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**THE VOTER DISENFRANCHISEMENT AND RESTORATION OF VOTING RIGHTS
EXPLORATORY COMMITTEE
DECEMBER 21, 2015
ALABAMA STATE CAPITOL
MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA**

Members present were Ms. Darlene Biehl, Volunteer Crime Victim's Advocate, Minority Senate Leader and Alabama State Senator Linda Coleman; Mr. Michael Coleman, Executive Director of Hope Ministries; Mr. Jefferson Dunn, Commissioner Alabama Department of Corrections; Mr. Kenneth Glasgow, Pastor at the Ordinary People Society; Ms. Carol Hill, Registrar for the Shelby County Board of Registrars; Mr. Tim Jolley, Circuit Judge for the 27th Judicial Circuit; Mr. Cliff Walker, Chairman of the Alabama Board of Pardons and Paroles; Ms. Will Harrell, representing the American Civil Liberties Union; Mr. Win Johnson, representing Mr. Rich Hobson, Director of the Alabama Office of the Courts; and the Honorable John H. Merrill, Secretary of State of the State of Alabama. Absent from the meeting were Alabama State Representatives Chris England and David Faulkner and Alabama State Senator Cam Ward.

Also present were Mr. Ed Packard, Director of Elections for the Office of Secretary of State, and Judge Richard J. Laird, Chief Legal Counsel to the Secretary of State.

CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME

Secretary John H. Merrill called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and with a quorum present, the Commission transacted the following business to-wit:

CONSIDERATION OF AMENDMENTS

Secretary Merrill began the meeting with a brief discussion regarding the impetus of the committee and their objectives in meeting. He then called upon Mr. Ed Packard to lead the review of the documents supplied by various members of the committee.

Ed Packard – Began the discussion with Will Harrell from the American Civil Liberties Union to discuss the handout supplied by his office.

Will Harrell – Introduced and discussed handouts submitted by his office.

Ed Packard – Next Ed introduced Win Johnson of the Administrative Office of the Courts to review the items he had submitted for the committee to review.

Win Johnson – Discussed documents submitted before turning conversation and debate to the extent to which moral turpitude would be defined. (more specifically whether or not a constitutional amendment would be required).

Secretary Merrill – Narrows focus back to defining moral turpitude only in relation to election law. And directs members that the intent is to give a complete package to the legislative team that will carry the bill so that there are as few policy concerns as possible.

Senator Coleman - Concurred with Secretary Merrill in directing the members to be intentional about what laws they select because legislators will be hyper critical before passage.

Win Johnson – Begins discussion of historical aspects and reasoning of the term moral turpitude as it relates to Alabama law.

Secretary Merrill – Recognized John Pickens of Alabama Appleseed to give presentation to the group regarding history of the term in Alabama law.

Secretary Merrill – Posed the following question: With the exception of the 15 laws already included in the current law as requiring a pardon are there any that anyone would wish to add:

A group consensus was reached regarding the addition of Human Trafficking and a discussion of the inclusion of Terrorism followed but no conclusion was reached.

GROUP BRIEFLY RECESSED TO GET LUNCH AND DRINK BEFORE RETURNING TO MEETING

Following return from lunch presentation from pardons and paroles.

Win Johnson – Brought up importance of fees remaining a focal point and the idea that they might not get paid.

Extensive discussion followed showing the presence of some disagreement as to whether or not fines, fees, and court costs are an aspect of punishment or not, and whether or not they should be included in the requirements for reinstatement.

Ed Packard – Following the discussion Ed was asked to give a synopsis or recommendation based upon what he had heard from the committee. That list is as follows:

1. Term of Sentence – including parole or probation
2. Restitution Payments Complete
3. Right to Vote – Auto restored following completion of One and Two
4. Fees & Fines – will be paid as prescribed by the judge

Secretary Merrill – After Ed outlined his point above Secretary Merrill then informed the committee that draft legislation would be created before the next meeting for the members to review.

A conversation then ensued which resulted in the creation of a subcommittee lead by Ed Packard to review the full list of crimes and to determine if any concerns or discrepancies exist. The subcommittee members are as follows:

1. Ed Packard
2. Carol Hill
3. Judge Tim Jolley
4. Win Johnson
5. Pastor Glasgow
6. Senator Linda Coleman
7. Judge Joel Laird

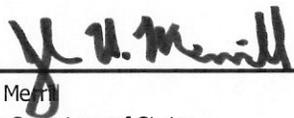
SECRETARY MERRILL CONCLUDED THE MEETING BY ESTABLISHING THAT BEFORE THE NEXT MEETING DRAFT LEGISLATION WOULD BE PREPARED AND SUBMITTED FOR THE COMMITTEES REVIEW.

ADJOURNMENT

Before adjourning the committee decided to reconvene January 20, 2016 from 2:00 p.m. through 4:00 p.m. Lunch will not be provided for this meeting.

With no other business before the body the Commission adjourned at 1:30 p.m.

X



John H. Merrill
Alabama Secretary of State