

Candidate Survey Responses for February 9, 2021 Special Election

Each election year beginning in 1980 we have surveyed candidates for public office regarding various life issues so that Oklahoma's pro-life citizens may have accurate information about candidates' positions on these important questions. Oklahomans For Life is our statewide right-to-life organization, affiliated with the National Right to Life Committee. In anticipation of the Special Election on Tuesday, February 9, 2021, Oklahomans For Life asked the twelve questions below of candidates for Oklahoma State Senate District 22. The counties or partial (marked by an asterisk) counties in each district are indicated after the district number. On each question, a "yes" answer indicates agreement with the position of Oklahomans For Life. The abbreviation after a candidate's name indicates party affiliation (Republican, Democrat, Libertarian, or Independent).

The candidates' answers to each of the twelve questions are indicated.

Oklahomans For Life 2021 Candidate Survey

On each question, a "yes" answer indicates agreement with the position of Oklahomans For Life.

Question 1: Upon reversal of the U.S. Supreme Court's *Roe v. Wade* decision, will you vote for a law that would protect the lives of unborn children and prohibit abortion except to prevent the death of the mother?

Yes ____ No ____

Question 2: If efforts to enact such a law failed, will you vote for a law that would prohibit abortion except when necessary to prevent the death of the mother, or when the pregnancy is the result of forcible rape (reported to law enforcement authorities within seven days), or when the pregnancy resulted from an act of incest committed against a minor (with the perpetrator reported to law enforcement authorities)?

Yes ____ No ____

Question 3: Will you oppose attempts to repeal existing pro-life laws, even by entities purporting to oppose abortion, except as part of a comprehensive restructuring of pro-life laws designed both to withstand court scrutiny and to save the lives of unborn children as supported by Oklahomans For Life?

Yes ____ No ____

Question 4: Will you support legislation to require shared decision-making between a guardian and an adult ward with disabilities regarding the withholding or withdrawal of life-preserving medical care?

Yes ____ No ____

Question 5: Will you support state funding of approximately one million dollars per year for a Public Guardianship program to advocate for vulnerable persons at risk for denial of life-preserving care, with safeguards to ensure that program guardians have no conflict of interest involving a medical provider, insurance company, or other entity or person not fully supportive of the right of vulnerable persons to receive life-preserving care?

Yes ____ No ____

Question 6: There is currently an aggressive drive underway to legalize euthanasia and assisted

suicide across the United States. Causing the starvation or dehydration deaths of persons with disabilities and of incompetent patients who are deemed to be a burden on others or to have a diminished “quality of life” is the euthanasia movement’s interim goal while they seek eventual public acceptance of killing by lethal injection or by lethal overdose of controlled substances/dangerous drugs. Oklahoma’s Hydration and Nutrition for Incompetent Patients Act protects incompetent persons who have not directed that they be deprived of food and water so they will not be victims of death by starvation or dehydration. Will you oppose any attempt to repeal or weaken this protective law?

Yes ____ No ____

Question 7: Oklahoma’s Nondiscrimination in Treatment Act requires that a health care provider shall not deny to a patient a life-preserving health care service the provider provides to other patients, and the provision of which is directed by the patient or a person authorized to make health care decisions for the patient: 1) On the basis of a view that treats extending the life of an elderly, disabled, or terminally ill individual as of lower value than extending the life of an individual who is younger, nondisabled, or not terminally ill; or 2) On the basis of disagreement with how the patient or person authorized to make health care decisions for the patient values the tradeoff between extending the length of the patient’s life and the risk of disability. Will you oppose any attempt to repeal or weaken this protective law?

Yes ____ No ____

Question 8: Oklahoma law protects against the involuntary denial of life-saving medical treatment by requiring that if a health-care provider’s refusal to comply with a decision made by or on behalf of a patient to receive life-saving medical treatment would, in reasonable medical judgment, be likely to result in the patient’s death, then the health-care provider must provide the life-saving treatment pending transfer of the patient to a willing provider. Will you oppose any attempt to repeal or weaken this protective law?

Yes ____ No ____

Question 9: Oklahoma’s advance directive (living will) law recognizes the particular importance of food and water. In order to ensure truly informed consent, our law requires a separately-initialed paragraph in an advance directive in order for artificial administration of food and water to be rejected. Some proposals have been made that would, instead, combine food and water with “medical treatment” such as ventilators or surgery, so that choosing to forego life-sustaining medical treatment would be assumed to mean the individual wanted to die by starvation and dehydration. In order to avoid confusion and protect individuals who expect to die from their underlying illness or injury, not from starvation or dehydration, will you vote against any bill that would repeal or weaken the existing requirement for a separately-initialed provision in an advance directive to indicate the rejection of food and water?

Yes ____ No ____

Question 10: Will you oppose the legalization of lethal prescriptions or lethal injections to intentionally kill an innocent person or to “assist” someone in committing suicide (“active euthanasia”)?

Yes ____ No ____

Question 11: Mothers are often given information heavily favoring abortion when given a diagnosis that their unborn child may have Down Syndrome. Will you support a law requiring that up-to-date,

evidence-based information about life-affirming resources for families with a Down Syndrome child be given to a mother who receives such a diagnosis?

Yes ____ No ____

Question 12: Oklahoma’s Supreme Court has arbitrarily struck down as “unconstitutional” several pro-life laws, including laws which in other states have survived federal court challenges. The Oklahoma Supreme Court has become so hostile to the right to life that, when the abortion industry challenges Oklahoma’s pro-life laws, they very seldom file suit in federal court, where they would most likely lose, but rather in state court, to give the Oklahoma Supreme Court the opportunity to strike down the laws. Given the fact that the state Constitution authorizes the Legislature to limit, by statute, the tenure of current state Supreme Court justices by enacting a mandatory retirement age, and given the fact that 32 other states impose a mandatory retirement age on their states’ Supreme Court justices, will you support a law to establish a mandatory retirement age for Oklahoma Supreme Court justices?

Yes ____ No ____

Candidate responses are below.

STATE SENATE

(To learn your Senate District #, go to our website www.OkForLife.org and click on “Find Your Legislators,” then enter your address and scroll down to the photo of your current state senator under “State Senate.” The number just below your senator’s photo is your Senate district number. Or you could get your district number by phoning your County Election Board and telling them your address. Half of the Senate is up for election every two years. Odd-numbered districts are up for election this year.)

			Question Number												
			Party	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
District 22 - Oklahoma															
JAKE	A.	MERRICK	Rep	yes	-	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
KERI		SHIPLEY	Rep	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
MOLLY		OOTEN	Dem	did not respond to survey											
DYLAN		BILLINGS	Dem	did not respond to survey											

