



**FAMILY  
COUNCIL**

*inside:*

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*Photo Credit: Helge Meyer*

**MAY 2021  
UPDATE LETTER**

## *Dear Friends,*

It was a dark night in 1993 when enemy soldiers in Bosnia heard the low rumble of an engine approaching in the night. Thermal scanners and radar equipment showed nothing out of the ordinary, but in the darkness they could hear something approaching quickly. A few seconds later the deafening roar of an engine filled the air as the black shape of a car blew past the guard post. It was possibly the only stealth vehicle of its kind on earth: A 1979 Chevrolet Camaro nicknamed the “Ghost Car.” Its driver had an equally legendary nickname. His real name was Helge Meyer, but the U.S. forces in Bosnia simply called him “God’s Rambo.”

Helge Meyer was a soldier with the Danish Special Forces when the Soviet Union dissolved and Yugoslavia descended into civil war. As a special operator, Meyer had trained with the finest soldiers in the Free World for clandestine missions in Eastern Europe. As a devout Christian, Meyer felt he could not sit idly on the sidelines while innocent women and children suffered from war, starvation, and genocide in the Balkans. He had to help.

Meyer offered his services to the NATO members in Europe. Being the reasonable people that they are, NATO believed Meyer was out of his mind and sent him away. Meyer eventually approached U.S. Air Force personnel in Europe who took one look at his 1979 Chevy Camaro and decided that they might be able to work with him. In possibly the most unique covert operation of the 1990s, U.S. military personnel outfitted Meyer’s muscle car with stealth paint that would confuse enemy radar and heat-detection. They installed night vision and thermal imaging technology so Meyer could drive in the dark without headlights. They outfitted his car with armor plating, bulletproof inserts, high-tech radio equipment, and an engine capable of putting out twice the horse power of the original V8. They even mounted a mine-sweeper and cow-catcher bumper on the front so Meyer could barrel through blockades without slowing down. But when the U.S. military tried to equip the Camaro with weapons, Meyer politely declined. He told them his Bible was the only weapon he needed.

Meyer’s plan was simple. He would use his stealth Camaro to deliver supplies and aid to civilians suffering throughout the Balkans. Armed with nothing more than the Word of God and a pocketknife, Meyer drove into war torn regions where NATO forces were afraid to go. In mission after mission, he unloaded thousands of dollars’ worth of humanitarian aid to civilians—and he did it all without the official sanction of any government or military. Meyer consistently faced danger from enemy soldiers and vicious bandits. He provided help in Croatia, Bosnia, and Kosovo throughout the 1990s and even into the early 2000s.

Today, Meyer resides in Germany. He no longer drives into war zones, but he still owns his 1979 Camaro. In 2018 Meyer reportedly told a Danish newspaper he does not want to be thought of as a hero, and that you don’t have to wheel a muscle car filled with medical supplies into combat zones to help others. He was able to do that, because he had the training and the support of the U.S. military. Meyer’s point was that we all have gifts we can use to help others—and we all ought to step up and put them to use wherever God calls us.

I believe that’s especially true of us as believers. God has work He wants us to do right now—at this particular time and place—and He will equip us to do that work. That’s something we want to do at Family Council. We don’t want to be just another lobbyist group at the Arkansas Legislature. We want to bring the light of God’s truth into the halls of government. And now let me tell you a little more about how we are working to do that—and about how you can partner with us in that mission.

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Family Council  
President Jerry Cox

## MY THOUGHTS: LEGISLATORS OVERRIDE VETO, PASS FIRST-OF-ITS-KIND LAW PROTECTING CHILDREN

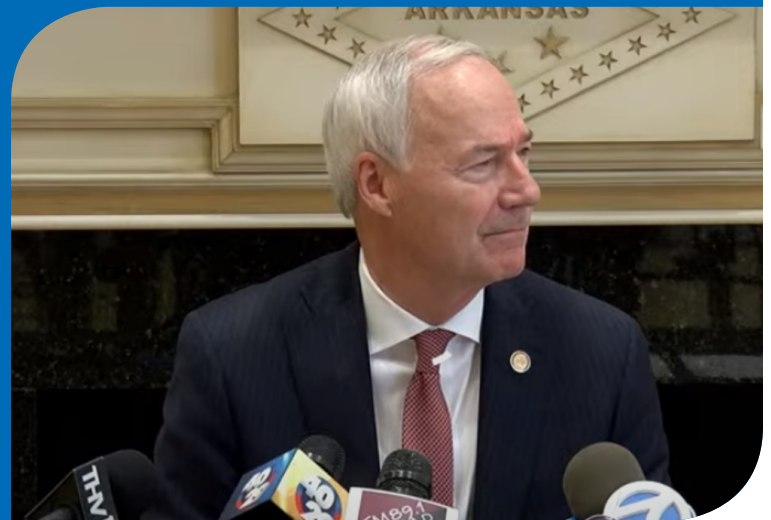
Just when you think you've seen it all, Rev. Franklin Graham issues a nationwide call to prayer over legislation in Little Rock.

In March lawmakers passed H.B.1570, the Save Adolescents From Experimentation (SAFE) Act. This good bill by Rep. Robin Lundstrum (R – Springdale) and Sen. Alan Clark (R – Lonsdale) prohibits sex-reassignment procedures on children in Arkansas. Gender-reassignment surgeries can leave children sterilized and scarred for life. Medical researchers do not know the long term effects these procedures and therapies can have on kids. The FDA has never approved the use of puberty blockers to perform gender transitions. That is why many people equate gender-reassignment procedures with experimenting on children.

Even though the bill passed with strong support from the Arkansas House and Senate, Governor Hutchinson chose to veto H.B. 1570. In his remarks defending his decision, the governor called the bill "a product of the culture war" in America and echoed objections that the ACLU and others had raised against the SAFE Act. Fortunately, the Arkansas House of Representatives and Arkansas Senate voted overwhelmingly to override the governor's veto.

The national attention that H.B. 1570 drew was unlike anything our team had ever seen before. Rev. Franklin Graham, Fox News host Tucker Carlson, Tony Perkins, Family Research Council in Washington, D.C., American Family Association, Focus on the Family—even the Christian satire website *The Babylon Bee*—all weighed in on this historic piece of legislation.

It's simply amazing how much misinformation opponents spread against this good bill. Some claimed it would deny transgender children healthcare. It doesn't. Others said transgender children wouldn't be able to get counseling if the bill passed. That simply is not true. Governor Hutchinson argued that the legislation inserts the State of Arkansas into a private matter between a child's parents and a doctor—but he is mistaken. H.B. 1570 protects children. It's no different from our other laws against child abuse. This is a really good bill that will do a lot of good in Arkansas. I am grateful to every lawmaker who stood up and did what was right.



Right: Gov. Hutchinson announces plans to veto H.B. 1570, the SAFE Act. The Arkansas Legislature voted to override his veto the next day.

## Here's How Your Legislators Voted on H.B. 1570

Below is a breakdown of how each member of the Arkansas House of Representatives and Arkansas Senate voted on H.B. 1570, the Save Adolescents From Experimentation (SAFE) Act. If your legislators supported this good bill, please be sure to contact them to say thank you.

### The Following Senators Voted For The SAFE Act

- Sen. Bob Ballinger (R - 5) Yea
- Sen. Charles Beckham (R - 12) Yea
- Sen. Cecile Bledsoe (R - 3) Yea
- Sen. Ronald "Ron" Caldwell (R - 23) Yea
- Sen. Alan Clark (R - 13) Yea
- Sen. Breanne Davis (R - 16) Yea
- Sen. Jonathan Dismang (R - 28) Yea
- Sen. Lance Eads (R - 7) Yea
- Sen. Jane English (R - 34) Yea
- Sen. Scott Flippo (R - 17) Yea

- Sen. Trent Garner (R - 27) Yea
- Sen. Ben Gilmore (R - 26) Yea
- Sen. Kim Hammer (R - 33) Yea
- Sen. Bart Hester (R - 1) Yea
- Sen. Jimmy Hickey (R - 11) Yea
- Sen. Ricky Hill (R - 29) Yea
- Sen. Missy Irvin (R - 18) Yea
- Sen. Blake Johnson (R - 20) Yea
- Sen. Mark Johnson (R - 15) Yea

- Sen. Mathew "Mat" Pitsch (R - 8) Yea
- Sen. Jason Rapert (R - 35) Yea
- Sen. Terry Rice (R - 9) Yea
- Sen. Bill Sample (R - 14) Yea
- Sen. Gary Stubblefield (R - 6) Yea
- Sen. James Sturch (R - 19) Yea
- Sen. Dan Sullivan (R - 21) Yea
- Sen. Larry Teague (D - 10) Yea
- Sen. David "Dave" Wallace (R - 22) Yea

*(continued on following page)*

## Here's How Your Legislators Voted on H.B. 1570 (continued)

### The Following Senators Voted Against The SAFE ACT

Sen. Linda Chesterfield (D - 30) Nay  
Sen. Joyce Elliott (D - 31) Nay  
Sen. Stephanie Flowers (D - 25) Nay

Sen. Jim Hendren (I - 2) Nay  
Sen. Keith Ingram (D - 24) Nay

Sen. Greg Leding (D - 4) Nay  
Sen. Clarke Tucker (D - 32) Nay

### The Following Representatives Voted For The SAFE Act

Rep. Sonia Barker (R - 7) Yea  
Rep. Howard Beaty (R - 9) Yea  
Rep. Rick Beck (R - 65) Yea  
Rep. Mary Bentley (R - 73) Yea  
Rep. Mark Berry (R - 82) Yea  
Rep. Stan Berry (R - 68) Yea  
Rep. Justin Boyd (R - 77) Yea  
Rep. Ken Bragg (R - 15) Yea  
Rep. Harlan Breaux (R - 97) Yea  
Rep. Keith Brooks (R - 31) Yea  
Rep. Karilyn Brown (R - 41) Yea  
Rep. Joshua Bryant (R - 96) Yea  
Rep. John Carr (R - 94) Yea  
Rep. Frances "Fran" Cavanaugh (R - 60) Yea  
Rep. Joe Cloud (R - 71) Yea  
Rep. Bruce Coleman (R - 81) Yea  
Rep. Cameron Cooper (R - 44) Yea  
Rep. Bruce Cozart (R - 24) Yea  
Rep. Cindy Crawford (R - 76) Yea  
Rep. Marsh Davis (R - 61) Yea  
Rep. Gary Deffenbaugh (R - 79) Yea  
Rep. Jim Dotson (R - 93) Yea  
Rep. Les Eaves (R - 46) Yea  
Rep. Jon Eubanks (R - 74) Yea

Rep. Brian Evans (R - 43) Yea  
Rep. Charlene Fite (R - 80) Yea  
Rep. Lanny Fite (R - 23) Yea  
Rep. Jack Fortner (R - 99) Yea  
Rep. Tony Furman (R - 28) Yea  
Rep. Jimmy Gazaway (R - 57) Yea  
Rep. Justin Gonzales (R - 19) Yea  
Rep. Michelle Gray (R - 62) Yea  
Rep. Delia Haak (R - 91) Yea  
Rep. David Hillman (R - 13) Yea  
Rep. Mike Holcomb (R - 10) Yea  
Rep. Steve Hollowell (R - 49) Yea  
Rep. Lane Jean (R - 2) Yea  
Rep. Jack Ladyman (R - 59) Yea  
Rep. Mark Lowery (R - 39) Yea  
Rep. Robin Lundstrum (R - 87) Yea  
Rep. Roger Lynch (R - 14) Yea  
Rep. John Maddox (R - 20) Yea  
Rep. Julie Mayberry (R - 27) Yea  
Rep. Rick McClure (R - 26) Yea  
Rep. Austin McCollum (R - 95) Yea  
Rep. Mark McElroy (R - 11) Yea  
Rep. Richard McGrew (R - 22) Yea

Rep. Gayla McKenzie (R - 92) Yea  
Rep. Ron McNair (R - 98) Yea  
Rep. Stephen Meeks (R - 67) Yea  
Rep. Josh Miller (R - 66) Yea  
Rep. Jon Milligan (R - 53) Yea  
Rep. John Payton (R - 64) Yea  
Rep. Clint Penzo (R - 88) Yea  
Rep. Aaron Pilkington (R - 69) Yea  
Rep. David Ray (R - 40) Yea  
Rep. Marcus Richmond (R - 21) Yea  
Rep. Johnny Rye (R - 54) Yea  
Rep. Keith Slape (R - 83) Yea  
Rep. Brandt Smith (R - 58) Yea  
Rep. Nelda Speaks (R - 100) Yea  
Rep. David Tollett (R - 12) Yea  
Rep. Dwight Tosh (R - 52) Yea  
Rep. Kendon Underwood (R - 90) Yea  
Rep. Jeff Wardlaw (R - 8) Yea  
Rep. Les Warren (R - 25) Yea  
Rep. Danny Watson (R - 3) Yea  
Rep. Carlton Wing (R - 38) Yea  
Rep. Richard Womack (R - 18) Yea  
Rep. Jim Wooten (R - 45) Yea

### The Following Representatives Voted Against The SAFE Act

Rep. Fred Allen (D - 30) Nay  
Rep. Nicole Clowney (D - 86) Nay  
Rep. Andrew Collins (D - 35) Nay  
Rep. Denise Ennett (D - 36) Nay  
Rep. Deborah Ferguson (D - 51) Nay  
Rep. Kenneth "Ken" Ferguson (D - 16) Nay  
Rep. Vivian Flowers (D - 17) Nay  
Rep. Denise Garner (D - 84) Nay  
Rep. Megan Godfrey (D - 89) Nay

Rep. Spencer Hawks (R - 70) Nay  
Rep. Monte Hodges (D - 55) Nay  
Rep. Ashley Hudson (D - 32) Nay  
Rep. Lee Johnson (R - 75) Nay  
Rep. Fredrick "Fred" Love (D - 29) Nay  
Rep. Stephen "Steve" Magie (D - 72) Nay  
Rep. Tippi McCullough (D - 33) Nay  
Rep. Milton Nicks (D - 50) Nay  
Rep. Mark Perry (D - 42) Nay

Rep. Jay Richardson (D - 78) Nay  
Rep. Jamie Scott (D - 37) Nay  
Rep. Joy Springer (D - 34) Nay  
Rep. David Whitaker (D - 85) Nay

### The Following Representatives Did Not Vote

Rep. Craig Christiansen (R - 47)  
Rep. Carol Dalby (R - 1)  
Rep. David Fielding (D - 5)  
Rep. Joe Jett (R - 56)

Rep. Reginald Murdock (D - 48)  
Speaker Matthew Shepherd (R - 6)  
Rep. Stu Smith (R - 63)  
Rep. DeAnn Vaught (R - 4)



Right: Jerry Cox speaks with Capitol Police officers ahead of a press conference on H.B. 1570.





Luke McCoy

## Arkansas Has Best Conscience Law in the Country

By Luke McCoy, Family Council Staff

Recently the Arkansas legislature passed—and Governor Hutchinson signed—S.B. 289, the Medical Ethics and Diversity Act. If you are a healthcare professional, this bill protects your right to obey your moral, ethical or religious beliefs in the healthcare industry. The Arkansas constitution says, “No human authority can, in any case or manner whatsoever, control or interfere with the right of conscience.” Current Arkansas law allows certain medical providers to exercise conscience in only a few instances: abortion, contraceptives, and end-of-life decision making. However, there was no legal remedy for situations where a person’s right of conscience was violated in these cases. This offered insufficient conscience protections. What good is a right if there’s no legal recourse to enforce that right? And these days, there are way more than just the three services mentioned previously to be found unconscionable. That’s why Arkansas needed real medical conscience protection, and this bill was the solution. It was vetted by religious and secular legal professionals such as Alliance Defending Freedom,

Americans United for Life, the Arkansas Hospital Association, and other local experts with experience in conscience litigation, medical ethics, and healthcare in general. As expected, just about every liberal group opposed the bill. Thanks to Arkansas lawmakers and Governor Hutchinson for signing this great bill! The governor and the legislature deserve much credit for the passage of this good bill. Medical professionals in other states have faced pressure to violate their consciences. Thanks to S.B. 289, that won’t happen in Arkansas.

## Arkansas Protects Fairness in Women’s Sports

By Ken Yang, Family Council Staff

The Arkansas legislature recently passed S.B. 354, the Fairness in Women’s Sports Act, with the governor then signing it into law. The lead sponsors of this bill were Sen. Missy Irvin (R – Mountain View) and Rep. Sonia Barker (R – Smackover). The bill was also part of the Republican Women’s Caucus’ *Dream BIG* legislative package. In short this new law will make sure that our girls and women get a level playing field when they play sports.



The new law ensures that sports expressly designated for girls will not be open to students that are biological males. There has been nearly 50 years of advances for girls that women have fought long and hard for, and this measure will preserve that for our females participating in sports. With South Dakota Governor Kristi Noem vetoing a similar version of Arkansas’ law passed in her state, Arkansas is now leading the way nationally by Governor Hutchinson signing the Fairness in Women’s Sports Act into law. Arkansas becomes the second state this year to pass this new law, and 30 states have now filed similar legislation. It is always refreshing when common sense prevails, and it was an honor to fight and stand with Sen. Irvin, Rep. Barker, our strong Republican women legislators, and all the lawmakers that supported this effort.



Ken Yang

**It is always refreshing when common sense prevails.**

## Good Legislation Passed As Of April 15

**Act 626 / H.B. 1570 (Prohibiting Sex-Reassignment on Children):** This good law by Rep. Robin Lundstrum (R – Springdale) and Sen. Alan Clark (R – Lonsdale) prohibits sex-reassignment procedures on children. It also prevents funding of sex-reassignment procedures performed on children. This law will protect children from being subjected to surgeries and procedures that can leave them sterilized and permanently scarred.

**Act 562 / H.B. 1402 (Abortion-Inducing Drugs):** This good law by Rep. Sonia Barker (R – Smackover) and Sen. Blake Johnson (R – Corning) updates Arkansas' restrictions on abortion-inducing drugs like RU-486. It outlines requirements that abortionists must follow in administering abortion-inducing drugs, which could help save unborn children from RU-486.

**Act 561 / H.B. 1589 (Transactions With Abortionists):** This good law by Rep. Harlan Breaux (R – Holiday Island) and Sen. Bob Ballinger (R – Ozark) prohibits government entities, including public schools, in Arkansas from engaging in transactions with abortion providers and affiliates of abortion providers.

**Act 560 / H.B. 1572 (Informed-Consent to Chemical Abortion):** This good bill by Rep. Robin Lundstrum (R – Springdale) and Sen. Scott Flipppo (R – Mountain Home) outlines the informed-consent process for chemical abortion. Arkansas' current informed-consent laws for abortion are geared primarily for surgical abortion procedures. H.B. 1572 will help ensure women get all the facts about chemical abortion — including its risks, consequences, and pro-life alternatives. This will help save many unborn children from abortion.

**Act 461 / S.B. 354 (Fairness in Women's Sports):** This good law by Sen. Missy Irvin (R – Mountain View) and Rep. Sonia Barker (R -Smackover) would prevent male student ath-

letes from competing against girls in women's athletics. This would protect fairness for girls' sports at school in Arkansas.

**Act 462 / S.B. 289 (Conscience):** This good law by Sen. Kim Hammer (R – Benton) and Rep. Brandt Smith (R – Jonesboro) protects healthcare workers' rights of conscience. Arkansas' current conscience protections are narrowly focused on abortion, abortifacients, and end of life decisions, and they protect only a limited number of people. Act 462 helps broaden these protections for healthcare workers.

**Act 498 / S.B. 85 (Abortion):** This good law by Sen. Cecile Bledsoe (R – Rogers) and Rep. Joe Cloud (R – Russellville) requires an abortionist to show an ultrasound image of the unborn baby to the pregnant woman before an abortion.

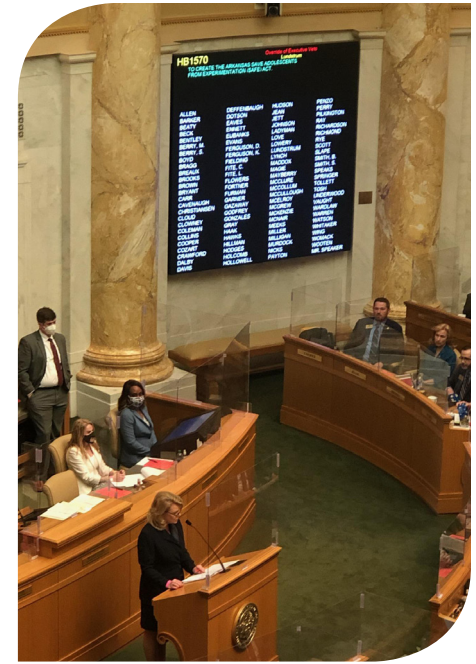
**Act 309 / S.B. 6 (Prohibiting Abortion):** This good law by Sen. Jason Rapert (R – Conway) and Rep. Mary Bentley (R – Perryville) prohibits abortion in Arkansas, except in cases when the mother's life is in jeopardy. Family Council worked closely with Sen. Rapert to pass this good bill that could save the lives of thousands of children and give the courts an opportunity to overturn decades of bad, pro-abortion rulings.

**Act 358 / H.B. 1408 (Abortion):** This good law by Rep. Robin Lundstrum (R – Springdale) and Sen. Gary Stubblefield (R – Branch) helps prevent abortion providers and their affiliates from receiving Medicaid reimbursements.

**Act 94 / H.B. 1211 (Religion is Essential):** This good law by Representative Mary Bentley (R – Perryville) and Senator Kim Hammer (R – Benton) recognizes that religion and religious organizations are essential in Arkansas.

**Act 90 / H.B. 1195 (Pro-Life):** This good law by Rep. Jim Dotson (R – Bentonville) and Sen. Bob Ballinger (R – Ozark) enacts legislation ensuring that women are offered information, assistance, and resources that could help them choose an option besides abortion.

**Act 226 / H.B. 1116 (Simon's Law):** This good law by Rep. Jim Dotson (R – Bentonville) and Sen. Bart Hester (R – Cave



*Rep. Robin Lundstrum asks the Arkansas House of Representatives to override the governor's veto of H.B. 1570.*



*From Left: Rep. Lundstrum, Sen. Clark, and Family Council's Charisse Dean pause for a photo amid conversations about H.B. 1570, the SAFE Act.*

*(continued on following page)*



## Good Legislation Passed As Of April 15 (continued)

Springs) would help protect children in Arkansas from being denied life support or having a DNR placed on their medical charts without parental consent.

**Act 311 / H.B. 1061 (No Patient Left Alone):** This good law by Rep. Julie Mayberry (R – Hensley) and Sen. Breanne Davis (R – Russellville) protects patients from being left alone and denied visitors in hospitals, nursing homes, and similar facilities.

**Act 342 / H.B. 1353 (Marijuana Advertisements):** This good law by Rep. Delia Haak (R – Gentry) and Sen. Cecile Bledsoe (R – Rogers) closes a loophole in Arkansas' laws regarding medical marijuana advertisements. It clarifies the law to say that marijuana dispensaries and cultivators cannot use a cross of any color or other symbols commonly associated with the practice of medicine in their advertisements.

**Act 392 / H.B. 1544 (Pro-Life Cities Resolution):** This good law by Rep. Kendon Underwood (R – Cave Springs) and Sen. Gary Stubblefield (R – Branch) affirms the right of municipalities in Arkansas to declare themselves pro-life. It also clarifies that Pro-Life Cities can install signs or banners announcing that they are pro-life

**Act 609 / S.B. 474 (Prohibiting Fraudulent Fertility Treatments):** This good bill by Sen. Charles Beckham (R – McNeil) and Rep. Jimmy Gazaway (R – Paragould) prohibits fraud and abuse in fertility treatments. The bill ensures people performing fertility treatments are honest, ethical, and abide by principles of informed-consent.

**Act 623 / H.B. 1429 (Home School):** This good bill by Rep. Mark Lowery (R – Maumelle) and Sen. Ben Gilmore (R – Cros-

sett) makes it easier for a student to withdraw from a public school to home school. The bill reduces the fourteen-day waiting period currently in Arkansas law for families wishing to transfer out of a public school. It also makes technical corrections to the home school law.

**S.B. 527 (Abortion Facilities):** This good bill by Sen. Ben Gilmore (R – Crossett) and Rep. Mary Bentley (R – Perryville) requires abortion facilities to have transfer agreements with hospitals, and it fixes a flawed definition in a pro-life law passed in 2019.

**S.B. 463 (Abortion Facilities):** This good bill by Sen. Blake Johnson (R – Corning) and Rep. Tony Furman (R – Benton) requires the State of Arkansas to report abortion data to the federal Centers for Disease Control. It also tightens Arkansas law concerning abortion facility inspections, and it requires abortionists to file certain documentation when the woman is a victim of rape or incest.

**H.R. 1021 (Home School):** This good resolution by Rep. Cameron Cooper (R – Romance) recognizes and celebrates 35 years of homeschooling in Arkansas. The resolution passed the Arkansas House on a voice vote.

**H.C.R. 1007 (Abortion):** This good resolution by Rep. Jim Wooten (R – Beebe) and Sen. Jason Rapert (R – Conway) recognizes January 22 — the anniversary of the U.S. Supreme Court's Roe v. Wade abortion decision — as "The Day of Tears" in Arkansas. The resolution acknowledges the 61 million unborn babies killed in abortion in America over the past five decades, and encourages Arkansans to lower their flags to half-staff on January 22 to mourn the innocent children who have lost their lives.



From Left: Family Council President Jerry Cox, Alliance Defending Freedom CEO Michael Farris, Sen. Alan Clark, Sen. Missy Irvin, Alliance Defending Freedom Attorney Stephanie Nichols, and Family Council staff member Luke McCoy gather at the Arkansas Capitol on March 22.



Rep. Sonia Barker and Family Council's Ken Yang testify in support of S.B. 354 protecting fairness in women's sports on Thursday, March 18. This good law is now Act 461.

## Good Legislation Filed As Of April 15

**H.B. 1523 (The Equal Justice Act):** This good bill by Rep. Mary Bentley (R – Perryville) and Sen. Gary Stubblefield (R – Branch) identifies various protections and criminal penalties currently found in Arkansas law. The bill expands on Arkansas’ law regarding felonies involving violence. It creates the offense of committing a felony involving violence for the purpose of preventing a person from exercising his or her constitutional right. The bill outlines minimum and maximum sentences for this type of felony. It also requires the state to collect and report statistics regarding felonies involving violence committed for the purpose of preventing a person from exercising his or her constitutional right.

**S.B. 388 (Abortion Facilities):** This good bill by Sen. Charles Beckham (R – McNeil) and Rep. Joe Cloud (R – Russellville) requires any facility that performs abortions to be licensed by the Arkansas Department of Health as an abortion facility, and it prohibits abortions in hospitals except in cases of medical emergency. S.B. 388 will help ensure that every clinic that performs abortions follows all of Arkansas’ laws concerning abortion facilities. This has the potential to save many women and unborn children from abortion.

**H.B. 1830 (Religious Freedom):** H.B. 1830 by Rep. Jim Dotson (R – Bentonville) protects the right of public school students to express a religious viewpoint in class assignments the same way they could appropriately express a secular viewpoint in an assignment.

**H.B. 1882 (Privacy):** This good bill by Rep. Cindy Crawford (R – Fort Smith) and Sen. Gary Stubblefield (R – Branch) protects physical privacy and safety of Arkansans in showers, locker rooms, changing facilities, and restrooms on government property.

**S.B. 649 (Lottery):** This good bill by Sen. Charles Beckham (R – McNeil) and Rep. Richard Womack (R – Arkadelphia) requires the Arkansas Lottery to budget 25% of its revenue for scholarships.



*Jerry Cox and Charisse Dean join with Rep. Lundstrum, Sen. Clark, two distinguished adolescent psychiatrists from Little Rock, and others outside the committee room following passage of H.B. 1570 in committee on March 22.*

**S.B. 662 (Prayer):** This good bill by Sen. Ricky Hill (R – Cabot) and Rep. Cameron Cooper (R – Romance) establishes a Day of Prayer for Arkansas Students annually on the last Wednesday of September.

**H.B. 1160 (Used Car Tax):** This good bill by Rep. John Payton (R – Wilburn) and Sen. Jason Rapert (R – Conway) would eliminate the tax on used cars sold for less than \$7,500; the bill contains a provision that would take effect in 2023 eliminating the tax on used cars sold for less than \$10,000. Family Council has worked for years to eliminate the used car tax, because it hurts single moms and middle class families who often can barely afford to buy a used vehicle, much less pay sales tax on one.

**H.B. 1431 (Used Car Tax):** This good bill by Rep. Robin Lundstrum (R – Springdale) and Sen. Jason Rapert (R – Conway) eliminates the sales tax on used cars sold for less than \$10,000. The bill is similar to H.B. 1160 by Rep. Payton and Sen. Rapert. Family Council has worked for years to eliminate the used car tax, because it hurts single moms and middle class families who often can barely afford to buy a used vehicle, much less pay sales tax on one.



*Family Council staff members Erin Hogan and Charisse Dean testify in the Senate Public Health Committee along with Sen. Alan Clark on Monday, March 15.*



*Rep. Cindy Crawford and Family Council's Ken Yang testify in support of H.B. 1882 in committee.*



## Bad Legislation Passed As Of April 15

**Act 681 / S.B. 622 (Hate Crimes):** This bad bill by Sen. Jimmy Hickey (R – Texarkana) and Rep. Matthew Shepherd (R – El Dorado), commonly being called a “hate crimes law,” outlines vague, protected classes in state law. This bill is so ambiguous that it’s impossible to know just how far-reaching this legislation may be. S.B. 622’s protections for religious liberty are not adequate. The bill does not contain sufficient safeguards to prevent cities and counties from enacting their own, more stringent hate crimes ordinances. It does not do enough to protect free speech or prevent thought-policing.



Family Council President Jerry Cox (Right) testifies against S.B. 622 in committee on Monday, April 5.

## Bad Legislation Filed As Of April 15

**H.B. 1685 (End-of-Life Care):** This bad bill by Rep. Michelle Gray (R – Melbourne) and Sen. Breanne Davis (R – Russellville) makes it easier for healthcare providers to deny a dying person food or water and take a person off life support. Family Council strongly opposes this bad bill.

**H.B. 1686 (End-of-Life Care):** This bad bill by Rep. Michelle Gray (R – Melbourne) and Sen. Breanne Davis (R – Russellville) lets healthcare workers who are not physicians complete Physician Order for Life-Sustaining Treatment (POLST) forms. It removes an important provision in state law that says a POLST form is not intended to replace an advance directive. It would inadvertently prevent a consulting physician—such as a palliative care physician—from completing a POLST form with a patient. Family Council strongly opposes this bad bill.

**S.B. 3 (Enacting Hate Crimes Legislation):** This bad bill by Sen. Jim Hendren (I – Gravette) and Rep. Fred Love (D – Little Rock) enacts hate crimes legislation by enhancing penalties for crimes committed against certain protected classes of people listed in the bill. The bill is virtually identical to H.B.

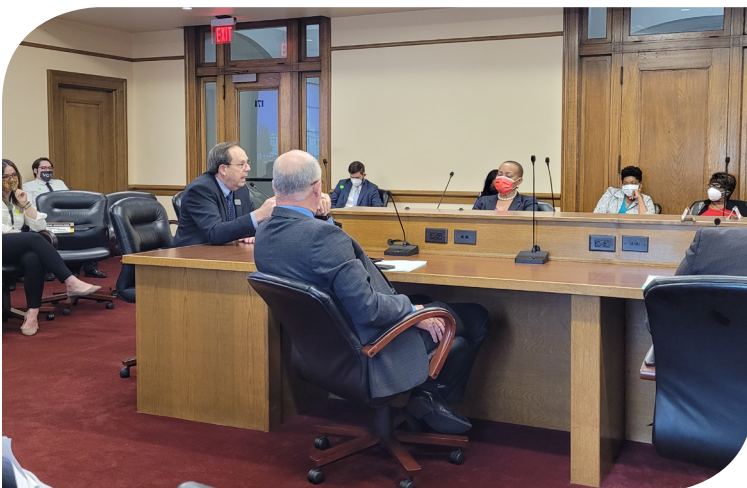
1020. Family Council has opposed hate crimes legislation for more than 20 years, and we oppose this bill as well.

**H.B. 1020 (Enacting Hate Crimes Legislation):** This bad bill by Rep. Fred Love (D – Little Rock) and Sen. Jim Hendren (I – Gravette) enacts hate crimes legislation by enhancing penalties for crimes committed against certain protected classes of people listed in the bill. The bill is virtually identical to S.B. 3. Family Council has opposed hate crimes legislation for more than 20 years, and we oppose this bill as well.

**H.B. 1228 (Public Drinking):** This bad bill by Rep. Lee Johnson (R – Greenwood) and Sen. Breanne Davis (R – Russellville) would let cities in dry counties approve public drinking in “entertainment districts” if the city contains a private club that serves alcohol. Under Arkansas’ “entertainment district” law, alcohol can be carried and consumed outdoors on city streets and sidewalks around bars and restaurants, if approved by the city council.

**H.B. 1148 (Alcohol):** This bill by Rep. Frances Cavanaugh (R – Walnut Ridge) and Sen. Missy Irvin (R – Mountain View)

*(continued on following page)*



Jerry Cox testifies against S.B. 3 in committee on Wednesday, April 7.



Jerry Cox testifies against H.B. 1685 in the House Public Health Committee on Thursday, April 8.



## Bad Legislation Filed As Of April 15 *(continued)*

overhauls Arkansas' local option election law concerning alcohol. The bill reduces the threshold for taking a county wet or dry via a petition drive. Liquor stores in wet counties would be able to continue operating even if the county voted to go dry. The bill would make it easier for some cities or towns in a dry county to be wet while the rest of the county is dry.

**S.B. 510 (LGBT Counseling):** This bad bill by Sen. Greg Leding (D – Fayetteville) and Rep. Tippi McCullough (D – Little Rock) would prohibit healthcare professionals from helping children overcome unwanted same-sex attraction and gender confusion. However, the bill would permit pro-

LGBT counseling that encourages children embrace a different sexual orientation or gender identity. This is a bad bill that hurts healthcare professionals and endangers the welfare of children.

**H.B. 1697 (No-Fault Divorce):** This bad bill by Rep. Ashley Hudson (D – Little Rock) and Sen. Greg Leding (D – Fayetteville) permits no-fault divorce in Arkansas. Under current law, couples in Arkansas can divorce in cases such as infidelity, abuse, following a lengthy separation, and other circumstances. H.B. 1697 would permit divorce due to irreconcilable differences, discord, or conflict of personalities regardless of if the husband or wife is at fault.

## Referred Constitutional Amendments As of April 15

The Arkansas General Assembly can refer up to three proposed State Constitutional Amendments for a statewide vote at the next General Election. By the time you read this the legislature will have completed this referral process. Here is where things stand at this time.

**H.J.R. 1005** by Rep. David Ray (R – Jacksonville) has passed and been approved for the November 2022 General Election ballot. This proposed State Constitutional Amendment raises the percentage of the vote required for voter approval of State Constitutional Amendments and initiated acts from the current threshold of a simple majority to at least 60% of the vote. This makes it more difficult to pass a constitutional amendment that has been referred to the ballot by the legislature or one that has been placed on the ballot by citizens using the petition initiative process. It also applies the same requirement for initiated acts proposed by citizens using the petition initiative process.

**S.J.R. 10** by Rep. Breanne Davis (R – Russellville) will be voted on very soon. If passed, this proposed State Consti-

tutional Amendment will appear on the November 2022 General Election ballot. This proposed State Constitutional Amendment will allow the Arkansas General Assembly to call itself into special session during a state of emergency.

**S.J.R. 14 prevents the government from burdening a person's free exercise of religion.**

**S.J.R. 14** by Sen. Jason Rapert (R – Conway) will be voted on very soon. It prevents the government from burdening a person's free exercise of religion. The measure is similar to Arkansas' state Religious Freedom Restoration Act. Family Council strongly supports this good amendment to the Arkansas Constitution.

**S.J.R. 13** by Sen. Jason Rapert (R – Conway) will be voted on very soon. It amends the Arkansas Constitution to say that Arkansans have a fundamental right to keep and bear arms.



From Left: Sen. Jason Rapert and Jerry Cox testify in support of S.J.R. 14, the Religious Freedom Amendment, on March 30.



Rose Mimms with Arkansas Right to Life testifies alongside Rep. Cloud before the House Public Health Committee.

## HERE'S HOW YOU CAN HELP US

Here's a snapshot of what has happened since January:

- Arkansas has passed legislation prohibiting abortion.
- Lawmakers have passed legislation protecting children from dangerous gender-reassignment procedures.
- Arkansas has declared religion essential, ensuring churches won't be targeted during a pandemic.
- The General Assembly has passed legislation protecting patients from being left alone in hospitals and nursing homes.
- My team and I have done local, state, and national media interviews.
- We have testified in committee more times than I can count.

There was one day we had four good bills—H.B. 1570, H.B. 1572, H.B. 1589, and H.B. 1402—in a single committee meeting, and all four of them passed! Family Council has the second largest lobbying team of any group in Arkansas. The 2021 legislative session is shaping up to be the best one we've ever had. It may not always be this way, but they say you ought to make hay while the sun is shining—and the sun is definitely shining at the Arkansas Legislature.

Here are three ways you can help us right now:

- Pray for me and my team.
- Send a generous, tax-deductible donation today, if you are able.
- Share this letter with your friends and encourage them to join our mailing list.

**We are proud to be your Arkansas home team.** We're grateful that we get to do what we do. But we wouldn't be able to do any of it without you. Thank you! It's so good to know that we have friends like you who believe in us and our mission of promoting, protecting, and strengthening traditional family values in Arkansas. Visit us online at [FamilyCouncil.org](http://FamilyCouncil.org) to get the latest news from us. **Give us a call at 501-375-7000 if there's ever anything my staff or I can do for you.**

Sincerely,

Jerry Cox, President

**P.S. Arkansas just passed a really good law that protects children from dangerous gender-reassignment procedures.** You can read all about that bill in this letter. The fight over it was unlike anything we have ever seen before. Fortunately, our legislators stood their ground and did what was right. I didn't have room in this letter to write about everything that is going on. Look for more information in two or three weeks. Thank you for standing with us!



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**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.

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