

CHAD MEREDITH

Chad Meredith, a staunch ally of the far-right legal movement, has been nominated to a lifetime seat on the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Kentucky. As former solicitor general of Kentucky and a partner at Squire Patton Boggs, Meredith has built a career advancing a deeply conservative political agenda that threatens core constitutional rights and disproportionately harms vulnerable communities. Throughout his career — primarily in corporate law and as Kentucky's general counsel and solicitor general — Meredith has consistently worked to restrict access to reproductive health care, weaken public health protections during the COVID-19 pandemic, push policies that divert public funds away from public schools, and prioritize corporate interests over workers' rights and environmental protections.

His record makes clear that, if confirmed, he would use his judicial authority to entrench regressive policies and curtail hard-won protections for Kentuckians for generations to come.

GENDER AND REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE

As solicitor general of Kentucky, Chad Meredith continually worked to restrict access to abortion and reproductive health care, and his record makes clear he would continue to do so from the bench. Meredith attempted to shut down the state's only abortion clinic by enforcing a medically unnecessary law requiring transfer and transport agreements with local hospitals, a tactic (one of many so-called "TRAP" laws) widely used by anti-abortion activists to close clinics under the guise of regulation. He argued that forcing women to travel out of state and up to 150 miles to access abortion care did not constitute an undue burden, ignoring the real-life barriers this creates for low-income and rural patients.

When that effort failed, Meredith doubled down. He defended two extreme state laws that effectively ban abortion as early as six weeks (before most people even know they're pregnant), criminalizing nearly 90% of abortions in Kentucky. One law prohibits abortion if the decision was based on a fetal diagnosis (i.e. if the fetus had genetic abnormalities that would prevent the fetus from surviving), further interfering with deeply personal medical choices.

In *EMW Women's Surgical Center, P.S.C. v. Beshear*, Meredith defended a law requiring providers to display and describe ultrasound images to patients, regardless of their wishes. He justified this coercive statute by claiming that "not every patient understands the consequences of the abortion procedure" and that "there are a number of patients who don't understand the nature of the fetus within them," statements that reflect a paternalistic and deeply disrespectful view of those seeking care. Meredith's record demonstrates a clear and ongoing commitment to undermining reproductive freedom and denying people the right to make decisions about their own bodies.

PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY

Meredith also actively fought efforts to protect Kentuckians during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. In *Beshear v. Acree*, he challenged Gov. Andy Beshear's emergency public health orders, including temporary restrictions on gatherings that were critical to slowing the spread of the deadly virus. These restrictions saved lives and helped ease the overwhelming burden on frontline medical workers and hospitals. Yet, Meredith chose to prioritize scoring political points over science and public safety, undermining the state's ability to respond effectively to a deadly public health crisis.

PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

Meredith represented East Kentucky Power Cooperative in a lawsuit challenging an EPA rule designed to protect communities from the toxic effects of coal ash pollution. The rule required utility companies to test groundwater near coal combustion residual sites and take mitigation action if contamination was found, a basic safeguard for public health. Meredith, an unwavering champion for corporations' bottom-line, argued that the rule was unlawful simply because it was too costly for the company to follow. His claims prioritized corporate profits over the health and safety of Kentucky residents, particularly those living near coal ash disposal sites, who are disproportionately impacted by environmental hazards such as groundwater and soil contamination.

WORKERS' RIGHTS

Throughout his career, Meredith has consistently sided against working people and organized labor. In *Zuckerman v. Bevin*, he defended Kentucky's anti-union "right-to-work" law, legislation designed to weaken unions and make it harder for workers to collectively bargain for fair wages, benefits, and safe conditions. His successful defense of the law before the Kentucky Supreme Court marked the culmination of a decades-long campaign to undermine workers' rights and shift power away from working families and toward corporate interests. He has spent much of his legal career choosing to represent big business interests as a corporate lawyer.

ETHICS

Meredith played a key role in advising former Kentucky Governor Matt Bevin on a series of deeply troubling and ethically questionable pardons and commutations. Among those he appears to have recommended clemency for were the brother of a major campaign donor, who was convicted in a robbery-homicide and sentenced to 19 years, and a man found guilty of raping a 9-year-old child. These decisions sparked bipartisan outrage, with even Republican Senator Mitch McConnell calling the pardons "completely inappropriate." Meredith's involvement in enabling such harmful abuses of executive power raises serious concerns about his judgment, ethics, and commitment to justice, qualities that are fundamental for any federal judicial nominee. His record reflects a dangerous disregard for the rights of victims and the integrity of the legal system, as well as a willingness to disregard the rule of law for partisan gain.