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*A BRIGHT DAY AT THE  
STATE CAPITOL*

# **THERE OUGHT TO BE A LAW**

By  
Portia Bright Pittman and Dr. Calvin Mercer

Illustrated  
by Harry Averia

Teaching  
Kids How Government Works

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# MEET THE AUTHORS

## **PORTIA BRIGHT PITTMAN**

Portia served as legislative assistant for legislators in the North Carolina Senate and House of Representatives. She earned her start in politics by successfully managing a North Carolina House campaign for Jean Farmer-Butterfield and a city council campaign for her coauthor. She expresses her passion for youth by helping them understand how government works. Portia leads programs for schools, faith communities, and civic groups about the legislative process. Contact her at [brightbooks@brightbooks.org](mailto:brightbooks@brightbooks.org) for details.



## **CALVIN MERCER, PhD**

Professor of Religion at East Carolina University, Dr. Mercer has written widely about the Bible and other topics in religion. His passion is helping faith communities and other groups understand how artificial intelligence, robotics, genetic engineering, and other breakthrough technologies are going to radically change our bodies, emotions, and minds. Dr. Mercer served a decade on the Greenville, NC City Council and works to engage citizens in their government. Dr. Mercer speaks widely on subjects of his books and volunteers in his wife's church youth group. Contact him at [mercerc@ecu.edu](mailto:mercerc@ecu.edu).



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# PRESS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **NEW BOOK LAUNCH—THERE OUGHT TO BE A LAW: A BRIGHT DAY AT THE STATE CAPITOL**

**Coauthors with extensive experience in government announce a new book for children about how the state legislature works.**

**There Ought to be a Law—A Bright Day at the State Capitol is a fun, informational story for ages 6-9, about how bills become laws. The prestigious “Reader’s Favorite” book review company just gave the book a “5-Star Medallion,” the highest possible award.**

**In the professionally illustrated book, Eliza and Martin visit the state legislature for an exciting adventure learning how to make a law. In any state this book will excite kids just like Eliza and Martin to yearn for a trip to their state Capitol.**

**The coauthors are Portia Bright Pittman, who has served as legislative assistant in the North Carolina Senate and House of Representatives and continues working in that role as legislative assistant today, and Dr. Calvin Mercer, East Carolina University Professor of Religion, who served a decade on the Greenville, NC, City Council.**

**The book’s 5-Star rating in every category—appearance, plot, development, formatting, and overall score—was awarded by Readers’ Favorite, the fastest growing book review and award contest company, which has earned the respect of renowned publishers.**

**Advance copies of the book have drawn praise from teachers, elected officials, and professors of education.**

**“I loved the book! I wish I’d had access to this book ‘back in the day’ when I was teaching fourth grade social studies and needed a more realistic way to explain laws and legislative processes,” Dr. Patricia Anderson, ECU Professor of Elementary Education, said. “The day ends in a long-awaited trip to get ice cream, and the reader can almost taste the deliciousness of the treat along with the fun of learning. The mixture of messages against bullying makes for some subtle learning about the negative effects of bullying for children.”**



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# PRESS RELEASE CONTINUED

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**"NC State Senator Don Davis said, "As a legislator, I can't think of anything better than this book to explain to youth how laws are made. What a wonderful contribution to the education of our youth who are our future!"**

**"Beth Uffers, Pitt County Teacher of the Year, noted that "the book addresses stereotypes and is inclusive of different races, ethnic backgrounds, religions, and gender. I am excited about seeing this book in our classrooms!"**

**"We both are excited at opportunities to work with youth and are passionate about doing our part to make government work well for citizens," Coauthor Pittman said. "The groundwork for learning how government works and its impact on our lives start at a young age. We want youth to know they can be a leader in their school, faith community, and neighborhood. The book helps them see they can change their world for the better."**

**Dr. Mercer added, "I've written a number of books for adults, but coauthoring this book to help youth understand the legislative process has been a highlight of my career. My volunteer work in my wife's church youth group gave me valuable insights into communicating well with this age group."**

**Pittman successfully managed a North Carolina House campaign for state Representative Jean Farmer-Butterfield and a city council campaign for her coauthor. She leads programs for schools, faith communities, and civic groups about the legislative process. Contact her at [brightbooks@brightbooks.org](mailto:brightbooks@brightbooks.org) for details.**



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# ABOUT THE BOOK

There Ought to be a Law—*A Bright Day at the State Capitol* is a fun, informational story for ages 6-9, about how bills become laws. The illustrated story takes Eliza and Martin on a visit to the state legislature.

At the Capitol, in a playful, yet realistic, way they create an anti-bullying bill, with a free ice cream amendment, and take it through the 12 steps required to become a law.

Eliza and Martin learn all about the state Capitol and its workings, meeting interesting people along the way.

The youth see the role government plays in their lives.

The story helps Eliza and Martin think about and appreciate rules in their own home, school, and community.

An Activity Book is sold separately.



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# AUTHORS

## Q & A

### **What inspired you to write this book?**

We both are excited at opportunities to work with youth and are passionate about doing our part to make government work well for citizens. The groundwork for learning how government works and its impact on our lives starts at a young age.

### **What can kids learn from this book?**

Kids will learn how laws are made, what elected leaders do, and how making laws can be fun and interesting. They will appreciate the role government plays in their lives. The story helps them think about and appreciate rules in their own home, school, and community.

### **How did your backgrounds play a role in creating this book?**

We both have worked in government and know the importance of citizens understanding their government and participating in the democratic process. Portia's career takes her inside a state Capitol where she daily sees up close the legislative process described in the book. Calvin served ten years as an elected official, giving him an insider perspective on the political and legislative process. He has written many books for adults and says coauthoring this book to help kids understand the legislative process has been a highlight of his career.

### **If there's one message kids should get from this book, what is it?**

Here is our main message to youth, according to coauthor Portia Bright Pittman. In the United States of America, we have freedom to choose our leaders and speak out about things we care about. You too can be a leader in your school, faith community, and neighborhood. You can change your world for the better by reading today and becoming a brighter leader tomorrow. Just start, and never give up.



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