

## Letters to the Editor

### Defending laws isn't a popularity contest

EDITOR, TIMES-DISPATCH:

Did a candidate for attorney general indicate he might not enforce Virginia laws?

Democratic candidate Mark Herring has essentially let Virginia voters know that his commitment to fulfilling the responsibilities of this office is at best lukewarm. In a recent interview, Herring said that if faced with a legal challenge to a controversial law like Virginia's Marriage Amendment, he would poll the attorneys in his office to determine whether to defend the law or not.

Herring's response demonstrates a basic, fundamental flaw in his conception of the role of an attorney general. He would exalt the office into a sort of super-legislature, with the power to pass judgment on the laws and constitutional provisions that have been duly enacted by the people.

This shows a troubling arrogance, a dismissive attitude toward the collective, considered decision-making of the General Assembly. At the same time, the idea of deciding by poll whether to defend the laws of our commonwealth demonstrates an inability to lead. Virginia needs an attorney general who will act boldly and decisively in defense of our laws and Constitution, not one who will gauge the popularity of a measure before deciding whether or not to go to work for us. If Herring is not willing to put politics aside to defend laws that he or his staff disfavors, then he is not qualified for the office.

Having been warned that Herring might not be willing to defend Virginia's laws, it is our civic duty to elect the candidate who is. That candidate is Mark Obenshain.

DON BLAKE.  
GLEN ALLEN.

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