

The Eagle

Summer 2019

Volume 21 — Issue 3



Heartbeat Bill Challenged

Ohio Senate Bill 23, the “heartbeat” bill, was signed into law on April 11 of this year. The new law forbids an abortion if a fetal heartbeat can be detected – usually about six weeks into the pregnancy. SB 23 was scheduled to go into effect on July 11, but a federal court order has put the measure on hold.

On July 3, U.S. District Judge Michael Barrett issued a preliminary injunction against SB 23. This renders the law ineffective until a court decision is reached. The suit was filed by ACLU and Planned Parenthood on behalf of Preterm-Cleveland and other Ohio abortion providers.

Judge Barrett wrote that “SB 23, as its sponsors intended, will have the effect of preventing nearly all abortions in Ohio.... This Court concludes that SB 23 places an ‘undue burden’ on a woman’s right to choose a pre-viability abortion, and under *Casey*, plaintiffs are certain to succeed on the merits of their claim.” (The “undue burden” standard was established in 1992 by the U.S. Supreme Court in *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*.)

While the legal challenge was expected by right-to-life advocates, it is still disappointing to know that the slaughter of innocent lives will continue in our state – at least for the time being. Aaron Baer (Citizens for Community Values) opined that “the Heartbeat Bill is constitutional.” He added that “the ACLU, Planned Parenthood, and abortion industry need to stop wasting taxpayer time and resources with these absurd lawsuits.”

Molly Smith (Right to Life Action Coalition of Ohio) noted that “Judge Barrett has a history of siding with the abortion industry, so this really comes as no surprise. We fully expect Attorney General Dave Yost and Governor [Mike] DeWine’s administration to vigorously defend this law, and to appeal it all the way to the United States Supreme Court if necessary.”

Oberlin’s Day in Court

Oberlin College is one of the nation’s most liberal institutions of higher learning. Students and faculty are adept at finding things to protest about – and usually they get away with it. Not so in the college’s dispute with Gibson’s Bakery, a longtime fixture in Oberlin, Ohio.

In 2016, an African-American student was caught trying to steal a bottle of wine from Gibson’s. When the (white) grandson of Gibson’s

owner tried to stop the thief, a fight ensued and police were called. When the officers arrived, they found the owner’s grandson on the ground being beaten by the thief and two of his friends (also African-American). Later the three perpetrators were arrested. They pleaded guilty to misdemeanor charges and admitted the grandson’s behavior was justified and not racially motivated.

Nevertheless, Oberlin students and faculty/administrators held protests, charging that Gibson’s was racist and profiled the three students. Oberlin’s dean of students even joined in the protests. Pamphlets were passed out accusing the store of racism, and the college temporarily banned purchases from the bakery (which had supplied the college’s cafeteria for years).

In light of its loss of business and reputation, the bakery and two of its owners sued the college for libel in November 2017, accusing the school of abetting the students’ claims of racism. A trial ensued, and on June 7, 2019, the jury delivered a verdict of \$11 million in compensatory damages against the college. This was followed by a whopping \$33 million award for punitive damages. (The total amount was later reduced from \$44 to \$25 million.) Oberlin’s president has refused to accept the jury’s verdict and has vowed to fight it.

Prof. Jonathan Turley wrote an article about the Oberlin case. “We are reaching a critical point in higher education in the United States,” he states, “where leaders are ceding control to a small group of activist students and faculty members. Too often, those challenges are met not with acts of conscience but with cowardice. Professors fear being labeled as either insensitive or racist for objecting to protests or changes on campus.”

Columnist Star Parker wrote that the Oberlin “college administration has a political agenda that it is not afraid to convey to its students. This agenda encourages, explicitly or implicitly, student behavior – inspired by this left-wing agenda – to which school administrators clearly are sympathetic.” Parker goes on to say that these leftist colleges “indoctrinate rather than teach, and they inspire intolerance rather than understanding. Oberlin College is paying the price now, as it should.”



Social Studies Model Promotes Progressive Themes

The current Ohio Social Studies Standards were adopted in 2018. The new Social Studies Model Curriculum was approved by the State Board of Education in June, 2019. The Model Curriculum contains “information and examples for the teacher designed to clarify, support, and extend understanding of the learning standards.” The Model Curriculum has content expectations for grades K-8 in four areas (strands): History, Geography, Government, and Economics. The high school section covers six subjects: American History, American Government, Modern World History, Economic and Financial Literacy, Contemporary World Issues, and World Geography.

A modern trend in Social Studies curricula is to emphasize themes related to *Progressivism*; for example: social justice, victimization, radical environmentalism, globalism, relativism, and multiculturalism. While traditionalists/conservatives decry this trend, unfortunately it seems to be locked in for the foreseeable future. Although the Ohio Standards and Model Curriculum contain many good principles and explanations, there is definitely a strong dose of progressive thinking in many sections.

We have examined the new Model Curriculum and found deficiencies in four principal areas. These are listed below, with examples from the document along with our comments.

1. Inaccurate description of our form of government.

*Grade 5 statement: “Democracies, dictatorships, and monarchies are three basic ways of describing the relationship that exists between those in power and citizens.” The U.S. form of government, a *constitutional republic*, is omitted.

*There are two references to the U.S. as a “federal republic” (Grade 8 and High School American Government), but the more accurate term – constitutional republic – is never used.

*Grade 6 statement: “A democracy is a government where the power of those in authority is limited because the people retain the supreme power (e.g., United States).” The U.S. is *not* a classic democracy; we elect *representatives* to carry out government functions.

2. Inadequate information about America’s Founding and religious heritage.

*Grade 8 statement: “The ideas of the Enlightenment and dissatisfaction with colonial rule led English colonists to write the Declaration of Independence and launch the Ameri-

can Revolution.” Enlightenment ideas (especially those of Hobbes, Locke, and Montesquieu) certainly had a strong influence on the structure of American government. But the critical role of Christian principles and Judeo-Christian morality in our Founding is never mentioned.

*High School American History expectation: “Explain the unalienable rights found in the Declaration of Independence....” None of the references to the Declaration states that the Founders believed that unalienable (natural) rights come from God.

*The only fact given about Washington, Adams, Jefferson, Madison, and Monroe is that they were early U.S. presidents. Most of the Founders and important colonial figures (e.g., Franklin, Henry, Revere, Hamilton) are not mentioned at all.

3. Environmental bias.

*Grade 5 statement: “Many of the issues facing the world today are the result of unintended consequences of human activities, like highways disturbing natural habitats and contributing to air pollution.” Human activities can have both positive and negative effects; the Model tends to emphasize the negative.

*High School American History statement: “The debate on the government’s role in protecting the environment also increased due to research on the effects of pesticides, pollution, waste disposal, and the extent of climate change. Demands from environmentalists led to the establishment of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).” This gives the impression that human activities have mostly negative effects on the environment. Positive effects of human interaction with the environment should also be given.

*High School Modern World History statement: “World population growth and the competition for energy supplies have led to an increase in greenhouse gas emissions, the loss of tens of thousands of plant and wildlife species, and the rapid decline of rainforests.” This has led to a “new environmental consciousness and a movement for the sustainability of the world’s resources.” *Sustainability* has a political agenda (climate change, global governance, green energy, *et al.*). This section

promotes an activist environmental agenda.

*High School Contemporary World Issues lists several organizations concerned about sustainability: Climate Action Network, Global Hunger Alliance, Institute for Sustainable Development, Greenpeace International, Sierra Club, and Rainforest Alliance. These are all activist environmental groups, representing only one side of the sustainability issue.

continued on next page Page 2



4. One-sided (progressive) viewpoints.

*High School American Government statement: “Individual rights are relative, not absolute. The exercise of rights must be balanced by the rights of others and by the common good.” There is an emphasis on the *common good* as opposed to individual rights. Some individual rights *are* absolute (unalienable).

*The only mention of Christianity in early American history is that Europeans were “converting American Indians to Christianity” (grade 8).

*The only fact given about Lincoln is that he was assassinated (grade 8).

*High School American History expectation: “Analyze and evaluate the success of progressive reforms during the late 19th and early 20th centuries in addressing problems associated with industrial capitalism, urbanization, and political corruption.” This section treats Progressivism in a positive light. While some progressive reforms may have been beneficial, many progressive ideas have failed or been harmful to society.

*High School American History expectation: “Summarize the struggle for racial and gender equality and the extension of civil rights that occurred in the United States in the post-World War II period.” “Marginalized” groups and “victimization” are over-emphasized. Liberal entities like the National Organization for Women and the Gay Liberation Front are covered favorably, while conservative groups and viewpoints are slighted.

*High School Contemporary World Issues expectation: “Analyze the ways in which trade, alliances, treaties, and international organizations contribute to the increasing interconnectedness of nations and peoples.” This section seems to favor trade alliances and treaties, but these have both positive and negative factors that should be noted.

Sarah Fowler is a State Board of Education member and chairman of the Teaching, Leading and Learning (TLL) Committee. This committee was responsible for submitting the Model Curriculum to the full Board for approval. Sarah and some of her constituents prepared an extensive list (87 pages) of suggested changes to the draft Model, but most TLL committee members didn’t want to discuss the requested changes and did not accept them before moving the Model to the full Board.

Ms. Fowler then prepared a simplified document (18 pages) which summarized her most serious concerns. This was submitted to the full Board at its June, 2019, meeting. She requested that action on the Model Curriculum be delayed one month so Board members could read and evaluate her concerns. A majority of the Board was opposed to more discussion, so they voted 10-6 against tabling and 9-6 against Fowler’s resolution. Thus all the work critiquing the Model was wasted. The Board voted 9-6 to accept the Model, with “no” votes from Fowler, Hagan, Hill, Kilgore, Toal, and Woods.

SEL Comes to Ohio

On June 11, 2019, the State Board of Education (SBE) approved Ohio’s first *social-emotional learning* (SEL) standards. The 11-6 vote is testimony to the fact that there was a lot of disagreement among the Board members regarding the standards. SEL is described by the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) as the process by which students “acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.”

KSA: knowledge, skills, attitudes. If these words sound familiar, it’s because we’ve heard them before. KSA first became fashionable in the early 1990s under the label “outcomes-based education” (OBE). Most people think that the purpose of schools is to teach *academic* knowledge and skills (language arts, math, science, history, government). KSA adds the area of *affective* learning (relating to moods, feelings, attitudes), which is quite controversial in that it erodes the fundamental right of parents to control the upbringing of their children.

OBE unleashed a storm of protests from parents, concerned citizens, and many educators as well. How did the educrats respond? They dropped the name OBE and started calling it by other names: standards-based education, performance-based education, Goals 2000, No Child Left Behind, and Common Core. The KSA idea reinvents itself every few years; now it comes under the guise of SEL – its most insidious form yet.

In August of 2018 ODE launched its five-year strategic plan entitled *Each Child, Our Future*. The plan refers to “four equal learning domains”: (1) foundational knowledge and skills, (2) well-rounded content, (3) leadership and reasoning, and (4) social-emotional learning. Items 1 and 2 relate to basic academics, but items 3 and 4 are non-cognitive, affective, or “soft” skills. Note the word “equal”; it puts items 3 and 4 on the *same footing* with real academics! Items 3 and 4 have never been a part of Ohio’s education accountability system – nor should they be.

Ohio’s SEL standards for grades K-12 are arranged in grade bands under five “competencies”: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making.

continued on next page

Page 3

Social and Emotional Learning



SEL comes to Ohio (continued)

To try to alleviate concerns over SEL, ODE says it “will not develop tests to measure students’ progress in learning the [SEL] standards.” However, Strategy 5 in *Each Child, Our Future* says Ohio will “move towards a varied system of assessments to appropriately gauge the four equal learning domains....” Strategy 6 calls on the state accountability system to be refined “to be a fairer, more meaningful process that reflects all four equal learning domains.” It thus appears that ODE intends to get its foot in the door by introducing “voluntary” SEL standards that eventually will become part of the statewide assessments.

Dr. Karen Effrem, Education Chairman for national Eagle Forum, published an article in May (2019) entitled “Why Ohio Should Reject ‘Social Emotional Learning’ Standards.” Briefly stated, some of her arguments are these: parents should decide how to address SEL issues with their children; there is a lack of consensus among educators about SEL; teachers are overburdened and poorly trained to conduct SEL; research shows SEL has often resulted in the over-medication of children; assessment of SEL is subjective and unreliable; and SEL has a strong link to the unpopular Common Core standards. Effrem describes SEL as “part of a national movement to psychologize education, falsely advertised as improving academic achievement and preventing violence and suicide.”

State Board members Kirsten Hill and Sarah Fowler led the opposition to the proposed SEL standards. Several Board members expressed concerns about SEL’s impact on privacy and parental rights. At the June 11 State Board meeting, Ms. Hill proposed an amendment that would have prevented state-level collection of psychological data without written consent. Hill argued that SEL “overpathologizes children” and “erodes personal freedom.” Amazingly, this sensible amendment *failed* by a 10-7 vote. After lengthy debate, the SEL standards were adopted by a vote of 11-6, with Fowler, Hagan, Hill, Kilgore, Toal, and Woods voting “no.”

Ohio Legislative Notes

Budget bill delayed. Lawmakers couldn’t reach agreement on the 2019-2021 biennial state budget (**House Bill 166**) by the July 1 target date. The main points of contention were the tax plans (income tax cut), healthcare reform (notably Medicaid), and education spending. On June 30 the General Assembly passed a temporary budget (**Senate Bill 271**) which kept funding at the current level and gave legislators 17 days to pass a new budget. The General Assembly normally goes on its summer break after July 1, but this year’s recess is being delayed until the budget is completed. Another issue that needs prompt resolution is **House Bill 6** (the controversial “clean energy” proposal).

Ohio Clean Air Program (HB 6). This is easily the most contentious bill being considered this year by the General Assembly. The bill would create the Ohio Clean Air Program to facilitate electricity production from “clean air” or “reduced emission” sources. The main beneficiary would be nuclear power, with wind and solar also benefitting.

First Energy Solutions, owner of Ohio’s two reactor facilities (Davis-Besse and Perry), has threatened to close the plants unless they receive government support. Currently, the nuclear plants cannot compete pricewise in light of plentiful supplies of natural gas from fracking.

There are strong opinions on both sides of the issue. Some conservative free-market groups (notably the Buckeye Institute and Americans for Progress) have raised concerns about government subsidies in general. They would prefer that market forces determine energy sources and prices. Buckeye notes that Ohio already subsidizes wind and solar energy via the Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS), which the Institute says should be repealed.



Opponents of HB 6 view the bill as an ill-conceived government bailout. Many activist renewable energy and environmental protection groups are against HB 6 (e.g., Green Energy Ohio, Ohio Green Party, National Wildlife Federation, Sierra Club, Nature Conservancy). They do not consider nuclear to be a legitimate “clean” energy competitor, and they are concerned that HB 6 will cut back – if not eliminate – the state’s renewable energy (RPS) mandates.

Supporters of HB 6 include many labor unions, who point to the loss of jobs should the nuclear plants shut down. Many utilities support HB 6, noting that nuclear is by far the largest source of clean, non-polluting energy in the state. Also, government regulations make it very difficult to start up a new nuclear facility in the U.S., so there is a need to preserve existing plants. Nuclear power must eventually become a major supplier of energy worldwide, so its growth needs to be supported.

Six hearings were held on HB 6 in the House Energy and Natural Resources Committee in April and May, drawing testimony from more than 300 witnesses; about 70% were opposed to the bill. HB 6 eventually cleared *continued on next page*

Ohio legislative notes (continued)

the committee and was approved by the full House on May 29 by a 53-43 vote. There have been eight hearings in the Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee thus far, with more than 200 witnesses.

First Energy Solutions (FES) had imposed a deadline of July 1 for the state to pass HB 6, but the Senate was unable to complete its work on the bill by that time. A vote will likely take place in July, and FES now says they can wait a while longer to determine whether or not to close the Davis-Besse and Perry plants.

Concealed carry (HB 178).

A second contentious bill being debated by the General Assembly is HB 178. This bill would permit citizens to lawfully carry a concealed firearm without a license. At least seventeen states currently have similar laws. Concealed carry is often called *constitutional carry*, since (as stated by Buckeye Firearms Association) “if we have the right to keep and bear arms, then why do we need permission?”

The bill received eight hearings in the House Federalism Committee from April-June, with over 200 witnesses – about 60% opposed to the bill. Proponents pointed out that states with constitutional carry laws show no statistical increase in crimes with firearms. Opposition came from the usual gun control lobby, and also from some law enforcement and prosecutor groups.

After considerable debate, the House committee approved HB 178 in a 7-4 vote on June 26. Because of the intense discussion, however, House Speaker Larry Householder decided to send the bill to another committee (Criminal Justice) for further consideration. Thus, while HB 178 survived its first hurdle in the Federalism Committee, its final fate is very much uncertain.

Humanity of the Unborn Education Act (HB 90).

This has also been called the Fetal Education Act. It would require the Ohio Department of Health to develop an instructional program and materials “to protect the humanity of the unborn child.” Six hearings were held in the House Health Committee this spring, but no vote has yet been taken. This sensible bill is supported by Ohio Right to Life and by the Right to Life Action Coalition of Ohio. HB 90 is opposed by pro-abortion groups (e.g., NARAL Pro-Choice Ohio, Planned Parenthood, ACLU) and some education groups (e.g., Ohio Education Association, American Federation of Teachers, Ohio School Boards Association).

Abortion Pill Reversal Information Act (SB 155).

In May Sen. Peggy Lehner (R) introduced this bill to require women who receive abortion-inducing medication to also receive information about the possibility of

reversing the effect of the drug. In this type of non-surgical abortion, the woman first takes the drug mifepristone to end the pregnancy, and then later takes misoprostol to cause expulsion of the fetus.

A new procedure has been developed in which large doses of the hormone progesterone are taken after the ingestion of mifepristone but before the fetus is expelled. In many cases this can reverse the abortion so the pregnancy can continue. Though not 100% effective, this method is available as a means for a woman having second thoughts about an abortion to possibly reverse the procedure.

Ohio Right to Life and Citizens for Community Values are backing SB 155, which has not yet received a hearing in the House Health, Human Services and Medicaid Committee.

Tax credit for pregnancy center donations (SB 297). This bill was introduced in June by Rep. Tim Ginter (R) and Rep.

Jena Powell (R). Under the bill, Ohioans who make a donation to a “qualifying pregnancy resource center” would receive a credit on their Ohio income tax return for 50% of the amount donated. The bill applies to non-profit crisis pregnancy centers; abortion providers would not qualify.

The bill has not yet received hearings in the House Ways and Means Committee. Citizens for Community Values and Ohio Value Voters have expressed support for the bill.

Health education standards (HB 165). This bill would require the Ohio Department of Education to adopt health education standards based on the existing National Health Education Standards (NHES). These are “comprehensive sexuality education” (CSE) standards, which promote “safer sex” methods – not abstinence from sexual activity before marriage.

Hearings on HB 165 were held in the House Primary and Secondary Education Committee in June. Witnesses opposed to the bill included Eagle Forum of Ohio’s Melanie Elsey, who outlined the history of health education in Ohio and urged the committee to reject HB 165. Barry Sheets, representing the Ohio Adolescent Health Association, also argued against the bill. A committee vote has not yet been taken.

Testing Reduction Act (HB 239). This would eliminate state-mandated end-of-course exams in Geometry, English Language Arts I, American History, and American Government. The primary sponsors are Rep. Gayle Manning (R) and Rep. Erica Crawley (D).

At first glance, most would agree that there is too much standardized testing in today’s schools. HB 239’s



continued on next page

Ohio legislative notes (continued)

sponsors are correct when they say that testing is “stressful” and takes an “emotional toll” on students. Schools do spend too much time preparing for and administering mandated assessments.

Having said this, do we really want to eliminate testing of American government and history? Many pundits have pointed out how little today’s citizens know about America’s past. Current state standards include the Founding of American Documents Curriculum. In testimony before the House committee, Chris Long (Ohio Christian Alliance) said: “Without the examination [in government/history], teachers will not be compelled to take the time for this course study of our founding documents.” Historian William Federer testified that “if testing is reduced, studying will not take place, and the history will be lost.”

Rep. Manning rebuts this by claiming that “the standards will still be taught even if there is no state assessment in the subject.” State Board of Education member Sarah Fowler would disagree. She recently reported that the state academic standards are “mandatory by default because most teachers feel like they have to teach exactly what’s written in the standards in order to do well on the [state] assessments.” In short, teachers know it is best to “teach to the test.”

HB 239 is supported by educator groups, including the Ohio Education Association, Ohio Federation of Teachers, and the Ohio School Boards Association. Three hearings on the bill were held in the House Primary and Secondary Education Committee in May and June, but a vote has not yet been taken.

Ohio Student Religious Liberties Act (HB 164). This bill would protect students’ rights to meet for religious purposes or to use religious expression in classwork or other school activities. Hearings were held this spring in the House Primary and Secondary Education Committee, which moved the bill forward in June by a 9-6 vote. The full House has not yet acted on the bill. Among supporters of HB 164 are Ohio Value Voters, Citizens for Community Values, and Alliance Defending Freedom. Opponents include the ACLU and the Freedom from Religion Foundation.

Forming Open and Robust University Minds Act (HB 88, SB 40). The FORUM Act prohibits colleges/universities from restricting the free expression rights of students, faculty, and invited guests in public areas of the campus. Hearings have been held in the House Civil Justice and Senate Education Committees, but no votes have yet been taken. Among those offering proponent testimony were Citizens for Community Values, Alliance Defending Freedom, and Americans for Prosperity.

Pornography as a public health crisis (House



Resolution 180). This resolution was introduced in June by Rep. Jena Powell (R). It declares “that pornography is a public health hazard with statewide and national public health impacts leading to a broad spectrum of individual and societal harms.” A resolution does not have the force of law, but it does express the opinion of the legislature.

HR 180 makes the connection between *pornography* and *human sex trafficking*. Statistics indicate that Ohio is the fourth worst state for sex trafficking, which highlights the necessity of enforcing obscenity laws. “We want to raise awareness of the issue,” Powell said. “We are tired of the exploitation of women and children in the state of Ohio.”

CCV Pres. Aaron Baer said “studies have shown that pornography contributes to human trafficking and the harassment of women. Rep. Jena Powell’s resolution sends a powerful message that if we care about the well-being of women and children, we must stand up against the porn industry.” HR 180 has been assigned to the House Health Committee.

Sports gaming (HB 194, SB 111). Two bills have been introduced that would expand gambling in Ohio. HB 194, sponsored by Rep. Dave Greenspan (R) and Rep. Brigid Kelly (D), would create a Sports Gaming Advisory Board to legalize and regulate betting on sports events. The gaming would be controlled by the Ohio Lottery Commission. SB 111, sponsored by Sen. John Eklund (R) and Sen. Sean O’Brien (D), would instead put the Ohio Casino Control Commission in charge of sports betting.

Both bills would permit wagering in casinos, racinos, and on-line (mobile betting). HB 194 would tax wagers at 10%, and SB 111 at 6.75%. HB 194 would designate the profits for K-12 education, while profits under SB 111 would go into the general budget.

Three hearings were held in May in the House Finance Committee, but no action has been taken. In testimony, CCV’s Aaron Baer implored the legislators “to reject HB 194 and any attempts to expand the lottery with sports betting and bring more exploitative gaming to the state.” He pointed out that most of the people who participate in the state’s lottery are those who can afford it the least – like addicted gamblers and the impoverished. He said the program is “stacked against the bettor, ensuring that the house essentially always wins.” Baer also questioned the constitutionality of the proposal. When voters approved expanded gambling in 2009, it was supposed to be limited to four casinos.

Speaking for CCV and Ohio Value Voters, Barry Sheets predicted that HB 194 would lead to “addictions
continued on next page

Ohio legislative notes (continued)

similar to our current opioid crisis, significant upswings in people seeking help from our problem gaming hot-lines, and more dollars having to be spent on social services to address problems this bill will allow.” Les Bernal (Stop Predatory Gambling) added that sports gaming is a form of “financial fraud” that severely harms children and leads to increased *illegal* gambling.

No hearings on SB 111 have yet been held in the Senate. In fact the bill has not yet been assigned to a committee. *We hope these bills die quietly*; there is too much gambling in Ohio as it is.

Sexual orientation / gender identity (SB 11). This SOGI bill, misnamed the Ohio Fairness Act by its supporters, has had three hearings in the Senate Judiciary Committee this spring. *SB 11 needs to be defeated*, since its main purpose is to advance the LGBTQ agenda. Unfortunately the bill is receiving support from a variety of organizations, including business and labor groups, liberal churches, health organizations, municipalities, universities, abortion providers, and gay support groups.

In many instances, people and organizations are lured to accept SOGI laws because they are deceptively written as merely anti-discrimination measures. In fact, such laws infringe on individual rights by trying to force people to embrace the LGBTQ lifestyle and a sexual orthodoxy. SOGI laws grant special privileges to certain people; as such they do not protect equality before the law.

* * * * *

Book Review: *The Case for Trump* Victor Davis Hanson (2019)

Victor Hanson is a Senior Fellow in classics and military history at the Hoover Institution. With this background, it may seem odd that he authored a book on a political subject. In this thoroughly researched account, however, Hanson shows himself to be a discerning scholar with some remarkable insights into our current President – Donald Trump. Hanson says he has never met Mr. Trump, but he nevertheless seems to understand the President very well.

The Case for Trump is a mostly positive report of how Trump, the business entrepreneur and flamboyant TV host, ventured into politics in 2015-2016. He had never run for public office before, yet he had the audacity to challenge the establishment politicians in both parties with a new style of tell-it-like-it-is, no-holds-barred campaigning. Trump developed a populist following that carried him through the Republican primaries ahead of fifteen experienced rivals, and then led him to victory over the Democratic heir apparent, Hillary Clinton. Almost no one in politics or the media thought Trump could win, and nearly all the pundits predicted an easy victory for Mrs. Clinton.



But they were wrong.

Once in office, Trump faced heavy opposition from several forces – the shocked Democratic Resistance that couldn’t believe he won, the Washington bureaucrats and politicians from the “Deep State,” the progressive elites on both the east and west coasts, the left-leaning members of the press, and the “Never Trumpers” in his own party who had fought against his candidacy. They first claimed the election was rigged, and they then tried to find a crime to bring Trump down. They searched for an impeachable offense (collusion or conspiracy), and they even attempted to have Trump declared incompetent and unfit for office. But the candidate fought back at every turn, and his opponents just became more furious and exasperated.

According to Hanson, Trump understood better than most other Republicans that the radical policies of 2009-2016 were “anathema to the traditional working classes of rural America, as well as urban blue-collar industrial workers and many of the self-employed.” In a real sense, Obama paved the way for Trumpism. Obama had ushered in a host of social changes that angered traditional Americans: gay marriage, women in combat, LGBTQ rights, open borders, amnesty, victimization of minorities, and social justice.

Candidate Trump understood that progressives on the left looked down with derision at middle- and lower-class workers, rural whites, and people from America’s heartland. Trump appealed to these forgotten people by pledging to promote America first, drain the Washington swamp, bring jobs back to America, and expose the liberal media bias. Hanson observed that “a large minority of the country empathized with the bad-apple Trump. It believed that whatever he dished out to the media was again long overdue.”

Trump recognized that there are two Americas – the affluent coastal elites (progressives) and a hinterland that had been flattened by globalism (traditionalists). Trump shrewdly analyzed America’s cultural division and exploited this schism in a way that neither Republicans nor Democrats readily understood. Trump realized that the key to victory in 2016 lay in a few midwestern states (Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, Wisconsin) and Florida.

Trump’s campaign targeted these battleground states, while Hillary Clinton largely ignored them.

Hanson observed that Trump’s 2016 campaign focused on two main things: first, he was not Hillary Clinton, and second, he would relentlessly attack those people and issues that the voters he was courting disliked. Trump’s supporters saw his campaign “as a long overdue pushback to the elite disdain and indeed hatred shown them.”

continued on next page

The Case for Trump (continued)

The Deep State has been especially annoying to Trump. This is the conglomerate of government bureaucrats and Washington insiders who seek to maintain the status quo and fight new initiatives. Deep state operatives are steeped in liberal policies: big government, high taxes, extensive regulations, wealth redistribution, identity politics, globalism, *et al.* Trump had to deal with holdovers from the Obama administration and entrenched government officials who knew how to use the vast federal resources to their advantage. As a newcomer to politics, “Trump had no real appreciation of the tentacles of the deep-state octopus.” Members of the deep-state swamp leaked information to the press and diligently worked from within to thwart the President’s agenda.

Despite the attacks, the amazing thing is that President Trump had a very impressive list of accomplishments in his first two years in office. Hanson reports: “So far Trump has proved to be one of the rare presidents who has attempted to do what he said he would.” To name some of the achievements: a vibrant economy, low unemployment, two conservative Supreme Court justices, a stimulating tax cut, widespread deregulation, a stronger military, domestic energy production, trade policies favoring the U.S., restoration of deterrence against China and Russia, negotiations with North Korea, pulling out from the Paris climate accord, and withdrawal from the Iran nuclear deal. Eight years of Barack Obama had pointed America in a progressive, globalist direction that was unpopular to many Americans. Many voters grew tired of Obama’s new regulations, higher taxes, government healthcare, defense cuts, budget deficits, expansion of government, and apologies for America’s past. Donald Trump did his best to reverse course and negate Obama’s destructive policies.

Hanson views Trump overall as a “tragic hero.” He acknowledges the President’s “tweeting . . . feuding . . . unbridled and often vicious speech, even his fast and loose relationship with the truth.” But it could be that Trump’s crass style was necessary to shake up the status quo and refocus America in a better direction – away from the victimization, social justice mindset.

Hanson concedes that Trump’s volatility makes it “impossible to calibrate the ultimate fate of the Trump administration....” He writes that Trump’s presidency “likely will end in one of two fashions, both not particularly good: either spectacular but unacknowledged accomplishments followed by ostracism when he is out of office and no longer useful, or, less likely, a single term due to the eventual embarrassment of his beneficiaries, as if his utility is no longer worth the wages of his perceived crudity.”

In short, Trump’s character flaws may cost him a favorable place in history. On the other hand, Hanson

concludes that Trump’s “traditionally nonpresidential behavior may have been valuable in bringing long-overdue changes in foreign and domestic policy.”

Hanson observes that Donald Trump is often his own worst enemy, but the President knows the real enemies to American democracy are his progressive detractors. It remains to be seen whether Trump fatigue will triumph over the last two years of his term, or whether the President will be able to make progress on some of the thorny issues that remain – like border security, infrastructure repair, and healthcare reform.

* * * * *

Eagle Council XLVIII in September

Eagle Council is an annual leadership and training conferences for Eagle members and other pro-family citizens. The conference covers various current topics in politics, education, and citizen advocacy. Speakers are selected for their expertise and ability to engage an audience. This event includes speaking sessions, meals, panel discussions, and networking opportunities.

Eagle Forum’s event will be held Sept. 19-21 at the Crystal City Marriott in Arlington, VA. In addition to the conference itself, there will be a D.C. at Night Monument Tour and a Capitol Hill Lobby Day. For details visit www.EagleForum.org.

Page 8

The Eagle: quarterly newsletter of Eagle Forum of Ohio

370 E. Mohawk Dr., Malvern, Ohio 44644

Eagle Forum of Ohio is an independent state organization, separate from national Eagle Forum.

Chairman: Khadine Ritter (ritter@theisenbrock.com)

Vice-Chairman: Dennis Strickler

Treasurer: Barbara Strickler

Secretary: Kathy Sadler

Eagle Editor: Bob Lattimer (rlattimer@gmail.com)

Internet: EagleForum.org

(Note: This is national Eagle Forum website; there is no state website.)

To submit an article or news item, contact the Editor. To subscribe, send your check to the above address.

*Paper copy by first class mail — minimum donation \$15 per year. *E-mail version — minimum donation \$10 per year. Checks should be made out to Eagle Forum of Ohio. EFO is a 501(c)3 organization; contributions are fully tax-deductible.