

MS AG uses false information and deception on SuperTalkMS

written by Sandy | March 28, 2022



By Sandy . . . March 21 , 2022, Mississippi attorney general Lynn Fitch appeared on a talk show, the Gerard Gibert show, on SuperTalkMS. This was during Judge Ketanji Jackson's questioning by the senate regarding her fitness to serve on our nation's highest court. On the program, Ms. Finch questioned that fitness in regard to the judge's prior sentencing in some of the cases before her. In her attempts to paint as sordid a picture as possible, Ms. Finch was misleading and deceptive in the examples she chose and the information she presented. I wrote to her and copied in the show's host, Mr. Gibert, of my concerns with this. A week has gone by with no response from either of them, and I have now written of the matter to the editors of the top five newspapers in Mississippi. What I want – what we as an organization want – is acknowledgment not only of misinformation being used but, more importantly, acknowledgement of the actual facts.

This is the content of my letter to Attorney General Fitch:

Dear Ms. Fitch,

I watched you with Gerard Gibert on SuperTalkMS and heard you speak about the need to provide safety for our citizens and especially protection for our children. Those words resonate with me, for I also, a mother and grandmother, want the world kept safe and those I love protected.

However, I found as I listened that your arguments and reasons are not in line with what I know to be true and therefore not what I expect from an elected official.

You spoke of a study out “recently” in North Carolina in which 85% of the men who were imprisoned with federal charges of child pornography possession also admitted to hands-on offenses against children. Possibly that is all you know of the study. You were speaking of the Butner-Redux Study, done from 2002-2005 – not very recent. It consisted of fewer than two hundred men in prison for possession of illegal images. The findings immediately came under fire and criticism due to institutional bias, sloppy methodology, misrepresentational sampling, flawed data gathering, and subject coercion. Subjects who denied any hands-on offenses were punished with disfavor and ostracism; those who “admitted” such offenses were rewarded. The study is considered questionable at best, fraudulent at worst, today.

Secondly, you attacked Judge Jackson as being “soft on sex offenders” and “overlooking the value of the victims, these children.” Judge Jackson’s record is clear that her sentencing of those who came before her charged with a sexual crime was not “soft” nor neglectful of the victims in the least. Your language seemed designed to terrify the public into believing that a crime wave will be unleashed on the nation if Judge Jackson is on the Supreme Court. In your criticism of the “left,” your subtext was that only judges considered “conservative” can stave off disaster. I reject such scare tactics; this is not what I want from elected officials.

Thirdly, you attacked, as you have done previously, the American Law Institute's recommendations for revision to the sexual crimes section of its Model Penal Code. You over and over misrepresented the results of dropping some offenses from registry eligibility. You used phrases such as saying this would be "done at the expense of the people," that law enforcement "will not go after" individuals who commit these crimes, that it is "letting them off the hook," that the law would be "protecting predators rather than victims," and that victims "will have no recourse." In this you are being not only disingenuous but also obfuscatory. The crimes you speak of will still be charged and prosecuted. Those who have broken the law and are convicted will still be punished. The legal establishment will not cease to function because some offenses do not qualify for a sexual offense registry. The legal establishment and the justice system functioned for many decades before sexual offense registries existed.

Everything that ALI recommends is in keeping with what years of solid research show most effective in promoting the safety for society that you and I desire. Judge Jackson's comments, which predate ALI's recommendations but are in line with them, are likewise consistent with a large body of empirical evidence which set the standard on which elected congressional representatives should build. I expect them to be cognizant of solid evidence and to base their bills and laws on it.

This is also what I ask of you. Be aware of the facts of an issue before you speak or write on the issue. Base your statements, opinions, and conclusions on the facts without twisting them to fit an agenda or resorting to scare tactics. This is what I expect of all public officials. This is what I expect of you.

Sincerely,

Sandy Rozek