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COUNCIL**

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**MARCH 2020
UPDATE LETTER**

DEAR FRIENDS,

In March of 2005 I was at Walmart when my cell phone rang. It was Chris Pyle with Governor Huckabee's office. From the tone of his voice—and when he asked me if I was sitting down—I braced myself for some really bad news. He said, "Fay Boozman died today." That's how I received the startling news that my good friend Dr. Fay Boozman had been killed in a farming accident.

Fay was an ophthalmologist from Northwest Arkansas. He was elected to the state senate in 1994, and he served there through 1998. Following an unsuccessful bid for the U.S. Senate, he directed the Arkansas Department of Health from 1999 until his untimely death in 2005. Fay served in the Arkansas Senate when being a Republican wasn't cool. Back then there was a large clique of senators who reminded me of a bunch of crude high school boys who took pleasure in bullying or making fun of others. You know the type that enjoys gossiping about people and laughing at them behind their backs, telling jokes about them, and treating them like an outcast. Fay and a handful of other good guys in the senate endured this, and they eventually prevailed.

As a state senator, Fay supported pro-life and pro-family legislation. He sponsored a measure providing income tax credits for certain adoption expenses. He helped charitable organizations like Habitat for Humanity get a break on sales taxes. He was a driving force in the successful effort to deregulate home schooling in 1997, and he proposed a "bill of rights" for the parents of public school children. He worked with Family Council to craft legislation that protected nursing home residents from being denied food or water.

As the director of the Arkansas Department of Health, Fay was responsible for implementing policies at the state level. Because of his leadership, the Health Department was able to enforce much-needed regulations on abortion facilities. He hired good people to serve in key positions at the department. Fifteen years later, some public health officials Fay hired are still serving, and we still rely on them today.

Fay also helped make sure that Arkansas did not fund or promote school-based health clinics that hand out contraceptives to students. From our experiences under Governor Bill Clinton and Governor Jim Guy Tucker, Fay and I both knew that those types of comprehensive sex-education programs were not what our public schools needed. I remember what a breath of fresh air it was to have Mike Huckabee in the Governor's Office and Fay Boozman in the Department of Health! Nobody is perfect, but the difference between them and the folks who held those offices before them was like night and day.

This March will mark 15 years since I got the phone call that Fay had passed away. A decade and a half later, his name still comes up regularly at the Capitol Building in Little Rock. He really was "one of the good guys." But even more than that, I think Dr. Fay Boozman's life and legacy is a testimony to the fact that one person really can make a difference. Fay knew there was more to life than running a successful business. He wasn't just a doctor from Rogers. He was a devoted husband, a father, and a leader in his church. He treated people with respect, and he understood that the things he did—good or bad—impacted others.

I believe there are other men and women like Fay Boozman out there. That's why over the years Family Council's Physicians Resource Council division has recognized doctors who exemplify Fay's devotion to the Christian faith, their family, and their community. It's one of the ways we promote, protect, and strengthen traditional family values in Arkansas. And now let me tell you a little more about how we are fighting for family values in our state—and about how you can partner with us in that mission.

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Family Council
President Jerry Cox

MY THOUGHTS: THE SUPER BOWL AD YOU DIDN'T SEE

On February 2 the Kansas City Chiefs won their first Super Bowl in 50 years. Even more than football, though, the Super Bowl is known for its elaborate commercials that cost millions of dollars to produce and broadcast. This year's advertising lineup included a controversial commercial that featured—of all things—drag queens eating hummus. You would think that a network willing to air something like that would be willing to sell ad space to anyone with money to spend, right? Apparently not.

Fox refused to air a Super Bowl ad featuring abortion survivors—men and women who were nearly killed in legal abortions before they were born. You can still watch the ad online by searching for "Faces of Choice." It's just 30-seconds of abortion survivors looking into a camera and asking questions, like, "Can you tell me that I didn't deserve to survive?"

Apparently Fox is worried that asking questions about abortion might upset some viewers, but there's nothing wrong with drag queens parading around onscreen. Go figure.

Arkansans Have Bought Enough "Medical" Marijuana to Roll Seven Million Joints

Since last May, Arkansans have bought more than 5,463 pounds of "medical" marijuana. That's enough to roll upwards of 5-7 million joints! Marijuana in Arkansas sells for about \$15 a gram. All told, Arkansans have spent more than \$35 million on marijuana. However, only about \$3.7 million of that money will go to the state in tax revenue—which won't even cover the cost of running the "medical" marijuana program, much less pay back the \$22 million Arkansas spent establishing the Medical Marijuana Commission and equipping our state agencies to run the program. That means regular taxpayers who don't want anything to do with marijuana likely will end up subsidizing "medical" marijuana in Arkansas.

Coalition Asks Arkansans Not to Sign Pro-Marijuana Amendment

In late January, Family Council Action Committee joined a coalition opposing recreational marijuana in Arkansas. The coalition is led by State Senator Cecile Bledsoe, and it includes the Arkansas Faith and Ethics Council and Arkansas Surgeon General Dr. Greg Bledsoe. In January, the group hosted a press conference in the Old Supreme Court room of the Arkansas Capitol Building, asking Arkansans not to sign petitions for the two recreational marijuana amendments vying for the ballot.

If either of these amendments passes, marijuana will be less regulated than alcohol. Arkansas will have the loosest marijuana law of any state in America, and illegal drug dealers will be able to grow and ship marijuana from Arkansas to neighboring states like Oklahoma and Texas. Arkansas will become a hub for drug cartels who want to sell marijuana legally in our state and illegally in others.

Jerry Cox speaks at a press conference opposing recreational marijuana in Arkansas.

The Problem With "Red Flag" Laws

Lately "red flag laws" have gotten a lot of attention. The idea behind them is that law enforcement should be able to take away a person's firearms if he or she raises enough "red flags" to appear dangerous. It sounds reasonable in theory, but it just doesn't work in practice.

Red flag laws take away a person's constitutional right to keep and bear arms, because the government thinks they might commit a crime. These laws ignore fundamental American principles about due process and presumption of innocence. Depending on how the "red flag" law is written, if a person goes on an angry tirade about something online or makes statements that sound extremist, the government might take away that person's guns and treat the person like a potential criminal rather than like someone who is innocent until proven guilty.

If state legislators can take away a person's right to keep and bear arms because of a "red flag," there's nothing to stop them from doing the same thing to their other constitutional liberties. Imagine an American citizen being told he or she no longer has the right to peacefully assemble because the government has concerns about the types of people

he or she might assemble with. Or imagine a person being told he or she no longer has freedom of speech, because the government has concerns about the types of things he or she might say. That's one of the problems with "red flag" laws.



Arkansans March for Life

In January thousands of Arkansans rallied on the steps of the state capitol building in the 42nd March for Life. Elected officials, pro-life leaders, and volunteers joined together to affirm the sanctity of human life. Pro-life events also took place in Northwest Arkansas. Arkansans are overwhelmingly pro-life. Today, most people in Arkansas believe abortion ought to be either completely illegal or legal only under certain circumstances. The state legislature has passed a long list of pro-life laws in recent years, and those laws are saving hundreds of children from abortion. Slowly but surely, we are building a culture that values innocent, human life.



Arkansans march for life on January 19, 2020
(Photo Credit: Sen. Jason Rapert).

The Problem With Hate Crimes Laws

Since the early 1990s, Family Council has opposed hate crimes legislation. In a nutshell, these laws enhance the penalty for crimes motivated by hate or bias against certain groups of people. On the surface, that sounds reasonable to a lot of folks. However, in practice, hate crimes laws just don't work the way they're intended. Here are three problems with hate crimes laws.

First, hate crimes legislation creates unequal protection under the law. It gives some people more protection than others. Hate crimes laws in other states typically give homosexuals, minorities, and people with disabilities extra protection, but they ignore other people who are likely to be the victim of a violent crime—like single moms, the homeless, the elderly, and small children.

Second, hate crimes laws punish criminals for what they thought and believed besides what they actually did. Did the perpetrator write something hateful on social media? What kind of church does he go to? Does he have friends who are racist or bigoted? These are the questions that prosecutors bring up when they charge someone with a hate crime. Free societies don't punish people for what they think or say—even when what they think or say is indefensible.

Finally, hate crimes laws don't prevent hate crimes. States with hate crimes laws still report a high number of hate crimes. That's why even some very liberal scholars have begun rethinking whether or not these laws work.

Laws that give people special protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity have been used as a battering ram against people of faith—especially photographers, caterers, florists, and wedding chapel owners who don't want to take part in same-sex weddings. Arkansas Governor Asa Hutchinson has called repeatedly for passage of a hate crimes law. Family Council strongly opposes hate crimes legislation, and we will work to defeat any effort to bring hate crimes laws to Arkansas—just as we have for the past two and a half decades.

Pro-Abortion Groups Rally in Little Rock

A week after Arkansas' March for Life, pro-abortion groups held their own rally on the steps of the Capitol Building. A few hundred people attended it. Speakers at the rally included a physician who performed abortions for Planned Parenthood before it closed its Fayetteville clinic last year; former surgeon general Dr. Joycelyn Elders; and a state representative from Fayetteville.

The rally was sponsored by the Arkansas Coalition for Reproductive Justice. On its Facebook page, this pro-abortion group:

- Promotes information about ways women can perform drug-induced abortions at home
- Spreads pro-LGBTQ messages
- Shares talking points from groups who want to decriminalize prostitution in Arkansas
- Promotes "solidarity" with "sex workers" (i.e. prostitutes)
- Endorses comprehensive-sex education in Arkansas

Pro-abortion groups are becoming more extreme in Arkansas, and they are grossly out of step with the values of the rest of the state. At the same time, we still have a lot of work to do if we want to end abortion and continue building a state that values the sanctity of human life.

Planned Parenthood is Fundraising in Northwest Arkansas

Nationwide, Planned Parenthood has pledged to spend \$45 million on elections this year. The group wants to unseat pro-life lawmakers and elect candidates who support abortion. In September, the group's political action committee in Arkansas raised \$1,270; in October the group raised another \$2,490. And in January Planned Parenthood's Arkansas PAC hosted an official fundraiser in Fayetteville.

Planned Parenthood's Arkansas PAC has somewhere between \$13,000–14,000 they could spend on electioneering. That isn't enough to make a big difference in a major election, but it could affect a close race. Planned Parenthood is still very active in Arkansas. That's why pro-lifers need to stay vigilant.



Ambulances Sighted at Abortion Facilities in Arkansas

The day after Christmas pro-life volunteers sighted an ambulance at Little Rock’s surgical abortion facility. Family Council sent the Little Rock Ambulance Authority a Freedom of Information Act request regarding the incident. In response we received heavily redacted 911 audio and dispatch documents. The redactions removed virtually all information about the woman’s condition and what prompted the abortion facility to call 911. Less than a month later, on January 21, another ambulance was sighted at the surgical abortion facility, and pro-lifers reported seeing an ambulance at Planned Parenthood’s chemical abortion center in Little Rock the next day. These ambulance sightings are a testimony to the fact that abortion isn’t “safe.” It takes the life of an unborn child, and it carries serious health risks for women.

Pro-Gambling Group Spends \$280,000 on Arkansas Ballot Measure

The group Arcade Arkansas has spent more than \$280,000 on its effort to bring casino-style gambling machines to Arkansas under the state lottery. Most of this money has come from a very small handful of people. If Arcade Arkansas is able to amend the state constitution this year, thousands of casino-style games will appear in gas stations and convenience stores all over Arkansas. This is exactly what lawmakers did not want when they passed the Arkansas Lottery’s enabling legislation back in 2009.

Expanding Our Network

One of Family Council’s priorities for 2020 is expanding our network of friends and supporters around the state. The goal is to reach more Arkansans, educate voters, and help everyday people all over Arkansas stand up for traditional family values. Our team has identified several thousand Arkansans whom we plan to invite to join our network and partner with us in various ways between now and the end of this year.

WE NEED YOUR HELP

Family Council exists to promote, protect, and strengthen traditional family values in Arkansas. We do that by shaping public policy and impacting public opinion all across the state. We also want to educate and equip Arkansans to make a difference in their communities. We just finished shipping thousands of voter’s guides all over Arkansas ahead of the March 3 primaries, and we plan to distribute thousands more before Election Day this November. None of this work would be possible without good friends like you who appreciate what we do. That’s why I hope you will send a generous, tax-deductible donation to Family Council today, if you are able. Your gift will help us continue standing for traditional family values in Arkansas.

Thank you for your support. Please let me know if there is ever anything my staff or I can do for you.

Sincerely,

Jerry Cox, President

Thank you!!

P.S. We just finished shipping thousands of voter’s guides statewide. Pro-lifers are on the move in Arkansas—but so are groups that support abortion. **We have a lot we want to do in 2020.** That’s why I hope you will send a generous, tax-deductible donation today, if you are able. Thank you for your support!

