





APRIL 2019 UPDATE LETTER

DEAR FRIENDS,

Last November 41-year-old school bus driver Kevin McKay drove two dozen elementary students through jammed traffic in northern California near the city of Paradise. McKay had been driving the school bus for a couple of months, but this morning he wasn't driving students to school. He was evacuating them to safety from a wildfire.

McKay drove students and teachers past scorched earth and flames as they tried to get out of the path of the blaze. One student said it was like driving through Armageddon. Another compared it to J.R.R. Tolkien's land of Mordor from The Lord of the Rings—a place of fire and desolation inspired by the biblical descriptions of Hell and by Tolkien's experiences fighting in No Man's Land during World War I.

Traffic ground to a halt as the highway became clogged with cars trying to leave the city of Paradise. Smoke began to fill the bus, forcing McKay and the other adults onboard to think quickly. McKay shredded his shirt and soaked the strips of cloth in a water bottle to make temporary filters the children could use to breathe safely. Outside, fire was everywhere by now, and the smoke made it impossible to see clearly. Panic-stricken drivers began colliding with one another. One vehicle sideswiped the school bus. More than one child did not think the group would make it out alive. In desperation, the group finally prayed.

After slogging through traffic for several hours, the bus finally reached safety. Children were reunited with their parents, and everyone hailed Kevin McKay as a hero. California's 2018 Camp Fire, as it was called, became the deadliest and most destructive fire in state history, leaving more than a hundred people dead, injured, or missing.

Kevin McKay is a hero for saving the lives of those two dozen students and teachers. There's no doubt about that. But what if someone saved 1,000–1,500 children from certain death?

We estimate that by August of 2020, as many as 1,000–1,500 children ages five and under will be alive in Arkansas because of pro-life legislation we've helped pass since 2015. Approximately 400 of those children will be going to preschool or Kindergarten that fall. That's like saving more than 20 school busloads of kids!

We can be confident of these numbers, because the Arkansas Department of Health releases extremely thorough reports on abortion each summer. Those reports tell us how many women asked about abortion; how many women had abortions; what abortion procedures were used; and at what point in pregnancy the abortion occurred. That means we can see how many abortions were prevented by laws like the Woman's Right to Know Act of 2015, The Abortion-Inducing Drugs Safety Act, Arkansas' ban on abortions during or after the 20th week of pregnancy, and other pro-life legislation.

The laws we pass in Little Rock save actual children from abortion. These are real kids, with names, faces, and souls. As important as that is, that isn't all we're doing. We're also working to promote and protect home schooling, rights of conscience, free speech, and other liberties. We're working to defeat bad legislation, too. A lot is happening in Little Rock, and we are right in the middle of it.

And now let me tell you a little more about what we've been doing these past few weeks.

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MY THOUGHTS: THE ARKANSAS LEGISLATURE IS A LOT LIKE A 45 RPM SINGLE RECORD

The 2019 legislative session reminds me of an old 45 rpm single record with your favorite band singing your favorite song on one side and with the same group singing a really awful-sounding song on the flip side.

Just like those old, vinyl records, the 2019 Arkansas Legislature has an A-Side and a B-Side.

On the A-Side, our state legislators have passed some great bills when it comes to fighting abortion and helping home schoolers. These bills could save hundreds of unborn children from abortion each year.

On the B-Side, a lot of lawmakers have insisted we need to add unnecessary exceptions to some of our pro-life laws. For the second session in a row, Republicans have killed our legislation protecting healthcare workers' rights of conscience.

Even more troubling, a few lawmakers have been quick to support genuinely terrible bills when it comes to things like contraceptives and sex education in public schools. Some of these are bills that would make Bill Clinton and Barack Obama proud.

So is the glass half-empty or half-full? If you're an unborn child whose life is spared from an abortion because of one of the laws passed this year, I suppose the glass is half-full. If you're a nurse who's been asked to help a teenage girl turn into a boy or do something else that violates your convictions, I suppose the glass is half-empty.

A Quick Look at Legislation

The Arkansas Legislature is in full swing at the moment, and a lot of bills have been filed. A few noteworthy bills already have passed and been signed. Legislation is such a fast-moving target that it's almost impossible to write, print, and mail a letter with a legislative update in it without the information becoming outdated before the letter makes it to the post office. However, here's a snapshot of legislation in Arkansas as of March 15.

Good Bills Passed

H.B. 1439 (Abortion): This good bill by Rep. Robin Lundstrum (R – Elm Springs) and Sen. Jason Rapert (R – Conway) prohibits abortion in Arkansas after the eighteenth week of pregnancy unless the mother's life or physical health is in serious jeopardy. The bill has passed the Arkansas Legislature and has been sent to the governor to be signed into law.

H.B. 1413 (Home Schooling): This good bill by Rep. Mark Lowery (R – Maumelle) prevents schools from charging home schooled students extra to take concurrent credit courses for college credit. The bill has passed the Arkansas Legislature and has been sent to the governor to be signed into law.

S.B. 149 (Abortion): This good bill by Sen. Jason Rapert (R – Conway) prohibits abortion in Arkansas if Roe v. Wade is ever overturned. This good bill has been signed into law.

S.B. 156 (Free Speech): This good bill by Sen. Bob Ballinger (R – Berryville) and Rep. Dan Sullivan (R – Jonesboro) prevents public colleges and universities from infringing the free speech of students and faculty on campus. This good

bill has been signed into law.

S.B. 168 (Pro-Life): This good bill by Sen. Cecile Bledsoe (R- Rogers) updates Arkansas' Safe Haven Act. It lets a woman surrender her new-



born to law enforcement personnel, fire department personnel, or medical personnel. Arkansas' Safe Haven Act protects children from being abandoned, and it provides women with options besides abortion. This good bill has been signed into law.

Bad Bills Filed

S.B. 304 (Sex Education): This bill by Sen. Will Bond (D – Little Rock) and Rep. LeAnne Burch (D – Monticello) requires every school district in Arkansas to offer "evidence based" health courses to 7th – 12th graders that include instruction on preventing pregnancy and sexually-transmitted diseases through abstinence and contraceptives. We know from experience that the kind of curriculum S.B. 304 mandates won't actually teach students to be abstinent. Instead it will encourage students to be sexually active. Past "evidence-based" programs pushed by Bill Clinton and Barack Obama did not have a meaningful impact on teen birth rates or teen abortion rates. S.B. 304 simply continues these flawed policies. S.B. 304 is currently before the House Education Committee.

A Quick Look at Legislation (continued)

S.B. 492 (Entertainment Districts): This bill by Sen. Trent Garner (R – El Dorado) and Rep. Sonia Barker (R – Smackover) lets cities create "entertainment districts" where open containers of alcohol can be carried and consumed out-

Because of their association with excessive drinking, entertainment districts in other states have raised serious concerns about crime, DUI offenses, and public safety.

doors. Entertainment districts essentially are areas where public intoxication is legal. Under this bill, an entertainment district could be temporary—such as at an event or festival—or it could be permanent. Because of their association with excessive drinking, entertainment districts in other states have raised serious concerns about crime, DUI offenses, and public safety. The bill is currently before the Senate City, County, and Local Affairs Committee.

H.B. 1290 (Contraceptives): This bill by Rep. Aaron Pilkington (R – Clarksville) and Sen. Bart Hester (R – Cave Springs) lets pharmacists dispense oral contraceptives to women without a prescription from a doctor. Oral contraceptives carry a number of health risks — which is why women currently need a prescription from a doctor — and they can cause the death of an unborn child by preventing the unborn child from implanting and growing inside the mother's womb. That's why Family Council opposes H.B. 1290. The bill has passed the Arkansas House of Representatives, and it is now before the Senate Public Health Committee.

Bad Bills Defeated

H.B. 1536 (Physician-Assisted Suicide): This bill by Rep. Dan Douglas (R – Bentonville) lets doctors prescribe lethal drugs to terminally ill patients who want to end their lives. Fortunately the bill was defeated in the House Public Health Committee.

SJR 18 (Ratifying the Federal Equal Rights Amendment):

This proposal by Sen. Joyce Elliott (D – Little Rock) and Rep. Jamie Scott (D – North Little Rock) would make Arkansas the 38th state to ratify the federal Equal Rights Amendment. This amendment to the U.S. Constitution is intended to prevent discrimination on the basis of sex, but the way it is worded could cause it to have a number of unintended consequences. States that have passed similar amendments have been forced to pay for abortions with taxpayer funds, and the Equal Rights Amendment could affect everything from college fraternities and sororities to how men and women are housed in federal prisons. Fortunately, the measure was defeated in the Senate State Agencies Committee.



Good Bills Filed

5.B. 448 (**Abortion**): This good bill by Sen. Gary Stubble-field (R – Branch) and Rep. Sonia Barker (R – Smackover) requires an abortionist to be board-certified or board-eligible OB/GYN. Currently any medical doctor or doctor of osteopathy in Arkansas can perform a chemical or surgical abortion. S.B. **448** will protect women from dangerous abortion practices. The bill also updates Arkansas' definition of a "viable fetus." Under current federal case law, states have a lot of leeway to restrict abortion when an unborn child is considered "viable." Updating this definition will make it easier to pass and enforce pro-life legislation in Arkansas. The bill is currently in the Arkansas Senate.

H.B. 1761 (Pro-Life/Bioethics): This good bill by Rep. Cindy Crawford (R – Fort Smith) and Sen. Missy Irvin (R – Mountain View) regulates the buying and selling of human eggs. Arkansas law currently lets companies harvest women's eggs for profit. Commercial egg harvesting carries a number of risks and is ethically suspect. H.B. 1761 prohibits companies from paying women for their eggs, but contains exceptions for free egg donations and for fertility treatments. The bill is currently in the House Public Health Committee.

H.B. 1289 (Conscience): This good bill by Rep. Brandt Smith (R – Jonesboro) protects the rights of conscience of all healthcare workers and companies. This will prevent people and organizations from being forced to promote, participate in, or pay for medical procedures that violate their conscience. The bill failed to pass the House Public Health Committee on Thursday, March 14, despite strenuous testimony in favor of the bill.

S.B. 387 (Lottery): This good bill by Sen. Joyce Elliott (D–Little Rock) and Rep. Jasen Kelly (R – Benton) raises the percentage of Arkansas Lottery revenue allocated for college scholarships to 25% by the year 2025. Currently, the Arkansas Lottery spends about 18% of the money it makes on scholarships. Unfortunately, the bill has failed to pass in the Senate Education Committee.

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A Quick Look at Legislation (continued)

H.B. 1378 (Lottery): This good bill by Rep. Jim Dotson (R–Bentonville) and Sen. Bob Ballinger (R – Berryville) raises the percentage of Arkansas Lottery revenue allocated for college scholarships to 25% by the year 2025. Currently, the Arkansas Lottery spends about 18% of the money it makes on scholarships.

H.B. 1399 (Pro-Life): This good bill by Rep. Karilyn Brown (R–Sherwood) and Sen. Scott Flippo (R – Bull Shoals) prohibits public funds from being used to clone or kill unborn children for scientific research. The bill has passed the Arkansas House, and has gone to the Senate Public Health Committee.

S.B. 341 (Abortion): This good bill by Sen. Missy Irvin

(R – Mountain View) and Rep. Joe Cloud (R – Russellville) amends Arkansas' informed-consent law for abortion to ensure women know how to find information about chemical abortion pill reversal. Doctors have demonstrated that chemical abortion drugs can be counteracted if the woman receives treatment quickly. This bill is currently before the Arkansas House.

H.B. 1453 (Abortion): This good bill by Rep. Clint Penzo (R – Springdale) and Sen. Kim Hammer (R – Benton) requires abortionists to give women information about perinatal hospice. Modern medicine has made it possible to test unborn children for deadly fetal abnormalities, and many children who test positive for

these abnormalities are aborted. H.B. 1453 will help women choose options besides abortion in these situations. The bill has passed the Arkansas House of Representatives and is currently before the Senate Public Health Committee.

H.B. 1511 (Home Schooling): This good bill by Rep. Mark Lowery (R – Maumelle) ensures home schooled students and private school students can access the Succeed Scholarship the state offers to students with special needs. Currently, this scholarship is only available for students enrolled in a public school.

S.B. 278 (Abortion): This good bill by Sen. Gary Stubble-field (R – Branch) and Rep. Spencer Hawks (R – Conway)

makes several improvements to Arkansas' abortion laws. The bill is currently in the Arkansas Senate.

S.B. 2 (Abortion): This good bill by Sen. Trent Garner (R – El Dorado) prohibits abortions performed because the baby has Down Syndrome. The bill is currently in the Arkansas Senate.

S.B. 3 (Abortion): This good bill by Sen. Trent Garner (R – El Dorado) requires abortionists to report complications arising from an abortion. Abortion carries a number of risks and consequences, and the reporting required by this bill will help Arkansas craft better pro-life laws in the future. The bill is currently in the House Public Health Committee.



Above: Rep. Mark Lowery (R – Maumelle) presents good home school legislation in committee.

Physician-Assisted Suicide Legislation Fails in Arkansas

On Wednesday, February 20, Rep. Dan Douglas (R – Bentonville) filed H.B. 1536 effectively legalizing physician-assisted suicide in Arkansas. This bill fundamentally violates the sanctity of human life by letting doctors prescribe lethal drugs to terminally ill patients. Physician-assisted suicide is bad, but

This bill fundamentally violates the sanctity of human life by letting doctors prescribe lethal drugs to terminally ill patients.

H.B. 1536 is worse than most proposals. In fact, the day it was filed, a palliative care physician I am friends with texted me, calling the bill "worse than terrible." I could not agree more.

Under H.B. 1536, Christian hospitals, hospices, and nursing homes would not be able to prevent physicians from pre-

scribing deadly drugs to their patients. Unlike Hawaii's suicide law, H.B. 1536 would not require patients to undergo counseling before receiving the lethal prescription. In other states where assisted suicide is legal, rumors of family members forcing individuals to take the suicide drugs have circulated. In states like Oregon and Washington, news outlets have reported insurance companies telling cancer patients that chemotherapy isn't covered, but suicide drugs are. H.B. 1536 doesn't address these problems.





Physician-Assisted Suicide Legislation Fails in Arkansas (continued)

Physician-assisted suicide is a hot topic in state legislatures right now. We knew it was only a matter of time before someone in Arkansas filed a bill legalizing physician-assisted suicide. However, H.B. 1536 came sooner than we expected, and it is worse than we imagined. We worked very hard to defeat this bill. We contacted our friends at American Family Association and Focus on the Family, and they opposed this bill. Former Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee opposed it, and a number of state legislators made it clear they don't support H.B. 1536. We also notified

everyday Arkansans who did an excellent job stepping up to the plate to fight this bad bill.

Thanks to overwhelming opposition from state and national leaders and from voters, the bill was soundly defeated in the House Public Health Committee. However, it was a grueling fight, and it's one we will face again in Arkansas if we don't proactively educate Arkansans about the dangers of legalizing physician-assisted suicide. That's something Family Council plans to do over the next two years.

Bill Would Establish Obama Administration's Failed Programs in Arkansas

What if I told you that a lot of Republicans at the Arkansas Legislature voted to create a state version of an Obama Administration program that we know wasted hundreds of millions of dollars in taxpayer funds? That's what's happening with S.B. 304 by Sen. Will Bond (D – Little Rock) and Rep. LeAnne Burch (D – Monticello).

Here's the backstory:

In 2010 the Obama Administration and Congress launched a nationwide effort to combat teen pregnancy and sexually-transmitted diseases. They decided to do that using "evidence-based" school programs that teach students about abstinence, contraceptives, and reproductive health. In theory, a lot of people thought it sounded promising. In practice, the program was a disaster.

For example, the government gave Planned Parenthood \$4 million in taxpayer money to conduct teen pregnancy prevention programs during school and after school in the Pacific Northwest. In the weeks immediately following the program, officials found that girls who went through the program were more likely to become pregnant than girls who did not. Twelve months later, all students who went through the program—male and female alike—were just as likely to become pregnant, cause a pregnancy, or engage in sexual activity without an effective method of birth control as other students. In other words, the program actually seemed to increase unintended pregnancy in the short run, and it failed to have any effect on unintended pregnancy in the long run.

The federal government distributed money hand over fist for programs like this one all over America for six years. In many states the money went directly to Planned Parenthood, who partnered with local public schools or government health offices to teach teenagers about preventing pregnancy and STDs. The programs focused on contraceptives, with abstinence education taking a backseat, and they simply did not work. That's why the Trump Administration moved to dismantle the program in 2017. Unfor-

tunately, as part of a compromise with liberals to avoid a government shutdown, the program wasn't completely discontinued. However, many states, including Arkansas, have avoided being caught up in this federal program.

Here's where S.B. 304 of 2019 comes into play:

S.B. 304 by Sen. Will Bond and Rep. Leanne Burch creates a state version of the Obama Administration's Teen Pregnancy Prevention Program in Arkansas.

S.B. 304 requires every school district in Arkansas to offer "evidence based" health courses to 7th–12th graders. The programs must include instruction on preventing pregnancy and sexually-transmitted diseases through abstinence and contraceptives. S.B. 304's idea of an "evidenced-based" sexual-education program is no different from the Obama Administration's.

S.B. 304 is such a patently bad piece of legislation that we did not believe there was any chance the bill would pass in the Senate. Unfortunately, despite testimony against the bill, several Republicans felt compelled to support it, because S.B. 304 also would create programs to address teen suicide, diabetes, and obesity in Arkansas—all of which are legitimate problems.

The bill passed the Arkansas Senate, and as of this writing (mid-March) it is in the House Public Health Committee, where we are working hard to defeat it.







POLICY POINTS: THREE DECADES OF DATA SHOWS ABSTINENCE IS THE BEST SEX-ED MODEL

By David Cox

Contraceptives and unplanned pregnancies have been a major topic at the legislature this year. This isn't anything new for Family Council. Those were major topics 25 years ago at the capitol, and we were part

of the discussion at that time, as well. Recently, several lawmakers have asked if Family Council has a better solution than contraceptives when it comes to preventing teen pregnancy. We've told them we do: Abstinence education.

When we say that, many people roll their eyes and claim that abstinence education simply doesn't work. Here's the truth: We have three decades of data from the State of Arkansas and the federal government that proves abstinence education not only works, but that it's far more effective against teen pregnancy than contraceptive education.

In 2016—while President Barack Obama was still in office—the federal Center for Disease Control released a 208-page report concluding teenagers who practice abstinence are healthier by nearly every metric than teenagers who are sexually active. The report looked at everything from seat-belt and bike helmet use to substance abuse, diet, exercise, and even tanning bed use. Their conclusion was that sexually-active teens were less healthy and engaged in riskier

behavior in almost every one of these areas. Abstinence doesn't just work when it comes to preventing pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases. It is tied to healthier, better lifestyles overall.

Besides this federal report, we also have raw data in Arkansas that indicates abstinence education is the best way to prevent teen pregnancy. In the 1980s and 1990s, governors Bill Clinton and Jim Guy Tucker worked very hard to promote sex-education promoting contraceptive use in public schools. Clinton's administration in particular worked to promote and establish school-based health clinics that distributed contraceptives. In 1997 the state switched strategies, promoting abstinence-based sex-education in public schools. The results were nothing short of staggering.

Teen birth rates and teen abortion rates in Arkansas plummeted. From 1997 to 2003, the teen abortion rate fell by approximately 37%, and the teen birth rate fell by 16%. Governor Huckabee's abstinence-based sex education of the late 1990s and early 2000s was more than twice as effective combating teen pregnancy and teen abortion as Gov. Clinton's and Gov. Tucker's contraceptive-based sex-education programs.

People who claim abstinence education doesn't work need to check the facts. Modern abstinence education programs don't stop at teaching students to be abstinent; they focus on overcoming peer pressure, making healthy choices, and avoiding risky situations. They help build self-esteem while also teachings kids to be sexually abstinent. These programs not only "work." They work so much better than contraceptive-based sex-education that there's almost no comparing the two.

Proposal Makes Dangerous Birth Control Drugs Available Without a Prescription

H.B. 1290 by Rep. Aaron Pilkington (R – Clarksville) and Sen. Bart Hester (R – Cave Springs) lets pharmacists dispense oral contraceptives to women without a prescription. Birth control pills carry a number of dangerous risks, including heart attack, blood clots in the lungs, and bleeding in the brain. That's why women currently cannot get oral contraceptives without first seeing a doctor. H.B. 1290 lets pharmacists sell these birth control pills to women without knowing whether or not the woman might be at risk for these complications. That means H.B. 1290 puts women's health at risk.

According to the federal Food and Drug Administration, virtually every major oral contraceptive on the market can cause the death of an unborn child. Birth control pills contain hormones that alter the lining of the uterine wall. If a child is

conceived, this change in the uterine wall can prevent the child from implanting inside the mother's womb. Instead of implanting and growing, the baby is miscarried and dies.

Family Council opposes this bill. As of this writing (mid-March), H.B. 1290 has passed the Arkansas House and is in the Senate Public Health Committee, where we are working to defeat it.



Home School Day at the Capitol a Huge Success!

In February we hosted Home School Day at the Capitol. This event was a huge success.

Hundreds of home school families came to the Capitol for Home School Day. They toured the building, attended committee meetings, met lawmakers, and learned about

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state government. They also made a favorable impression on our elected officials who make laws, rules, and regulations that impact home schooling. State Representative Cameron Cooper (R – Romance), who also is a home school dad, even sponsored a resolution honoring home schooling, and Rep. Mark Lowery (R – Maumelle) passed prohome school legislation in committee that day.

Home School Day at the Capitol is one of the most important events we host. It helps us educate home schoolers. It also helps lawmakers understand that their laws impact real-life families in Arkansas.



Above: Home schoolers gather with elected officials on the steps of the Capitol Building.



Pastors Day at the Capitol a Huge Success

In February we also hosted Pastors Day at the Capitol. This event was a huge success as well.

Pastors and church leaders from all over Arkansas gathered at the Arkansas Capitol Building for a time of prayer and worship. Elected officials and guest speakers shared their hearts and talked about God's Word. The best way I can describe it is this: We had church in the Capitol Building.

The Arkansas Capitol can be a very dark place sometimes, and Pastors Day at the Capitol helps bring a little of God's light into it. It's a way we can "pray for those in authority" while also informing and equipping ministers to serve everyone—including our elected officials.

New Foundation Ready to Apply for Federal Funds and Help Pregnancy Centers

A few weeks ago we received a letter from the Internal Revenue Service saying the ARFuture Foundation's tax-exempt status had been approved. This means the foundation is ready to begin applying for funds and distributing grants to Arkansas' pregnancy resource centers that help women with unplanned pregnancies. The road to this point was long, and we still have a lot of work left to do, but we are one step closer to our goal of making Arkansas the most pro-life state in America.





Family Council Honors Arkansas Couples Married the Longest

In March we hosted a reception honoring Arkansas' Longest-Married Couple—and the nine runners up—at the Governor's Mansion in Little Rock. Ten couples—each of whom had been married seventy-five years or more—came to the capital city with their families.

This is a truly special event that we are pleased to host each year. Marriage is a sacred covenant, and recognizing couples who have been married more than seven decades shows younger generations that marriage really can last a lifetime.

This year's longest-married couples are:

- Cleovis and Arwilda Whiteside of White Hall 79 years, married July 24, 1939
- Cecil and Lois Robertson of Heber Springs 79 years, married September 8, 1939
- Gussie and James Stephenson of North Little Rock 79 years, married December 25, 1939
- Thell and Margie Ellison of Natural Dam 77 years, married June 24, 1941



- Bill and Freda McClain of Little Rock 76 years, married June 20, 1942
- Grady and Wilma Adcock of Hot Springs 76 years, married July 3, 1942
- JC and Avanelle Merritt of Greenbrier 76 years, married July 6, 1942
- Cliff and Louis Ganus of Searcy 75 years, married May 27, 1943
- Doug and Kathleen Freeman of Sherwood 74 years, married December 16, 1944
- Earl and Ina Disheroon of Harrison 73 years, married May 1, 1945

Thank you!!

WE NEED YOUR HELP

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By the time you get this letter the Arkansas Legislature likely will be winding down and we will be looking ahead to the rest of the year and beyond. Our office has been incredibly busy these past few weeks. That's why I hope you will send a generous, tax-deductible gift today. Your financial support will help replenish our funds, which typically run a little low following the legislative session. Just mail your gift back to us using the enclosed response card and return envelope. We really appreciate your support, your friendship, your kind words, and your prayers. Let us know if there's ever anything we can do for you.

Sincerely,

Jerry Cox, President

P.S. It's been a busy—and productive—session at the Arkansas Legislature. Several good bills have passed, and we are working hard to stop bad bills that are still in play. That's why I hope you will send a generous, tax-deductible donation, if you are able. Your gift will help us continue standing strong for traditional family values at the Arkansas Legislature.

