

ACTIONS TO TAKE DURING THE ELECTION SEASON:

- Contact the 2018 candidates and attend candidate forums in your voting district.
- Ask the questions listed below.
- If the candidates support the following questions, consider volunteering your time to work on their campaign.
- Alabama needs elected officials that are willing to publicly acknowledge that they will help reform the Alabama Child Custody Law and practices that's placing approximately 40,000 children at risk annually.

LAY THE FOUNDATION:

*What Would You Say is the Most Significant Social Problem of Today?

1. Approximately 40,000 children in Alabama are annually subjected to child custody determination (court orders that limit children to only 48-56 hours twice a month to visit with one of their parents – this equates to only 4 years out of 19 years of the child's minority).
2. Surprisingly, this is the main cause of one parent homes and one parent involvement with the children of Alabama.
3. There is no social science data or creditable research to support restricting children to only seeing one parent and their extended family 48-56 hours twice a month.
4. This practice places Alabama children at risk as, according to Alabama DHR and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, children with limited or no contact with one of their biological parents account for:
 - 63% of youth suicides
 - 71% of school dropouts
 - 75% juvenile drug abuse
 - 71% of teen pregnancies
 - 85% of youths in prison
 - 90% of homeless and runaway children
5. Alabama is currently ranked 42nd among the 50 states in overall child well-being, based on measures in four categories – (health, education, economic well-being, and family and community).
6. Did you know the state of Alabama received federal money and profits when children only have one parent directly involved in their day-to-day lives?

QUESTION FOR 2018 CANDIDATES:

1. If elected, would you support legislation that would strengthen and protect a child's relationship with both of their biological parents, unless evidence exists of harm to a child as a result of abuse, neglect, or abandonment of child(ren)?
2. In your opinion, should the government make child-rearing decisions for fit parents? If yes, please give 2-3 examples where such state/government involvement would be appropriate.
3. During the 2018 legislative session, the Alabama State Senate passed a bill called the Children's Equal Access Act stating "there shall be a rebuttable presumption that joint custody is in the best interest of the child. This rebuttable presumption may be overcome only by clear and convincing evidence, set forth in written findings of fact, that joint custody is not in the best interest of the child." A companion bill was filed in the Alabama State House of Representative with 35 co-sponsors. If elected would you support and vote during the 2019 legislative session on a similar bill? If no, please explain.

BENEFITS:

- Reduction of negative social impact on children by reducing juvenile detention and imprisonment, teen pregnancy, suicide, school dropout, drug use, and sex trafficking
- Reduction of court dockets, providing judges more time for criminal cases and domestic relations cases involving unfit parents and domestic violence
- Reduction of financial burden on taxpayers and increase in Alabama revenue