



**FAMILY  
COUNCIL**

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**NOVEMBER 2018  
UPDATE LETTER**

## **DEAR FRIENDS,**

Riding down the dusty road in an old, yellow school bus, I could see the final traces of fall colors on the trees. The sun already was setting on the last school day before Thanksgiving, and the bus was full of noisy excitement. A few younger kids had drawings of turkeys and pilgrims to take home. We 7th graders were way beyond those years. I was focused on bigger thoughts of adventure and imagining that first Thanksgiving.

As the bus dropped me off in front of our four-room house, and my feet hit the rickety front porch, I could see a light already on in the kitchen window. The tin on the roof rattled as I headed toward the light. Inside, I was greeted with the smell of cornbread baking and my mother's smile welcoming me home. Supper would be ready in a bit, but the real feast would be the next day—Thanksgiving day—my mother's favorite holiday. But there was a lot to do. I checked my trusty rifle beside my bed, and I went outside to see to my faithful dog. He didn't know it, but we had a big hunting expedition the next day. I remember finishing supper and getting out my boots and hunting clothes for the following morning. As I went to sleep that night there was the crackle of wood burning in the stove and in my imagination, there were animals to hunt—turkeys, squirrels, and deer—just like the first Thanksgiving.

It was still dark when I woke up. My daddy had parched some peanuts the night before, so I grabbed a handful and stuck them in my pocket—provisions for the trail. As soon as I stepped into the cold morning air, my dog knew exactly what was up. That old gun was all he needed to see. We headed into the woods, down toward the river. As the sun rose the morning was full of sounds. Birds were everywhere. Each rustle of a leaf made me wonder if it were a deer or some dangerous animal.

Reaching the river, I walked out on a big outcropping of rocks and gazed upstream and down. I could hear the rapids roaring below. Far away, mallards flew. I imagined what these woods might have been like when Indians walked them—when the first explorers came, and who might have stood on this very rock before me.

All too soon the morning was spent. I hadn't killed a single thing. I guess I never was much of a hunter. But my imagination was rich with thoughts of what it might have been like to walk in the woods on the first Thanksgiving back there at Plymouth Colony. As my dog and I approached the house I unloaded my gun knowing that I was as mighty a hunter as I could imagine.

"As I could imagine"—that's what made it the best. An imagination—that's all I needed. Looking back, I'd say that's how I learned to dream. I learned to think about life, and yes, sometimes to pray about life.

There's a lot to be said about solitude and how it changes us for the better. Maybe it's that solitude that equips us to change the world around us for the better. Even now, over 50 years later, I love being in a solitary place where I can dream about how things were and how things can be.

For almost 30 years, Family Council has rested on dreams. Those dreams have propelled it, and those dreams continue to inspire me to keep pressing forward. Dreams like making Arkansas the most pro-life state in the nation or bringing a godly influence to the dark world of politics. I didn't know it when I was a boy, and I sometimes forget it today—that dreams—the right ones—come from God, and they take us to real life adventures we could never imagine. That's what Family Council is for me—a dream leading to real life adventure. Now, come with me and let me tell you a about some dreams and the adventure ahead.

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Family Council  
President Jerry Cox

## MY THOUGHTS: GIVING THANKS THIS YEAR

Believe it or not, another Thanksgiving is upon us. This year I wanted to take a few moments to reflect on the things I'm thankful for at Family Council.

I'm thankful to have been called to this work and that I get to take a stand for important issues like religious liberty and the sanctity of human life. I do consider my work at Family Council a ministry and a calling, and I consider it a privilege to do what I do.

I'm grateful to have so many good friends like you who believe in and support our mission. I know my staff and I would have failed a long time ago without families and churches all over Arkansas backing us. I'm thankful that God has provided for our needs and blessed us with nearly three decades of success. It's hard to believe I've been doing this work for nearly thirty years, but it's true.

We wouldn't be here today without God's steady hand of guidance leading us. I am very grateful to Him for meeting our needs and giving us the direction we need. And I look forward to continuing this good work in the future.

## Pro-Life Ruling in Louisiana Bodes Well for Arkansas

On September 26 a three-judge panel in the federal Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals upheld a pro-life law in Louisiana that is similar to one Arkansas passed in 2015. The Louisiana law requires abortionists to have hospital admitting privileges in case women experience emergency complications from abortion. The U.S. Supreme Court struck down a similar Texas law in 2016, saying the law burdened women's abortion access, but the Fifth Circuit panel ruled Louisiana's law is different because the law "does not impose a substantial burden on a large fraction of women."

**Here's why this matters for Arkansas.** In 2015 the Arkansas Legislature passed the Abortion-Inducing Drugs Safety

Act. This good, pro-life law that we supported requires abortion clinics that offer chemical abortions to contract with a doctor who has hospital admitting privileges to handle complications arising from the abortion—much like the Louisiana law. This law forced Planned Parenthood temporarily to stop doing abortions in Arkansas earlier this year. Abortion groups are asking the federal Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals to strike our law down. The fact that the Fifth Circuit has upheld Louisiana's pro-life law means the Eighth Circuit may uphold Arkansas' similar law as well. That puts us one step closer to a pro-life victory.

## Arkansas Medical Students Bake Cupcakes for Abortion

September 28 is "International Safe Abortion Day," an annual event observed by a number of pro-abortion groups and websites. On September 28 we received a photo taken at the University for Medical Sciences in Little Rock showing a tray of cupcakes next to a handmade sign reading,

Happy International Safe Abortion Day!  
take a cupcake, read, enjoy!  
-Future Health Professionals for Reproductive Rights

Attached to each cupcake were flyers titled "KEEP ABORTION LEGAL," "NORMALIZE ABORTION," and "ABORTION IS HEALTH-CARE" and listing pro-abortion talking points. The cupcakes apparently were prepared by anonymous medical students. A tray of cupcakes may not seem like a big deal to some, but here are two points to keep in mind: **First, abortion never is safe.** It kills an unborn baby, and it carries a number of risks and consequences for the woman—which is why Arkansas' lawmakers have passed one of the strongest informed-consent laws for abortion in America. The law ensures women receive all the facts about abortion and its alternatives. **Second, there's nothing to celebrate about abortion.** In the

past even abortion's supporters argued abortion should be legal, but also rare. Stunts like this trivialize abortion in a way that would have been unheard of two or three decades ago.

Family Council criticized this pro-abortion display as soon as we learned of it, and we were later informed someone at UAMS removed the sign and flyers shortly afterward. Frankly, it's troubling to see something like this from medical students. I would expect men and women training to become healthcare professionals to understand better than anyone that abortion shouldn't be celebrated or taken lightly.



## Doctors Help Someone Commit Suicide Nearly Every Day in California

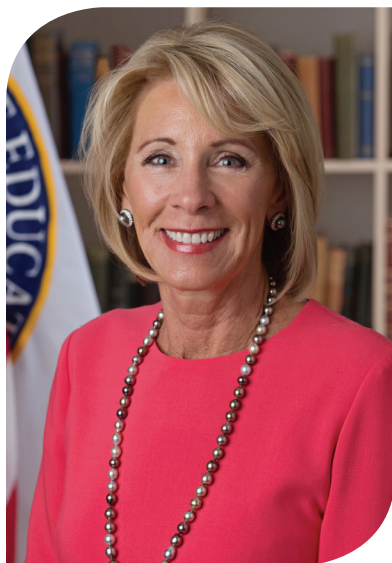
Government reports out of California show physician-assisted suicide claims a life there nearly every day, on average. Assisted suicide is legal in seven states and the District of Columbia. Legislation letting doctors help terminally ill people commit suicide has been introduced in about half of all state legislatures in the past five years, and Gallup reports most Americans support physician-assisted suicide on some level. Arkansas outlawed assisted suicide in the 1990's, but with so many people pushing for the "right to die," it's only a matter of time before this issue comes up in Congress, at the U.S. Supreme Court, or in Little Rock. That's why we are looking at ways to shore up Arkansas' laws against assisted-suicide now—to be proactive in this fight.

Being pro-life means believing human life is sacred from conception until natural death. It means protecting life at every age—whether in the womb or in the nursing home. Human life is sacred, and no sickness gives us an excuse to take a life—including our own. Christians are called to help those who suffer, but we don't eliminate suffering by eliminating people who are suffering. We're winning the fight to protect the unborn, but we need to prepare for the coming fight over assisted suicide. It's going to be difficult, but I believe we can win it as well.

## Federal Secretary of Education Criticizes ASU Speech Policy

In September U.S. Education Secretary Betsy DeVos publicly criticized Arkansas State University's "free speech" policy during an event in Philadelphia. ASU's policy restricts free speech by students to designated "free speech" zones. Attorneys at Alliance Defending Freedom filed a lawsuit on behalf of an ASU student after the school stopped her from setting up a table outside the student union to generate interest in forming a conservative organization on campus.

Secretary DeVos criticized ASU, calling it an example of "administrators and faculty manipulating marketplaces of ideas." Nationwide, colleges have tried to restrict speech on campus—especially speech by conservative and pro-life students. Our friends at Alliance Defending Freedom have won several cases against these schools, so ASU's speech restrictions probably won't hold up in court.



Left: Federal Education Secretary Betsy DeVos

## Supporting Pregnancy Resource Centers

Nearly a year ago we began work on an initiative to provide funding for Arkansas' pregnancy resource centers. Pregnancy resource centers provide women with real options in the face of an unplanned pregnancy. Many of them offer pregnancy tests, ultrasounds, maternity clothes, baby supplies, adoption referrals, parenting resources, and other tools—all free of charge. Other states give federal funding to pregnancy resource centers through the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families grant program. This year we began work on a similar program in Arkansas. After extensive meetings with government officials, attorneys, and knowledgeable leaders from other states, we have formed a new foundation that will help facilitate this funding. This foundation will act as a conduit, getting federal funding directed to the pregnancy resource centers easily and efficiently. The road to this point took a lot longer than we expected, but I believe we can start providing government funding to pregnancy resource centers in 2019. This is something we have dreamed of doing for almost a year, now. Thank you for praying for us and standing with us as we make this dream into a reality.



## We're Drafting Pro-Family Legislation

Soon state lawmakers will start filing bills ahead of the 2019 legislative session. We're drafting bills that will do good things like save unborn children from abortion; promote home schooling; and protect religious freedom and rights conscience. Arkansas is the second most pro-life state in America. We want to become number one, and we've developed a legislative package we believe will do exactly that. Our goal is to make Arkansas the best in the nation when it comes to respecting human life. We're also prepared to oppose legislation that promotes things like the LGBT agenda or undermines family values. Your support is letting us do all of this.



Family Council Development and Communications Director Luke McCoy

## POLICY POINTS: PASSING HEALTHCARE FREEDOM OF CONSCIENCE LEGISLATION

By Luke McCoy

Arkansas needs to take steps to protect medical professionals, healthcare companies, and their employees from being forced to subsidize or participate in procedures like abortion referrals, providing emergency contraception, or sex-reassignment operations that violate

their religious convictions. Right now Arkansas has some good protections on the books for doctors and hospitals, but we need to give other people the same protections. I'm working with leading experts on a bill for 2019 that will:

- Make sure no one can be forced to participate in a non-emergent procedure—like abortion counseling—that violates their conscience;
- Protect people and companies from being forced to provide or pay for objectionable medical procedures;
- Protect healthcare employees from being fired or demoted for declining to offer procedures and services that violate their convictions.

We are preparing to get this good bill drafted, and we look forward to working with lawmakers to pass it in 2019.

### WE NEED YOUR HELP

We have a lot of good work to do, and we can't do it alone. We need good friends like you who back us and are willing to work alongside us. Here are four ways you can do that:

- 1. Pray:** We need God's wisdom, guidance, and blessing. Please pray that we will know what we should do and that we will be equipped to do it.
- 2. Tell Your Friends:** If you have friends or family members who are not familiar with our work, I encourage you to share this update letter with them. Help them connect with us.
- 3. Give Financially:** We can't operate without the generous financial support of families and churches all over Arkansas. When you give to Family Council, you aren't just supporting an organization. You're saving lives from abortion. You're empowering parents to home school their children. You're passing legislation that makes Arkansas a better state to live, work, and raise a family. I never want anyone to feel pressured to give, but I hope you will give a generous, tax-deductible donation to Family Council today, if you are able. Your support will help us do a lot of good in Arkansas.
- 4. Give a Non-Monetary Gift:** You don't have to write a check to be a financial supporter. Some people donate stock or other assets to Family Council to help offset their taxes and support our work at the same time. Others have donated vehicles or other property. Enclosed is more information about donating appreciated assets to Family Council. Give us a call at (501) 375-7000 if you have any questions.

**Thank you for standing with us.** I cannot tell you enough just how much your friendship and financial support mean to me and my staff. Please call us any time if there is ever anything we can do for you.

Sincerely,

 Thank you!!  
Jerry Cox, President

P.S. We've developed a legislative package we believe will make Arkansas the most pro-life state in America. We're preparing to work with lawmakers to protect healthcare workers' rights of conscience. A federal court ruling in Louisiana could help Arkansas win a big, pro-life victory in the coming months. We're drafting legislation, and we are launching an effort to support Arkansas' pro-life pregnancy resource centers. We couldn't do any of this without you. That's why I hope you will send a generous, tax-deductible gift to Family Council today, if you're able. Please pray for me and my staff as we fight for traditional family values.