



**FAMILY
COUNCIL**

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**AUGUST 2021
UPDATE LETTER**

Dear Friends,

On August 2, 1990, the Iraqi army invaded Kuwait. At the time, Iraq commanded the fourth or fifth largest military on earth—estimates on the military's size varied. The Iraqi commanders were experienced. They had spent years fighting the Iranian military, and they possessed powerful tanks and aircraft designed and built by the Soviet Union. Within hours of the invasion, Kuwait's leaders had fled to Saudi Arabia, Iraqi forces had driven into the heart of the country, and Saddam Hussein had installed a military government over Kuwait.

In his memoir *It Doesn't Take a Hero*, General Norman Schwarzkopf wrote that many strategists did not believe war ever would break out between Muslim nations. Most Middle Eastern countries at the time shared similar ethnicities, and most practiced Sunni Islam. Iran was an exception, because it practiced Shia Islam. It made sense for Iraq to fight wars with Iran, but it caught many people by surprise when Saddam Hussein ordered the invasion of Kuwait—a Sunni nation ethnically and religiously similar to Iraq.

General Schwarzkopf had spent part of his childhood in Iran. His father—a U.S. Army officer—was stationed there during World War II as part of the war effort. During the Cold War, conventional wisdom was that America might be forced to lead the Free World in a war against Russia on the plains of Europe or in the jungles of the South Pacific. Schwarzkopf believed the military needed to focus on Middle Eastern warfare too.

General Schwarzkopf eventually was assigned a little-known unit in the American Army explicitly focused on desert warfare. After he took command, they began running simulations and exercises for military operations in Iraq or Iran. Some strategists were concerned the Soviet Union might invade Iran or a similar Middle Eastern nation in an effort to seize its oil fields. Even though the U.S. was no friend of the Ayatollah, it was prepared to go to war on Iran's behalf to prevent the Kremlin from controlling a major portion of the world's oil supply.

During the training exercises, something interesting began to happen. Iraqi military forces began mobilizing in patterns very similar to the training simulations that Schwarzkopf and his troops were running. By August of 1992, Saddam Hussein's forces had done what General Schwarzkopf and his superiors had feared the Soviets might do: They had swept into Kuwait to seize its oil fields. President George H. W. Bush dubbed it a "Hitler at Munich moment" that threatened to ignite a larger conflict. The United States would engage.

The United States and its allies had spent decades training for a situation almost exactly like this. They faced a near-peer adversary armed with Soviet military equipment. The U.S. government ordered 4,000 additional body bags. Potential casualties were estimated at 10,000.

Coalition forces executed a massive air campaign followed by some of the largest tank battles in U.S. history and the largest military flanking maneuver in world history. Even though the battles were massive, the Iraqi military was defeated in less than 100 hours of ground warfare. Schwarzkopf and other veterans of Operation Desert Storm cited their relentless training and preparation as part of the reason the U.S. military was able to win so handily. I would add that Divine Providence probably had something to do with it too.

There's no doubt that training, experience, and leadership are important. At Family Council, I'm so grateful for the experience and leadership of our team. My staff is as capable and experienced as some of the folks who work at national organizations. They do excellent work—and the victories we achieve are a testimony to that. And now let me tell you a little more about that work—and how you can be part of it too.

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Family Council
President Jerry Cox

MY THOUGHTS: HERE'S FAMILY COUNCIL ACTION COMMITTEE'S 2021 LEGISLATIVE REPORT CARD

One of the most common questions people ask me when I travel the state is, "How did my legislator vote?" It's so easy for politicians to act like Eddie Haskell from "Leave It to Beaver," behaving one way in public and another way in private. Arkansans want to know if their elected officials are keeping their campaign promises and remaining true to their values when they come to Little Rock.

There are probably as many different ways to grade a legislator as there are state legislators. However, I think their voting record is a good place to start. Enclosed with this letter is Family Council Action Committee's report card for the 2021 Arkansas General Assembly. It offers

a snapshot of how lawmakers voted on key social, moral, or economic legislation related to the right to life, education, family, marijuana, religious liberty, and other issues.

Lawmakers earned letter grades ranging from A–F based on how they voted on all the bills. Family Council Action Committee gives Statesman Awards to lawmakers who earn an A. This report card is not an endorsement of any candidate or political party. It does not measure any lawmakers' integrity, commitment to their faith, work ethic, or rapport with Family Council Action Committee. It is only a report on how each lawmaker voted, but I hope it will give you a window into where your state representative and state senator stood on important pieces of legislation.

Freedom of Religion is a Fundamental Right

By U.S. Congressman French Hill

Religious freedom—one of the most basic human rights for all people—has historically been an area of sincere bipartisan support and agreement in American foreign policy. For this reason, it is important that America remains a world leader in defending and promoting religious liberty for all people and faiths. This is especially the case in countries such as China where people are expressly and often violently targeted for their faith. Freedom of religion is a fundamental right that Americans enjoy every day, but unfortunately, it is not respected by all governments around the world.

Sadly, in Communist China, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) prohibits Christians from openly practicing their faith. Many have fled China to neighboring countries, desiring to exercise their faith openly and without prosecution. For those that remain, the CCP actively works to subvert their faith. For example, the CCP looks to approve the appointment of Catholic bishops and forcibly removes crosses from Protestant churches, even shutting their doors in some instances. This only increases the number of believers that are forced to worship in underground, hidden rooms and hide their Bibles or any proof of their faith. This is a terrible reality.

In the Xinjiang region of northwest China, over three million Muslim Uyghurs have been sent to concentration camps since 2017, being forced to culturally assimilate by the CCP, with some experts calling it a cultural and ethnic

genocide. In addition to the Christian and Muslim faiths, the CCP has also worked to subvert Tibetan Buddhists. It insists on the Party's right to select the next Dalai Lama and imposes severe constraints on the rights of Tibetan Buddhists to practice their beliefs within Tibet.

For years, the CCP turned its authoritarian eye away from the growing numbers of Chinese people of the Christian belief, including Roman Catholics. But today the CCP's Supreme Leader Xi Jinping is fully committed to the view "religion as an enemy." Xi is actively reversing the past practice of tolerance towards the growth of the Christian faith. His goal is to "sinicize" religion. For instance, the CCP Politburo is undertaking a major initiative to rewrite religious texts in order to purge any passages that violate "core socialist values."

Religious communities across the world are praying for wisdom and religious tolerance for China's leaders. During the COVID-19 pandemic, I participated in a series of virtual international meetings that highlighted limitations on individuals' exercise of their religious freedom. This



U.S. Congressman French Hill represents Arkansas' 2nd Congressional District. He is a member of the Committee on Financial Services and a ranking member of the Subcommittee on National Security, International Development and Monetary Policy.

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Freedom of Religion is a Fundamental Right *(continued)*

included meetings with Martin Lee, founding Chairman of Hong Kong's Democratic Party, and Cardinal Zen, the sixth Bishop of Hong Kong, as well as engagement on a global week of prayer for freedom of belief in China.

In addition, people of faith around the world objected to liquor and hardware stores being deemed "essential" and open during this time while houses of worship were shuttered. This only served to highlight that over 80% of the world's population lives in a religiously repressive nation, a statistic that should be eye-opening for any person of faith.

On June 2, 2020, President Trump signed an executive order that requires the United States to "respect and vigorously promote" religious freedom. I recently led a bipartisan, bicameral effort to urge President Biden to fill the vacant role of Ambassador-at-large for International Religious

Freedom as well as a similar position on the National Security Council. The Ambassador position is vital to monitoring religiously motivated abuses and discrimination; developing and implementing policies to address global religious freedom concerns; engaging with nongovernmental organizations working to promote religious freedom; and fully engaging and supporting the strategic global gathering of governments, faith communities, and civil society. Additionally, I am pleased that Republican Leader Kevin McCarthy appointed Arkansan, Dr. Jim Carr, of Searcy to the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom.

It is important that America remain at the forefront of defending religious liberty and I will continue to advocate for religious freedom and tolerance around the world.

San Francisco Gay Men's Choir Tells Parents "We're Coming For Your Children"

"You think that we'll corrupt your kids if our agenda goes unchecked. Funny. Just this once you're correct. We'll convert your children—happens bit by bit, quietly and subtly, and you will barely notice it... We'll convert your children. We'll make them tolerant and fair... We're coming for your children!"

In late June the San Francisco Gay Men's Choir sang those words in a YouTube music video titled, "A Message From the Gay Community." The line, "We're coming for your children," is repeated heavily throughout the song. The choir removed the video following significant backlash from the public, but copies of it have continued to circulate on social media and news websites.

The San Francisco Gay Men's Choir apparently tried to downplay the song as satire, but very few parents think it's funny when somebody threatens to come after their kids. The video also prompted many people to point out how the narrative about homosexuality has changed. When Massachusetts first recognized same-sex marriages in 2004, the message was, "Who cares if two grown men want to get married?" Today the message is completely different. A lot of

people believed issues surrounding homosexuality, same-sex marriage, gender-identity, and so on wouldn't affect them if they just stayed out of the debate and didn't care about the issue. That simply does not seem to be the case. As one pundit put it some years ago, "you will be forced to care." That seems to be what we are witnessing here.



Above: Screenshot of the music video.

Religious Liberty Wins Victory at U.S. Supreme Court

On June 17, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled unanimously in favor of a faith-based adoption and foster care agency from Philadelphia. In 2018 the City of Philadelphia ended foster-care referrals to Catholic Social Services, because the Catholic charity declined to place children with same-sex couples. That prompted a federal lawsuit. In June the

U.S. Supreme Court ruled in favor of Catholic Social Services. Faith-based adoption and foster care agencies have faced tremendous pressure in recent years to violate their religious convictions or stop serving their communities altogether. This Supreme Court victory is important for religious freedom.



John Stonestreet, Radio Host
and Director of the Colson Center

LEGALIZING MARIJUANA USE FUELS RISE IN SELF-HARM AMONG YOUNG MEN

By John Stonestreet

Already this year, New York and Virginia have joined a growing list of states that have legalized recreational marijuana. By doing so, they've also joined the list of states increasing the likelihood of young men committing suicide and hurting themselves.

According to a recent report in the Journal of the American Medical Association, states that allow commercial marijuana sales saw "self-harm rates rise by 46% among men ages 21 to 39." Self-harm includes suicide attempts and behaviors like cutting.

This is the latest report to suggest that recreational marijuana use, is dangerous, especially for young people and especially for young people with a certain genetic makeup. Of course, there's no reliable way to know whether or not a young person is genetically vulnerable until it's too late.

Despite a growing body of evidence, states continue to push for legalization as if nothing could possibly go wrong. We already know it has.

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Is Your Community Pro-Life? We Can Give You a Pro-Life Resolution.

It's important for city and county officials to send a strong, clear message that they don't want abortionists killing unborn children in their communities. Earlier this year the Arkansas Legislature passed a law affirming the right of municipalities to do exactly that. Cities, towns, and counties all over Arkansas are free to pass resolutions declaring that they are pro-life. We can help you pass a pro-life resolution in your community. If you are interested in passing a pro-life resolution, contact our office at (501) 375-7000, and we will provide you with more information.

Arkansans Support Law Protecting Kids From Sex-Reassignment Procedures: New Poll

In June Talk Business & Politics and Hendrix College released a poll showing most voters support Arkansas' new Save Adolescents From Experimentation (SAFE) Act. The legislature passed the SAFE Act earlier this year. It protects children from sex-reassignment procedures, puberty blockers, and cross-sex hormones.

The Talk Business & Politics and Hendrix College poll shows 52.5% of voters in Arkansas support the SAFE Act; 38% oppose it; and 9.5% don't have a position on the measure. It's good to see most voters support the SAFE Act—especially considering the fact that some groups have gone to great lengths to mischaracterize the law and what it does.

The Biden Administration Is Using Your Tax Dollars to Oppose Arkansas' SAFE Act

In June President Biden's U.S. Department of Justice filed a statement of interest opposing Arkansas' Save Adolescents From Experimentation (SAFE) Act in federal court. The SAFE Act protects children in Arkansas from sex-reassignment procedures, puberty blockers, and cross-sex hormones given in an attempt to change the child's biological sex. Legislators passed the law last spring, but the ACLU and others have sued to strike it down. The Biden Administration's statement in the lawsuit calls sex-reassignment procedures "life-saving care" and argues that the SAFE Act violates the U.S. Constitution. The brief also implies that the lawmakers who passed the SAFE Act must secretly be motivated by hate against transgender people instead of a genuine desire to help children.

But as we have said time and time again, researchers do not know the long term effects that puberty blockers and cross-sex hormones can have on kids. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has never approved puberty blockers and cross-sex hormones for the purpose of gender transition. Doctors are giving these hormones to kids off-label, in a manner the FDA never intended. That is why many experts agree that giving puberty blockers and cross-sex hormones to children is experimental, at best. That's also why a major hospital in Sweden announced earlier this year that it would no longer administer puberty blockers and cross-sex hormones to children under 16. It is deeply disappointing that the federal government would use taxpayer dollars to oppose a law that protects children from experimentation. Fortunately, Arkansas' Attorney General's office is fighting back, and we believe that federal courts will uphold this good law.

Conway Gets Arkansas' Fifth Safe Haven Baby Box

On July 7, pro-lifers in Conway unveiled Arkansas' fifth Safe Haven Baby Box. The Safe Haven Act of 2001 lets a woman surrender her newborn baby to law enforcement, medical personnel, and first responders. The law gives women an option besides abortion. Similar laws are on the books in all 50 states.

Safe Haven Baby Boxes installed at fire stations let women surrender an infant safely and anonymously using a specialized, hospital-grade bassinet designed to keep the baby secure while notifying the first responders inside the fire station that the baby is there. There are currently 75 Safe Haven Baby Boxes in operation nationwide—including five in Arkansas. Future Safe Haven Baby Boxes are planned for Maumelle, Fort Smith, El Dorado, and Rogers. Safe Haven Baby Boxes are amazing pieces of pro-life technology. If you are interested in placing a Safe Haven Baby Box in your community, contact Arkansas Right to Life at 501-663-4237.

Abortion Activists Desecrate Christ of the Ozarks Statue in Eureka Springs

Early on the morning of July 9, abortion activists hung a banner reading "God Bless Abortions" across the Christ of the Ozarks statue in Eureka Springs. Christ of the Ozarks is an iconic, 67 foot tall statue on Magnetic Mountain. It has been a popular landmark in Arkansas since 1966.

Here's something to remember: Arkansas is the most pro-life state in America, according to Americans United for Life. Public opinion polling shows most Arkansans think abortion should be either completely illegal or legal only under certain circumstances. Abortion in Arkansas remains near historic lows. And the Arkansas Legislature passed more pro-life legislation this year than ever before. It's unfortunate that a small group of activists decided to make a pro-abortion statement using Christ of the Ozarks. However, across the board Arkansans still are winning the fight to end abortion in our state. That's something to celebrate.



Satanic Temple Quietly Drops Pro-Abortion Lawsuit in Arkansas

Last September the Satanic Temple sued Lamar Advertising after the company rejected designs for pro-abortion billboards that the Satanic Temple wanted to place in Arkansas. In February the attorney for the Satanic Temple asked the court to dismiss the lawsuit without prejudice. The decision to drop the lawsuit received very little attention at the time. Our team only recently learned of it. The Satanic Temple's billboard designs claimed that the group's "religious abortion ritual averts many state restrictions" on abortion. However, it seems they have dropped their lawsuit to bring these bad, pro-abortion billboards to Arkansas.

Pregnancy complications are the sixth most common cause of death among women between the ages of 20 and 34.

Abortions Save Lives!

www.TheSatanicTemple.com

Our Religious Abortion Ritual Averts Many State Restrictions

Above: One of the billboards that Lamar reportedly rejected last September.

Our Credit Card Processor Canceled Us A Few Weeks Ago—But We Aren't Quitting

At 10:29 am on July 7 we received a terse email from our credit card processor—a company owned by J.P. Morgan Chase—saying, "Unfortunately, we can no longer support your business. We wish you all the luck in the future, and hope that you find a processor that better fits your payment processing needs." At 10:30 AM they terminated our account, and we could no longer accept donations online. For nearly two years we had used this company to process donations that our supporters made to Family Council and the Education Alliance via our websites. If you gave by credit or debit card, this company handled the transaction. Without a processor, it's impossible for a nonprofit to accept donations online.

Our processor was not very transparent about their reason for canceling our account so abruptly. Eventually we learned the company had designated us "High Risk." According to their Terms of Service, High Risk companies include:

- Astrology and psychic services
- Career placement services
- Cyberlockers and file sharing or storage services
- Companies that conduct research or testing on animals
- Companies known to have issues with labor or working conditions
- Companies involved in land acquisition and involun-

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Left: The pro-abortion group Indecision reportedly took credit for placing a banner that read "God Bless Abortions" on the Christ of the Ozarks monument in Eureka Springs.

Our Credit Card Processor Canceled Us A Few Weeks Ago—But We Aren't Quitting *(continued)*

tary resettlement

- Companies who have been subject to allegations related to human rights violations
- Pawn shops
- Private prison operators

The list goes on, but as far as we can tell Family Council doesn't engage in any activities considered "High Risk." I assume our conservative principles and our work had something to do with the decision. However, the Terms of Service lets them terminate accounts at any time for any reason or no reason at all. Apparently that's what they decided to do with us.

My team and I briefly considered pushing back against J.P. Morgan Chase. Obviously, it's frustrating that one of the larg-

est banks in the nation would treat its customers so unfairly and unprofessionally. However, we decided it just wasn't worth the time and trouble to fight them. It would be too much of a distraction from the rest of our work. Our team was able to find a different processor that we like much better.

In a way, it's probably just as well that our credit card processor canceled our account. J.P. Morgan Chase has given heavily to pro-LGBT and pro-abortion groups over the years. Our new processor doesn't do that. I doubt we're the first conservative organization J.P. Morgan Chase has "canceled." We probably won't be the last either. In the meantime, we aren't letting this slow us down. We're still committed to serving families like yours right here in Arkansas.

HERE'S WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

Did you know summertime can be a difficult season, financially, for us at Family Council?

Families are busy. People travel, host barbecues, go to ballgames, or spend time on other activities. Across the board, churches, charities, and nonprofit organizations like ours don't receive as many donations during the summer as they do the rest of the year.

There's nothing wrong with going to the lake or helping your kids chase lightning bugs around the yard, but I hope you won't forget us. You can use the enclosed envelope and response card to send a generous, tax-deductible gift to Family Council today, if you are able. We will use your gift to work to establish pro-life cities in Arkansas, make sure the good laws we helped pass this year are properly implemented, serve home schoolers, host monthly prayer meetings, equip citizens, and more.

Thank you for your friendship and support. **Feel free to call or email us if there's ever anything my staff or I can do for you.**

Sincerely,



Thank you!!

Jerry Cox, President

P.S. Enclosed is a copy of Family Council Action Committee's 2021 Legislative Report Card. There's a lot of news in this letter that you won't want to miss. We have prayer meetings coming up with special guests on August 19 and September 26. Contact Erin on our team at erin@familycouncil.org if you would like to know more about how to participate in these meetings online. Please remember to pray for me and my team. I hope you will send a generous, tax-deductible gift today, if you're able. Thank you for standing with us.



***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.*