



FAMILY
COUNCIL

INSIDE:

—
**Here's How to Elect
Bad Politicians**

—
**Here's Why We're
Winning the Fight
Against Abortion**

—
**Family Council's
Greatest Hits from
the Past 30 Years**

—
**Wisconsin Atheists
Bully Arkansas
School District**

—
& MORE



JAN/FEB 2020
UPDATE LETTER

DEAR FRIENDS,

I'm always a bit relieved when Christmas is over, and a little sad too. The empty nest gets pretty quiet after we've waved goodbye to the last load of grandkids.

This year, the house was quiet but, there on the kitchen table was one lone plate left after David's family hurriedly ate lunch and headed back to Kansas. I picked up that plate and started rinsing it off to put in the dishwasher. I suddenly felt a little melancholy. Maybe it was missing life the way it used to be with the unending task of raising four boys. Maybe it was missing our five almost perfect grandsons. Or maybe I was just exhausted after having a house full of company for several days! At any rate, I put the plate in the dishwasher as Doris has taught me. In a few minutes I made full recovery from my bout of melancholy and pretty soon Doris and I settled into enjoying the peace and quiet.

Somewhere in that quiet I thought about the little ones who almost didn't get to celebrate Christmas—the ones who were almost aborted, but got to live because someone did something. The lawmaker who voted pro-life, the pregnancy center worker who answered one more phone call, the person in front of the abortion clinic, those who marched and those who prayed—they all made a difference. Because of them, some little one had presents under the tree on Christmas morning and, yes, maybe they even left behind a messy plate or two for someone to wash.

I am reminded that it's more than lives saved; it is lives to be lived—not just Christmas, but, birthdays, weddings, and hearts given to Christ. That is what we're fighting for every day!

Last year alone, the legislature passed 13 pro-life laws. In 2015, we championed the nation's best informed-consent law, and the Arkansas Legislature passed it. This good law is saving hundreds of unborn children every year! In fact, this year 500 children will start pre-school or Kindergarten because this law saved their lives.

It's difficult to imagine, but in 2033 or 2034, each of these children saved will walk across the stage at a high school graduation. Some of these children may be valedictorians or salutatorians. They may graduate with honors and go to college, or fight for our country, or marry one of your grandchildren. They will have children of their own someday. They will shape the future in ways that most of us will never live to see.

This month marks the 47th anniversary of the U.S. Supreme Court's infamous *Roe v. Wade* abortion decision. This one ruling has cost the lives of nearly a quarter of a million Arkansans. That's a sobering thought. But today we are winning the fight against abortion. In December, Arkansas was named the second most pro-life state in the nation, just behind our friends in Louisiana. With your help we are pressing on toward the goal of making Arkansas the most pro-life state in the nation, and by the grace of God, I believe we will get there.

Because of good laws passed and the work of so many, tonight in homes across Arkansas, more than a thousand babies, toddlers, and young children will eat supper, read bedtime stories, brush their teeth, put on pajamas, pick up teddy bears and blankets, and crawl into bed. They will get to do these things because their lives were saved from abortion thanks to the good laws you have helped us get passed. That wouldn't be possible without friends like you who stand by our mission at Family Council. You and I are building an incredible legacy in Arkansas, one child and one messy plate at a time.

And now let me tell you a little more about that legacy—and about what we have planned for the coming year.

**This month
marks the
47th anniversary
of *Roe v. Wade*.**

414 S. Pulaski St., Suite 2 • Little Rock, AR 72201 • 501-375-7000 • info@familycouncil.org



Family Council
President Jerry Co

MY THOUGHTS: HERE'S HOW TO ELECT BAD POLITICIANS

William E. Simon is credited with saying, "Bad politicians are sent to Washington by good people who don't vote." I believe that's true. I also believe bad politicians are sent to Washington by good people who don't vote wisely. It isn't enough simply to vote.

Casting an uninformed vote may be the most certain way to elect bad politicians. We need to vote for candidates who reflect our values and stand up for what is right. Voters can't do that unless they know what their candidates believe.

That's why for thirty years Family Council has published the state's leading nonpartisan voter's guide. We survey the candidates about issues like abortion, guns, economics, education, and immigration, and we publish their survey responses in print and online. We've been doing this

since 1990, and I honestly believe it has made a difference. Because our guide doesn't favor one candidate over another, churches can distribute our voter's guide to their members.

We publish the Arkansas Voter's Guide, because we want voters to know who their candidates are and what they stand for. It's something we've done for 30 years, and it's something we plan to continue doing. Enclosed with this letter is a free copy of the 2020 Arkansas' Voter's Guide for the March 3 primary elections. If you want additional copies of the guide—free of charge—call our office at (501) 375-7000 or fill out the form enclosed with this letter.

Here's Why We're Winning the Fight Against Abortion

The day after Christmas in 1994, I fell from a boulder and broke my knee while hiking with one of my sons in the national forest west of Little Rock. I had knee surgery and spent the next several weeks on crutches. As a result, I wasn't able to walk in the annual March for Life in Little Rock that January. However, I did park my car at the end of the route and take a picture of the marchers as they trudged up the snowy hill to the Capitol Building.

To me, that picture symbolizes the reason why we are winning the fight to protect unborn children. Abortion in Arkansas has dropped to near-record lows. Most Arkansans believe abortion ought to be either completely illegal or legal only in a handful of circumstances. We passed more pro-life legislation last year than we did in the first decade of Family Council's existence. I believe this is possible because pro-lifers 25 years ago literally walked uphill in the snow to fight abortion.

Today the annual March for Life still takes place in Little Rock every January. People routinely pray and counsel women outside abortion facilities in Little Rock. Every spring and fall we hear stories about babies saved from abortion thanks to the efforts of groups like 40 Days for Life. But a lot of that groundwork was laid decades ago by ordinary people who were committed to the extraordinary work of ending abortion.

Arkansas Ranked Second Most Pro-Life State in America

In December our friends at Americans United for Life released their annual Defending Life List. According to AUL, Arkansas is the second most pro-life state in America for the third year in a row. AUL acknowledged the many great pro-life laws Arkansas passed last year. We are pleased to work with our friends at Arkansas Right to Life and in the Arkansas Legislature to pass good laws that protect unborn children. We look forward to the day when Arkansas truly is the most pro-life state in America.

Join Us for Prayer at the Capitol

Family Council is hosting prayer meetings in the Old Supreme Court room of the Arkansas Capitol Building every month. Each meeting will last about an hour. Join us for prayer at noon on Wednesday, February 12, and at noon on Wednesday, March 11. For directions or additional information contact Charisse Dean at (501) 375-7000 or charisse@familycouncil.org.



January 22, 1995: Some 200 pro-lifers march uphill through the snow in the annual March for Life in Little Rock.

Wisconsin Atheists Bully Arkansas School District

In December officials at the Pea Ridge School District suspended public prayer at school board meetings and ball-games following a complaint from the Wisconsin-based Freedom From Religion Foundation. The Freedom From Religion Foundation is an atheist group that routinely sends letters threatening legal action against schools and officials in Arkansas and elsewhere. Despite these letters, the group rarely sues anybody. Unfortunately, the Pea Ridge School District yielded to the Freedom From Religion Foundation. However, we have worked to connect them with lawyers at Alliance Defending Freedom, The American Center for Law and Justice, and other organizations that specialize in religious liberty cases. We hope that the Pea Ridge School District will continue letting board members and students exercise their right to pray before meetings and gatherings.

Medical Marijuana Costing Arkansas Taxpayers Millions

In December, news outlets reported that Arkansans had spent some \$23.3 million purchasing so-called "medical" marijuana. About \$2.4 - \$2.5 million of that money will go to the state as tax revenue. However, the legalization of "medical" marijuana already has forced the state to spend about \$22 million establishing the Medical Marijuana Commission and equipping our state agencies to run the program. Right now it looks like the state is going to spend about \$5 million or more every year overseeing "medical" marijuana in Arkansas. It's unclear if marijuana sales will provide enough tax revenue to cover those costs—much less pay back the \$22 million marijuana already has cost the state. That means regular taxpayers who don't want anything to do with marijuana likely will get stuck with the bill.



Help Us Find Arkansas' Longest-Married Couple

We're searching for the man and woman in Arkansas who have been married the longest. If you or someone you know has been married more than 70 years, email ken@familycouncil.org or call (501) 375-7000. Send us the couple's name, address, email address, phone number, and wedding date, and we will put them in the running for Arkansas' Longest-Married Couple. We will honor the ten couples who have been married the longest at a special reception in February, so we need all nominations by February 3. Call or email us if you have questions.

Order Free Copies of the Arkansas Voter's Guide for Your Family or Church!

The 2020 Arkansas Voter's Guide is here. Enclosed with this letter is a free copy of the guide that you can use ahead of the March 3, 2020 primaries. We asked candidates where they stand on issues like abortion, marriage, education, guns, and other topics that matter to voters. Those survey responses are in this voter's guide. You can find comments from the candidates and additional information at ArkansasVotersGuide.com. We plan to distribute thousands of copies of the Arkansas Voter's Guide this year. If you want additional guides to give to your friends, family members, or your church, please fill out the forms enclosed with this letter and mail it back to us. You can also request free copies of the Arkansas Voter's Guide by calling our office at (501) 375-7000 or by going to ArkansasVotersGuide.com.



Family Council's Greatest Hits from the Past 30 Years

It's impossible to sum up 30 years of work spent promoting, protecting, and strengthening traditional family values. More than 16% of Arkansas history has occurred under Family Council's watch! There's just no way to capture everything that's happened during that time. But when I look back on the past three decades, I'm reminded that there are very memorable moments and there are victories that took years—or even decades—to accomplish. Here's my best attempt to list some of Family Council's greatest hits from the past 30 years:

Building a Culture of Life. Since we launched Family Council in 1989, the number of abortions has been cut in half. Our pro-life work has helped make Arkansas the second most pro-life state in the nation. In the past 30 years we've seen Arkansas go from being a state where abortion is promoted to a state where one in five Arkansans think abortion ought to be completely illegal. Family Council has helped pass dozens of pro-life laws that will save the lives of hundreds of children every single year. We're proud to be part of that legacy.

Strengthening Home Schooling. In 1998 we established the Education Alliance, one of the nation's strongest and most effective statewide home school support organizations. The Education Alliance has helped thousands of families start home schooling, find a curriculum, prepare for college, and so much more. Today former home schoolers work in state government. Some of our lawmakers home school their own children. Home schoolers literally are helping shape the future of Arkansas. We are glad we get to be part of that movement.

Protecting School Children. Throughout the 1990's we exposed the dangers of Outcomes-Based Education. As a result, the program was halted. We also opposed comprehensive sex-education in public schools, and we helped spearhead efforts to teach abstinence to students. Our abstinence education efforts led to some of the most dramatic reductions in teen pregnancy and abortion in Arkansas history.

Helping Physicians With Bioethics. In the 1990s we started our Physicians Resource Council division. The goal of this division was to help doctors address social and moral issues. The Physicians Resource Council helped stop human cloning and embryonic stem cell research in Arkansas, and it has successfully opposed physician-assisted suicide and euthanasia.

Running One of the Most Successful Voter Education Efforts in America. Since 1990 we have distributed millions of voter's guides in Arkansas. These guides show where candidates stand on important issues like abortion, marriage, education, taxes, immigration, and so on. Over the years we've asked candidates about everything from what they think causes homosexuality to whether or not the U.S. ought to build a wall along its southern border. I don't know of any other group in America with a track record like ours when it comes to voter education.

Promoting Religious Liberty in Arkansas. Over the years, we have worked with speakers like David Barton of Wallbuilders to host events promoting America's godly heritage. In 1994 we worked with Lt. Governor Mike Huckabee and our other conservative friends in Arkansas to establish a Christian Heritage Week. Over the past ten years we have helped pass legislation protecting religious liberty and we have supported good legislation protecting healthcare workers' rights of conscience.



From Left: Rep. Tim Hutchinson, Sen. Bill Henley, and Mr. Tom Holiman with Gov. Bill Clinton (seated) at a bill-signing ceremony for the 1985 law that legalized home schooling in Arkansas.



From Right: Family Council staff members Elizabeth Robins and John Thomas stand with Lt. Gov. Mike Huckabee and other conservative leaders at a proclamation for Christian Heritage Week in Arkansas (February 2, 1994).



Stopping Legislation That Would Hurt Nursing Home Residents. Being pro-life means respecting innocent human life from conception until natural death. Throughout the 1990's nursing homes and their lobbyists tried to pass legislation making it easier to deny food or water to terminally ill or unresponsive residents. We successfully defeated these efforts. In 2003 we helped pass a law ensuring terminally ill patients will be given food or water when they request it. From 2003–2018 we successfully opposed leg-



islation that would have put a price tag on human life and shielded nursing homes from lawsuits if they neglected their residents.

Blunting the Radical LGBT Agenda. If radical LGBT activists are making headway in America, it isn't because of Arkansas. Over the years we've repeatedly passed legislation supporting traditional marriage, blocking attempts to indoctrinate public school children with LGBT ideology, and protecting Christians who disagree with same-sex marriage and homosexual behavior.

A Few More Memorable Moments from 1989–2019

Passing our very first bill. It was a pro-life parental-notification law we passed in 1989. That law set the stage for a parental-consent abortion law a few years later, an informed-consent law a few years after that, and dozens of other pro-life laws and resolutions since.

Distributing our first voter's guide in 1990. I launched Family Council in 1989. The very next year we surveyed candidates for our very first voter's guide, and we published their answers in Focus on the Family's Citizen magazine and through local outlets. We've distributed somewhere between two and three million voter's guides since then, but that very first guide in 1990 was critical.

Getting our first website in the early 1990s. We got our website at the very beginning of the .com boom—before Focus on the Family even had one. Since then technology has changed a lot, but getting that first website was an important milestone

The Covenant Marriage Act of 2001. This law addressed our state's alarming divorce rate and encouraged couples to resolve their differences rather than simply file for divorce. Many people don't know this law exists, but we worked for years to pass it, and it's still one of the laws we are most proud of.

Defeating a fatally-flawed effort to rewrite the state constitution. In the 1990s Governor Jim Guy Tucker and a handful of lawmakers tried to give themselves the power to rewrite Arkansas' State Constitution, but we were able to help stop them.

Defeating multiple attempts to abolish the Electoral College. In 2007 and 2009 we repeatedly blocked attempts to award Arkansas' electoral votes to the presidential candidate who won the nationwide popular vote. Those were memorable victories.

Banning partial-birth abortion—twice! In 1997 Governor Mike Huckabee signed our first ban on partial-birth abortion. Unfortunately, the 8th Circuit Court of Appeals struck it down.

A few years later, Congress passed a federal ban on partial-birth abortions that was upheld in court. In 2009 we passed a state partial-birth abortion ban that was similar to the federal law, and it has been on the books in Arkansas ever since.

Blocking LGBT "hate crimes" laws in Arkansas. Throughout the 1990s and early 2000s we repeatedly blocked attempts to pass a "hate crimes" law in Arkansas, because these laws punish criminals for what they believe rather than simply for their crimes. These types of laws give special protections to some people, but not other people, and they have been used by LGBT activists to target Christians. The worst fight over hate crimes laws was in 2001. Fortunately, we were able to win that fight in the Arkansas Senate.

Banning human cloning. In 2003 we helped pass Act 607 that prevents cloning of human beings, including human embryos. Laws like these had a tremendous impact on biomedical research in America and are part of the reason why today's scientists aren't as interested in human cloning and embryonic stem cell research.

Passing the Woman's Right to Know Act of 2001 and the Woman's Right to Know Act of 2015. In 2001 we helped pass a great informed-consent law for abortion. In 2015 we passed an even better law that gives women all the facts about abortion—including its risks, consequences, and alternatives. When women have this information, they're more likely to choose life for their baby.



Family Council President Jerry Cox shakes hands with President George W. Bush at the airport in Little Rock (April 25, 2001).



HERE'S OUR VISION FOR 2020

We just finished our thirtieth year in ministry at Family Council. That's really hard to believe. We have some big plans for 2020. Here is a snapshot of our vision for 2020:

Defeat Recreational Marijuana in Arkansas. Arkansas' Surgeon General, the U.S. Surgeon General, and leading researchers from around the country all agree that marijuana is a dangerous drug. We plan to work with our friends across the state to defeat recreational marijuana in Arkansas in 2020.

Make Arkansas the Most Pro-Life State in America. Arkansas is the second most pro-life state in the country, but we want to be number one. We are putting together pro-life legislation and we are working on projects that will help us end abortion in our state.

Educate and Equip Voters. This year we plan to distribute tens of thousands of copies of our Arkansas Voter's Guide all over the state. These guides will help voters elect the best candidates.

Support Pregnancy Resource Centers. Our team is working with pregnancy resource centers to help them find funding and support. These centers offer women real options besides abortion, and are the tip of the spear in the fight to end abortion.

Assist Home Schoolers. Our home school director, Lisa Crook, is here every day. She helps home schoolers navigate everything from beginning Kindergarten to applying for college to dealing with social workers to competing in science fairs. She has more experience assisting home schoolers than nearly anybody in Arkansas. Home schooling in Arkansas has helped build an entire generation of adults who are leaders in their communities, and we are glad to be part of that legacy.

Honor Arkansas' Longest-Married Couples. In February we will host a reception in Little Rock, where we will honor the ten couples in Arkansas who have been married the longest. This is one way we promote marriage and show younger generations that love and commitment really can last a lifetime.

Host Pastor's Day at the Capitol. In February ministers, church leaders, and public officials will gather at the Arkansas Capitol Building with us for a time of prayer and worship. Pastor's Day at the Capitol helps Christians fulfill their mission of being salt and light in a very dark world.

Hold Regular Prayer Meetings at the Capitol. Christians are called to pray for those in authority. That's why we are hosting regular prayer meetings at the Capitol Building this year. If you would like to know more about these meetings, call Charisse Dean on our staff at (501) 375-7000.

We can't do any of this good work without friends like you. That's why I hope you will support our work by sending a generous, tax-deductible donation today, if you are able. Thank you for being so generous to us. I always appreciate your kind words, your friendship, your financial support, and your prayers. Please let me know if there is anything we can ever do for you.

Sincerely,



Jerry Cox, President

Thank you!!

P.S. Here's your free 2020 Arkansas Voter's Guide. To request additional, free copies of the guide for your family or church, just call us at (501) 375-7000 or go to ArkansasVotersGuide.com. We just wrapped up a great year, and we have big plans for 2020. Check out this letter to learn more about our goals for the coming months. Thank you for all you do to stand with us and support our work.

