



**FAMILY  
COUNCIL**

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**NOVEMBER 2020  
UPDATE LETTER**

*Dear Friends,*

In 2016, business tycoon Warren Buffett said “For 240 years it’s been a terrible mistake to bet against America, and now is no time to start.” In spite of COVID-19 and everything else going on in 2020, he repeated that quote in May of this year by saying, “Never, ever bet against America.”

Just think of all those who bet against America and lost. In the War of 1812, the British mercilessly shelled Fort McHenry, but in the dawn’s early light our flag was still there. Hitler referred to Americans as a “mongrel race of people,” but that didn’t stop thousands of young American GIs from storming the beaches on D-Day to crush the Third Reich. The Japanese thought Pearl Harbor would be a fatal blow, but less than four years later, they couldn’t stop the Battleship Missouri from steaming into Tokyo Harbor to accept their unconditional surrender. In 1956, Soviet Primer Nikita Khrushchev uttered his ominous threat, “We will bury you.” Instead, it was Khrushchev who died and was buried in 1971. Less than 20 years later his Berlin wall fell, and the Soviet Union fell apart. In Desert Storm, Saddam Hussein promised us the “mother of all battles,” and it turned out that way for his forces—not ours. Osama Bin Laden called us the great Satan, but then he met Seal Team Six. These and everyone else who has bet against America has lost.

Today, ANTIFA, the radical Black Lives Matter organization, white supremacists, Neo-Nazis, the “cancel culture,” and all the rest, along with much of the media, are betting against America. Communist China, Russia, North Korea, and Iran are all betting against America. Sadly, many in our federal government and even a few at the Capitol in Little Rock are betting against the America you and I love.

They too will lose because, in the end, evil always loses. Evil has always hated America, because of the gospel we stand for and the one we stand for—our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Humanly speaking, America shouldn’t even be here. Our light should have been snuffed out years ago. But our light shines on. Every time the words of “America the Beautiful” cross our lips, we pray that refrain, “God shed His grace on thee.” This is the only reason we have prevailed against all odds, and the only reason we will prevail. The odds always favor evil, but in Christ, we’re more than conquerors.

I want you to know that at Family Council, our bet is on America and her people. Our bet is on the man in the church pew—on the woman in her prayer closet—on children who are being raised right by Christian parents—on the generations yet unborn whose lives we save today from abortion. Our bet is on the goodness of America and God’s promise that if we humble ourselves and repent that God will heal our land. Our hope is in our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ—the same place every other generation of Americans has put their hope and trust.

With that faith, hope, and love Family Council is, by the grace of God, going to continue taking Biblical values into the halls of government. We’re going to continue standing for God’s truth and His righteousness—no matter what.

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Family Council  
President Jerry Cox

## MY THOUGHTS: FAMILY COUNCIL HAS THE BEST TEAM IN THE COUNTRY

We don't talk very often about the staff at Family Council, but I want you to know our team is second to none. I realize it isn't a competition, but I would put them up against any pro-family group—state or national—in the country. When I launched Family Council in 1989, my goal was to double our staff from one employee—me—to two employees. After we did that, I made it a goal to grow our staff from two people to four and then from four to six. Throughout the 1990s we grew, but there was a problem: The people who came to work here were excellent, but they usually did not stay very long. Aside from John Thomas, Martha Adcock, and Melissa Savary who were on staff for a number of years, we had a lot of turnover in our office.

A few years ago I decided to change how we do things. I wanted to recruit good employees who would stay with Family Council for a long time and who we could train to excel at what they do. Looking back, I think I can say confidently that we have succeeded at that.

Doris and I have been part of Family Council since Day One. David reviews every bill filed at the Arkansas Legislature, and his expertise in public policy is widely respected. Luke communicates regularly with our supporters, and over the past seven years he has helped us meet new friends who like our work and want to help us. Before coming to Family Council, Ken worked for presidential campaigns; for the past five years he has helped us coordinate major projects like the voter's guide. Charisse has a background in church ministry, and since 2015 she has served on the State Board of Education and is currently its Chair. Before joining our team nearly two years ago, Erin was heavily involved in her community and served on her local Republican committee; in fact, we met her, because she volunteered extensively at the legislature for the late Sen. Linda Collins. Lisa worked in the Arkansas Department of Education's Home School Office for several years before joining our team in 2015. I honestly don't know anybody who understands home schooling and the Department of Education better than Lisa does. Over the summer, we added an intern to our team: Chip Gross. He's studying to become an attorney, and he has already done incredible work helping us research and understand legislation. Oh, and I almost forgot to mention: Luke, Ken, Charisse, and Erin have grown into a lobbying team that is very formidable. You should see them walk the halls of the Capitol Building sometime!

Family Council is incredibly blessed. Our staff now has several years of experience, and every member of our team is an expert in his or her field. National organizations we work with always tell me how impressed they are with our team. Our staff has the strengths and the skills to get the job done. This work is a calling, and I never want to ignore the hand of God in what we do, but I'd like you to know that the folks at our office do an incredible job. They're like a talented football team: I can pass them the ball, and they can move it down the field or lateral it to a teammate who can. That's why I'm anticipating some big wins in the coming months.

## Our Favorite Thanksgiving Memories and Traditions

Thanksgiving is right around the corner. This is such a wonderful season! As we look forward to spending time with family and giving thanks to God, our team would like to share a few of our favorite traditions and memories about this holiday.



When I was a boy the woods were all around our house, so it was easy for me to take my gun on Thanksgiving and pretend that I was a pilgrim hunting turkeys or Daniel Boone looking for a bear. I remember the fall air gently moving the kitchen curtains as my mother made an amazing meal complete with cherry pie and chocolate cake.

**Jerry Cox**  
President

My dad got very little vacation time, so deer hunting on Thanksgiving was a break for my dad and two brothers. By evening they were home, and we would all sit down to a wonderful home cooked meal. For some people it's turkey, but at our house the turkey took a back seat to the dressing my mother made. I have her recipe, but I've never been able to make it taste the way I remember it.

**Doris Cox**  
Bookkeeper





The thing I look forward to the most at Thanksgiving is being with my family. We all live busy lives and it is hard to gather throughout the year. Thanksgiving is a time for us all to meet, eat, and give thanks for the year. I am blessed with a wonderful family. My Grandmother always made everyone's favorite desserts (which was a lot of desserts). She is no longer with us, but my mother and I have continued to bake everyone's favorite desserts. It is a labor of love for our family.

**Lisa Crook**  
*Home School Director*



My favorite Thanksgiving tradition is seeing family and telling stories to my children about the Pilgrims, Squanto, and Samoset. I always look forward to turkey, cornbread dressing, mashed potatoes, pies, and all the other side dishes. Some years we deep-fry the turkey; other years we roast it in the oven. It's just really good to spend a long weekend with loved ones and celebrate the blessings that God has given us.

**David Cox**  
*Assistant Director*



The thing I look forward to the most at Thanksgiving is relaxing, eating, and watching football with my dad. My favorite Thanksgiving tradition is having the day off from our family business and just having a day with the family to enjoy a nice meal and downtime from the everyday hustle and bustle.

**Ken Yang**  
*Government Affairs*



My life is just so busy that a holiday like Thanksgiving means literally just family time with very little, if any, distraction over a rather slow day. It's as if time slows down, and I soak up every minute of Thanksgiving. My favorite Thanksgiving tradition is going to my parents to be with close and extended family from out of town. We usually hang out, play spades, ride the four-wheeler, maybe do some fishing if it's warm, and also shoot some guns. It's a great time to catch up.

**Luke McCoy**  
*Development*



My favorite Thanksgiving tradition is making my grandmother Pearl's coveted dressing and sweet potato pies. The thing I look forward to most at Thanksgiving is spending time with family and friends.

**Charisse Dean**  
*Government Affairs*



The thing I look forward to the most at Thanksgiving is gathering around our large family table with the people I love and enjoying the day. I am always so grateful to the Lord for the bounty of food and love that is shared around the Thanksgiving table! My favorite Thanksgiving tradition is perusing recipes with my Mom and then getting to work to prepare what we find for the Thanksgiving meal! It can be a lot of work, but it's something I treasure!

**Erin Hogan**  
*Administrative*



My favorite Thanksgiving tradition is how my wife and I create the ambience for our day, setting the table with the two pilgrim candles and putting *A Charlie Brown Thanksgiving* on for the kids (who are wearing turkey clothes). The thing I look forward to the most at Thanksgiving is spending truly uninterrupted time with my family—especially because we are all focused on expressing our gratitude to God for how He's blessed us.

**Chip Gross**  
*Legal Intern*  
*Family Council*



## U.S. Can Take Practical Steps to Counter China

By U.S. Congressman Rick Crawford

We are in the midst of the greatest public health and economic crisis we have ever seen. China is responsible for the cover-up of COVID-19, permitting it to spread and disrupt the livelihoods of Americans and our partners around the globe. This has cost over 200,000 American lives to date and will continue to impact our security and prosperity going forward if steps are not taken.

In response, it is important we look at methods that strengthen our position both at home and abroad, as we look to counter China's influence now and over the long term. This can only be done by strengthening partnerships with whom we share common interests and values. The United States must support its allies in the Pacific Rim and elsewhere, serving as a geo-political, economic, and moral counterweight to China in the wider region. For instance, we need to divest ourselves from China and its state-owned enterprises and reposition production and supply chains from China to the United States and partner countries. This is something we have already done with state-owned enterprises and their threatening behavior within our own borders.

One of the key regions in this process is Latin America. I believe there are several measures we can take to stem China's growing influence in our hemisphere.

Latin America presents a unique opportunity to move elements of the global supply chain from China, while preserving competitive advantage and the business environment that made China appealing to Western companies. This can be done through a combination of tax incentives and infrastructure development in Latin America. I know that a primary barrier to relocating production and service facilities to Central and South America is the current inconsistent state of infrastructure in targeted countries. Another barrier to relocating production and service facilities to Latin America is market conditions and the rule of law. We need to work with countries in Latin America to develop conditions conducive to attracting foreign investment.

In doing so, we must recommit ourselves to our own backyard and keep non-continental powers, in particular China, from being influential in the Americas. One way we can do this is through the establishment of a Western Hemisphere Trade Bloc, further linking existing free trade areas and partners while working to keep outside actors and their behavior at bay.

I have heard first-hand from leaders in the region, and the time to act is now. China is exerting unwarranted influence in the region, as they work to undermine our interests in our own backyard. In the face of this onslaught, our neigh-

bors are urgently requesting our assistance. If we do not answer their call, then it shall be too late.

Second, we also need to work to develop mutually beneficial economic and trade opportunities. As the world's leading agriculture producing country, American agriculture is a tool for strengthening our engagement overseas. This can be done through the promotion of precision agriculture, technology and research exchanges, the provision of food assistance, as well as market development.

American farmers have the ability to stabilize food supply chains globally. We have an overabundance of high-quality food, and we need to ensure that it reaches those who need it most, regardless of location. Such actions will aid in building relationships, open markets, and promote food security.

Moreover, I believe such actions will go a long way in demonstrating that the United States is a reliable, well-meaning partner, especially at a time when China and the CCP have proven unreliable across sectors, yet attempt to boost its image through its own coronavirus disinformation campaign, e.g. "mask" diplomacy.

Finally, we need to all understand that food security is national security. It is not a secret that the CCP actively seeks to steal proprietary research and technological advancements from our agricultural sector, looking for ways to undermine American ingenuity and steal the profits of our labor.

Overall, I believe addressing these items will strengthen our position as a counterweight to the CCP in key regions, promote our values, and secure the supply of needed goods and materials for ourselves and others.

Importantly, it will also undermine China and the CCP's position, starving it of needed resources to project influence abroad and maintain sovereignty at home. I believe that we must hold China accountable for its actions of the past months.

However, we must also work long-term to decrease their influence at home and abroad, starve the CCP of resources needed to maintain its hold on power, and limit opportunities to undermine American security and prosperity.



*Congressman Crawford is a member of the U.S. House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence and a member of the Subcommittee on Counterterrorism, Counterintelligence, and Counterproliferation.*

## You Can't Pass a Hate Crimes Law Without Creating Special, Protected Classes of People

A few months ago Gov. Hutchinson, Sen. Jim Hendren (R-Gravette), businessmen, and a few others proposed passage of hate crimes legislation in Arkansas. Their measure enhances the penalty for crimes motivated by hate against certain groups of people. Twenty-five years of experience in other states has taught us that these laws simply do not work. They don't protect people from violent crimes, and they carry serious unintended consequences. That's why Family Council has opposed this type of legislation since the 1990s.

One of the problems with hate crimes laws is that it's impossible to draft a law like this without creating special, protected classes of people who get more legal protection than others. Case in point, the governor's hate crimes proposal he rolled out last summer contains language implying that the bill doesn't create special, protected classes. But at the very same time it lists classes of people who are protected—classes based on gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, religion, and so on.

Saying that a hate crimes law doesn't create protected classes is a little like passing a law that restricts how fast a person can drive, but claiming that it isn't actually a speed limit. It simply can't be done. Designating special, protected classes of citizens makes our justice system unequal. That's one reason why Family Council opposes hate crimes legislation.

## Federal Government Sues Arkansas Kroger Store that Fired Two Christian Employees

In September the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) filed a lawsuit against a Kroger store in Conway over religious discrimination. The store allegedly fired two Christian employees who declined to wear a rainbow-colored heart at work; rainbow insignia generally are worn to show support for LGBT causes and lifestyles, which is something these two employees felt they could not do. This lawsuit highlights how corporations work really hard to promote the LGBT agenda. It also underscores the power of lower courts and government offices. This lawsuit may never land before the U.S. Supreme Court, but it still will impact how businesses in America treat their employees' religious beliefs and how future courts handle religious discrimination cases. That could affect Americans for years to come.



## Federal Government Budgets \$31 Million for Abstinence Education

In October the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families office announced it awarded \$31.63 million to 79 organizations nationwide that will teach sexual-risk avoidance to youth and young adults. The grant money is part of an effort to teach youth personal responsibility, how to avoid risky behaviors, and how to wait until marriage before engaging in sexual activity.

**We know from experience that teaching abstinence and sexual-risk avoidance is the right way to go.** In 1997 Arkansas began promoting abstinence sex-education. 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%. Martha Adcock, who was Family Council's staff attorney at the time, chaired Governor Mike Huckabee's Steering

Committee on Abstinence Education. Under her leadership, the State of Arkansas awarded millions of dollars to local groups that taught students about abstinence. Arkansas'

**From 1997 to 2003, the teen abortion rate fell by approximately 37%, and the teen birth rate fell by 16%.**

sas' abstinence education program was so successful that it garnered national attention. Unfortunately, Congress later cut funding for these good programs. It's great to see the federal government finally making abstinence education a priority again.



## Arkansas Attorney General's Office Defends Three Pro-Life Laws in Court

On September 23, Attorney General Leslie Rutledge's office appeared before a panel of judges from the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals to defend three pro-life laws the Arkansas Legislature passed in 2019. The laws are:

- Act 493 of 2019, prohibiting abortion after the eighteenth week of pregnancy, except in cases of rape, incest, or to save the life of the mother.
- Act 619 of 2019, prohibiting abortion of an unborn baby solely because the child has Down Syndrome.
- Act 700 of 2019, requiring abortion doctors to be board certified or board eligible OB/GYNs.

Family Council supported all three of these laws, because they will save lives and could help undermine *Roe v. Wade*. They passed with overwhelming support, but U.S. District

**Arkansas has won some major, pro-life victories in court. I am confident more victories are ahead.**

Judge Kristine Baker blocked the state from enforcing the laws. Attorney General Rutledge's office has asked the Eighth Circuit to vacate Judge Baker's injunction. Arkansas has won some major, pro-life victories in court. I am confident more victories are ahead.

## Documents Show Abortionist Wrote Marijuana Certifications in Heber Springs

A Little Rock abortionist has been working at a medical marijuana clinic in Heber Springs, according to documents Family Council obtained via the Freedom of Information Act. Dr. Thomas Tvedten is the owner of Little Rock Family Planning Services, Arkansas' only surgical abortion facility. Documents obtained from the State Medical Board indicate that besides operating an abortion facility in Little Rock, Dr. Tvedten began certifying patients to use medical marijuana at Heber Springs Cannabis Clinic in September of 2019.

According to the documents, in February of 2020 Dr. Tvedten certified a 12-year-old girl to use medical marijuana. A complaint filed against Dr. Tvedten indicates that the girl was receiving treatment from child and adolescent psychiatrists Dr. Scott Hogan and Dr. Lynn Thomas in central Arkansas. When the girl's psychiatrists learned Dr. Tvedten had certified their patient to use marijuana, they filed a complaint with the Arkansas State Medical Board.

The Arkansas State Medical Board asked Dr. Kristi Kindrick, a board certified psychiatrist, to review the case. Dr. Kindrick prepared an Expert Reviewer's Report outlining her findings. The report indicates Dr. Tvedten diagnosed the

**Dr. Tvedten certified a 12-year-old girl to use medical marijuana.**

child using a screening tool for post-traumatic stress disorder, which the report says is not a substitution for a psychiatric evaluation. The report also notes that marijuana exposure puts children with severe mental illness at significant risk of worsening symptoms. The report concludes that "Dr. Tvedten has acted in a grossly negligent manner" in diagnosing the child and certifying her to use medical marijuana. The Arkansas State Medical Board suspended Dr. Tvedten's medical license in August pending a disciplinary hearing before the board. On October 1, the board opted to reinstate Dr. Tvedten's license, but barred him from certifying anyone to use medical marijuana until the board holds a disciplinary hearing in December.

**Obviously, this situation highlights a number of issues with Arkansas' medical marijuana laws.** For example, Arkansas' medical marijuana amendment lets physicians with no experience diagnosing mental illness certify people to use marijuana for mental illnesses like PTSD, Alzheimer's, and Tourette's syndrome.

Family Council is monitoring this situation and discussing possible legislation that could prevent this kind of thing from happening in the future.



## ENJOY SOME EASY MICROWAVE PEANUT BRITTLE THIS THANKSGIVING!

- 1½ Cups raw peanuts
- 1 Cup sugar
- ½ Cup light corn syrup
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 1 Tablespoon butter
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 teaspoon baking soda

Combine peanuts, sugar, salt, and syrup in a two-quart, microwave-safe bowl. Microwave on high for three minutes. Stir well. Microwave an additional two and a half minutes. Stir in butter and vanilla extract. Microwave for one minute. Add soda, and stir quickly until light and foamy. Immediately pour onto a lightly greased baking sheet. When cool, break into pieces, and store in an airtight container.

Image by Janet Hudson / CC BY 2.0

### Satanic Temple Sues to Place Pro-Abortion Billboards in Arkansas, Indiana

In September the Satanic Temple filed a lawsuit against Lamar Advertising after the company rejected four pro-abortion billboard designs the group wanted to place near pregnancy resource centers in Arkansas and Indiana. The billboards claimed that “abortions save lives” and that the Satanic Temple’s abortion ritual could help “avert many state restrictions” on abortion. Lamar rejected the ads for being misleading and offensive.

It’s very telling that the Satanic Temple wants to place offensive, pro-abortion billboards near pregnancy resource centers. Pregnancy resource centers give women real options besides abortion. Many offer everything from pregnancy tests to ultrasounds to maternity clothes and adoption referrals—often free of charge. These centers are real leaders in the fight to end abortion. Abortion’s supporters know that. Maybe that’s why they feel the need to target these good organizations. In the meantime, Family Council and other pro-life groups want to do everything we can to support and promote the work that pregnancy resource centers do.

### Remembering Heaven Pace: The Unborn Baby Girl Murdered Twenty-One Years Ago

On August 26, 1999, Shiwona Pace, 23, was ambushed by a 20-year-old man and his two teenage brothers in Little Rock. Her former boyfriend had hired them to attack Shiwona and kill her unborn baby girl—Heaven Lashay Pace—who was due to be born the following day. Shiwona pleaded with the men to spare her child as they repeatedly kicked her in the stomach. In response, one yelled, “Your baby is dying tonight!”

Shiwona’s attackers beat her for half an hour before leaving her severely injured and sobbing on the ground. Later at the hospital her daughter, Heaven, was stillborn. “She was a perfect baby, almost seven pounds,” Shiwona later said. “She almost looked as if she were sleeping.”

In the past, men who attacked a pregnant woman and killed her baby were not charged with anything more than assault and battery against the woman. However, in the spring of 1999 Family Council worked with Senator Jim Hendren and other state lawmakers to pass the Fetal Protection Act. The law made it a crime to injure or kill an unborn child who is more than 12 weeks gestation. Because of that law, the boyfriend and the three attackers were convicted of murder for Heaven’s death.

In 2013 Family Council again worked with Senator Hendren and other lawmakers to expand the Fetal Protection Act to ensure it protects unborn children at every stage of development, starting at the moment of conception. On October 1 of this year, Dekeesha McPhearson, 35, was tragically killed in a shooting in Little Rock. According to local news outlets, she was pregnant. Little Rock Police have said her murderer will face two homicide charges. It’s terrible that Dekeesha and her baby were killed, but it’s good that state law recognizes there are two murder victims in this case. Arkansas’ Fetal Protection Act is no ordinary pro-life law. It helps establish legally that unborn children are living human beings—something that could play a big role in overturning *Roe v. Wade* and ending abortion. Family Council is very proud to be able to support good, pro-life laws like these.



Above: In August of 2018 the Satanic Temple parked a statue of baphomet in front of the Capitol Building for a few hours to protest the Ten Commandments monument.

## Save the Date: Giving Tuesday is December 1

Giving Tuesday is coming December 1. This is a day that Americans pause to focus on helping nonprofits and charities. Last year our friends across the state pulled together and very generously donated a total of \$31,025 on Giving Tuesday! It was probably the most successful fundraising drive we have ever done, but it would not have happened without the support of friends like you. Believe me when I say that those gifts were a tremendous

blessing. They did a lot to help us stand up for traditional family values all over Arkansas. This year, I hope you will consider helping us by making a generous, tax-deductible donation on Giving Tuesday, if you are able. Look for more information about Giving Tuesday on our website or in our weekly email alerts. If you aren't on our email list, email us at [info@familycouncil.org](mailto:info@familycouncil.org), and we will add you to it.

## WE NEED YOUR HELP

Back a few months ago I told our friends around the state that I wasn't sure how COVID-19 and the economic downturn would affect our finances at Family Council. We had donors tell us they weren't sure if they would be able to help us this year or not. Obviously, there's been a lot of uncertainty the past few months.

The good news is our friends have stepped up to help us. I want to tell every one of our financial supporters thank you for doing that. I mean it when I say that we could not ask for better friends. You've been there for us time and time again. We would not be here without your faithful support.

I hope you will think about how you want to help us between now and the end of this year. You can give securely online any time by going to [FamilyCouncil.org](http://FamilyCouncil.org). You can mail a tax-deductible donation using the envelope and response card enclosed with this letter. You can sign up to become a monthly pledger, and give every month. You can join our prayer team or our Rapid Response Network by calling our office at (501) 375-7000. I know you will pray for us and support us as you are led and as you are able.

Thank you for being there for us. **I'm so glad that you believe in what we do. Your support makes you a strong partner in our work.** I always appreciate your kind words and your prayers. Please let me know if there is anything my staff or I can do for you.

Sincerely,



Jerry Cox, President

Thank you!!

**P.S. Our team has distributed thousands of copies of the Arkansas Voter's Guide in print and online.** Enclosed is a little information about how you can support our work by donating stock, property, or other assets. Between now and the spring of 2021 we want to mobilize our Rapid Response Team to stop bad legislation—like the hate-crimes measure. We plan to work to protect doctors from being forced to perform sex-change operations on children. We're working with our friends around the state to establish hundreds of pro-life cities and counties all over Arkansas. Your generous financial support and your prayers make all of this possible.



**About Us:** Family Council is a conservative, Christian non-profit organization based in Little Rock, Arkansas. Jerry Cox founded Family Council in 1989 in association with Dr. James Dobson and Focus on the Family. Our mission is to promote, protect, and strengthen traditional family values. We educate and equip families and churches to make Arkansas a better place to live, work, and raise a family, and we lobby lawmakers and elected officials on important issues that matter to families. Our work is funded by generous supporters all over Arkansas.