Up Alabama, they partnered with Eagle Forum of Alabama to address the issue at a state level at the Alabama Public Library System meeting. As we of Clean Up Alabama see it, the source of this skewed thinking is the involvement of the American Library Association. They teach Marxist ideals to the future and current librarians, provide them with lists of books containing obscene or sexual content to order for their kid’s library, and assist them in fighting ANY effort to restrict ANY person’s access to ANY book, no matter what age. In our opinion, only complete disaffiliation with the ALA is acceptable. This fight has also garnered the attention of several State lawmakers and the Governor, who intend to make changes to state laws to protect the innocence of Alabama children. This effort at the state level has succeeded in replacing some members of the APLS board who were standing against the efforts.

It’s been almost a year since this battle started. We heard that Prattville City Council President Lora Lee Boone stated she believed we would give up after a few meetings if they just stayed strong. She couldn’t have been more wrong. What have we accomplished during this year? Every single member of the Prattville-Autauga Library Board has been replaced.

And during the February board meeting the new board passed every reform we have asked for!

- Age-restricted library cards for children
- Warning labels on sexual content books in the adult section
- Ban on buying children’s books with sexual content
- Removal of all books with sexual content from the children’s library.

So, the moral of this story is...

- Fear of being targeted or cancelled is contagious, but so is courage.
- A few people CAN make a HUGE difference.
- And finally, Galatians 6:9 “Let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap if we faint not.”

*Lori Herring is a follower of Jesus, a wife, a retired RN, retired homeschool mom to 4 grown sons and 3 grandchildren. She serves on the Board of Eagle Forum of Alabama, on the Legislative team, and is the Director of Special Projects.*

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## The U. N. Behind the Chaos at US–Mexico Border Chaos

Epoch Times published an article on February 24, 2024, based upon an interview with Oriel Ortega, former director of Panama's border patrol and now a security and defense consultant to Panamanian President Laurentino Cortizo. Cortizo said that in 2016 a lot more nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) moved into Panama. He said that this increase corresponded with the U.N.'s Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration meeting in 2016. The US voted against this but 152 nations—including Panama—voted in favor.

Of course, we know that illegal migration to the U.S. has been anything but safe, orderly, regular and legal.

The article goes on to say: "Documents show that in 2023, a record 500,000 migrants traveled through the dense jungle known as the Darien Gap from Colombia into Panama. Migrants from around the world are flying into South and Central America to start their journey because countries such as Suriname and Ecuador don't require a visa to enter. Their final destination is the United States."

Mr. Ortega said that the NGO's are "exacerbating" mass illegal migration problems. These organizations are funded by the U. N. and due to the large amount of money contributed by the United States, indirectly they are funded by the American taxpayer. While the U.N. has aided migrants for decades, the scope of its operation has dramatically expanded with the number of illegal immigrants entering the United States surging.

Nearly \$1.3 billion of U.S. taxpayer money was given to the U.N. and other agencies assisting illegal migrants in 2023, according to a government spending database. The International Organization for Migration (IOM), the U.N.'s migration arm, is paying for the expansion of camps, including ones near the Darien Gap,

The United Nations does not have our interest in mind. This is just one more reason for the U. S. to get out of the U.N. Eagle Forum has endorsed the DEFIND Act to make that happen.



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***Eagle Forum of Alabama  
Education Foundation Newsletter***

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