



John Guard

President Trump nominated John Guard to serve on the United States District Court for the Middle District of Florida on June 16, 2025.

Career¹

- Bachelor of Arts, Florida State University, 1997
- Juris Doctor, Tulane University School of Law, 2000
- Associate, Holland & Knight LLP, 2000-2002 & 2004-2009
- Law Clerk to the Hon. James S. Moody Jr., U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Florida, 2002-2004
- Assistant U.S. Attorney, Criminal, U.S. Attorney's Office, Middle District of Florida, Jacksonville Division, 2009-2012
- Partner, Quarles & Brady LLP, 2012-2019
- Executive Director of Transition, Ashley Moody, Attorney General-elect, Nov. 2018-Jan. 2019
- Chief Deputy Attorney General, Florida Department of Legal Affairs, 2019-present
 - Acting Attorney General (Jan.-Feb. 2025)

Record on Reproductive Freedom

Guard has led litigation to undermine abortion access and reproductive freedom during his tenure at the Florida Attorney General's office:

- As Chief Deputy Attorney General, Guard "directed the litigation strategy"² and defended Florida's devastating abortion ban³ – a ban which passed into law before the *Dobbs* decision overturned the constitutional right to abortion and took effect just days after the *Dobbs* decision was announced.
 - The plaintiffs argued that the ban was unconstitutional under Florida's state constitution and its explicit right to privacy provision.⁴ In April 2024, the Florida Supreme Court overturned decades of state precedent and ruled that the state's right to privacy no longer protected the right to abortion.⁵
 - During the arguments in the case, Guard attempted to minimize the effect the ban would have on pregnant people in Florida.⁶ The judge corrected him by identifying that at least 1,600 women were estimated to be impacted immediately by the ban.⁷ When the judge asked whether "all those who have become pregnant by rape would be effected by [the ban]," Guard dodged the question.⁸

REPRODUCTIVE FREEDOM^{FOR} ALL

- Guard fought to undermine Floridians’ efforts to enshrine the right abortion in the state’s constitution. While working in the Attorney General’s office, he petitioned the Florida Supreme Court to write an advisory opinion on whether a proposed citizen initiative to amend the state constitution to protect reproductive freedom was invalid and not permitted to be on the ballot.⁹ The Supreme Court did not agree with any part of the State’s argument and approved the amendment’s placement on the ballot.¹⁰
- As acting Attorney General, Guard led an amicus brief to the Supreme Court on behalf of Florida supporting South Carolina’s efforts to block recipients of their state Medicaid program from choosing Planned Parenthood as their qualified health care provider, in *Medina v. Planned Parenthood South Atlantic*.¹¹ The Supreme Court heard oral arguments in this case on April 2, 2025 and, as of June 24, has yet to release its opinion.

Record on Intersectional Commitments

Voting Rights and Democracy

- Guard authored a note during law school where he suggested that Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act was unconstitutional.¹² Under Section 2, plaintiffs can challenge state action that dilutes and deprives racial minorities of their full right to vote. Guard argued that this landmark democracy-promoting federal law could be considered an unjust and unconstitutional burden on the states.

Immigration

- Guard led Florida’s challenge against the Department of Homeland Security’s policy during the Biden administration that permitted certain noncitizens, such as asylum seekers, to avoid being detained as they awaited a determination of their request for immigration relief.¹³

¹ John Guard, Questionnaire for Judicial Nominees, United States Senate Committee on the Judiciary (June 2, 2025).

² *Id.* at 27.

³ See *Planned Parenthood of Sw. and Cent. Florida v. Florida*, 2022 WL 2436704 (2d Judicial Cir. Leon Ctny. Fla. July 5, 2022); *Planned Parenthood of Sw. and Cent. Florida v. Florida*, 384 So.3d 67 (Fla. 2024).

⁴ *Id.*

⁵ *Planned Parenthood of Sw. & Cent. Florida v. Florida*, 384 So.3d 67 (Fla. 2024).

⁶ Regan McCarthy, *Arguments Resume in a Case to Temporarily Block Florida’s 15-week Abortion Ban*, Healthy News Florida WFSU (June 30, 2022), <https://health.wusf.usf.edu/health-news-florida/2022-06-30/a-second-day-of-hearings-begins-in-a-case-to-temporarily-block-floridas-15-week-abortion-ban>.

⁷ *Id.*

⁸ *Id.*

REPRODUCTIVE FREEDOM^{FOR}ALL

⁹ Attorney General’s Reply Brief in Advisory Opinion to the Attorney General Re: Limiting Government Interference with Abortion, 2023 WL 8111992 (Nov. 15, 2023).

¹⁰ Advisory Opinion to the Attorney General Re: Limiting Government Interference with Abortion, 384 So.3d 122 (Fla. Apr. 1, 2024).

¹¹ Brief of Amici Curiae the State of Kansas and Seventeen Other States in Support of Petitioner, 2025 WL 491454 (U.S. No. 23-1275).

¹² John Matthew Guard, Comment, *“Impotent Figureheads”? State Sovereignty, Federalism, and the Constitutionality of Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act after Lopez v. Monterey Cnty. and City of Boerne v. Flores*, 74 Tul. L. Rev. 329 (1999).

¹³ *Florida v. U.S., et al.*, case no. 3:2 I-cv-01066-TKW-ZCB (N.D. Fla.), 2022 WL 2431443 (Jan. 18, 2022); 2022 WL 2431414 (N.D. Fla. May 4, 2022); 2022 WL 2431442 (N.D. Fla. June 6, 2022); 342 F.R.D. 153 (N.D. Fla. July 12, 2022); 2022 WL 4021934 (N.D. Fla. Sep. 2, 2022); 2023 WL 2399883 (N.D. Fla. Mar. 8, 2023) (containing Final Judgment).