

Bio of John Stemberger



John Stemberger is an AV-rated Orlando attorney who has been a conservative policy advocate for over 30 years. As a native Floridian, he attended Florida State University, where he studied political science and philosophy before obtaining a Juris Doctorate of Law at the Cumberland School of Law at Samford University. He founded the Institute for Conservative Studies (ICS) as a permanent student-led think-tank at Florida State University.

After legislative internships in both the Florida House and Senate, Stemberger worked with attorney Ken Connor in Tallahassee for several years and then served as the lobbyist for Florida Right to Life with Connor. Stemberger has a unique understanding of law, government, and the media from his extensive political background, advising state, federal, and presidential campaigns. In

1992, he was appointed as the Political Director of the Republican Party of Florida during the final campaign of former President George H. W. Bush. Stemberger has been quoted in news and media sources hundreds of times as an expert on law, policy, culture, and politics, including in the *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Time*, *The Economist*, and *National Public Radio*. His legal, political, and non-profit advocacy work has appeared on *ABC News Nightline*, *Fox News*, *C-SPAN*, *MSNBC*, and *Court TV*. Starting in 2001, Florida Governor Jeb Bush twice appointed Stemberger to the Judicial Nominating Commission (JNC) for the Ninth Judicial Circuit of Florida, where he served for eight years screening and recommending new judge candidates in Central Florida. In 2017-2018, he was appointed to and served as a member of the historic Florida Constitution Revision Commission, which only convenes once every twenty years.

A sought-after speaker around the country, John Stemberger is also a member of the Council for National Policy, and in a feature article on his work, the *Miami Herald* called him “One of the most interesting and influential people you’ve *never* heard of.” In 2009, *Orlando Magazine* named him one of the top 50 most powerful people in Central Florida. In 2018, *Florida Trend Magazine* named him one of the top 500 most influential business leaders in Florida.

In addition to the private practice of law, in 2004, Stemberger became the President of the Florida Family Policy Council (FFPC). Since starting the FFPC, he served as Chairman of the campaign to amend Florida’s Constitution to define marriage as the union of one man and one woman, adopted by 61.9% of Florida voters in 2008. He also launched the “Florida Judicial Accountability Project” by filing a federal lawsuit against the Florida Bar and Judicial Qualifications Commission to strike down Florida’s gag order, which prohibits judge candidates from announcing their views on issues during their campaigns and created a statewide judicial voter guide. In 2024 Stemberger became the new President of Liberty Counsel Action and Senior Counsel for Liberty Counsel founded by Mat Staver.

In 2009, Stemberger’s law firm received international media attention for representing Rifqa Bary, the Muslim teenager from Columbus, Ohio, who fled to Orlando, Florida, after she was threatened with being killed by her father for not renouncing her faith after her conversion from Islam to Christianity was discovered. Rifqa’s book *Hiding in the Light* tells her remarkable story and has been a *New York Times* best seller.

As an Eagle Scout and former Scoutmaster, John was one of the primary founders and was named as Chairman of the Board Emeritus of Trail Life USA, a Christian scouting movement for boys that started in 2014 and now has around 50,000 members with over 1,000 troops chartered in all 50 states.

In 2023, Stemberger published the book *Legacy of Life*. This full-color commemorative table book honors fifty of the greatest pro-life leaders from the last fifty years. With a foreword by Ben Shapiro, each tribute is written by a national leader. The book, filled with beautiful art and history, is available at <https://legacyoflifebook.com>.

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EDUCATION

Juris Doctorate of Law, Cumberland School of Law,
Samford University; Birmingham, Alabama
Honors and Activities
First Place, National Moot Court Competition of
Duke University; The Rabbi Seymour Seigel Memorial
Competition on Legal Ethics
Finalist, Robert Donworth Appellate Argument Competition
Finalist, Gordon Saad Moot Court Competition
Order of the Barrister
Who's Who Among American Law Students
Member, Mock Trial Advocacy Board
Member, Henry Upson Sims Moot Court Board
President, Christian Legal Society
Chairman, Cordell Hull Speakers Forum, Student Bar Association

Bachelor of Science, Political Science/Philosophy,
Florida State University; Tallahassee, Florida
Honors and Activities
First Speaker Award, Southeastern CEDA Debate Circuit, FSU
Forensics Team
Who's Who in American Universities and Colleges
Gold Key Leadership Scholarship award
President, FSU College Republicans
Founder and President, FSU Institute for Conservative Studies
State Supervisor of Elections Scholarship

Associate of Arts, Public Administration,
Daytona Beach Community College
Honors and Activities
State President, Florida Junior Colleges Student Government
Association (FJCSGA)
Student Body President, Daytona Beach Community College
Congressman Claude Pepper State Leadership Award
University of Florida Blue Key Leadership Award
Who's Who in American Junior Colleges
Outstanding Young Men of America; U.S. Jaycees
Phi Theta Kappa National Honor Fraternity
Rotary Club International, Area Scholarship

EDUCATION Cont'd.

Architectural Drafting Certification

Daytona Beach Community College

United States Air Force, JROTC

Completed three-year program, Florida 42nd Squadron
Daytona Beach

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

President, Liberty Counsel Action, and Senior Counsel of Liberty Counsel, 2024- Present

Principal / Owner, Law Offices of John Stemberger, P.A., Orlando, Florida, 1997-2024

President & General Counsel, Florida Family Policy Council, 2004-2023.

Civil Trial Lawyer, Heindl & Stemberger, Attorneys and Counselors at Law, 1997

Civil Trial Lawyer, Billings, Cunningham, Morgan & Boatwright, Orlando, Florida, 1994-1997

Commercial Litigation Attorney, Pennington & Haben, P.A., Tallahassee, Florida, 1993-1994

Political Director, Republican Party of Florida, 1992-1993

Executive Political Assistant, Kenneth L. Connor, Principal, Connor & Associates, P.A.

Judicial Externship, Judge James Hard, Jefferson County Criminal Court, Alabama

Law Clerk, Kenneth L. Connor and Associates, P.A., Tallahassee, Florida

Lobbyist, Florida Right to Life

Legislative Internship, Representative David Troxler, Florida House of Representatives

Legislative Internship, Senate Republican Office, Senator Richard Langley, Minority Leader

State President, Florida Junior Colleges Student Government Association.

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

Member, Florida Constitution Revision Commission, 2017-2018
AV Rated by Martindale Hubble
Member, Million Dollar Advocates Forum
Member, Judicial Nominating Commission, Ninth Judicial Circuit, 2001 to 2009
Chairman, Judicial Nominating Commission, Ninth Judicial Circuit, 2002 to 2003
Barrister Member, First Central Florida Inns of Court, Orlando Chapter
Admitted, United States Supreme Court
Admitted, United States Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeal
Admitted, United States Federal Court- Middle District of Florida
Admitted, Florida Bar
Member, Christian Legal Society
Member, Federalists Society
Member, Orange County Bar Association
Member, Volusia County Bar Association
Allied Lawyer, Alliance Defending Freedom

REPORTED CASES

Marsh v. Valyou, 940 So. 2d 1125 (Fla. 2006)
Konikov v. Orange County, No. 04-10481, 2005 U.S. App. LEXIS 10176, June 3, 2005.
Jacobs et al., v. The Seminole County Canvassing Board, et al., 773 So. 2d 517 (Fla. 2000)
Taylor v. Martin County Canvassing Board, 773 So. 2d 517 (Fla. 2000)
Yeung v. Saylor, ___ So.2d ___ (Fla. App. 2 Dist. 1998)
State Farm Mut. Auto. Ins. v. Isom, 681 So.2d 1170 (Fla. App. 5 Dist. 1996)
Ferrari N. AM. v. Coral Gables, 661 So.2d 1278 (Fla. App. 1 Dist. 1995)

CIVIC / COMMUNITY

Primary Founder and Board Chairman Emeritus of Trail Life, USA
President and General Counsel, Florida Family Policy Council, Inc.
Orange County Legal Aid, Volunteer Guardian Ad Litem
Chairman of the Board, WIN Family Services, Baltimore, MD
Member, Metro Life Church
Precinct Committeeman, Leon County Republican Executive Committee
Boy Scouts of America, Halifax District, Central Florida Council
Eagle Scout Advancement Review Board
Eagle Scout Award
Vigil Honor Member, Order of the Arrow
Assistant Scoutmaster
United Way Representative, BSA
Member, Seven Step Society-Sibling Support Group- Straight, Inc. Drug Rehab
Member, Chemical People, Daytona Beach Community Drug Abuse Task Force
American Red Cross, Campus Blood Drive Coordinator
Easter Seals Society, Gala Auction Staff
Halifax Urban Ministries, Food Collection