

Senator Dick Durbin
Ranking Member, Senate Judiciary Committee
Written Questions for Robert Porter Chamberlin
Nominee to be U.S. District Judge for the Northern District of Mississippi
September 10, 2025

1. You cosponsored SB2619, which allowed a health care provider to refuse treatment if it violated his or her conscience, without facing any consequences. The legislation's purpose and effect would have been to restrict access to abortion for women in Mississippi and provide a cover for providers who denied care to patients.

You sponsored a proposed state constitutional amendment to prevent same-sex marriages performed in other states to be legally recognized in Mississippi in 2004. In support of the measure, you stated that, "sometimes preventative medicine is best."

And, you voted for a bill to make it illegal for municipalities within Mississippi to sue gun manufacturers, distributors, or dealers for faulty design, manufacture, distribution or sale of firearms and ammunition because you wanted to "limit some of the rampant lawsuits that some other states have experienced."

Why should women seeking reproductive care, members of the LGBTQ+ community, and victims of gun violence believe that they will be treated fairly in your courtroom—should you be confirmed to the federal bench—given your support for these legislative efforts?

Response: The legislation referenced in the question was from over twenty years ago. It occurred over ten years before the U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Obergefell*. I will apply *Obergefell* and all binding precedent if confirmed as a United States District Court Judge. The reason all parties should feel they will be treated fairly in my courtroom is that I have proven it over the last 21 years, first with 12 years on the state trial court bench and then with almost 9 years on the Mississippi Supreme Court.

2. **You have previously spoken about the issue of addiction faced by many Americans, and highlighted the need to "put those with this mental illness back on the right track." Do you support President Trump's decision to cut over \$11 billion in public health grants to address addiction and mental health, among other public-health problems?**

Response: It would be inappropriate for me, as a judicial nominee, to comment on the wisdom of an executive decision made by the President.

3. Thousands of absentee and mail-in ballots were cast by voters during your election to the Mississippi Supreme Court. Yet, President Trump has vowed to eliminate voting by mail and electronic voting systems, calling it a "completely disproved Mail-In SCAM" and claiming that it enables "MASSIVE VOTER FRAUD."

- a. Do you believe that the mail-in votes that were cast for you during your run for the Mississippi Supreme Court were a scam?**

Response: The question invokes a political dispute. It would be inappropriate for me, as a judicial nominee, to comment on such a political dispute. As to my election, I have confidence in the Mississippi Secretary of State and the state election committee that it was conducted appropriately.

Months after your election, Mississippi Secretary of State defended state control and decision-making over election systems, arguing that “the diversity of current state election systems is one reason these systems have remained secure.”

- b. Do you disagree with President Trump that states are “merely an ‘agent’ for the Federal Government in counting and tabulating” election results?**

Response: Please see my response to Question 3a.

- c. During your tenure as Chairman of the Election Committee of the Mississippi State Senate, did you uncover widespread or systemic fraud owing to the use of mail-in ballots?**

Response: I do not recall investigating fraud related to mail-in ballots during my tenure.

- 4. Did President Trump lose the 2020 election?**

Response: President Biden was certified as the winner of the 2020 presidential election and served as the 46th President of the United States.

- 5. Where were you on January 6, 2021?**

Response: I was in Mississippi.

- 6. Do you denounce the January 6 insurrection?**

Response: The characterization of the events of January 6, 2021 have been the subject of much political debate. There is, likewise, continuing litigation involving those events. As a judicial nominee it would be inappropriate for me to comment on political issues as well as matters in ongoing litigation.

- 7. Do you believe that January 6 rioters who were convicted of violent assaults on police officers should have been given full and unconditional pardons?**

Response: The pardon power belongs to the executive. The decision to pardon rests within the sound discretion of the President. To the extent this question asks for an

opinion of the President's decision or otherwise comment on a political matter, as a judicial nominee, it would be inappropriate for me to further comment.

8. The Justice Department is currently defending the Trump Administration in a number of lawsuits challenging executive actions taken by the Administration. Federal judges—both Republican and Democratic appointees—have enjoined some of these actions, holding that they are illegal or unconstitutional. Alarming, President Trump, his allies, and even some nominees before the Senate Judiciary Committee have responded by questioning whether the executive branch must follow court orders.

a. What options do litigants—including the executive branch—have if they disagree with a court order?

Response: The standard course would be to request a rehearing, obtain a stay, or appeal the order.

b. Do you believe a litigant can ever lawfully defy an order from a lower federal court? If yes, in what circumstances?

Response: Orders are meant to be followed. Those unhappy with an order should request a rehearing, request a stay, or file an appeal. However, there are certain, very limited, circumstances where a party can raise a defense to compliance such as lack of jurisdiction or impossibility. *See, e.g., 17 Corpus Juris Secundum Contempt Sections 56-65.* Further, in some instances, defying a court order is necessary to appeal it. *See, e.g., Mohawk Industries, Inc. v. Carpenter, 558 U.S. 100, 111 (2009).* Also see 15B Charles Alan Wright & Arthur R. Miller, *Fed. Prac. & Proc. Juris.* (2nd ed.) Section 3914.23.1.

c. Under the separation of powers, which branch of the federal government is responsible for determining whether a federal court order is lawful?

Response: The judicial branch. Additionally, see my response to Question 8b.

9. District judges have occasionally issued non-party injunctions, which may include “nationwide injunctions” and “universal injunctions.”

a. Are non-party injunctions constitutional?

Response: This question relates to matters that are the subject of ongoing litigation. Therefore, it would be improper for me, as a judicial nominee, to further comment.

b. Are non-party injunctions a legitimate exercise of judicial power?

Response: Please see my response to Question 9a.

- c. Is it ever appropriate for a district judge to issue a non-party injunction? If so, under what circumstances is it appropriate**

Response: Please see my response to Question 9a.

- d. As a litigator, have you ever sought a non-party injunction as a form of relief? If so, please list each matter in which you have sought such relief.**

Response: Not to my knowledge.

- 10. At any point during your selection process, did you have any discussions with anyone—including individuals at the White House, the Justice Department, or any outside groups—about loyalty to President Trump? If so, please provide details.**

Response: No

- 11. Does the U.S. Constitution permit a president to serve three terms?**

Response: Section 1 of the 22nd Amendment to the U.S. Constitution directs that “No person shall be elected to the office of the President more than twice”. To the extent this question implicates an ongoing political dispute, it would be inappropriate for me, as a judicial nominee, to comment further.

- 12. On May 26, 2025, in a Truth Social post, President Trump referred to some judges whose decisions he disagrees with, as “USA HATING JUDGES” and “MONSTERS”, who “...SUFFER FROM AN IDEOLOGY THAT IS SICK, AND VERY DANGEROUS FOR OUR COUNTRY...”¹**

- a. Do you agree that these federal judges are “USA HATING” and “MONSTERS” who “...SUFFER FROM AN IDEOLOGY THAT IS SICK, AND VERY DANGEROUS FOR OUR COUNTRY...”?**

Response: It would be inappropriate for me, as a judicial nominee, to comment regarding political disputes or the opinion of any political figure.

- b. Do you believe this rhetoric endangers the lives of judges and their families?**

Response: Please see my response to Question 12a.

- 13. In addition to the President’s own attacks on judges, his adviser Stephen Miller took to social media to call a federal trade court’s ruling against President Trump’s tariffs a**

¹ Donald J. Trump (@realDonaldTrump), TRUTH SOCIAL (May 26, 2025, 7:22AM), <https://truthsocial.com/@realDonaldTrump/posts/114573871728757682>.

“judicial coup”² and later reposted the images of the three judges who decided the case and wrote, “we are living under a judicial tyranny.”³

- a. Do you agree that these judges are engaged in a “judicial coup” and that “we are living under a judicial tyranny”**

Response: Please see my response to Question 12a.

- b. Do you believe this rhetoric endangers the lives of judges and their families?**

Response: Please see my response to Question 12a.

- c. Would you feel comfortable with any politician or their adviser sharing a picture of you on social media if you issue a decision they disagree with?**

Response: Please see my response to Question 12a.

14. When, if ever, may a lower court depart from Supreme Court precedent?

Response: It is never appropriate for lower courts to depart from controlling Supreme Court precedent.

15. When, in your opinion, would it be appropriate for a circuit court to overturn its own precedent?

Response: As a district court nominee, I will not be called upon to overturn circuit court precedent. Circuit courts should follow the standards set in caselaw, and their own precedent, for when to overrule existing circuit court precedent.

16. When, in your opinion, would it be appropriate for the Supreme Court to overrule its own precedent

Response: As a district court nominee, I will not be called upon to overturn Supreme Court precedent. In determining whether Supreme Court precedent should be overruled, the Supreme Court applies the stare decisis factors set out in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization*, 597 U.S. 215, 268-90 (2022).

17. Please answer yes or no as to whether the following cases were correctly decided by the Supreme Court:

² Stephen Miller (@StephenM), X, (May 28, 2025, 7:48PM), <https://x.com/StephenM/status/1927874604531409314>.

³ Stephen Miller (@StephenM), X, (May 29, 2025, 8:25AM), <https://x.com/StephenM/status/1928065122657845516>.

a. *Brown v. Board of Education*

Response: As dozens of nominees have said before, it is almost always improper for judicial nominees to give a thumbs-up or thumbs-down to Supreme Court precedent. To my knowledge, the only two exceptions to this general rule against opining on the merits of Supreme Court cases are *Brown* and *Loving*. I agree that both those decisions were correctly decided.

b. *Plyler v. Doe*

Response: See above

c. *Loving v. Virginia*

Response: See above

d. *Griswold v. Connecticut*

Response: See above

e. *Trump v. United States*

Response: See above

f. *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*

Response: See above

g. *New York State Rifle & Pistol Association, Inc. v. Bruen*

Response: See above

h. *Obergefell v. Hodges*

Response: See above

i. *Bostock v. Clayton County*

Response: See above

j. *Masterpiece Cakeshop v. Colorado*

Response: See above

k. *303 Creative LLC v. Elenis*

Response: See above

l. *United States v. Rahimi*

Response: See above

m. *Loper Bright Enterprises v. Raimondo*

Response: See above

18. With respect to constitutional interpretation, do you believe judges should rely on the “original meaning” of the Constitution?

Response: As a district court judge, should I be so confirmed, my obligation would be to apply binding precedent. As a district court judge, it seems highly unlikely that I would be called upon to interpret constitutional provisions but would, rather, be called upon to apply them. However, should I be so required, I would employ methodologies consistent with those used by the U.S. Supreme Court and Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals when called upon to undertake constitutional interpretation.

19. How do you decide when the Constitution’s “original meaning” should be controlling?

Response: Please see my response to Question 18.

20. Does the “original meaning” of the Constitution support a constitutional right to same-sex marriage?

Response: The *Obergefell* decision holds that the Constitution includes that right. As a district court judge, I would apply all binding precedent. An analysis of original public meaning would not figure into the application of binding precedent.

21. Does the “original meaning” of the Constitution support the constitutional right to marry persons of a different race?

Response: The *Loving* decision holds that the Constitution includes that right. As a district court judge, I would apply all binding precedent. An analysis of original public meaning would not figure into the application of binding precedent.

22. What is your understanding of the Equal Protection and Due Process clauses of the Fourteenth Amendment?

Response: The Equal Protection Clause and the Due Process Clause require strict and intermediate scrutiny when the government attempts to classify persons based on a protected characteristic or quasi-protected characteristic. These protections include both procedural rules and substantive rights.

23. How do these clauses apply to individuals that the Framers of the amendment likely did not have in mind, such as women? Or LGBTQ+ individuals?

Response: The Supreme Court has found these protections to apply to sex discrimination and sexual orientation, among others. As with all other binding precedent, I will faithfully apply these decisions if so confirmed.

24. Do you believe that judges should be “originalist” and adhere to the original public meaning of constitutional provisions when applying those provisions today?

Response: Please see my response to Question 18.

25. If so, do you believe that courts should adhere to the original public meaning of the Foreign Emoluments Clause when interpreting and applying the Clause today?

Response: Please see my response to Question 18.

26. Under the U.S. Constitution, who is entitled to First Amendment protections?

Response: While the First Amendment applies to everyone, the Supreme Court has recognized that the First Amendment can apply differently to different people and in different circumstances. While preferences of one speaker over another is disfavored, and usually subject to strict scrutiny when favoring a particular content, there are also occasions where strict scrutiny is not required. *See, e.g. TikTok Inc. v. Garland*, 145 S.Ct. 57, 68 (2025).

27. How would you determine whether a law that regulates speech is “content-based” or “content-neutral”? What are some of the key questions that would inform your analysis?

Response: First and foremost, I would apply applicable binding precedent on the issue. Generally, determining whether a law regulating speech is content-based, as opposed to content-neutral, you have to determine whether the law in question regulates a particular kind of speech. In other words, does it apply to particular speech because of the topic discussed or the idea or message expressed. *See, e.g., City of Austin, Texas v. Reagan Nat’l Advertising of Austin, LLC*, 596 U.S. 61 (2022).

28. What is the standard for determining whether a statement is protected speech under the true threats doctrine?

Response: As set forth in *Counterman v. Colorado*, 660 U.S. 66, 74 (2023), true threats of violence are unprotected. They are defined as “serious expressions conveying that a speaker means to commit an act of unlawful violence.” *Id.*

29. Is every individual within the United States entitled to due process?

Response: The Supreme Court has stated that “the Due Process Clause applies to all ‘persons’ within the United States, including aliens, whether their presence here is lawful, unlawful, temporary, or permanent.” *Zadvydas v. Davis*, 533 U.S. 678, 693 (2001). The question in most cases is less about whether the doctrine of due process applies and more about how much process is due. If confirmed, I will follow all binding precedent on the issue.

30. Can U.S. citizens be transported to other countries for the purpose of being detained, incarcerated, or otherwise penalized?

Response: This question is the subject of intense public debate and is being currently litigated. As a judicial nominee it would be inappropriate for me to comment on the subject.

31. The Fourteenth Amendment states: “All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside.”

a. Is every person born in the United States a citizen under the Fourteenth Amendment?

Response: This question asks about matters being currently litigated. Therefore, it would be improper for me, as a judicial nominee, to comment on the subject.

b. Is the citizenship or immigration status of the parents of an individual born in the United States relevant for determining whether the individual is a citizen under the Fourteenth Amendment?

Response: This question asks about matters being currently litigated. Therefore, it would be improper for me, as a judicial nominee, to comment on the subject.

32. Do you believe that demographic and professional diversity on the federal bench is important? Please explain your views.

Response: Yes. Nobody should be excluded from the opportunity to serve as a judge based on race, ethnicity, sex, religion, or any other protected characteristic. Such diversity serves, among other things, to bring different viewpoints from differing backgrounds to the bench.

33. The bipartisan *First Step Act of 2018*, which was signed into law by President Trump, is one of the most important pieces of criminal justice legislation to be enacted during my time in Congress. At its core, the Act was based on a few key, evidence-based principles.

First, incarcerated people can and should have meaningful access to rehabilitative programming and support in order to reduce recidivism and help our communities prosper. Second, overincarceration through the use of draconian mandatory minimum sentences does not serve the purposes of sentencing and ultimately causes greater, unnecessary harm to our communities. With these rehabilitative principles in mind, one thing Congress sought to achieve through this Act was giving greater discretion to judges—both before and after sentencing—to ensure that the criminal justice system effectively and efficiently fosters public safety for the benefit of all Americans.

a. How do you view the role of federal judges in implementing the *First Step Act*?

Response: I would follow the *First Step Act of 2018* as well as all other sentencing directives. Judges are required to faithfully and impartially, within the parameters of the law, sentence defendants on a case by case basis applying all applicable sentencing directives including 18 U.S.C. 3553 and the Sentencing Guidelines.

b. Will you commit to fully and fairly considering the individualized circumstances of each defendant who comes before you when imposing sentences to ensure that they are properly tailored to promote the goals of sentencing and avoid terms of imprisonment in excess of what is necessary?

Response: Yes

34. The Federalist Society seeks to “reorder[] priorities within the legal system to place a premium on individual liberty, traditional values, and the rule of law.”

a. During your selection process, have you spoken to or corresponded with any individuals associated with the Federalist Society, including Leonard Leo or Steven G. Calabresi? If so, please provide details of those discussions.

Response: No

b. Have you ever been asked to and/or provided services to the Federalist Society, including research, analysis, advice, speeches, or appearing at events?

Response: No

c. Have you ever been paid honoraria by the Federalist Society? If so, how much were you paid, and for what services?

Response: No

35. The Teneo Network states that its purpose is to “Recruit, Connect, and Deploy talented conservatives who lead opinion and shape the industries that shape society.”

- a. During your selection process, have you spoken to or corresponded with any individuals associated with the Teneo Network, including Leonard Leo? If so, please provide details of those discussions.**

Response: No

- b. Have you ever been asked to and/or provided services to the Teneo Network, including research, analysis, advice, speeches, or appearing at events?**

Response: No

- c. Have you ever been paid honoraria by the Teneo Network? If so, how much were you paid, and for what services?**

Response: No

36. The Heritage Foundation states that its mission is to “formulate and promote public policies based on the principles of free enterprise, limited government, individual freedom, traditional American values, and a strong national defense.” Heritage Action, which is affiliated with the Heritage Foundation, seeks to “fight for conservative policies in Washington, D.C. and in state capitals across the country.”

- a. During your selection process, have you spoken to or corresponded with any individuals associated with the Heritage Foundation or Heritage Action, including Kevin D. Roberts? If so, please provide details of those discussions.**

Response: No

- b. Have you ever been asked to and/or provided services to the Heritage Foundation or Heritage Action, including research, analysis, advice, speeches, or appearing at events?**

Response: No

- c. Were you ever involved in or asked to contribute to Project 2025 in any way?**

Response: No

- d. Have you ever been paid honoraria by the Heritage Foundation or Heritage Action? If so, how much were you paid, and for what services?**

Response: No

37. The America First Policy Institute (AFPI) states that its “guiding principles are liberty, free enterprise, national greatness, American military superiority, foreign-policy engagement in the American interest, and the primacy of American workers, families, and communities in all we do.”

- a. During your selection process, have you spoken to or corresponded with any individuals associated with AFPI? If so, please provide details of those discussions.**

Response: No

- b. Have you ever been asked to and/or provided services to AFPI, including research, analysis, advice, speeches, or appearing at events?**

Response: No

- c. Have you ever been paid honoraria by AFPI? If so, how much were you paid, and for what services?**

Response: No

38. The America First Legal Institute (AFLI) states that it seeks to “oppose the radical left’s anti-jobs, anti-freedom, anti-faith, anti-borders, anti-police, and anti-American crusade.”

- a. During your selection process, have you spoken to or corresponded with any individuals associated with AFLI, including Stephen Miller, Gene Hamilton, or Daniel Epstein? If so, please provide details of those discussions.**

Response: No

- b. Have you ever been asked to and/or provided services to AFLI, including but not limited to research, analysis, advice, speeches, or appearing at events?**

Response: No

- c. Have you ever been paid honoraria by AFLI? If so, how much were you paid, and for what services?**

Response: No

39. The Article III Project is an organization which claims that, “The left is weaponizing the power of the judiciary against ordinary citizens.”

- a. During your selection process, have you spoken to or corresponded with any individuals associated with the Article III Project, including Mike Davis, Will Chamberlain, or Josh Hammer? If so, please provide details of those discussions.**

Response: No

- b. Have you ever been asked to and/or provided services to the Article III Project, including research, analysis, advice, speeches, or appearing at events?**

Response: No

- c. Have you ever been paid honoraria by the Article III Project? If so, how much were you paid, and for what services?**

Response: No

40. The Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF) states that it is “the world’s largest legal organization committed to protecting religious freedom, free speech, the sanctity of life, marriage and family, and parental rights.”

- a. During your selection process, have you spoken to or corresponded with any individuals associated with ADF? If so, please provide details of those discussions.**

Response: No

- b. Have you ever been asked to and/or provided services to ADF, including research, analysis, advice, speeches, or appearing at events**

Response: No

- c. Have you ever been paid honoraria by ADF? If so, how much were you paid, and for what services?**

Response: No

41. The Concord Fund, also known as the Judicial Crisis Network, states that it is committed “to the Constitution and the Founders’ vision of a nation of limited government; dedicated to the rule of law; with a fair and impartial judiciary.” It is affiliated with the 85 Fund, also known as the Honest Elections Project and the Judicial Education Project.

- a. **During your selection process, have you spoken to or corresponded with any individuals associated with these organizations, including Leonard Leo or Carrie Severino? If so, please provide details of those discussions.**

Response: No

- b. **Have you ever been asked to and/or provided services to these organizations, including research, analysis, advice, speeches, or appearing at events?**

Response: No

- c. **Have you ever been paid honoraria by these organizations? If so, how much were you paid, and for what services?**

Response: No

- d. **Do you have any concerns about outside groups or special interests making undisclosed donations to front organizations like the Concord Fund or 85 Fund in support of your nomination? Note that I am not asking whether you have solicited any such donations, I am asking whether you would find such donations to be problematic.**

Response: I am unaware of these groups or the allegations suggested by the question. Any activities by these groups, or others, would have no effect on my judicial decision making process. I would at all times abide by the law, rules and judicial canons.

- e. **If you learn of any such donations, will you commit to call for the undisclosed donors to make their donations public so that if you are confirmed you can have this information when you make decisions about recusal in cases that these donors may have an interest in?**

Response: I am unaware of these groups or the allegations suggested by the question. Any activities by these groups, or others, would have no effect on my judicial decision making process. I would at all times abide by the law, rules and judicial canons.

- f. **Will you condemn any attempt to make undisclosed donations to the Concord Fund or 85 Fund on behalf of your nomination?**

Response: I am unaware of these groups or the allegations suggested by the question. Any activities by these groups, or others, would have no effect on my judicial decision making process. I would at all times abide by the law, rules and judicial canons.

Nomination of Robert P. Chamberlin
Nominee to the United States District Court for the Northern District of Mississippi
Questions for the Record
Submitted September 10, 2025

QUESTIONS FROM SENATOR WHITEHOUSE

Please answer each question and sub-question individually and as specifically as possible.

1. As a state senator, did you cosponsor a state constitutional amendment to prevent same-sex marriages performed in other states from being legally recognized in Mississippi?

Response: I did cosponsor SCR 514 during the 2004 Mississippi legislative regular session. This was a legislative enactment made in the representation of constituents from over 20 years ago, not a judicial decision. The purpose of the SCR was to prevent Mississippi from being required to recognize enactments from other states that were, at the time, illegal in Mississippi. Further, this was over 10 years before the U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Obergefell v. Hodges*, 576 U.S. 644 (2015). The decision in *Obergefell* is binding precedent. If I am fortunate enough to be confirmed as a U.S. District Court Judge, I will faithfully apply *Obergefell*, as well as all binding precedent of the U.S. Supreme Court as well as the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals where applicable.

- a. Did you say the following about this amendment?

A constitutional amendment certainly carries with it more weight. Sometimes preventive medicine is best.

Response: I do not recall making the referenced statement. However, if it comes from a reputable source, I do not deny making the statement.

- b. What did you mean by “preventive medicine”?

Response: It is clear from the context that the phrase is referencing the avoidance of litigation by acting preemptively.

2. As a state senator, did you cosponsor legislation to prohibit same-sex couples from adopting children?

Response: I did cosponsor SB 2916 during the 2000 Mississippi legislative regular session. This was a legislative enactment made in the representation of constituents from almost 25 years ago, not a judicial decision. This was over 10 years before the U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Obergefell v. Hodges*, 576 U.S. 644 (2015). The decision in *Obergefell* is binding precedent. If I am fortunate enough to be confirmed as a U.S. District Court Judge, I will faithfully apply *Obergefell*, as well as all binding precedent of the U.S. Supreme Court as well as the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals where applicable.

**Senate Judiciary Committee
Nomination Hearing
September 3, 2025
Questions for the Record
Senator Amy Klobuchar**

For Robert Chamberlin, nominee to be U.S. District Judge for the Northern District of Mississippi

While serving as a member of the Mississippi Senate, you introduced a state constitutional amendment to prevent same-sex marriages performed in other states to be legally recognized in Mississippi. In 2022, Congress passed the *Respect for Marriage Act*, which guarantees that valid marriages between two people are given full faith and credit in every state.

- If confirmed as a federal judge, will you recognize that federal law requires Mississippi to recognize and give full faith and credit to same sex marriages entered into another state?

Response: Yes. I would recognize and respect any congressional act. Further, the referenced legislation was over 10 years before the U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Obergefell v. Hodges*, 576 U.S. 644 (2015). The decision in *Obergefell* is binding precedent. If I am fortunate enough to be confirmed as a U.S. District Court Judge, I will faithfully apply *Obergefell*, as well as all binding precedent of the U.S. Supreme Court as well as the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals where applicable. Working as a legislator, representing constituents, and serving as a trial court judge, being a servant of the Constitution and the law, are vastly different. I have shown for almost 21 years now that I can be fair to all litigants on all issues that come before me as a judge. This would include the requirement to give full faith and credit to same sex marriages entered into in another state.

**Nomination of Robert Porter Chamberlain to the
United States District Court for the Northern District of Mississippi
Questions for the Record
Submitted September 10, 2025**

QUESTIONS FROM SENATOR COONS

1. At any point during the process that led to your nomination, did you make any representations or commitments to anyone—including but not limited to individuals at the White House, at the Justice Department, or at outside groups—as to how you would handle a particular case, investigation, or matter, if confirmed? If so, explain fully.

Response: No

- a. At any point during the process that led to your nomination, were you asked about your opinion on any cases that involve President Trump or the Trump administration?

Response: No

2. How would you describe your judicial philosophy?

Response: If confirmed, my judicial philosophy would be to faithfully carry out the duties of an Article III judge of an “inferior” court to the U.S. Supreme Court. In doing so, I would apply all precedents of the U.S. Supreme Court as well as any other applicable laws or rules binding on the court.

3. With respect to substantive due process, what factors do you look to when a case requires you to determine whether a right is fundamental and protected under the Fourteenth Amendment?

Response: If confirmed, I would faithfully apply the standards set forth in applicable Supreme Court precedent.

- a. Would you consider whether the right is expressly enumerated in the Constitution?

Response: Yes. *See, e.g., Timbs v. Indiana*, 586 U.S. 146, 151 (2019); *McDonald v. City of Chicago*, 561 U.S. 742, 767 (2010)

- b. Would you consider whether the right is deeply rooted in this nation’s history and tradition? If so, what types of sources would you consult to determine whether a right is deeply rooted in this nation’s history and tradition?

Response: Yes. I would consult historical sources including caselaw. I would also apply the instruction and sources referenced in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health*

Organization, 597 U.S. 215, 237-40 (2022). As always, I would apply Supreme Court precedent.

- c. Would you consider whether the right has previously been recognized by Supreme Court or circuit precedent? What about the precedent of another court of appeals?

Response: Yes. I would of course look to U.S. Supreme Court precedent and then precedent from the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals. In the absence of such precedent, I would consult relevant case law from other circuits.

- d. Would you consider whether a *similar* right has previously been recognized by Supreme Court or circuit precedent?

Response: Yes

- e. What other factors would you consider?

Response: I would consider any factors which had been identified in controlling precedent.

- 4. In your view, is it ever appropriate for a judge to ignore, disregard, refuse to implement, or issue an order that is contrary to an order from a higher court? Please explain.

Response: It is never appropriate for a district court judge to fail to follow an order from a court which has appellate authority over that district court

- 5. Under 28 U.S.C. § 455, “[a]ny justice, judge, or magistrate judge of the United States shall disqualify [themselves] in any proceeding in which [their] impartiality might reasonably be questioned.”

- a. If confirmed, would you recuse yourself from future cases involving challenges to Mississippi laws on which you voted affirmatively in the state legislature?

Response: In addressing the need to recuse in a case, I will abide by all laws, rules and judicial ethical canons.

- b. Would you recuse yourself from future cases involving challenges to Mississippi laws you voted against while in the state legislature?

Response: In addressing the need to recuse in a case, I will abide by all laws, rules and judicial ethical canons.

- 6. In *United States v. Virginia*, 518 U.S. 515, 536 (1996), the Court explained that in 1839, when the Virginia Military Institute was established, “[h]igher education at the time was considered dangerous for women,” a view widely rejected today. In *Obergefell v.*

Hodges, 576 U.S. 644, 668 (2015), the Court reasoned, “As all parties agree, many same-sex couples provide loving and nurturing homes to their children, whether biological or adopted. And hundreds of thousands of children are presently being raised by such couples. . . . Excluding same-sex couples from marriage thus conflicts with a central premise of the right to marry. Without the recognition, stability, and predictability marriage offers, their children suffer the stigma of knowing their families are somehow lesser.” This conclusion rejects arguments made by campaigns to prohibit same-sex marriage based on the purported negative impact of such marriages on children.

- a. When is it appropriate for a court to consider evidence that sheds light on our changing understanding of society?

Response: If I am confirmed, I will follow all applicable binding precedent. As regards consideration of particular evidence, at the district court level, that would be determined on a case by case basis pursuant to the rules of evidence.

- b. What is the role of sociology, scientific evidence, and data in judicial analysis?

Response: At the district court level, I would be determining cases and controversies. The admissibility of scientific, technical, or other specialized knowledge in the determination of adjudicative facts is governed by Federal Rule of Evidence 702.

7. As a state senator, you supported a proposed state constitutional amendment to prevent same-sex marriages performed in other states from being legally recognized in Mississippi. The Supreme Court’s decision in *Obergefell v. Hodges*, 576 U.S. 644 (2015), requires states to license and recognize same-sex marriages.

- a. Why should the public be confident that you can apply *Obergefell* fairly when you tried to bar recognition of out-of-state marriages in Mississippi in the past?

Response: a. This legislation was over 10 years before the U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Obergefell v. Hodges*, 576 U.S. 644 (2015). The decision in *Obergefell* is binding precedent. If I am fortunate enough to be confirmed as a U.S. District Court Judge, I will faithfully apply *Obergefell*, as well as all binding precedent of the U.S. Supreme Court as well as the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals where applicable. Working as a legislator, representing constituents, and serving as a trial court judge, being a servant of the Constitution and the law, are vastly different. I have shown for almost 21 years now that I can be fair to all litigants on all issues that come before me as a judge.

- b. Would you recuse yourself from cases involving claims of discrimination against LGBTQ people?

Response: In addressing the need to recuse in a case, I will abide by all laws, rules and judicial ethical canons.

8. Do you consider yourself an originalist?

Response: I believe that when interpreting provisions of the constitution, we should give words and phrases their original public meaning.

- a. You said during your Senate Judiciary Committee confirmation hearing that *Brown v. Board of Education* was correctly decided. Can you explain how the Court's decision in *Brown* comports with an originalist interpretation of constitutional law?

Response: The Fourteenth Amendment of the Constitution requires equal protection of all citizens under the laws. See U.S. Const. amend. xiv (“[N]or shall any state . . . deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.”). This topic has been the subject of significant scholarly attention and that many well-renowned scholars believe the decision is consistent with originalist principles. See, e.g., Michael W. McConnell, *Originalism and the Desegregation Decision*, 81 Va. L. Rev. 947, 1140 (1995) (“This Article shows . . . that school segregation was understood during Reconstruction to violate the principles of equality of the Fourteenth Amendment.”).

- b. You said during your Senate Judiciary Committee confirmation hearing that *Loving v. Virginia* was correctly decided. Can you explain how the Court's decision in *Loving* comports with an originalist interpretation of constitutional law?

Response: The Fourteenth Amendment of the Constitution requires equal protection of all citizens under the laws. See U.S. Const. amend. xiv (“[N]or shall any state . . . deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.”). This topic has been the subject of significant scholarly attention and that many well-renowned scholars believe the decision is consistent with originalist principles. See, e.g., David R. Upham, *Interracial Marriage and the Original Understanding of the Privileges or Immunities Clause*, 42 Hastings Constitutional Law Quarterly 213 (2015); Steven G. Calabresi and Andrea Matthews, *Originalism and Loving v. Virginia*, 2012 BYU L. Rev. 1393 (2012).

- c. During your hearing, you were unwilling to answer whether you believed the Supreme Court's decision in *Obergefell v. Hodges* was correct. Why?

Response: As numerous nominees have pointed out, it is generally improper to comment on the correctness of Supreme Court decisions except for the acknowledgement that they are binding precedent. There have been two exceptions to this general rule, *Brown* and *Loving*.

- d. How many times does Justice Kennedy's decision for the Supreme Court in *Obergefell* cite *Loving v. Virginia*?

I have not counted the exact number of times *Loving* is cited in *Obergefell*, however, upon review, it appears to be approximately 11-12 times.

9. I have been proud to co-lead the bipartisan *Safer Supervision Act*, a bill to reform our federal supervised release system that has received substantial conservative and law enforcement support. The premise of the bill is that our federal supervision system has strayed far from how Congress designed it, as courts impose it mechanically in essentially every case, which means that probation officers do not have time to properly supervise those who most need it. The bill reinforces courts' existing obligations under 18 U.S.C. §§ 3553 and 3583 to impose supervision as warranted by the individual facts of the case and encourages more robust use of early termination when warranted to provide positive incentives encouraging rehabilitation. At the encouragement of a bipartisan group of members of Congress, the U.S. Sentencing Commission recently finalized an amendment to supervision guidelines implementing certain parts of the bill; this amendment will go in effect in November.

- a. As a sentencing judge, would you endeavor to impose supervision thoughtfully and on the basis of the individual facts of the case consistent with 18 U.S.C. § 3553 and 18 U.S.C. § 3583?

Response: Yes. I would faithfully follow 18 U.S.C. Section 3553 and U.S.C. Section 3583, as well as any other sentencing directives.

- b. Would you agree that the availability of early termination under 18 U.S.C. § 3583(e)(1) can provide individuals positive incentives to rehabilitate?

Response: I agree that Congress has made the determination that early termination of supervised release is appropriate in some circumstances.

- c. Will you commit if confirmed to reviewing the *Safer Supervision Act* and the recent Sentencing Commission amendment and considering them as you develop your approach to sentencing of supervised release?

Response: Yes

10. What is the remedy if the President violates his constitutional duty to faithfully execute the laws?

Response: The legislative body has the option of impeachment proceedings. Regarding legal action, it would be inappropriate for me, as a judicial nominee, to comment on particular avenues available in the judicial process in matters involving an executive and his duties.

11. Is President Trump eligible to be elected President for a third term?

Response: Section 1 of the Twenty-Second Amendment states, in part, “No person shall be elected to the office of the President more than twice....” To the extent the question asks about political disputes, it would be improper for me, as a judicial nominee, to comment on any ongoing political dispute.

12. Who won the 2016 U.S. Presidential Election?

Response: Donald J. Trump. There was no dispute among the candidates.

13. Who won the 2020 U.S. Presidential Election?

Response: President Biden was certified as the winner of the 2020 presidential election and served as the 46th President of the United States. To the extent this question seeks to elicit an answer that could be taken as opining on the broader political or policy debate regarding the conduct of the 2020 presidential election or on statements by any political figure, my response, consistent with the position of prior judicial nominees when asked questions regarding the 2020 election, is that it would be improper to offer any such comment as a judicial nominee. See Code of Conduct of U.S. Judges, Canons 3(A)(6), 5.

14. Who won the 2024 U.S. Presidential Election?

Response: Donald J. Trump. There was no dispute among the candidates.

15. Would it be constitutional for the President of the United States to punish a private person for a viewpoint that person expresses in a newspaper op-ed?

Response: The limited facts given make it impossible to promulgate an educated First Amendment response. As a nominee, I do not think it would be appropriate for me to comment on such an abstract hypothetical scenario.

16. Do you agree with me that the attack at the U.S. Capitol on January 6, 2021, was an insurrection? Why or why not?

Response: The characterization of the events of January 6, 2021 has been the subject of much political debate. There is, likewise, continuing litigation involving those events. As a judicial nominee it would be inappropriate for me to comment on political issues as well as matters in ongoing litigation.

17. Would it be constitutional for the President of the United States to terminate government contracts with a private person specifically because that person donated to members of the opposite political party?

Response: This question references an ongoing political dispute which may lead to future litigation. As a judicial nominee, it would be inappropriate for me to comment.

18. Would it ever be appropriate for the President of the United States to punish a law firm for taking on a client that the President did not like?

Response: This question references an ongoing political dispute which may lead to future litigation. As a judicial nominee, it would be inappropriate for me to comment.

19. Do you agree that there is a constitutional right to privacy that protects a woman's right to use contraceptives? If you do not agree, please explain whether this right is protected or not and which constitutional rights or provisions encompass it.

Response: The U.S. Supreme Court has recognized a constitutional right to use contraceptives in *Griswold* and extended by *Eisenstadt*. As a United States District Court Judge, if so confirmed, I would follow all binding precedent.

20. Do you agree that the constitutional right to travel across state lines is fundamental and well established?

Response: The U.S. Supreme Court has recognized a fundamental right to travel and that right is well established.

- a. Do you think it is constitutional for a state to restrict the interstate travel of its citizens?

Response: As a judicial nominee, it would be inappropriate for me to comment on the constitutionality of a hypothetical state restriction on travel.

21. Do you believe that the Constitution protects a fundamental right to privacy?

Response: The U.S. Supreme Court has recognized a fundamental right to privacy and that right is well established.

- a. Does that right extend to information about your health care and medical history?

Response: This is a matter of ongoing public debate and litigation. As a judicial nominee, it would be inappropriate to comment as to the parameters of a right that has not been decided by the Supreme Court.

- b. Do you agree that it is a violation of that right for states to surveil people's health care and medical history?

Response: This is a matter of ongoing public debate and litigation. As a judicial nominee, it would be inappropriate to comment as to the parameters of a right that has not been decided by the Supreme Court.

22. Do you agree that there is a constitutional right to privacy that protects the right to in vitro fertilization (IVF)? If you do not agree, please explain whether this right is protected or not and which constitutional rights or provisions encompass it.

Response: I do agree that there is a recognized constitutional right to privacy. Whether that right extends to IVF has been the subject of litigation. As a judicial nominee, it would be inappropriate for me to comment on matters that are subject to ongoing litigation.

23. Do you believe that immigrants, regardless of legal status, are entitled to due process and fair adjudication of their claims?

Response: The Supreme Court has stated that “the Due Process Clause applies to all ‘persons’ within the United States, including aliens, whether their presence here is lawful, unlawful, temporary, or permanent.” *Zadvydas v. Davis*, 533 U.S. 678, 693 (2001). The question in most cases is less about whether the doctrine of due process applies and more about how much process is due. I confirmed, I will follow all binding precedent on the issue. Further, judges are to adjudicate all claims fairly, regardless of party.

24. Does the public’s original understanding of the scope of a constitutional provision constrain its application decades later?

Response: As a district court nominee, this is a question that would rarely come into play. I would follow the binding precedent of the U.S. Supreme Court and the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals. It is those courts which are tasked with determining the scope of a constitutional provision.

25. What sources would you employ to discern the contours of a constitutional provision?

Response: Please see my response to Question 24.

26. What role does morality play in determining whether a challenged law or regulation is unconstitutional or otherwise illegal?

Response: It is the role of a judge to evaluate claims and cases, to apply applicable law and precedent and decide such claims based on controlling law as applied to the facts of the particular case. Personal views of the judge should never come into play.

27. What role, if any, should the practical consequences of a particular ruling play in a judge’s rendering of a decision?

Response: It is the role of a judge to evaluate claims and cases, to apply applicable law and precedent and decide such claims based on controlling law as applied to the facts of the particular case. With limited equitable exceptions, the practical consequences do not come into play. The law is to be applied faithfully and impartially.

28. What role, if any, should empathy play in a judge's decision-making process?

It is the role of a judge to evaluate claims and cases, to apply applicable law and precedent and decide such claims based on controlling law as applied to the facts of the particular case. Cases should not be decided on personal views or preference for one party over the other. However, judges, especially district court judges, do need to be mindful that their decisions have real life consequences and are not just an exercise in academia.

29. What role, if any, should a judge's personal life experience play in his or her decision-making process?

Response: A judge's life experiences will hopefully have prepared the judge to undertake the judicial office with understanding, diligence, integrity, courage, knowledge and impartiality. No judge is required to check their common sense at the courthouse door.

30. Should you be confirmed, would you ever inform parties before you that they do not need to comply with your orders?

Response: No. I would never inform a party before me that they did not have to comply with an order. However, I would hear and adjudicate any claim by a party that they were somehow relieved from following order. This would seem to implicate a very unique and narrow set of circumstances.

- a. Under what circumstances would you tell a party they could decide not to comply with your orders?

Response: Please see my response to Question 30.

- b. What would you do if a party refuses to comply with one of your orders?

Response: If such a scenario were to arise, I would first determine if noncompliance had in fact occurred. This may or may not require a hearing. If I found that noncompliance had occurred, I would likely require additional briefing and hold a hearing to determine the reason for noncompliance and what further action may be necessary.

31. When it comes to conducting yourself ethically, who in the legal profession do you see as a role model?

Response: I cannot say that I have a role model in that regard. I guess, at times, it is too hard to put someone up on a pedestal. I suppose we all aspire to the fictional standards of Atticus Finch.

32. Discuss your proposed hiring process for law clerks.

Response: I intend to use the same methods I have used in hiring clerks as a state trial court judge and state appellate court judge. I would accept applications, evaluate potential applicants, narrow down the list for interview, interview candidates, and make a decision. In doing so, I would evaluate the application and candidate as a whole to determine who was the best fit for the job.

- a. Do you think law clerks should be protected by Title VII of the Civil Rights Act?

Response: As a judicial nominee, it would inappropriate for me to comment on proposed legislative action.

- 33. In the past year, multiple studies have revealed ongoing problems with workplace conduct policies and outcomes in the federal judiciary. In a national climate survey, hundreds of judiciary employees reported that they experienced sexual harassment, discrimination, or other forms of misconduct on the job. A study by the Federal Judicial Center and the National Academy of Public Administration found the branch has failed to set up trusted reporting systems for employees who experience misconduct or ensure those handling complaints are adequately trained.

- a. If confirmed, what proactive steps would you take to ensure that the clerks and judicial assistants who work in your chambers are treated with respect and are not subject to misconduct?

Response: First and foremost would be communication. I would make sure all staff were made aware of their importance, their right to be free from any type of mistreatment and I would maintain an open door policy to hear and address any complaints in that regard. I would also make sure that they had access to appropriate personnel should they feel uncomfortable discussing such topics with me.

- b. What proactive steps would you take to ensure that any workplace-related concerns that your clerks and judicial assistants may have are fully addressed?

Response: Please see my response to Question 33a.

- c. If you are confirmed and you later hear from a colleague or your chambers staff that another judge is acting inappropriately, what steps would you take to help ensure the problem is addressed?

Response: I would likely address the concern with the judge in question. I would also follow any requirements imposed upon me by law or the judicial canons.

- 34. Some district court judges have issued standing orders indicating that the court will favor holding an oral argument when there is a representation that the argument would be handled by a junior lawyer. Such efforts are intended to provide more speaking

opportunities in court for junior lawyers. Would you consider issuing a standing order that would encourage more junior lawyers to handle oral arguments? Why or why not?

Response: I am unfamiliar with this practice but I am certainly open to consider any mechanism that would provide additional opportunities for young attorneys to hone their courtroom skills.

- a. How else would you support the skills development of junior lawyers appearing before you?

Response: Please see my response to question 34. In addition, I would seek opportunities to speak at CLE's or other opportunities to give pointers.

35. Do you think the individuals convicted of assaulting law enforcement officers at the Capitol on January 6, 2021, deserved to be pardoned?

Response: The pardon power belongs to the executive. The decision to pardon rests within the sound discretion of the President. To the extent this question asks for an opinion of the President's decision or otherwise comment on a political matter, as a judicial nominee, it would be inappropriate for me to further comment

36. If you were the President on January 20, 2025, would you have pardoned the individuals convicted of assaulting law enforcement officers at the Capitol on January 6, 2021?

Response: Please see my response to Question 35.

Questions for the Record for Justice Robert Chamberlin
Submitted by Senator Richard Blumenthal
September 10, 2025

1. The Trump administration has stepped up attacks on reproductive rights, including freezing Title X funding for clinics that offer reproductive care, cutting Biden-era emergency abortion protections, pardoning anti-abortion extremists, and fighting to defund Planned Parenthood. And the Republican budget bill will kick 16 million people off their health insurance and defund Planned Parenthood—threatening the closure of 200 health centers across the country and putting access to vital reproductive care for millions of families at risk.

You have crusaded against reproductive rights throughout your career. As a Mississippi State Senator, you cosponsored a bill to revise the state’s homicide and assault statutes to expand the definition of “human being” to include an unborn child beginning at conception. You also cosponsored a bill to allow healthcare providers to refuse to provide treatment that violated their consciences, without risking criminal, civil, or administrative liability.

Response: I staunchly disagree with the prologue of the question. I have not crusaded against reproductive rights throughout my career. Rather, in the 20 years since I left the legislature I have served 12 years as a state trial court judge and almost 9 years as an appellate judge on the Mississippi Supreme Court where I have steadfastly defended the law and followed binding precedent without fail.

- a. With such clear anti-choice views, how can litigants expect you to be fair on issues related to reproductive rights?

Response: Working as a legislator, representing constituents, and serving as a trial court judge, being a servant of the Constitution and the law, are vastly different. I have shown for almost 21 years now that I can be fair to all litigants on all issues that come before me as a judge.

2. As a Mississippi State Senator, you sponsored a state constitutional amendment to prevent same-sex marriages performed in other states from being legally recognized in Mississippi. In an interview, you justified the need for the amendment by saying “[a] constitutional amendment certainly carries with it more weight” and “[s]ometimes preventative medicine is best.”

- a. Given your record and comments, how can homosexual litigants expect you to treat them fairly in the courtroom?

Response: Working as a legislator, representing constituents, and serving as a trial court judge, being a servant of the Constitution and the law, are vastly different. I have shown for almost 21 years now that I can be fair to all litigants on all issues that come before me as a judge.

- b. In 2015, the Supreme Court ruled in *Obergefell v. Hodges* that the right to same-sex marriage was the law of the land. Your record shows that this conflicts with your personal views.

- i. Do you believe *Obergefell* was correctly decided?

Response: As has been expressed by Justice Kagan, and numerous nominees to come before this committee, it is generally not proper for judicial nominees to give a “thumbs-up” or “thumbs-down” to any particular U.S. Supreme Court precedent. The holding in *Obergefell* is binding precedent and, as such, I will follow it faithfully should I be confirmed.

- ii. Do you still believe that “preventative medicine” is needed to push back against same-sex marriage? If not, what changed your mind?

Response: Respectfully, the question is a mischaracterization of the comment. The comment referred to the ability to avoid litigation by acting preemptively relating to issues that were, at the time, illegal in Mississippi.

- iii. Will you commit to applying *Obergefell* should a relevant case come before you?

Response: Yes

3. If confirmed, will you recuse yourself from any case where a reasonable person, knowing all the relevant facts, might question your impartiality, even if you personally believe you can be fair?

Response: In addressing the need to recuse in a case, I will abide by all laws, rules and judicial ethical canons.

- a. If confirmed, will you recuse yourself from cases involving individuals, organizations, or entities to which you or your family members have made political contributions or provided political support?

Response: Please see my response to 3

- b. If confirmed, will you recuse yourself from cases involving former clients, former law firms, or organizations with which you have had significant professional relationships?

Response: Please see my response to 3

- c. If confirmed, will you recuse yourself from cases involving personal friends, social acquaintances, or individuals with whom you have ongoing personal relationships?

Response: Please see my response to 3

- 4. If confirmed, will you commit to avoiding all *ex parte* communications about pending cases, including informal discussions at social events or professional gatherings?

Response: In addressing *ex parte* communications, I will abide by all laws, rules and judicial ethical canons.

- d. If confirmed, will you avoid discussing pending cases or judicial business with elected officials, political appointees, or political operatives?

Response: Please see my response to 4.

- e. If confirmed, will you commit to declining meetings or communications with lobbyists, advocacy groups, or special interests seeking to influence your judicial decisions?

Response: Please see my response to 4.

- f. If confirmed, will you refrain from making public statements about legal or political issues that could reasonably be expected to come before your court?

Response: Please see my response to 4.

- 5. If confirmed, will you commit to filing complete and accurate financial disclosure reports that include all required information about your financial interests and activities?

Response: In addressing financial disclosure reports, I will abide by all laws, rules and judicial ethical canons.

- g. If confirmed, will you decline all gifts from parties who might appear before your court or who have interests that could be affected by your judicial decisions?

Response: Please see my response to 5.

- h. If confirmed, will you decline privately funded travel, hospitality, or entertainment that could create an appearance of impropriety or special access?

Response: Please see my response to 5.

- i. If confirmed, will you ensure that any teaching, speaking, or writing activities comply with judicial ethics requirements and do not create conflicts with your judicial duties?

Response: Please see my response to 5.

6. The House Republican-authored budget reconciliation bill had included a provision that would have limited federal judges' ability to hold government officials in contempt. While the Senate Parliamentarian ruled that the provision violated the Byrd Rule, and it was, therefore, removed, it would have prohibited federal courts from issuing contempt penalties against officials who disobey preliminary injunctions or Temporary Restraining Orders if the party seeking the order did not provide financial security to cover potential future damages for wrongful enjoining.

The contempt power was first codified in law in the Judiciary Act of 1789. In 1873, the Supreme Court described it as "inherent in all courts" and "essential to the preservation of order in judicial proceedings and to the enforcement of the judgements, orders, and writs of the courts, and consequently to the due administration of justice." Yet House Republicans are seeking to exempt government officials from this key tool for judicial enforcement.

- a. Do you believe the contempt power is "essential . . . to the due administration of justice[?]"

Response: Yes

- b. Do you believe that federal judges should be limited in their ability to hold government officials who defy court orders in contempt?

Response: I would follow all rules and precedents relating to the issue of judicial contempt orders should a case implicating the issue come before me as a judge. Otherwise, consistent with the Code of Conduct and positions taken by prior nominees, it would be inappropriate for me, as a pending nominee, to comment on any subject of political controversy or to express a position regarding matters of public policy or any ongoing litigation.

7. If confirmed, you, like all other members of the federal bench, would have the ability to issue orders. On February 9, 2025, Vice President Vance posted on X that "[j]udges aren't allowed to control the executive's legitimate power." This raises an extremely concerning specter of Executive Branch defiance of court orders.

- a. If confirmed, would you have the ability to issue orders?

Response: Yes

- i. Would you have the ability to enforce those orders?

Response: Yes

- ii. What powers would you have to enforce those orders?

Response: There are various tools available to a trial court judge to ensure compliance with court orders. These include sanctions, civil and criminal contempt procedures, as well as lesser means such as status reports or regular court appearances to explain noncompliance.

- b. Does there exist a legal basis for federal Executive Branch officials to defy federal court orders? If so, what basis and in which circumstances?

Response: Orders are meant to be followed. Those unhappy with an order should request a rehearing, request a stay, or file an appeal. However, there are certain, very limited, circumstances where a party can raise a defense to compliance such as lack of jurisdiction or impossibility. *See, e.g., 17 Corpus Juris Secundum Contempt Sections 56-65.* Further, in some instances, defying a court order is necessary to appeal it. *See, e.g., Mohawk Industries, Inc. v. Carpenter, 558 U.S. 100, 111 (2009).* Also see 15B Charles Alan Wright & Arthur R. Miller, *Fed. Prac. & Proc. Juris.* (2nd ed.) Section 3914.23.1.

- c. Does there exist a legal basis for state officials to defy federal court orders? If so, what basis and in which circumstances?

Response: Please see my response to 7b

- d. What would make a court order unlawful?

Response: While the question is extremely broad, generally speaking, a court order could be “unlawful” if entered without jurisdiction as it would be void ab initio.

- i. What is the process a party should follow if it believes a court order to be unlawful?

Response: Please see my responses to Questions 7b-c

- ii. Is it ever acceptable to not follow this process? When and why?

Response: Please see my responses to Questions 7b-c

- 8. Were you in Washington, D.C. on January 6, 2021?

Response: No

- a. Were you inside the U.S. Capitol or on the U.S. Capitol grounds on January 6, 2021?

Response: No

Senator Mazie K. Hirono
Senate Judiciary Committee

Nominations Hearing
Questions for the Record for Robert Chamberlin

1. As part of my responsibility as a member of this committee to ensure the fitness of nominees, I ask each nominee to answer two initial questions:
 - a. **Since you became a legal adult, have you ever made unwanted requests for sexual favors, or committed any verbal or physical harassment or assault of a sexual nature?**

Response: No

- b. **Have you ever faced discipline or entered into a settlement related to this kind of conduct?**

Response: No

2. As a Mississippi state senator in 2004, you cosponsored SB2869, a bill to include “unborn children” in the definitions of assault and homicide in Mississippi’s criminal code. This included changing the definitions to expand the criminal code to conduct affecting unborn children “from conception until live birth.” This bill became law, and as a result, in Mississippi, a prosecutor can charge a person for damage to an embryo or fetus. This includes charging the mother of the embryo or fetus, and many mothers have in fact been charged.
 - a. **When deciding whether to cosponsor SB2869, did you consider how the bill would be implemented in practice?**

Response: Yes

- b. **When ruling on a case as a judge, will you be considering how your judicial opinions and decisions will be implemented in practice?**

Response: It is the role of a judge to evaluate claims and cases, to apply applicable law and precedent and decide such claims based on controlling law as applied to the facts of the particular case. With limited equitable exceptions, the practical consequences do not come into play. The law is to be applied faithfully and impartially. Cases should not be decided on personal views or preference for one party over the other. However, judges, especially district court judges, do need to be mindful that their decisions have real life consequences and are not just an exercise in academia.

- c. **At the time you decided to support and cosponsor this bill, what issues did you believe this bill would address?**

Response: I believe the language of the bill is self-explanatory as to the issues it was intended to address.

- d. **For each of the issues you believed this bill would address, how did you believe that enforcement would operate in practice?**

Response: Please see my response to Question 2c. Additionally, enforcement was the duty of prosecutors, not legislators.

- e. **At the time you decided to support and cosponsor this bill, what was your understanding of the mens rea required to convict someone under this bill? Does it require knowledge that a person is pregnant?**

Response: As a judicial nominee, it would be inappropriate to comment on what I might have thought the mens rea requirement was as a legislator. That was and is a judicial determination.

- f. **Has your understanding of the mens rea required to convict someone under this bill changed in the decades since the bill was passed?**

Response: Please see my response to Question 2e.

- g. **Did you anticipate that the law would primarily be enforceable against pregnant women?**

Response: No.

- h. **If not, how did you envision enforcement to operate against anyone other than the mother of the embryo or fetus**

Response: There are many ways in which the law could have been violated by men and women alike including instances of domestic violence against the mother.

3. While in the State Senate, you supported a bill that would make it illegal for municipalities to sue gun manufacturers, distributors, or dealers in most circumstances. As a judge, you will be deciding whether to hold parties liable for their actions. **What other industries did you support protecting from lawsuits as a state senator?**

Response: I disagree with the question's characterization that the bill referenced protected any industry from lawsuits. To my recollection, I have not supported legislation that "protected" industries from lawsuits. I would note that in a 2004 special session we did pass a tort reform legislative package.

4. In 2004, you supported an amendment to the Mississippi Constitution to prevent recognition of same-sex marriages performed in other states. You also supported a

resolution urging Congress to pass a federal constitutional amendment defining marriage as between one man and one woman. **Will you recuse yourself in any decisions involving the constitutionality of same-sex marriage?**

Response: In addressing the need to recuse in a case, I will abide by all laws, rules and judicial ethical canons.

5. Do you believe *Obergefell v. Hodges* was correctly decided?

Response: As numerous nominees have pointed out, it is generally improper to comment on the correctness of Supreme Court decisions except for the acknowledgement that they are binding precedent. There have been two exceptions to this general rule, *Brown* and *Loving*.

6. Do you believe *Brown v. Board of Education* was correctly decided?

Response: As numerous nominees have pointed out, it is generally improper to comment on the correctness of Supreme Court decisions except for the acknowledgement that they are binding precedent. There have been two exceptions to this general rule, *Brown* and *Loving*. *Brown* was correctly decided.

7. If you answered question 7 with a “yes” or “no” but did not similarly answer question 6, please explain how you determined you could answer question 7 but could not answer question 6.

Response: As numerous nominees have pointed out, it is generally improper to comment on the correctness of Supreme Court decisions except for the acknowledgement that they are binding precedent. There have been two exceptions to this general rule, *Brown* and *Loving*.

Nomination of Robert P. Chamberlin
United States District Court for the Northern District of Mississippi
Questions for the Record
Submitted September 10, 2025

QUESTIONS FROM SENATOR BOOKER

1. In 2025, you joined seven other Mississippi Supreme Court Justices to uphold a ruling that denied a transgender teen’s name change despite his parents’ consent. The majority opinion repeatedly identified and referred to the transgender teen as a female and affirmed the chancellor’s conclusion that “it [is] in the minor’s best interest to wait until [he] was more mature to decide to legally change [his] name as part of a gender transition.”¹
 - a. According to the majority’s reasoning, under what circumstances would a minor ever be able to legally change their name as part of a gender transition?

Response: The majority in *McKay* merely affirmed the decision of the chancery court judge which found that, under the applicable law, it was not in the best interest of the minor to grant the name change. In such instances, the chancery court judges “have discretion to grant or deny a minor’s requested name change” and may only grant such a name change where it is “clearly in the best interest of the child”. The chancellor also noted on the record the right of the minor to come back before the court when the minor was more mature. As to speculation as to what circumstances would warrant a name change in the future, it would be inappropriate to comment.

- b. According to the majority’s reasoning, under what circumstances would a non-transgender minor be able to legally seek a name change?

Response: Please see my response to Question 1a.

2. In 2000, you sponsored a Mississippi Senate bill that would prohibit same-sex couples from adopting in Mississippi and further would render invalid in Mississippi any adoption by same-sex couples that is valid in another jurisdiction.²

- a. Provide the policy justification for this legislative proposal.

Response: I did cosponsor SB 2916 during the 2000 Mississippi legislative regular session. This was a legislative enactment made in the representation of constituents from almost 25 years ago, not a judicial decision. This was over 10 years before the U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Obergefell v. Hodges*, 576 U.S. 644 (2015). The decision in *Obergefell* is binding precedent. If I am fortunate enough to be confirmed as a U.S. District Court Judge, I will faithfully apply *Obergefell*, as well as all binding

¹ *In re Petition of S.M.-B, a Minor, by and through Monica Lee McKay v. Mississippi State Bd. Of Health*, No. 2023-CA-01379-SCT (Miss. Apr. 17, 2025), available at <https://courts.ms.gov/images/Opinions/CO182514.pdf>.

² Mississippi Legislature, Senate Bill No. 2916, Regular Session 2000.

precedent of the U.S. Supreme Court as well as the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals where applicable.

3. In 2004, you sponsored a Mississippi Senate resolution to amend the state's constitution to define marriage as valid only between a man and a woman.³

- a. What are the facts and holding of the Supreme Court's 2015 decision in *Obergefell v. Hodges*?

Response: The *Obergefell* case involved a state's denial of a marriage license to a same sex couple. The Supreme Court held that the Fourteenth Amendment requires a state to license marriages of same sex couples under the same terms and conditions as marriages between two people of the opposite sex. The *Obergefell* decision is binding precedent recognizing a constitutional right to same sex marriage.

- i. What impact would the holding of *Obergefell* have on a proposal to amend a state's constitution to define marriage as only between a man and a woman?

Response: It would prohibit such an amendment. I would note that the legislation to which you refer was twenty years ago, over ten years before the *Obergefell* decision.

- b. Are there any circumstances in which a state should not recognize a same-sex marriage that was performed in another state?

Response: States are required to follow binding precedent of the U.S. Supreme Court including *Obergefell*.

4. The American Bar Association (ABA) Standing Committee on the Federal Judiciary has conducted extensive peer evaluations of the professional qualifications of a president's nominees to become federal judges for seven decades. This practice has endured through 18 presidential administrations, under Republican and Democratic presidents.

On May 29, 2025, Attorney General Pam Bondi ended this longstanding practice when she informed the ABA that, "[T]he Office of Legal Policy will no longer direct nominees to provide waivers allowing the ABA access to nonpublic information, including bar records. Nominees will also not respond to questionnaires prepared by the ABA and will not sit for interviews with the ABA."⁴

- a. Do you agree with AG Bondi that "the ABA no longer functions as a fair arbiter of nominees' qualifications and its ratings invariably and demonstrably favor nominees put forth by Democratic administrations"?

³ Mississippi Legislature, SCR No. 514, Regular Session 2004.

⁴ Letter from Attorney General Pam Bondi to William R. Bay, President, American Bar Association (May 29, 2025), <https://www.justice.gov/ag/media/1402156/dl?inline>.

Response: It would be inappropriate for me, as a judicial nominee, to express an opinion on the statements of any political figure or on any subject of political controversy.

5. How would you characterize your judicial philosophy?

Response: If confirmed, my judicial philosophy would be to faithfully carry out the duties of an Article III judge of an “inferior” court to the U.S. Supreme Court. In doing so, I would apply all precedents of the U.S. Supreme Court as well as any other applicable laws or rules binding on the court.

6. What do you understand originalism to mean?

Response: Originalism is a method of constitutional interpretation that requires a judge to apply the text of a constitutional provision according to its original public meaning.

7. Do you consider yourself an originalist?

Response: Constitutional provisions should be applied as written according to their original public meaning.

8. What do you understand textualism to mean?

Response: Similar to originalism, textualism refers to a method of interpreting a statute that requires a judge to interpret the text as written and apply it pursuant to the meaning it had at the time of enactment.

9. Do you consider yourself a textualist?

Response: Statutory language should be applied as written according to its meaning at the time of enactment.

10. Legislative history refers to the record Congress produces during the process of passing a bill into law, such as detailed reports by congressional committees about a pending bill or statements by key congressional leaders while a law was being drafted. Some federal judges consider legislative history when analyzing the meaning of a statute.

- a. If you are confirmed to serve on the federal bench, would you consult and cite legislative history to analyze or interpret a federal statute?

Response: Reliance on legislative history is unnecessary when a statute’s language is unambiguous. *Mohamad v. Palestinian Authority*, 566 U.S. 449, 458 (2012). To the extent it is necessary, in rare circumstances, to consult legislative history, the purpose should be to clear up ambiguity, not invite it. *Milner v. Dep’t of Navy*, 562 U.S. 562, 574 (2011). I would apply all binding precedent of the U.S. Supreme Court and the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals.

- b. Do you believe that congressional intent matters when interpreting a statute? Why or why not.

Response: Please see my response to Question 10a.

11. According to an academic study, Black men were 65 percent more likely than similarly-situated white men to be charged with federal offenses that carry harsh mandatory minimum sentences.⁵
- a. What do you attribute this to?

Response: This question refers to a topic which is subject to intense public discussion and debate. It also implicates issues which might come before me as a U.S. District Court Judge should I be so confirmed. Therefore, it would be inappropriate for me, as a judicial nominee, to comment further. If confirmed, there would be no room for bias in my courtroom.

12. A recent report by the United States Sentencing Commission observed demographic differences in sentences imposed during the five-year period studied, with Black men receiving federal prison sentences that were 13.4 percent longer than white men.⁶
- a. What do you attribute this to?

Response: Please see my response to Question 11.

13. What role do you think federal judges, who review difficult, complex criminal cases, can play in ensuring that a person's race did not factor into a prosecutor's decision or other instances where officials exercise discretion in our criminal justice system?

Response: Under 18 U.S.C. Section 3553 (a), judges must "avoid unwarranted sentence disparities among defendants with similar records who have been found guilty of similar conduct". Additionally, judges must always be aware of potential bias in sentencing. These are requirements I followed during my twelve years as a state trial court judge.

14. Do you believe it is an important goal for there to be demographic diversity in the judicial branch? Why or why not.

Response: Yes. Nobody should be excluded from the opportunity to serve as a judge based on race, ethnicity, sex, religion, or any other protected characteristic. Such diversity serves, among other things, to bring different viewpoints from differing backgrounds to the bench.

⁵ Sonja B. Starr & M. Marit Rehani, *Racial Disparity in Federal Criminal Sentences*, 122 J. POL. ECON. 1320, 1323 (2014).

⁶ U.S. SENTENCING COMM'N, DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES IN SENTENCING 2 (Nov. 2023), https://www.ussc.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/research-and-publications/research-publications/2023/20231114_Demographic-Differences.pdf.

15. Please indicate whether you have ever published written material or made any public statements relating to the following topics. If so, provide a description of the written or public statement, the date and place/publication where the statement was made or published, and a summary of its subject matter. Mere reference to the list of publications and statements provided in your Senate Judiciary Questionnaire is insufficient; provide specific responses.

If you have not disclosed a copy of the publication or a transcript of the statement to the Judiciary Committee, please attach a copy or link to the materials and please explain why you have not previously disclosed them.

- a. Abortion
- b. Affirmative action
- c. Contraceptives or birth control
- d. Gender-affirming care
- e. Firearms
- f. Immigration
- g. Same-sex marriage
- h. Miscegenation
- i. Participation of transgender people in sports
- j. Service of transgender people in the U.S. military
- k. Racial discrimination
- l. Sex discrimination
- m. Religious discrimination
- n. Disability discrimination
- o. Climate change or environmental disasters
- p. “DEI” or Diversity Equity and Inclusion

Response: As noted on my Senate Judiciary Questionnaire, I have spoken about rules of evidence, civil procedure, and other litigation matters. Those discussions may have touched on the issues listed above, but I do not remember any specifically doing so. For a full accounting of the topics I have addressed, please refer to the list of the list of publications and statements provided in your Senate Judiciary Questionnaire and the corresponding recordings or attachments. To the best of my knowledge, the answers provided on my Senate Judiciary Questionnaire and supplement disclose all publications and public statements.

16. Under what circumstances would it be acceptable for an executive branch official to ignore or defy a federal court order?

Response: Orders are meant to be followed. Those unhappy with an order should request a rehearing, request a stay, or file an appeal. However, there are certain, very limited, circumstances where a party can raise a defense to compliance such as lack of jurisdiction or impossibility. *See, e.g., 17 Corpus Juris Secundum Contempt Sections 56-65.* Further, in some instances, defying a court order is necessary to appeal it. *See, e.g., Mohawk Industries, Inc. v. Carpenter, 558 U.S. 100, 111 (2009).* Also see 15B Charles Alan Wright & Arthur R. Miller, *Fed. Prac. & Proc. Juris.* (2nd ed.) Section 3914.23.1.

- a. If an executive branch official ignores or defies a federal court order, what legal analysis would you employ to determine whether that official should be held in contempt?

Response: If such a scenario were to arise, I would first determine if noncompliance had in fact occurred. This may or may not require a hearing. If I found that noncompliance had occurred, I would likely require additional briefing and hold a hearing to determine the reason for noncompliance and what further action may be necessary.

- b. Is there any legal basis that would allow an executive branch official to ignore or defy temporary restraining orders and preliminary injunctions issued by federal district court judges? Please provide each one and the justification.

Response: Please see my response to Question 16.

17. Does the president have the power to ignore or nullify laws passed by Congress?

Response: The executive and legislative branch have clearly defined roles in our government as set forth in Article I and Article II of the Constitution, as well as the remainder of the Constitution and applicable precedent interpreting the Constitution. Any dispute as to the parameters of those powers are clearly issues which would have to be addressed by the judicial branch and, as a judicial nominee, it would be inappropriate for me to further comment.

18. Does the president have the power to withhold funds appropriated by Congress?

Response: Please see my response to Question 17.

19. Does the president have the power to discriminate by withholding funds against state or local jurisdictions based on the political party of a jurisdiction's elected officials?

Response: Please see my response to Question 17.

20. Does the Supremacy Clause of the U.S. Constitution establish that federal laws supersede conflicting state laws?

Response: Yes

21. Does the Fifth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution apply to non-citizens present in the United States?

Response: The Supreme Court has stated that "the Due Process Clause applies to all 'persons' within the United States, including aliens, whether their presence here is lawful, unlawful, temporary, or permanent." *Zadvydas v. Davis*, 533 U.S. 678, 693 (2001). The question in most cases is less about whether the doctrine of due process applies and more

about how much process is due. If confirmed, I will follow all binding precedent on the issue.

22. Is it constitutional for Congress to delegate to federal agencies the power to implement statutes through rulemaking?

Response: The issue of Congressional delegation to federal agencies is currently a hotly debated topic of public policy and legality. It is also subject to ongoing litigation. As such, as a judicial nominee, it would be improper for me to comment further.

23. Was *Brown v. Board of Education*, 347 U.S. 483 (1954), correctly decided?

Response: As dozens of nominees have said before, it is almost always improper for judicial nominees to give a thumbs-up or thumbs-down to Supreme Court precedent. Two exceptions to this general rule against opining on the merits of Supreme Court cases are *Brown* and *Loving*. I agree that both those decisions were correctly decided.

24. Is *Griswold v. Connecticut*, 381 U.S. 479 (1965), binding precedent? Please describe the facts and holding of this case.

Response: *Griswold* is binding precedent. It involved an appeal by individuals who were penalized for prescribing contraceptives, and the Court held that the statute violated a “right to privacy” that the Court interpreted to be within the Constitution.

25. Is *Lawrence v. Texas*, 539 U.S. 558 (2003), binding precedent? Please describe the facts and holding of this case.

Response: *Lawrence* is binding precedent. It involved an appeal by an individual penalized for engaging in certain sexual conduct, and the Court held that the statute penalizing engaging in that conduct violated the Constitution.

26. Is *Obergefell v. Hodges*, 576 U.S. 644 (2015), binding precedent? Please describe the facts and holding of this case.

Response: *Obergefell* is binding precedent. It involved a challenge to state statutes defining marriage as a union between one man and one woman. The Court held that the Constitution requires States to license a marriage between two people of the same sex.

27. Do you believe that President Biden won the 2020 election? Note that this question is not asking who was certified as president in the 2020 election.

Response: President Biden was certified as the winner of the 2020 presidential election and served as the 46th President of the United States. To the extent this question seeks to elicit an answer that could be taken as opining on the broader political or policy debate regarding the conduct of the 2020 presidential election or on statements by any political figure, my response, consistent with the position of prior judicial nominees when asked questions

regarding the 2020 election, is that it would be improper to offer any such comment as a judicial nominee. See Code of Conduct of U.S. Judges, Canons 3(A)(6), 5.

- a. Did Biden win a majority of the electoral vote in the 2020 election?

Response: Please see my response to Question 27.

- b. Do you believe that the results of the 2020 election, meaning the vote count, were accurate? If not, please provide why not and examples.

Response: Please see my response to Question 27.

28. The 22nd Amendment says that “no person shall be elected to the office of the President more than twice.”⁷

- a. Do you agree that President Trump was elected to the office of the President in the 2016 election?

Response: President Trump was certified as the winner of the 2016 election.

- b. Did Trump win a majority of the electoral vote in the 2016 election?

Response: Please see my response to Question 28(a).

- c. Do you agree that President Trump was elected to the office of the President in the 2024 election?

Response: President Trump was certified as the winner of the 2024 election.

- d. Did Trump win a majority of the electoral vote in the 2024 election?

Response: Please see my response to Question 28(c).

- e. Do you agree that the 22nd Amendment, absent a constitutional amendment, prevents President Trump from running for a third presidential term?

Response: Section 1 of the Twenty-Second Amendment states, in part, “No person shall be elected to the office of the President more than twice....” I have not reviewed any case law or other authorities addressing or interpreting this Amendment, nor formed an opinion on how it might apply to any particular facts. To the extent the question asks about political disputes, it would be improper for a judicial nominee to promise or forecast how he or she would rule in a case that might come before him or her

⁷ U.S. CONST. amend. XXII.

29. Has any official from the White House or the Department of Justice, or anyone else involved in your nomination or confirmation process, instructed or suggested that you not opine on whether any past Supreme Court decisions were correctly decided?

Response: No, except that I was advised that numerous nominees in prior hearings had opined on the correctness of *Brown* and *Loving*.

30. Have you spoken or corresponded with Elon Musk since November 2024? If yes, provide the dates, mode, and content of those discussions and communications.

Response: No

31. Have you spoken or corresponded with any member of the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) since November 2024? If yes, identify the member(s) and provide the dates, mode, and content of those discussions and communications.

Response: No

32. Have you spoken or corresponded with Stephen Miller since November 2024? If yes, provide the dates, mode, and content of those discussions and communications.

Response: No

33. Have you spoken or corresponded with Chad Mizelle since November 2024? If yes, provide the dates, mode, and content of those discussions and communications.

Response: No

34. Have you spoken or corresponded with Pam Bondi since November 2024? If yes, provide the dates, mode, and content of those discussions and communications.

Response: No

35. Have you spoken or corresponded with Todd Blanche since November 2024? If yes, provide the dates, mode, and content of those discussions and communications.

Response: No

36. Have you spoken or corresponded with Emil Bove since November 2024? If yes, provide the dates, mode, and content of those discussions and communications.

Response: No

37. Have you spoken or corresponded with Leonard Leo since November 2024? If yes, provide the dates, mode, and content of those discussions and communications.

Response: No

38. Have you—personally or through any of your affiliated companies or organizations, agents, or employees—provided financial support or other resources to any members of the Proud Boys or of the Oath Keepers for their legal fees or for other purposes? If yes, state the amount of financial support provided, dates provided, and for what purposes.

Response: No

39. Have you ever spoken or corresponded with any of the following individuals? If yes, provide the dates, mode, and content of those discussions and communications.
- a. Enrique Tarrio
 - b. Stewart Rhodes
 - c. Kelly Meggs
 - d. Kenneth Harrelson
 - e. Thomas Caldwell
 - f. Jessica Watkins
 - g. Roberto Minuta
 - h. Edward Vallejo
 - i. David Moerschel
 - j. Joseph Hackett
 - k. Ethan Nordean
 - l. Joseph Biggs
 - m. Zachary Rehl
 - n. Dominic Pezzola
 - o. Jeremy Bertino
 - p. Julian Khater

Response: No

40. Have you ever spoken or corresponded with any individuals convicted and later pardoned of offenses related to the January 6, 2021 attack on the U.S. Capitol? If yes, identify the individual(s) and provide the dates, mode, and content of those discussions and communications.

Response: No

41. Have you ever been demoted, terminated, or experienced any other adverse employment action?

Response: No

- a. If yes, please describe the events that led to the adverse employment action.

- b. If no, please affirm that, since becoming a legal adult, you have left each place of employment voluntarily and not subject to the request or suggestion of any employer.

I affirm that since becoming a legal adult I have left each place of employment voluntarily and not subject to the request or suggestion of any employer.

42. Federal judges must file annual financial disclosure reports and periodic transaction reports. If you are confirmed to the federal bench, do you commit to filing these disclosures and to doing so on time?

Response: Yes

43. Article III Project (A3P) “defends constitutionalist judges and the rule of law.” According to Mike Davis, Founder & President of A3P, “I started the Article III Project in 2019 after I helped Trump win the Gorsuch and Kavanaugh fights. We saw then how relentless—and evil—too many of today’s Democrats have become. They’re Marxists who hate America. They believe in censorship. They have politicized and weaponized our justice systems.”⁸

- a. Do you agree with the above statement?

Response: It would be inappropriate for me, as a judicial nominee, to comment on any public dispute or the opinion of any public figure.

- b. Have you discussed any aspect of your nomination to the federal bench with any officials from or anyone directly associated with A3P, or did anyone do so on your behalf? If yes, identify the individual(s) and provide the dates, mode, and content of those discussions and communications.

Response: No

- c. Are you currently in contact with anyone associated with A3P? If so, who?

Response: No

- d. Have you ever been in contact with anyone associated with A3P? If so, who?

Response: No

44. Since you were first approached about the possibility of being nominated, did anyone associated with the Trump Administration or Senate Republicans provide you guidance or advice about which cases to list on your Senate Judiciary Questionnaire (SJQ)?

Response: No

⁸ <https://www.article3project.org/about>

- a. If so, who? What advice did they give?

Response: Not Applicable

- b. Did anyone suggest that you omit or include any particular case or type of case in your SJQ?

Response: No

45. During your selection process did you talk with any officials from or anyone directly associated with the Article III Project, or did anyone do so on your behalf? If so, what was the nature of those discussions?

Response: No

46. During your selection process did you talk with any officials from or anyone directly associated with the Federalist Society, or did anyone do so on your behalf? If so, what was the nature of those discussions?

Response: No

47. List the dates of all interviews or communications you had with the White House staff or the Justice Department regarding your nomination.

Response: On November 7, 2024, I contacted U.S. Senator Roger Wicker and U.S. Senator Cindy Hyde-Smith, expressing my interest in being appointed to the vacancy on the United States District Court for the Northern District of Mississippi. On April 16, 2025, I was contacted by the White House Counsel's Office, which advised that I had been recommended as a potential nominee to the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Mississippi. On April 23, 2025, I interviewed with the White House Counsel's Office in Washington, D.C. Since June 5, 2025, I have been in contact with officials from the White House Counsel's Office and the Justice Department's Office of Legal Policy regarding the nomination. On August 11, 2025 I received a phone call from President Trump advising me of my nomination.

48. Please explain, with particularity, the process whereby you answered these written questions.

Response: I drafted my responses to each of these questions. I did so after reviewing the responses of several prior nominees. After receiving feedback from persons at the Office of Legal Policy at the U.S. Department of Justice, I finalized my answers and authorized them to be submitted to this committee. My answers are my own.