



## VOTER'S GUIDE

### LAW AMENDMENT

The Law Amendment gives urgently needed guidance to the Credentials Committee and Executive Committee that Southern Baptists still believe the Bible teaches that only men can be pastors. Due to their stated confusion and clear inaction regarding rising egalitarianism in the SBC, over 1,000 churches currently violate the clear teaching of Scripture and the BF&M by egalitarian practice. Vote yes on the Law Amendment. Vote no on any attempt to amend it, as any changes will cause at least a one-year delay.

Arguments against the Law Amendment are fallacious. Some say that the Law Amendment is unnecessary, since there are few women pastors in the SBC (false) or that the BF&M already requires male pastors (true, but misleading because the Credentials Committee has failed or delayed in taking action on egalitarian churches, and told the Convention in Anaheim (2022) that it lacked guidance to proceed with disfellowshipping egalitarian churches). The Credentials Committee has proceeded on a small handful of large profile churches, in an ad hoc and chaotic manner. Others say that the Law Amendment has the unintended consequences of transforming the SBC into a top-down denomination (an invalid argument, since enforcing membership criteria does not give the SBC more control over local churches). Meanwhile, most problematic, some opponents of the Law Amendment are in fact *bona fide* egalitarians.

The Law Amendment has been heavily scrutinized and debated for almost two years now. It should be passed immediately with no amendments.

For further information, consult the following resources:

<https://americanreformer.org/2023/04/mr-smith-goes-to-the-convention/>

<https://christoverall.com/article/concise/is-the-slippery-slope-actually-slippery-egalitarianism-and-the-open-and-affirming-position/>

<https://americanreformer.org/2023/06/how-many-female-pastors-are-in-the-sbc/>

<https://centerforbaptistleadership.org/a-taxonomy-of-bad-arguments-against-the-law-sanchez-amendment/>

<https://centerforbaptistleadership.org/curious-objections-to-the-law-amendment/>

<https://christoverall.com/article/longform/the-sbc-isnt-drifting-its-being-steered-a-sober-minded-response-to-emotional-sabotage/>

<https://centerforbaptistleadership.org/southern-baptists-and-the-law-amendment-salters-hall-redux/>

## **FINANCIAL TRANSPARENCY**

Rhett Burn's motion to instruct entities to provide 990-level disclosure is not just a suggestion; it's a necessity. It's essential to equip messengers to hold entities and trustees accountable. The motion will require SBC entities to comply with commonly accepted financial disclosure (without requiring any tax filing with the government). Since the EC has declined to recommend Burn's motion, Burns is likely to make a new motion along similar lines and then appeal any attempted referral to the Executive Committee.

The SBC's practices regarding financial transparency fall below standards for almost any other comparable organizations, including other Christian denominations and institutions. In the face of rising calls for financial transparency, including even popular calls for forensic audits of NAMB, the SBC has routinely stymied efforts for greater accountability. Supporters of Burns's amendment should vote for any new motion along similar lines, and support attempts to overrule any Executive Committee decision to refer such motion (any referral is likely to delay and ultimately kill any new motion).

**For further information, consult the following resources:**

<https://americanreformer.org/2024/02/lifting-the-fog-on-the-sbc-finances/>

<https://centerforbaptistleadership.org/baptist-cooperation-runs-on-trust-and-trust-demands-transparency/>

<https://centerforbaptistleadership.org/update-on-financial-transparency-efforts-in-the-sbc-will-messengers-get-a-vote-or-not/>

<https://americanreformer.org/2024/06/just-trust-us/>

## **ARITF RECOMMENDATIONS**

ARITF will request that the Messengers affirm their recommendations. While not all of ARITF's recommendations are objectionable, they are implicitly asking the Convention to affirm the creation of the Abuse Reform Commission (ARC), an entity with independent governance that will not be subject to the will of the messengers. The creation of the ARC and its funding violates the SBC's Business and Financial plan and undermines Baptist polity by creating a new entity that is outside messenger control and accountability.

ARITF's recommendations are written very imprecisely and as such, any affirmation (or denial) of ARITF's recommendations will leave the Executive Committee with significant discretion in the implementation of any further abuse reform related actions. ARITF's recommendations continue to include the fatally-flawed concept of a database that would include those who have been "credibly accused," and may be construed to bless or ratify the creation of the ARC.

**For further information, consult the following resources:**

<https://americanreformer.org/2022/06/the-sbc-sexual-abuse-report-and-its-consequences/>

<https://www.dailywire.com/news/southern-baptists-metoo-moment>

<https://thefederalist.com/author/whitehead-and-abbotoy/>

<https://centerforbaptistleadership.org/the-path-forward-on-abuse-reform-in-the-sbc/>

## **PROCEDURAL VOTES**

It is expected that the President will move for the convention to adopt a special procedural rule that allows opportunity for one messenger to speak for, and one member to speak against, any motion prior to the question being called. This rule would distort perceived acceptance of or opposition to various motions, and facilitate filibustering. Messengers should retain discretion to debate as time permits (or, in the alternative, call the question).

## **NEW MOTIONS**

It is likely that messengers will make a number of new motions relating to financial transparency, good governance/conflicts of interest and accountability for entities that are off-mission (i.e., the ERLC). Broadly, we recommend supporting these steps.