

The Kentucky CITIZEN

STRENGTHENING FAMILIES AND THE VALUES THAT MAKE FAMILIES STRONG

Vol. XXVII No. 2

March/April 2018

HB 372 **could** move! 2018 **could** be historic

HB 372 and many bills still have the potential of passing. With most, it will be the people who call in who make the difference.

The weighty issues of the 2018-19 biennial budget and, more importantly, the failing pension system have put Frankfort lawmakers in a precarious place. Clearly, cutting programs or raising taxes in an election year to make the budget balance are not good *political* options. Similarly, trying to find the solution to the very real pension crisis without changing “anything” that pension recipients expect is also complicated in an election year.

That is exactly what legislators are trying to do, particularly those in the majority in both Chambers – the Republicans.

These legislators are going to make tough choices on both of these tough issues. Then, after the Session is over, these same legislators will be facing stiff competition in the November elections by candidates supported by the most powerful union in Kentucky – the Kentucky Education Association.

Given that heavy load, legislators are eagerly looking for things to do that do not



If ever there was a time to pass legislation that affirms religious liberty, secures student privacy, that protects marriage, that supports the sanctity of life, that slows sex trafficking and drug use, and that strengthens healthy education programs, NOW IS THAT TIME!



Kent Ostrander

The Pastor's Protection Act (House Bill 372) **could** move!

*It has only 3 weeks to make it through the Assembly, **but it can!***

In these times when many activists and political leaders are trying to use the power of government to force pastors, churches and religious organizations to comply with all of the LGBT demands, it is refreshing to see Kentucky state legislators work to protect religious leaders and pastors.

The opportunity is *NOW* to pass this legislation and be a leading state that helps work out the details of the 2015 *Obergefell* same-sex marriage U.S. Supreme Court decision. For example: During oral arguments Justices John Roberts and Samuel Alito asked Solicitor General Donald B. Verrilli, Jr. (the lead attorney for the U.S. Government) whether a ruling that same-sex marriage is a constitutional right requires a religious college that has married housing to afford such housing to same-sex couples and whether a college could lose its tax exempt status if it failed to do so. The Solicitor General responded “It’s certainly going to be an issue. I don’t deny that . . . It is going to be an issue.”

We can help set that issue here in Kentucky! (For more go to page 2)

cost the state money, but that will enrich family life in Kentucky and, therefore, they will be appealing to their base. Enter pro-family legislation. If ever there was a time to pass legislation that protects marriage, that supports the sanctity of life, that affirms religious liberty, that slows sex trafficking and drug use, and that strengthens healthy education programs, *NOW IS THAT TIME!*

The bulk of the 2018 Session will be over in just three weeks. If something is going to pass it needs to be moving – *very soon!* Without doubt, the best way to get things moving is with a prayer and then this step of faith: calling the **Legislative Message Line** 1-800-372-7181 and letting your legislators know what you desire.

Good bills that can still pass this Session

see page 2, 3 & 7

Kentucky has significant pro-life assets

see page 4-5

Major sex-trafficking victory

see page 7

C-J article fouls debate on child marriage

see page 8



House Bill 372:

by Rep. Jason Petrie

HB 372 lifts the threat of state punishment if a church or religious school operates by its Biblical beliefs about marriage.

Regarded as the “**Live and Let Live**” bill, HB 372 protects churches, pastors and religious schools from state control that would attempt to force them to violate their deeply-held religious beliefs about marriage.

HB 372 is a shield to protect, not a sword to hurt anyone or deny anyone else their rights. And it needs to move *this week!*

Clearly, churches and religious schools regularly teach their understanding of the Bible on any number of doctrinal issues, *and they attempt to live up to those teach-*

ings. It would be nothing but “crazy” for the state to allow them to continue to teach their understandings of Scripture, but then mandate that



they violate those teachings by threatening them with punishment if they don't violate those beliefs with their actions. That would make them exactly what their Scriptures define as a “hypocrite” – preaching and teaching one thing, but doing the exact opposite.

The bottom line is that HB 372 would reinforce the rights of churches and religious schools, giving them protection from state

officials or outside groups who talk about diversity, but who actually practice intolerance and want to use the state to force their will on others. Though these dangers are not fully manifest in Kentucky *yet*, they are coming!

... HB 372 would reinforce the rights of churches and religious schools, giving them protection from state officials or outside groups who talk about diversity; but who actually practice intolerance ...

Two Other States have Moved on this Issue (Kentucky could be next with HB 372)

In 2015 the Texas legislature passed “The Pastor Protection Act.” The Texas act states that “a religious organization, an organization supervised or controlled by or in connection with a religious organization, an individual employed by a religious organization while acting in the scope of that employment, or a clergy or minister” would not be required to marry, celebrate or provide any services, accommodations, facilities, goods or privileges to a person regarding marriage that would cause the organization or individual to “violate a sincerely held religious belief. “It prohibits the state or any individual” from taking any legal action or discriminating against the organization because of the organization’s beliefs about marriage between two adults.

The Texas law has stood without challenge. Link to statute:

<http://www.legis.state.tx.us/tlodocs/84R/billtext/pdf/SB02065F.pdf#navpanes=0>

House Bill 372 is essentially the Texas statute.

In 2016 Mississippi enacted a much broader law that protects not just religious organizations but also individual citizens, public servants, and businesses, from government penalty for operating publicly according to their belief. The language of the Mississippi statute is also different stating, “belief that marriage is reserved for one man and one woman.” (HB 372 states “belief about marriage is between two adults”.)

The Mississippi statute was immediately challenged and was appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court. States had been waiting for the Court to act, but in January of 2018 the U.S. Supreme Court refused the appeal, saying the plaintiffs were unable to prove harm, thus allowing the Mississippi statute to stand. (*For now*)

Obergefell Created Conflict with Religious Beliefs (Kentucky could help undo the conflict)

Kentucky citizens hold a wide range of reasonable views on the issue of same-sex marriage. Maintaining the Commonwealth’s commitment to religious freedom when faced with these good-faith differences of opinion is vital. Leading legal scholars concur that conflicts between same-sex marriage and religious liberty are real and should be addressed through legislation. Some examples:

In 2016 **Iowa**’s Civil Rights Commission interpreted the current law in Iowa to mean that churches and pastors could be prosecuted for operating in a manner that was consistent with their church’s doctrine.

The **Massachusetts** Commission Against Discrimination and Attorney General Maura Healey both interpreted the Commonwealth’s public accommodations laws to force churches to open church changing rooms, shower facilities, restrooms, and other intimate areas, based on their perceived gender identity, and not their biological sex, in violation of the churches’ religious beliefs.

In February 2018, lawmakers in **Michigan** asked the Michigan Attorney General to investigate a church’s youth pastor for having a church youth group discussion about sexual identity. The discussion was at the church.

In February 2018 in **Florida**, an employee of a Catholic School was terminated from her position as first grade teacher for marrying a same-sex partner. The Diocese had previously formally instructed employees that their conduct must comply with the teachings of the Catholic Church, including their teaching on marriage, or their employment was in jeopardy. Headlines in newspapers since then include, “Not the Right Kind of Catholic” and “Why It Was So Wrong for Catholic School to Fire Miami Teacher.”

We’ve just enough time to pass HB 372. **Will you help?**

See top of page 3 and make your call! (Husbands and wives should both call, multiplying the your impact.)

Call 1-800-372-7181 The Legislative Message Line & leave this message for “*all the legislators in my county.*” Then ask her to “*copy my message to House & Senate Leadership.*”

**“Pass HB 372: The Pastor, Church and School Protection Act.
And do NOT weaken HB 372 – protect ALL religious groups.*”**

HB 372 protects our basic religious institutions from having to change their core beliefs and practices because the *Obergefell* decision legalized same-sex marriage.

★ Some forces in Frankfort are trying to weaken HB 372 in attempt to lessen its protections.

More legislative opportunities: (See calling instructions on bottom of page)



House & Senate Resolutions - HCR 152/SCR 154: Honoring Pregnancy Care Centers

Rep. Robert Benvenuti & Sen. Max Wise: These two concurring resolutions commend Pregnancy Help Centers for their services (that are provided free of charge and at no cost to the taxpayer) to vulnerable women, men and their families who are faced with an unplanned pregnancy. These resolutions also disapprove of any efforts intended to undermine the ability of the pregnancy resource centers from carrying out their mission or compromise their religious beliefs. There are 50 faith-based pregnancy help center offices in Kentucky. (FYI - In some states, legislatures have mandated that pregnancy care centers *refer to* abortion providers.)



House Bill 115: Reporting Prescriptions that Terminate Pregnancy *Rep. Robby Mills*

This bill would require a physician to report a prescription for mifeprex, misoprostol, or any other drug or combination of drugs that are intended to end a pregnancy. The FDA requires this combination of pills (often called RU 486) to be given to a woman in a doctor's office, clinic or hospital setting. However, in October of 2017 the ACLU sued the FDA wanted regulations relaxed in order to have pharmacists in local communities dispense with a doctor's prescription. HB 115 would require reporting of these potent drugs. This bill is particularly important given the fact that Planned Parenthood wants to expand this kind of abortion in Kentucky.



House Bill 454: Banning Dismemberment Abortion *Rep. Addia Wuchner*

This bill will prohibit an abortion on a pregnant woman that will result in the dismemberment, bodily crushing, or human vivisection of the child unborn when probable age post-fertilization the of unborn child is 11 weeks or greater, except in the case of a medical emergency. Currently, animal cruelty laws protect animals more than our abortion laws protect or care for an unborn human.



House Bill 455: Ban of Abortion on Down Syndrome Children *Rep. Melinda Prunty*

HB 455 will prohibit an abortion if the pregnant woman is seeking the abortion, in part or in whole, because of a test result indicating Down Syndrome in an unborn child, a prenatal diagnosis of Down Syndrome in an unborn child, or any other reason to believe that the has child Down Syndrome, except in the of case a medical emergency.



Senate Bill 71: Abstinence Inclusion in Public School Sex Education *Sen. Stephen Meredith*

Requires that if a public school teaches Sex Education, “abstinence before marriage in a monogamous relationship” must be included in the program as the only guarantee against pregnancy and Sexually Transmitted Diseases. Opponents of this bill, which includes Planned Parenthood and other very liberal national groups, insist that “Comprehensive Sex Education,” which normalizes early teen sexual activity, abortion, and alternate sexual orientations, be taught and elevated.

Call 1-800-372-7181

Call the toll-free Legislative Message Line and leave this message for “*all the Senators and Representatives from my county.*”

“Please pass ... (give number and title of bills). And please, no gambling expansion.”

Kentucky: Amazingly equipped for the

The Commonwealth has been given so much and has so many who are willing to roll up their sleeves and work. Ke

To become a state with a comprehensive “culture of life” it takes many people and many groups doing the many things necessary. Kentucky has been graced with many of the assets needed. Though there is still a long way to go for the Commonwealth to reach its apex in the reversal the nation’s *Roe vs Wade* curse, the state is on the cusp of more major strides forward. Consider where we have been and where we are going with the following projects, groups and leaders that have risen to extend the “culture of life” in the state:

Pregnancy Care Centers

There are now over 50 pregnancy care centers that freely serve the hundreds of



The Kentucky Memorial for the Unborn can give solace for those who have lost an unborn child and choose to memorialize them on the wall.

Kentucky women each year that experience an unwanted pregnancy. (See map on next page). These centers are funded primarily by contributions from those on their areas. They are staffed in part by many volunteers who simply want to serve the women in need in their communities. Without doubt these centers are concerned not only for the

mother, but also for the unborn child, so they stock their offices with both maternity clothing and baby clothing as well as other maternal supplies that can help a young woman make the transition into gracefully bringing a new life into the world and raising that child.

Embodying the “grace” side of “grace and truth,” these centers together manifest the caring side of the major rift in America caused by the U.S Supreme Court’s 1973 intrusion into the Congressional domain of making new law.

Kentucky Memorial for the Unborn

Another aspect of the sanctity of life issue, both across America and in Kentucky, is the fact that many women have had abortions and now painfully regret their decision. A young woman in crisis, not knowing what she will do but “trusting” Uncle Sam and his pro-choice *Roe vs Wade* policy will often realize years later that she chose to terminate the life of her own child. That realization most often results in regret and emotional heartache.

In addition to the post-abortion counseling that pregnancy care centers offer, pro-life Kentuckians, under the leadership of Kathy Rutledge, raised funds and built the *Kentucky Memorial to the Unborn*, which allows women to memorialize their unborn child on a granite wall set in a beautiful garden-like setting overlooking the state Capitol. (See photo on left) The Memorial serves those who have lost children through abortion or through miscarriage – it was designed to simply honor the life in the womb that was lost prematurely.

CHOOSE LIFE License Plates

This year marks the 11th year that CHOOSE LIFE license plate dollars have supported pregnancy care centers that serve the women of Kentucky.

The big winners in the “CHOOSE LIFE” license plate project have always been the Kentucky women who are caught in an untimely pregnancy and who do not feel that they have life-giving options. Since 100 percent of the money generated by the plates goes to the local pregnancy care centers that dot the state, it is the women in need that experience the most meaningful impact from the funds given.

Anyone can sign up for an official Kentucky CHOOSE LIFE license plate and give a \$10 donation (the maximum gift allowed) when they go to renew their plate. The donated money is delivered annually to The Family Foundation by the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet and then 100 percent of it is distributed to state pregnancy care centers.

CHOOSE LIFE

Kentucky license plates

“We can all give a little”

**Go ahead, get one for your car
and drive with this CHOOSE LIFE
encouragement all over town.**



**You'll be making a stand for life
and for compassionate, life-saving intervention because
pregnancy care centers will receive 100% of the money
that you donate above the actual cost of your license plate.**

THIS is Unbridled SPIRIT in Kentucky!

Sanctity of Life issue

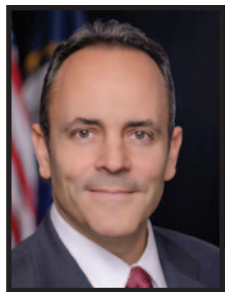
Kentucky can lead the nation on this issue at this time!

State Senator Jack Westwood (R-Erlanger-Ret), had worked for several years to secure the official CHOOSE LIFE license plate for Kentucky but was thwarted each year by pro-choice Democrats in the House of Representatives. In 2006, he worked out a compromise with a Democrat bill sponsor and the funds began to flow.

Now the total funds garnered from this effort has reached over one third of a million dollars and have helped the pregnancy care centers, along with the women they serve, to flourish.

Pro-Life Governor

Without doubt, those promoting life in Kentucky have been encouraged by the election of one of the most passionate pro-life governors in the country. Gov. Matt Bevin, with an upset election victory in 2015, has taken strong stands for life whether it be



Gov. Matt Bevin, Kentucky's 62nd Governor, shooting straight on abortion

Treasurer Allison Ball and pro-life Commissioner of Agriculture Ryan Quarles. This makes the Executive Branch *predominately led* by committed pro-life leaders – a first in Kentucky since before the 1973 *Roe vs Wade* decision.

Pro-Life Legislature

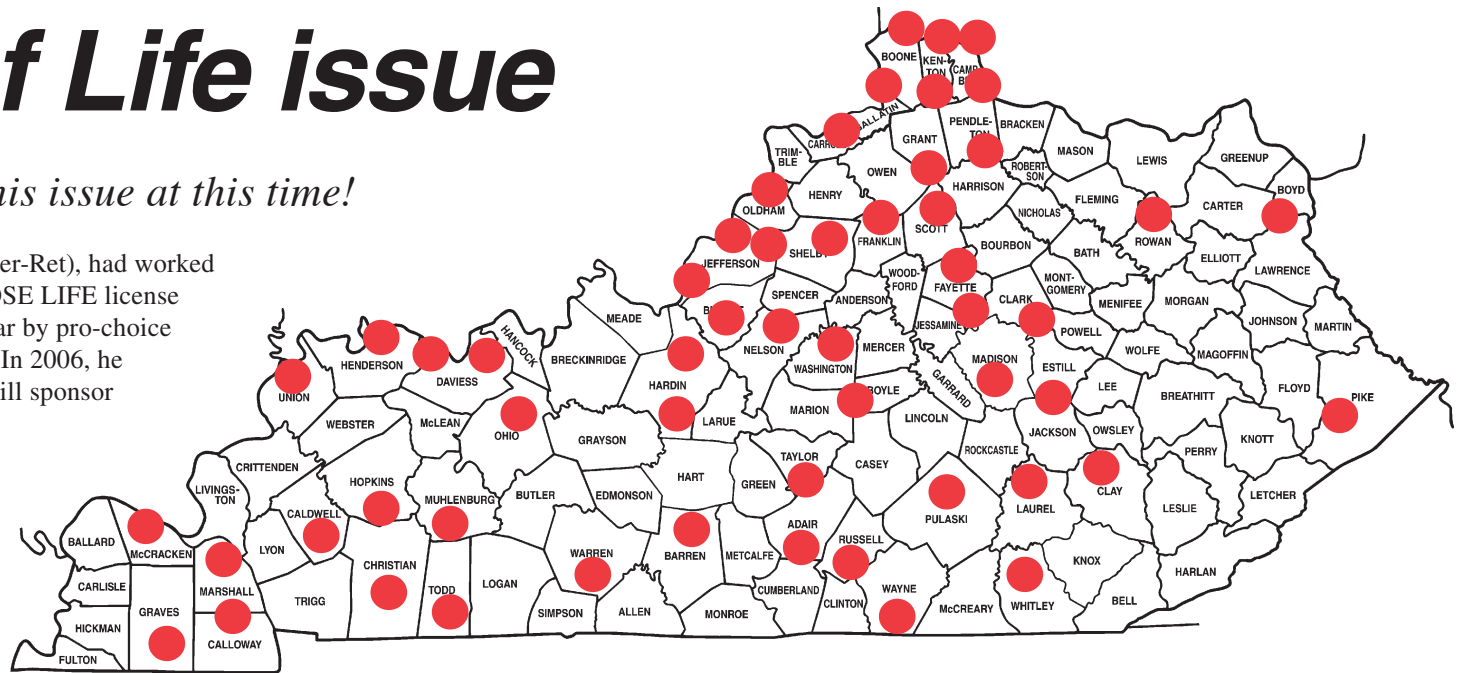
But a governor cannot work alone to accomplish all that is in his heart unless there is a legislative body that will work with him. In the 2016 elections, the pro-choice, Democrat-dominated House flipped to a pro-life, Republican-dominated Chamber in a single election. And, it was not a minor shift – it was an earthquake. The House had been 54-46 Democrat to Republican, and it turned to become a 64-36 Republican to Democrat Chamber.

With the Senate already a 27-11 pro-life, Republican-dominated body, the transformation of the House moved the legislature into a position to pass pro-life legislation. In the 2017 Session alone, a 20-Week Abortion Ban, an Ultrasound Bill, and an act that defunded Planned Parenthood passed with overwhelming majorities, generating a quantum leap forward for the pro-life cause in the state.

Pro-Life Groups

In addition to the aforementioned assets working in Kentucky, there are a number of very active pro-life organizations that work to educate and impact the legislature. If the pregnancy care centers are the “grace” part of “grace and truth,” then these groups embody the “truth” side of that equation.

Kentucky Right To Life Association is the “grand daddy” of them all. Headquartered in Louisville and founded in 1970, it has 16 affiliates across the state. Margie Montgomery, a remarkable woman who has led the organization since its inception, still leads the group which focuses primarily on sanctity of life education and on legislation



Pregnancy Resource Centers dot the Kentucky landscape, serving women with untimely pregnancies.

through his public speaking, his leadership with the members of the House and Senate, or through his administration going to court to protect the gains won in the legislature and righting the wrongs of the last, very pro-choice, Beshear Administration.

But more than just the election of Gov. Bevin, most Kentuckians don't realize that swept into office with him in 2015 were pro-life Auditor Mike Harmon, pro-life-

“from the cradle to the grave.”

Northern Kentucky Right to Life, located primarily in the northern three counties of the state, has also been serving Kentucky for many years. Over the years, they have boasted the strongest pro-life delegation of state legislators sent to work in Frankfort.

Dr. Frank Simon has worked for 35 years in policy. His American Family Association of Kentucky has been laboring on many issues confronting Kentucky; but it has always stood most strongly with those articulating the need to protect the sanctity of life.

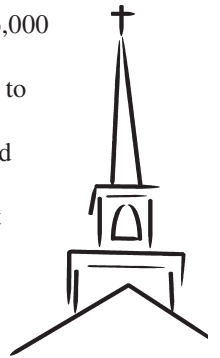
The Family Foundation, whose home office is located in Lexington, has worked alongside the Kentucky Right To Life Association in their legislative work since 1990. In addition, in 1994 The Family Foundation facilitated the founding the Kentucky Association of Pregnancy Care Centers.

Churches

Last but not least, it is important to note the Kentucky has over 6,000 Bible-oriented churches. Though not all engage the issues and the debates in Frankfort, it is true that, generally speaking, they gravitate to the sanctity of life position that is clearly stated in Scripture.

As more and more of these churches come on board to be salt and light, the promise of Kentucky being a light to the nation on this, and many other issues, becomes more and more believable. Remember it was Christians who made the difference in the 2015 election of Gov. Bevin, and it was Christians who made the difference in the 2016 “flip” of the House. Who knows what that same body of people will accomplish if they indeed stay the course and become what they are called to become and they do all they are called to do?

The Commonwealth of Kentucky has many things going for it in regards to the sanctity of human life. Leadership at all levels and in all spheres will be necessary because of the tried and true reality that “Nothing moves unless it is pushed.” Many Kentuckians are pushing as hard as they can for the goal, “No abortions are done here.”



To get involved in some way with one of Kentucky's many pro-life organizations, simply contact The Family Foundation by calling (859) 255-5400 or by emailing kent@kentuckyfamily.org



God is at work in *Kentucky Marriage Movement*

The *CITIZEN* recently caught up with Greg Williams to see how things were “moving along” at KMM.

Editor's Note: Greg Williams has been leading the Kentucky Marriage Movement for seven years. Prior to serving in this capacity, Greg spent eight years directing a Sexual Risk Avoidance program for teens across Kentucky. This Q&A format was chosen to get to the heart of his work.

Citizen: So what's going on in the Kentucky Marriage Movement?

Greg: Wow, where do I start? Last year was our seventh, or Sabbath, year. God really blessed and is multiplying our efforts.

Citizen: What does that look like?

Greg: First of all, prayer and support for this movement have grown and seeds planted in the first 6 years are bearing fruit. We finished 2017 with several *Love and Lordship* events, including a series at Ninevah Christian Church in Lawrenceburg. In the first 2 months of 2018 we have already conducted four weekend events, spoken at several churches and begun three series. Partners include Isaiah House, Blackburn Correctional Institute and an exciting new collaboration with the Lexington Leadership Foundation's Fatherhood Initiative under Eric Geary and David Cozart. Several more events are scheduled into the Summer including the Sisters for Life “Family Summit” in Louisville and a *Love and Lordship* conference in Colorado in August. Two resources/events that we facilitate are *Love and Respect* and *Art of Marriage*. Both are DVD-based and excellent.

Citizen: Awesome! What is unique about KMM regarding marriage, family, and The Church?

Greg: With a renewed focus on marriage in light of the *Obergefell* decision there are many great resources to help couples thrive, to help restore marriages and to help successfully-married couples mentor other couples. The KMM's primary offering is the live *Love and Lordship* (L&L) events. The L&L message focuses on healthy marriages and encourages and challenges today's churches to recognize that God's design for marriage goes far beyond the home and family. Marriage and family call us to help revive and restore a culture of agape (Godly love) relationships that begins in our homes.

Citizen: Very interesting. Tell us more.

Greg: The *Love and Lordship* message outlines four priorities that are amiss in our

culture, and to some degree, in our churches. God designed each of these to happen first in marriage and family and then for Christ's Church to benefit from and apply in the culture:

1) Understanding/Applying Christ's Lordship (True Authority) in our daily lives;

2) Developing Agape Marriages, Families and Relationships that build The Church and impact our culture;

3) Teaching/Modeling Relational Servant-leadership through marriage and family;

4) Generational Discipleship that begins in our homes, benefits our churches, and reaches a troubled world.

Citizen: How is this message being received?

Greg: With fear and trepidation! Just kidding. But it's not always the easiest message to hear. Churches are seeing the great need for stronger marriages and families with discipleship as a primary focus. These are God's building blocks for His Church. *Love and Lordship* brings these together to encourage churches and leaders toward a paradigm shift that many have been seeking or working toward. God's plan is that each of these priorities begins in our homes. From there His Church is strengthened. Programs and ministries are helpful, but they are only fruitful for His Kingdom if we are building relationships and holding one another accountable to obedience in these priority areas. When, even with good intention, we move away from Biblical order we give the enemy territory and ammunition. We only restore that by returning to His order in our homes and in His Church. Together, these make it happen.

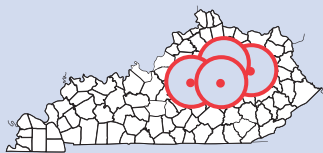
Citizen: So what more can we expect from KMM?

Greg: We're excited about opportunities ahead and look to partner with more churches and groups to help build a healthy marriage culture in our churches that the world will take notice of. I'm available to speak at churches in weekend services as well as *Love and Lordship* conferences, retreats or multiple night events across the state.

(For more, website and phone number are at bottom of page)



Greg Williams
is Director
of the
**Kentucky
Marriage
Movement**



The Kentucky Marriage Movement

Lexington, Feb. 1 - April 5

Healthy Relationship Thurs. Night Series - Greg Williams
Lexington Leadership Foundation - Embrace Church
1015 N. Limestone, Lexington, KY 40505

Lexington, Feb. 16-17

Love and Lordship Series - Greg Williams
Blackburn Correctional Institute
3111 Spur Road Street, Lexington, KY 40511

Willisburg, March 21 - May 9

Love and Lordship Wednesday Series - Greg Williams
Isaiah House
2084 Main Street, Willisburg, KY 40078

Sharpsburg, May 18-19

Love and Lordship Conference - Greg Williams
Bethel Christian Church
518 Bethel Ridge Road, Sharpsburg, KY 40374

For more information, call (859)255-5400 or go to www.kentuckymarriage.org

More legislative opportunities: (See calling instructions on bottom of page 3)



House Bill 152: Empowering Truckers Against Trafficking Rep. Addia Wuchner

HB 152 would require a person applying for a commercial driver's license to complete training related to identifying and reporting human trafficking and require commercial driver's licenses to be issued with a wallet card that outlines the signs of human trafficking and how to report it. (Card includes the National Human Trafficking Hotline number.) Traffickers often transport prostituted children, making it harder for them to seek help or escape.



House Bill 294: Treating Trafficking Offenders as Violent Offenders Rep. Joni Jenkins

HB 294 updates the law to better reflect the seriousness of human trafficking or promoting human trafficking by treating those convicted of such heinous crimes as violent offenders. If convicted of those crimes, the violent offender would be required to serve no less than 85 percent of the sentence imposed before being eligible for probation or parole. In addition, a violent offender is not eligible for credit on his/her sentence for "good behavior."



House & Senate Resolutions - HCR 93/SCR 105: Internet Trafficking Rep. Donna Mayfield & Sen. C.B. Embry:

These two Concurrent Resolutions, one in the House and one in the Senate, urge Congress to close the loophole in the Federal Communications Decency Act (FCDA) that gives immunity to online sites, such as "Backpage.com," that knowingly and recklessly advertise sex to connect their "customers" with trafficking victims. (See related updated story below.) This common sense legislation is backed by numerous national groups as well as 51 Attorneys General who say their hands are tied by the FCDA.



House & Senate Resolutions - HR 149 & SR 170 Defending Dignity Rep. Melinda Prunty & Sen. David Givens:

These two Simple Resolutions recognize connections between pornography, the objectification of women, and sex trafficking. They assert that a public health crisis created by pornography exists, that obscenity plays a role in objectifying women, and that there is a need for education on the harms of pornography and sex trafficking. They also encourage the Attorney General, Commonwealth's Attorney Offices, Law Enforcement, and Municipalities to enforce current laws dealing with obscenity and other forms of sexual exploitation.



House Concurrent Resolution HCR 34: Responsible Marijuana Research Rep. Danny Bentley

HCR 34 actually delays marijuana legalization, urging instead the expedited research and appropriate approval of marijuana derivatives for medical use. Bill sponsor Dr. Bentley, a PhD, registered pharmacist and university faculty member explains that several marijuana derivatives are currently approved and available by prescription, with others likely to be legalized soon. He warns the legislature about circumventing the FDA to legalize a smoked plant because it has not been adequately studied.



House Bill 1: Adoption and Foster Care Reform Rep. David Meade

During the 2017 Legislative Session, in response to years of requests by citizens, legislators and professionals that the Adoption and Foster Care system in Kentucky be improved, the General Assembly created an adoption task force to review those systems. In December the task force reported their recommendations. HB 1 makes major changes to the current system incorporating those recommendations.

HCR 93 passes KY House, helps Congress act

HCR 93 (see above) passed the Kentucky House Friday (Feb. 23) and then on the following Tuesday (Feb. 26) Congress acted.

On Feb. 27, the U.S. House of Representatives gave survivors, their families, and advocates the biggest victory in the fight against sex trafficking since the Trafficking Victims Protection Act in 2000. The Family Foundation was one of the voices speaking up for the voiceless and advocating justice for the victims of sex trafficking.

The Family Foundation partnered with the *National Center on Sexual Exploitation* (NCOSE in Washington, DC) and *Refuge for Women* (Lexington, KY) to encourage Kentucky's state legislators to join the growing chorus urging Congress to close the loophole in the Communications Decency Act.

On Friday, Feb. 23, just four days before the Washington vote – the Kentucky House unanimously passed HCR 93, sponsored by Rep. Donna Mayfield (*R-Winchester*), which urged Congress and Kentucky's Congressional Delegation to support reforming the CDA.

"Kentucky's House of Representatives unanimously signaled to the U.S. Congress that it is time to stem the burgeoning growth of online sex trafficking by amending the Communications Decency Act (CDA)," said Lisa L. Thompson, Vice President of Research and Education for the National Center on Sexual Exploitation. "In an 83-0 vote, Kentucky's legislature passed a resolution sending the unequivocal message to Congress that all those who facilitate sex trafficking must be held accountable — including website operators with business models built on sexual exploitation. NCOSE applauds this action, as well

as Reps. Donna Mayfield (Retired, U.S. Marshals Service) and Melinda Prunty for spearheading this effort."

Kentucky's stand helped passage of the legislative package in the U.S. House. The Family Foundation made every Kentucky Congressman aware of the resolution urging them to amend the CDA and five of Kentucky's six Congressmen voted to pass the legislative package amending doing just that.

Just as Kentucky's HCR 93 must now be considered by the Kentucky Senate, the legislative package passed by the U.S. House must now be considered by the U.S. Senate. When HCR 93 passes the full General Assembly and is signed by Gov. Bevin, an official copy will be sent to Sen. Mitch McConnell and Sen. Rand Paul.

The Family Foundation has also worked on several other anti-trafficking efforts in the General Assembly this Session. (See legislation listed above) These efforts include treating trafficking offenders as violent offenders, empowering truckers against trafficking, and combatting child trafficking at hotels.



Opinion: It's hard to believe they could get marriage that wrong!

The C-J reporting fiasco

If you had been monitoring *Twitter* on the weekend of March 3-4, you would have amazed to find out that The Family Foundation was in favor of child brides. That's right. 13-year-olds no less.

It wasn't true, of course. We had concerns with only one part of Senate Bill 48, which prohibited all marriages involving anyone under 17 and putting judges in charge of deciding whether 17-year-olds could marry. The problem was that judges had completely displaced parents in the procedure involving 17-year-olds.

Under the original legislation, a judge could approve the marriage of a 17-year-old without the parents' knowledge or consent. It was a problem not only for The Family Foundation, but with several other members of the committee charged with considering it.

We approached the chairman of the Senate Judicial Committee, Whitney Westerfield (*R-Hopkinsville*), and asked him to fix this. He agreed that it needed to be fixed and the legislation passed out of his committee on March 6 with universal support.

So why all the fuss about "child brides"?



Martin Cothran is the senior policy analyst for The Family Foundation

One of the main reasons this effort got the smear treatment was because the *Louisville Courier-Journal* ran a story with the headline "Kentucky's 'child bride' bill stalls as groups fight to let 13-year-olds wed." In the story it was made clear that the group was The Family Foundation. The reporter made one call to The Family Foundation office for director Kent Ostrander and since he was in Frankfort at the time they just went with the story.

The Family Foundation called on the paper to retract the story.

They refused, but the attention we brought to its inaccuracies resulted in a rewrite of the article.

The disinformation campaign that followed the story's publication was not only directed at The Family Foundation, but it ended up becoming a hate-fest



It's time to stand.

NOW is a VERY important moment in history.



Follow us on Twitter:
@KentuckyFamily



"Like" us on Facebook:
The Family Foundation

Sign up for our email UPDATE by emailing to:
kent@kentuckyfamily.org



The Kentucky CITIZEN

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directed against parents, against people of faith, and against the poor.

On The Family Foundation's *Facebook* page, some poster accused us of being wanting to "legalize rape," of being pedophiles, and many other less avory things – all because we were trying to prevent judges from letting 17-year-olds marry without their

parent's knowledge or consent.

We were "backwater puritan religious conservatives."

The *Twitter* sharks then went after Kentuckians themselves. "Hillbillyland," a poster of *Facebook* called it. As the *Washington Examiner* later put it, "Twitter exploded with takes about those knuckle-dragging, banjo-playing, cousin-marrying, inbred mountain people."

It was ugly and hateful.

In the committee meeting called to pass the revised bill, Westerfield said, "At

no point were the parties from Survivor's Corner or The Family Foundation, or the legislators that raised concerns at odds with one another. There was a concern

One of the main reasons this effort got the smear treatment was because the Louisville Courier-Journal ran a story with the headline "Kentucky's 'child bride' bill stalls as groups fight to let 13-year-olds wed." In the story it was made clear that the group was The Family Foundation.

about protecting the role of parents. That narrative was distorted and perverted to mean something gross that no one in this

room believes in or has advocated for."

That message is finally getting through, even to the national media, many of whom based their stories on the *Courier-Journal's* hit piece – an article that is still on their website with the same deceptive title.