



## AR State Republican Candidates Addressed HSV Residents – 2022

### Description

On March 31, at the second part of the Hot Springs Village Republican Primary Candidate Forum, Saline County candidates addressed HSV residents. This report is not a transcription.

The candidates at this portion of the meeting include:

Doyle Webb, Lieutenant Governor Candidate

John Thurston, Incumbent Candidate for Secretary of State

Eddie Joe Williams, Secretary of State Candidate

Doc Washburn, Arkansas Governor Candidate

Mark Lowery, State Treasurer Candidate

Bill Sample, Incumbent Candidate for AR Senate

Matt McKee, State Senate Candidate

Mary Bentley, Incumbent Candidate for Arkansas House

### Doyle Webb, Lieutenant Governor Candidate

“I’ve been coming to the Village since 1982 when I was the Saline County Republican Chairman. Most of you know me as the state Republican Chairman.”

Webb was the longest-serving state Republican Chairman in the nation (12 years).

“I am the leader of the Republican Revolution – to change Arkansas from a dark blue state to a bright red state.”

“I did have a real-life at one time. I practiced law for 25 years [in Benton], married my law school

sweetheart, Barbara Webb, who is now on the Arkansas Supreme Court.”



**Doyle Webb, Lieutenant Governor Candidate**

“After I left the practice of law and running residential and commercial real property – my family even owned a flower shop – I decided I needed to get into politics. I was called by the Holy Spirit. I ran for Saline County Justice of the Peace and I was elected. I was the first Republican elected in Saline County since 1874.”

“When you are the first Republican elected in a place like that where everybody is Democrats, they say, ‘we will never vote for anything that a blankety-blank Republican proposes’. So my first ordinance was that every meeting would begin with a prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance. And I want to tell you, I used to be 6’4? and they beat me down, but I beat them. When you are in that situation, you learn that you either surrender or fight. And I chose to fight.”

Moving on to the Senate, Webb was one of seven Republicans out of 35 in the Senate, with eleven Republicans in the House out of 100. They passed the first ban on partial-birth abortion in Arkansas.

Webb served as Chief of Staff for Lieutenant Governor Rockefeller for five years. After that, Webb returned home to practice law again.

“This guy by the name of Barrack Husein Obama got elected President. Barbara said, ‘Doyle, what are you going to do about that?’ I said, ‘every little boy in Arkansas dreams of being the Republican State Chairman. Ha ha ha.’ “

In 2008, Webb was elected as 2008 Republican State Chairman. He found the Republican party to be broke both spiritually and financially. They had a plan and elected candidates and are now the Arkansas majority party.

**What is a major challenge of the office you seek and how would you address it?**

“I think a major challenge of the office of Lieutenant Governor, which is different than a Lieutenant Governor in Texas – there are two constitutional duties. One is to preside over the Senate. The other is to be the Governor in the event the Governor is not capable of serving. I think I have been blessed by being the Republican Chairman. I helped elect every Republican that is in the legislature, in Congress

in constitutional office. I think Lieutenant Governor is a unique office in that it is a hybrid. It is both an executive office and a legislative office. You are an executive that sits in the legislature. I have a unique ability and opportunity to help mediate battles between the Governor and the legislature. I had to do that in the party. Believe it or not, the Republican Party is not always unified. My challenge would be to meditate, to work together, to try and bring a true conservative Republican government into Arkansas.

### **What separates you from your primary opponents?**

“I have five good Republican opponents. What separates me is I have that experience, I both served in the legislative and the executive branch, like the hybrid Lieutenant Governor. I have also served in the office with a great Lieutenant Governor Win [Winthrop] Rockefeller. I worked with him for five years or 1,500 days. I prepared him every day for every matter that would come up in the Senate and for every person that would walk in the door. More importantly, on two crises that faced our state. One where Governor Jim Guy Tucker refused to resign. We were gathered in the House chamber, ready to hear Governor Huckabee’s State when we learned that he had left the Capitol, taken his state police unit with him and barricaded himself in the mansion, and refused to resign. Lieutenant Governor Huckabee called me and said, ‘Doyle, what can we do to get him out of office.’”

“Fast forward to 911. Governor Huckabee was out of state, and Lieutenant Governor Rockefeller at the time was Governor. Lieutenant Governor Rockefeller called me and said, ‘Doyle, our country has just been attacked by terrorists. Governor Huckabee is out of state and I am the Acting Governor. What authority do I have to be the Acting Governor? What can I do to keep the people safe?’”

“The two times that our state has faced crises in the last few years, the Acting Governor, or Lieutenant Governor, has called on me for my advice, ‘what can we do?’ “

“I’ve served in the office for 1,500 days. I served the party for 12 years. If there is a better person qualified to serve in that office, I would tell you to vote for them. But I am the best-qualified person.”

### **John Thurston, Rerunning for Secretary of State**

“I am John Thurston. I am currently your Secretary of State and its been an absolute honor to serve you this first term.”

Thurston said he has been coming to HSV since the early '90s when he had a summer job on Coronado Golf Course.

He entered politics in 2010 when he ran because Obama was in office. “I began to see the way the country was going. I was in the ministry for 13 years before running for office. If you would have asked me 15 years ago what I would be doing in 2022. I would have told you ministry. Went to Bible School. Was a licensed minister. That’s what I was going to do. But I was frustrated. I said I am going to run for office. Like Doyle, every little boy wants to be Land Commissioner, too.”



John Thurston, Incumbent Candidate for Secretary of State

He was the first Republican elected to Commissioner of State Lands in Arkansas. After serving in that position for eight years, he ran for Secretary of State and won. His main goal as Secretary of State was to fulfill all the statutory responsibilities of the office. He also wanted to make it difficult to cheat.

“People talk about January 6. They talk about the protest. They talk about what happened at the Capitol and I do not condone or support what happened to our nation’s Capitol. But we forget, what the protest was really all about. It was about the election being stolen. They felt like it was. Well, Arkansas wasn’t exempt. There were lawsuits in those states that changed their election process – the ballot harvesting, the drop boxes, the vote by mail. Arkansas was in a lawsuit as well. A lawsuit was filed and because of the wisdom of God, a statement that I released, that lawsuit never saw the light of day in the courtroom. I would put our election system and our process up against anyone in the state.”

“Election Integrity is my main objective. We had record turnout in the Presidential election, here in a pandemic and Trump received more votes in that election than he did in the one previously. And I think that is because we have good elections here in Arkansas.”

**What is a major challenge of the office you seek and how would you address it?**

“The National Heritage Foundation” is a Conservative Think Tank that ranked Arkansas number four in the nation in the area of election integrity. That is good news. My goal is going to continue to be focused on that. That’s the main issue to continually focus on. Cyber-security – for the first time in state history, we have a cyber-security specialist on staff. For the first time in state history, on election night, near the primary and presidential election, we had the Department of Homeland and the FBI were on site at the capitol with us, on election night helping monitor cyber-security. They were in communication with their counterparts across the nation. That’s the main, most important thing is election integrity.”

**What separates you from your primary opponents?**

“I respect every candidate that’s running for this office, whether he is the Republican opponent or it’s the Democrats...But in this particular moment in Arkansas history, in this race, I’m the only one that

has actually run a constitutional office. And I am the only one that has actually been Secretary of State, that is running for this office. I've had my metal tested. I mentioned record turnout. I mentioned we were in a pandemic. I mentioned the lawsuits. There is so much that we faced during the last election cycle and I've had my metal tested and this is not the time to change the election division or who's in leadership because the next presidential election is going to be bigger than the last one. That is not to belittle any of the other candidates. It is just to simply point out that I am the most experienced."

"Thank you so much. Appreciate your vote."

### **Eddie Joe Williams, Secretary of State Candidate**

"My name is Eddie Joe Williams. I am running for Secretary of State. I never miss the opportunity to ask for your vote...I don't take it for granted."

Williams has run in eight elections and spent 40 years working full-time for the Union Pacific Railroad. "I am the epitome of a citizen legislature. He retired a few years ago. "Managed at a high level. Managed at one time ran a customer service center of over 600 customer service reps. I've managed over 1,000 trains a day. I know complex issues and how to manage those final root cause analyses and deal with them."

"A little bit about my family and who I am. I've been married to my lovely wife DeLona. She is here..."

The Williams have four daughters and 11 grandchildren.

Williams began his political career serving as a City Councilperson. After that he was elected as the Mayor of Cabot. At that point in time, he was invited to HSV to consider a job as the Village Manager. Although he had a long conversation with HSV, it didn't work out, but "for the better, I went on to become a Senator." Spending eight years in the Senate, and was then chosen by President Trump to serve for three and a half years as his Energy Advisor. "I like to say, 'gas was \$1.69 when we left.' I wish he was still our President, to be honest with you."



### **Eddie Joe Williams, Secretary of State Candidate**

“It was an honor to work for him for three and a half years. We helped set energy policy throughout the United States.”

“I want to serve you as your next Secretary of State. It’s not easy when you are running against an incumbent. You have to have a very good reason...We are faced with some very difficult decisions to be made and we need good, responsible people who have managed at that level. I’ve done that. John’s talking about, he is the only one that ran a constitutional office. Well, I put their budget together. I approved the budgets. I worked for eight years as Chair of State Agencies. All of the agencies came under my preview for the last six years I was Chair of State Agencies.”

### **What is a major challenge of the office you seek and how would you address it?**

“First thing. I received a letter here a while back from Judicial Watch...It said, ‘we’re in trouble in the state of Arkansas. We’re about to be sued because we have allowed people who have died, who moved out of the state to continue on our voter rolls. They’ve given us 90 days. I don’t know if we submitted a plan for that or not, but we’re about to be sued. We’re one of the worst in the United States for the potential of voter fraud. I will work tirelessly, tirelessly to replace that process. Make sure that if someone passes or moves out of the state of Arkansas, you are off the voter roll. You become inactive. So if you try to vote, it’s going to run a flag up. That is an important thing in the State of Arkansas, for me to meet and immediately address.”

### **What separates you from your primary opponents?**

“My work experience. I am 67 years old. I started with the railroad as a laborer, cleaning toilets, and washing windows. When I retired I was Regional Director of Transportation. I ran the entire eastern part of the United States.”

“Why did that happen? Because I was the best toilet cleaner there was. Somebody noticed. “

“Bill Sample and I served together. He’ll tell you I am the guy that starts early and stays late. There are major issues. I promise you this – if I am elected the first thing I will do is hire back all the Republicans that were fired almost four years ago out of that office. We need good, Godly, right-leaning people in the Secretary of State’s office. That is one of the main reasons that I am running for Secretary of State. Thank you and God bless you.”

### **Doc Washburn, Arkansas Governor Candidate**

“I’ve been in talk radio for years and years and every once in a while, somebody will say, ‘man, you ought to run for whatever’. I always say, ‘nope. You have the wrong guy. I am not cut out for that. I do a talk show. I’m not a politician. When Sarah Huckabee Sanders endorsed John Bozeman and French Hill for re-election on her Facebook page a couple of months ago, my phone started ringing because people noticed hundreds of negative comments. How can you endorse these people who stabbed your boss in the back? Who said horrible things about Donald Trump, who put you on the map?”

“Again, I said, ‘no guy. I am not cut out for that. I’m a talk show host.’ Jan Morgan, who is challenging Senator Bozeman for the Republican nomination for Senate – she wasn’t taking no for an answer. She

said, 'look, you don't understand what is going on. We're about to lose our country. We need good people like you to stand up and run for office. You need to talk to your wife and pray about it.'

"Well, when you tell a Christian to talk to their wife and pray about something, what am I supposed to say? No?"

"Okay, Jan. All right."

"We talked about it and prayed it. She said, 'this is way over my head. I trust your judgment.'"

"Well, I didn't trust my own judgment. There is a proverb that says, 'there's wisdom in the abundance of counselors.' I met with ten or eleven people in a conference room in a church in North Little Rock the next evening. Two main questions I remember."

"One is, cause I got fired from doing talk radio from not getting the vaccination. I've been doing podcasts since then."

"One question was, 'would this be a publicity stunt just to get publicity for podcast? Or would you actually be trying to win?'"

"I said, 'No, if I run for Governor, it is to win.'"

"The second question was, 'what would your top priority be?'"



**Doc Washburn, Arkansas Governor Candidate**

"I said, 'Glorify God. Because we are supposed to glorify God in everything we do.'"

"Jan Morgan was at the meeting. When she heard that, she said, 'That's what I've been waiting to hear.'"

“At the end of two and a half hours, it was unanimous. Everybody was like, ‘We hope you’ll do this.’

“My friend, Wayne Beach, gave me a \$100 that evening and said, ‘Well, if you decide not to run, just take me out to dinner sometime.’”

“I was scheduled to speak to the Saline County Republican Women’s Club the next evening. I talked about what I thought it meant, that Sarah’s getting all these comments – people complaining she’s won’t answer questions. She won’t talk about issues. What it means that she endorsed French Hill and John Bozeman, who said horrible things about Donald Trump. And what it means that when she was endorsed by the Governor, she talked about what a great job he had been doing.”

Arkansas legislators passed a bill making it illegal for children to be sterilized – illegal for eight and nine-year-olds to get puberty blockers. Hutchinson vetoed this bill. And she thinks Hutchinson is doing a great job.

“Forget about all the small businesses they shut down back in 2020. I don’t know how you can be from the state and be that out of touch.”

Washburn told the Saline County Republican Women’s Club that it costs \$15,000 to file to run for Governor as a Republican. “If the Lord provides money, I am going to file. I am running.” They started contributing that evening and even though it took us a while to set it up for people to donate online, we got more than enough money to file and I became an official candidate for Governor.”

**What is a major challenge of the office you seek and how would you address it?**

“The major challenge is the fact that Walmart and the Chamber of Commerce feel like they can continue to run this state and I’m not going to put up with it. That is the major challenge.”

“Low prices every day and give a lot of people jobs – that’s great. But it is about time that somebody steps up and says, ‘The Walton Family Foundation is not going to be able to shove their liberal ideology down our throats anymore. This is what has been going on for years and years and years. We’ve got a lot of conservatives in the legislature who want to get something done, want to do the right thing. But if Walmart says, ‘Oh, no, no, no, no...’ That is why Asa vetoed the bill to protect eight and nine-year-olds from being sterilized with these puberty blockers and then goes on Tucker Carlson’s show and lied about it. The Walton Family Foundation and the Chamber of Commerce and several other corporate interests in this thing, ‘we don’t want to discriminate against our eight and nine-year-old transgenders.’”

“It’s evil. The major challenge is we don’t wrestle in flesh and blood, but in spiritual powers and principalities, high places. Something like that is evil. Just like when Asa did this COVID-19 Townhall in Siloam Springs and people were yelling at him because their loved ones were going to the hospital and they were refusing to treat them for COVID-19. He said, ‘well of course they get therapeutics. Isn’t that right? Hospital Administration says, ‘not presently’. And nothing changed. It’s evil.”

“We need to take care of people...Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.”

**What separates you from your primary opponent?**



“I am actually willing to talk about issues. People keep on saying, ‘well, are you going to challenge Sarah to a debate?’ I said, ‘I would be happy to debate her. But she can’t afford to debate me. There are too many questions she can’t answer.’”

“Sarah, do you believe the election was stolen? Okay, then why were you fundraising with your good buddy, Mike Pence, in Indiana a few months ago?”

“ Sarah, do you believe in vaccine mandates?’ Well no, she doesn’t believe in vaccine mandates from the government. But she doesn’t have a problem with company-enforced vaccine mandates. In her mind, that is free-market capitalism.”

“I think it is wrong for Walmart to tell their employees at their home office in Bentonville, ‘you got to get the vaccine.’ I think it is wrong for Tyson to tell people, ‘you got to get the vaccine.’ I think it is wrong for Walmart to tell their vendors, ‘oh, y’all got to be vaccinated, too.’ We’ve been digging into her contributions. Ninety percent of which are either from PACs or people outside of this state. A lot of liberal Democrat political operatives in places like California contribute to her. Now, why is that? There are a lot of things she can’t talk about because she doesn’t want to upset the applecart.”

### **Mark Lowery, State Treasurer Candidate**

“I am State Representative Mark Lowery and am running for State Treasurer. I’ve been in the legislature for five terms.”

This is his 5th term on the Education Committee and his second term as Chairman of the House Insurance and Commerce Committee (HICC). The HICC oversees banking, investments, real estate, and anything related to finance and commerce.

“You may know me on a bill that I am very proud of. In 2017, I was the lead sponsor for voter ID in Arkansas. I think the only reason I was on the front of the line to sponsor that bill is that I was crazy enough to believe that we could pass a bill that takes a supermajority. A lot of legislators only want to take on those bills where they only have to have 51 votes. We had to have 67 votes to pass that bill and we passed it overwhelmingly.”

“Last spring we also passed tough legislation related to absentee ballots and how those are processed and also gave more power to the State Board of Election Commissioners to be able to investigate, to use the Arkansas state police to investigate complaints.”

“The Heritage Foundation said that the reason we have the number four ranking is because of all of that legislation we passed last January. So you can thank your Legislators both House and Senate, for that.”



**Mark Lowery, State Treasurer Candidate**

"I've always taken on the tough issues. I've not been afraid of them. Voter ID was really not that tough a lift. But it certainly was controversial. I took a lot of hits. In the last session, I also tried to take on banning Critical Race Theory from our schools. Unfortunately, we were not able to get that bill passed because superintendents were not telling the truth when they told Legislators that Critical Race Theory is not in our schools."

"I also asked the tough questions about why are school districts not being able to educate their children above the 30% reading level. Less than 30% are reading at grade level. They said, 'we're not getting enough money.'"

"I asked the tough questions and found out that Arkansas school districts were sitting on \$1.6 billion that they were not spending on their kids. We passed a law that sets a cap on how much they can carry over from year-to-year."

Lowery said that the reason he brings up non-Treasurer issues is that they are issues that tell you that he will fight for you. "I will ask the tough questions. You can trust me to not just take a 'no' or not just take a 'well, we're not really sure why it's that way.' I listen to you. I take your phone calls. Matter of fact, some of the best legislation I've ever sponsored came [about] because constituents contacted me from around the state and said, 'why isn't this the case? Isn't there a law?' I said, 'well, there should be a law.' I will tell you a little bit more in the questions that follow that tell you how that fighter instinct I have will help you in the Treasurer's office."

**What is a major challenge of the office you seek and how would you address it?**

"I think the major challenge is that my opponent is, for instance, is going around bragging about the

fact that Arkansas has \$1.2 billion in reserves. I don't think that is something we should be bragging about when our Arkansans are suffering from 8% inflation, 50% higher fuel costs, and having more and more difficulty making ends meet. The challenges that we see coming forward are, 'what are we going to do in an accelerated way to give more ease and make sure that there is more money in your pocket from the beginning. Not taking it in the state coffers and saying, 'well, I guess we can give some of it back.'"

"The other thing is, we have to be careful to not invest in this ESG. I don't know if you are familiar with it, but you can only invest in companies that are environmentally, socially, or globally competent. We need to invest in companies that are making the best return for the state of Arkansas. I pledge to you that I will do that."

### **What separates you from your primary opponents?**

"I met with the current Treasurer, Dennis Milligan, who is term-limited, by the way, don't worry, I am not running against Dennis. He is running for Auditor. I asked him if Arkansas was invested in Blackrock. If you are not familiar with Blackrock, they are the force behind the Region's Smart Program that would enter into more and more eminent domain in the delta and they also are invested in companies that do business with the Communist Chinese Military. I said, 'Dennis, I hope that we are not invested.' As of March 1, the state Treasurer's office disinvested from Blackrock and I will continue that."

"The more important issue is that when you say that you are a fiscal conservative, your voting record ought to speak for you. My opponent in 2019 voted for seven out of seven tax increases. I can tell you right now, that I've lost count of how many tax increases I've voted against. The American Conservative Union gave me an award for Conservative Achievement because I did hold the line on fiscal restraint and also making sure that more money is in your pocket."

"Thank you so much for the opportunity to be with you today. I appreciate your vote."

### **Bill Sample, Incumbent Candidate for AR Senate (Dist. 6)**

This position is for both Garland and Saline County.

"Thank you all for coming out. I am going to ask you to vote for me. I have never failed to ask anyone to vote for me and never failed to say 'thank you' for voting for me because it is a very big privilege for me to serve you."

"I was in business in this community for 40 years. I have had the honor of serving you both in the house and in the senate and I would like to continue doing that. I've got some things that we haven't finished yet that I would like to take and finish up on. But there are other matters we've got to look into."

“Right now, this district in this community is facing a big situation. We’re about to go from a good 911 system that has two 911 centers to one. The reason they are wanting to do that is that they want to have one 911 center in every county. Well, Garland County is a county of 100,000 plus population. But on any given day, there is about 200,000 or 250,000 here with the lakes, with the casinos, with the national park. I have been working very diligently with both the City Manager and the County Judge and all of the other representatives and senators to try to make sure that we continue to have two 911 centers.”

“Also, there is another thing that we are experiencing that we’ve all worked on – just trying to fix the old Army/Navy Hospital...The state of Arkansas pulled out from using that building and now it has just been occupied by homeless people. They are tearing that building up. They caught one two weeks ago that had set up shop there, was actually doing business there. He had cut down 800 pounds of copper out of that building. The worst thing about it was that he was using the tools that we left there – the tools that could go back to inventory and be used in other purposes for other educational purposes.”



**Bill Sample, Incumbent Candidate for AR Senate (District 6)**

“We also have some road issues that we have to take care of.”

“Thank you.”

**What is a major challenge of the office you seek and how would you address it?**

“The major challenge to being a Senator, this next coming up session, is to make sure that the new Governor, the new Lieutenant Governor, are successful. We’ve also got to make sure we are on a good financial standpoint. If something else comes up, the Federal Government has pretty well

bankrupted, itself. I want to make sure the state of Arkansas is not in the situation [indecipherable] that we have to raise taxes on anything.”

### **What separates you from your primary opponent?**

“Experience. I’ve had a lot of experience. This job, and I know that a lot of people are going to differ with me on this, this job takes a person that has the ability to think out the problems and say ‘no’ when ‘no’ needs to be said. Sometimes you can’t just say ‘yes’ and make everyone feel happy or anything. You’ve got to use your own good judgment and experience to make sure that we are doing the right thing for you. And thank you and I appreciate your vote.”

### **Matt McKee, State Senate Candidate (Dist. 6)**

“Thank you very much. I am Justice of the Peace, Matt McKee. I’m serving my sixth term as Justice of the Peace, representing western Garland County. It’s been a privilege to serve on the Quorum Court and you learn a lot when you are passing budgets and when you are taking care of the everyday business of the county when you are dealing with elected officials who want to increase their fiefdoms – their own little kingdoms.”

“We’re very blessed in Garland County because we don’t have a lot of that. A lot of that is because we’ve got a very good Quorum Court. We’ve snuffed out [elected officials who were interested in increasing their fiefdoms]. When it pops its ugly little head up, we snuff it out fast.”

“We’ve been able to do a lot of good things. I live in Pearcy with my wife and four daughters and so I’ve learned how to say ‘no’ when ‘no’ needs to be said. I’m just extremely blessed to live out there.”

“I was Chairman of the Republican Party in Garland County for the last seven years, working to get conservative Republicans elected around Garland County and the state. I am tired of electing Republicans who go up and they vote for higher taxes. And they vote for more regulation. And they vote for mandates, or they don’t vote against them.”

“We’ve got a very good legislature right now. We’ve got 75 Republicans and we can’t get things to the Republican party platform passed. That’s kind of strange, isn’t it? We’ve got a couple of Republicans that can’t seem to vote for lower taxes. They can’t seem to vote against mandates. They can’t seem to vote for the Republican principles that have made this a great state. Right? Everybody loves Arkansas. Who was born and raised here? Raise your hand. That’s great! I’m glad. I grew up in western Colorado and I wouldn’t move back to western Colorado if you paid me. I love Arkansas. I’ve been down here since 2002.”

“I have a small construction business. I actually remodel bathrooms in the Village. I am not looking for work right now.”

“We’ve got major problems in this country. We’ve got people trying to destroy this country and a lot of people say, ‘well, they’re not trying’. Yeah, they are. They are trying to destroy this country and we’ve got some bungling idiot in the White House that can’t tell his \*ss from his elbow. I wasn’t going to say that. I apologize.”

“But, we’ve got major problems and state legislatures have got to be firewalls to protect the people

within their states.”



**Matt McKee, State Senate Candidate (District 6)**

“I respect Mr. Sample. I think he’s done a lot of good work over the years. But roads and bridges and Army/Navy Hospitals and all those things are still going to be here ten years from now. We need people that can stand up and fight right now – that have the stamina, the energy, and the belief – the conviction that says when a world corporation comes in and they want to tell you that you can’t invest with them or they are not going to take your investment dollars because you don’t have the right kind of social standing or you don’t believe the politically correct things that you are supposed to believe.”

“When we’ve got mandates coming down from the Federal government that tell you how to live your life – that is not okay. We need people that can stand up against that kind of garbage and know that kind of garbage is coming.”

**What is a major challenge of the office you seek and how would you address it?**

“I think the major challenge involves part of what Mr. Lowery spoke about, that the woke corporations and the Federal government are absolutely out of control. As a state legislature, as a conservative, I don’t want to get involved in business in the government. I don’t want them involved at all.”

“If a business is going to fire you because you don’t get a vaccine that’s in trial phases, that’s nuts. We’ve got to be able to protect the people that live here, whether it is from the Federal government or the woke corporations.”

**What separates you from your primary opponent?**

“As I said, I like Bill. Bill is a nice guy and I think he’s done good work over the years. I don’t think he has the energy to accomplish the things that need to be accomplished at this time.”

“I would appreciate your vote and your support and I look forward to meeting all of you.”

## Mary Bentley, Incumbent Candidate for Arkansas House

"I first want to say how grateful I am that you are here, to take your time to learn what's going on with the candidates out there because our nation is in trouble. Arkansas families are struggling to even pay bills when our gas prices are going through the roof. So thank you. This is not a personality contest. It is much more important than some personality contest and thank you for taking the time to know who the candidates are that are running and to be here today and wait for me for the very last to speak."

"My name is State Representative Mary Bentley and I currently serve District 73. I have been honored to be in the House for the past seven years. I live in Perry County, two miles north of the Saline border in a little spot called, Wayne Junction. I am the owner and operator of Bentley Plastics, an injection molding company that I've been honored to run for 20 years. I've traveled all over the country to market for my company. I love Bentley Plastics. Our family invested everything to keep this company going and that is really the reason that I am in politics. In 2008 we all know who got elected to be President." Bentley said that all of a sudden as a small business owner who has worked everything to compete against China, to have a business was in trouble. At this time, all of a sudden, her electricity prices doubled and Obama Care took over her health care with costs going through the roof. She got on the telephone and started calling Vic Snyder's office. "His office treated me like I was an idiot, that I knew nothing – that I didn't know what I was talking about. I said, 'excuse me, excuse me.' I'm doing the budget every day. I know what is happening and if you double my electricity bill, I cannot compete against China. I will have to shut the doors. There is no way for me to function."

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**Mary Bentley, Incumbent Candidate for Arkansas House**

“At that point, I knew we have to make sure we elect people to office that understand what’s going on, that care, that will listen to the constituents and will do what is right for Arkansas. I had never been engaged in politics before. I had always looked at Arkansas Right to Life and whoever they suggested. Whoever they recommended, that is who I voted for...”

She said she started door-knocking for other Republicans. Bentley enjoyed being with the candidates and then she became the Republican Chairman for Perry County for four years. At that time, Perry County was divided, having four different House seats.”

“I am a strong conservative leader in the House and I have fought so hard for so many things that you and I care about. I am here today because I care about every one of my constituents. My opponent is not here. I am here because I care. I care about you. I care about our country. We are in trouble and I will be happy to stay and answer any questions you’ve got. Thank you.”

**What is a major challenge of the office you seek and how would you address it?**

“I think the major challenge as a leader in the House is that we don’t have Republicans in there that stand on our party platform. As Representative Lowery talked about his bill for critical race theory, I have been to David Barton’s WallBuilders Conference and learned all about critical race theory on the 1619 project and I was begging the Republican Members of the Education Committee to pass



Representative Lowery's bill and all they listened to was the superintendents. It was maddening. I was furious – just furious that they would not vote to end critical race theory in our state... This is the United States of America. You gentlemen fought for our freedoms – not for us to be forced to take an experimental vaccine to keep a job... It's your right. If you want to take that vaccine, if you looked at the risks and the benefits of the best thing for you to do, then by all means, please take it. I was a registered nurse at Children's Hospital for ten years. I understand our healthcare system. If it is best for you, take it..." Bentley said a pregnant nurse should not be forced to take a vaccine or lose her job and lose her ability to pay for that baby and pay for a home. "It's crazy. I am a strong conservative, courageous Republican. I need to get back to the House but I do have a primary opponent in May."

### **What separates you from your primary opponent?**

My primary opponent has absolutely no experience. She is a J. P. in Conway and she believes that is going to get her into the House. I can tell you that I have fought against the world corporations and the world corporations want her to run. There is a lawsuit right now against the Legislators – the Legislators that voted for the Safe Act which protects our kids from being chemically and physically castrated. I was a strong supporter of that bill. I was on the House floor speaking for that bill to help get it passed. In the lawsuit, there are four Legislators that are named..." Bentley is one of four in the lawsuit... The Arkansas State Chamber doesn't fight for our small businesses anymore and they are the ones that are getting an opponent against me. That is what separates me. I will not cave. I will vote for you. That's what I am here for, to vote for my constituents. Thank you."

By Cheryl Dowden, Hot Springs Village Gazette, April 2, 2022

Photography by Joseph Dowden

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