

# CITIZEN

STRENGTHENING FAMILIES AND THE VALUES THAT MAKE FAMILIES STRONG

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## Many pro-family bills are moving, but other bills need help from Kentucky citizens

*Now is when your Senators and Representatives begin to get weary, so encourage them with your perspective!. (Make your calls!)*

The 2019 General Assembly Session is now more than half-way over and a good number of bills are moving forward. This could be a very productive Session for the family and the values that keep families strong.

However, at this point in the Session, if a bill hasn't cleared one Chamber, either the House (if the bill started there), or the Senate (if the bill started there), the chances are becoming slim that the bill will have time to clear the other Chamber and successfully be passed this year.

In other words, now is a critical time to let your voice be heard. If you haven't done so, take a moment and call the Legislative Message Line and leave your encouragement for your legislators.

You do not have to talk to them; you just leave a warm and encouraging message that says something like "Please support House Bill \_\_\_\_\_. Thank you." The receptionist that receives your message will then type your message and email it to the legislator(s) that you requested. If you don't know your Senator or Representative, they can tell you who

they are based on your address. OR, you can just say "Leave my message for all the Senators and Representatives in my county."

It is wise to also ask them to "copy my message to President Stivers and Pro Tem Given's" in the Senate, OR to "copy my message to Speaker Osborne and Pro-Tem Meade" in the House.

Regarding the bills that we have highlighted, since some have "moved forward" (changed Chambers from where they were originally filed), you can check the "Status" that is included. The "Status" description will direct you to the Chamber that needs to be given your message.

Your call to the Legislative Message Line should take about one minute. Here are a few tips making it easy:

**Be Kind** - You can be firm, but be polite. Your legislator wants to hear from you (he wants your vote next time), so do not give him a reason to ignore your message by having a bad attitude.

**Be Direct** - Reference the bill number, then, just state clearly what you want done. For example, your legislator will know what you want when he gets your message saying, "Pass SB152: The Parental Rights Act."

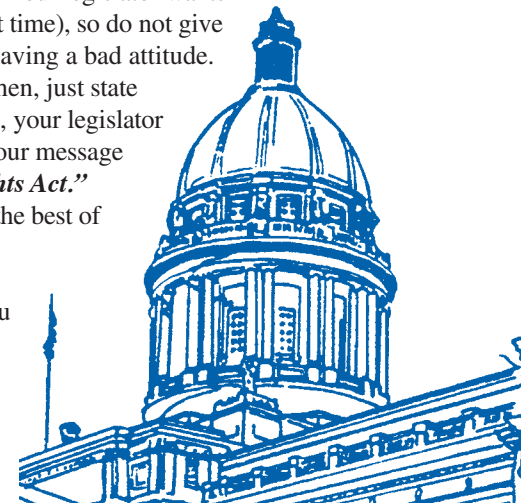
**Be Full of Faith** - You are speaking, to the best of your ability, the concerns that the Lord would have, so be confident, even bold with your encouragement. Remember, you are strengthening someone who is under the gun in Frankfort.

**Do Not Be "Religious"** - Christian-speak and Bible-speak are not known languages in Frankfort. Speak your message in the language of the listener – the truth that you share will have its own impact if it is understood. The Spirit will amplify it.

**In other words, now is a critical time to let your voice be heard. If you haven't done so, take a moment and call the Legislative Message Line and leave your encouragement for your legislators.**

**Pages 4-6 have information on key bills and their progress in the 2019 Session.**

**Legislators need your perspective and encouragement on these bills (and others) to order to move forward. YOU are KEY in the rise or fall of bills like these.**



**Frankfort is YOUR Capitol!  
Make your voice heard.**

# Kim Davis facing court costs at no fault of her own

*Gov. Beshear did not follow the law by offering someone to substitute for her, making her take her stand . . . and take the fall.*

In spite of Gov. Bevin's public praise for Kim Davis during his campaign, he has argued in court, as represented by his attorneys, that "county clerks must follow the law and issue marriage licenses to qualified couples," she "alone chose not to follow the law," and "cannot claim to represent the Commonwealth when she defies that law."

That was the revelation in the *Lexington Herald-Leader's* Jan. 30 article, *Gov. Bevin's lawyers say Kim Davis failed to do her job as clerk, must pay the bill.*

The Family Foundation contacted Bevin's Press Secretary seeking comment and received a statement from his legal counsel, Steve Pitt, assuring us that the attorneys representing Bevin's position "have taken no position as to whether Ms. Davis acted unconstitutionally" and "Gov. Bevin does not believe that she has done so and continues to support Ms. Davis's actions."

Regardless, the statement failed to specifically address or explain the repeated claims, contained in several legal filings, that Kim Davis "chose not to follow the law," violated her "statutory duties," and that the Rowan County Clerk's Office "should be deterred from engaging in conduct that violates civil rights."

Nor does the statement address the representation made by Bevin's attorneys that he maintains Gov. Beshear's position that "county clerks must follow the law and



**County Clerk Kim Davis**

issue marriage licenses to qualified couples."

In the Jan. 31 oral arguments before the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals, Bevin's attorneys continued to represent these positions as those of Bevin. The court is weighing who should pay the legal fees.

## How Did We Get Here?

The entire situation has arisen because former Gov. Beshear refused to abide by the Kentucky Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 2013. Rather than reasonably accommodating their sincerely held religious beliefs, Beshear told Rowan County Clerk Kim Davis, Casey County Clerk Casey Davis (no relation), and 58 others to do their job or resign.

**The entire situation has arisen because former Gov. Beshear refused to abide by the Kentucky Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 2013.**

Kentucky law requires the government to use the least restrictive means to accomplish any

action that limits the religious liberties of its citizens and employees.

In fact, the question of the County Clerks had already been contemplated by the Legislative Research Commission before the act's passage.

The LRC's Local Mandate Fiscal Impact Estimate said: "the least restrictive alternative required of the local government may be... significant, for example, if it requires hiring additional staff or paying overtime for other staff to do a job that an employee declines to do because of religious beliefs."

A ruling is expected in the next few months from the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals. At that time Kim Davis will know whether the state, her County Clerk's office or she personally will be held liable for the court costs.

For many Kentuckians, she was taking a stand for them and their religious liberties.

# Somerset City Council defeats sex ordinance

*The LGBTQ community foisted their perspective on a number of cities in Kentucky . . . but not in Somerset.*

On Feb. 11, the Somerset City Council defeated a proposed Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Ordinance by a 10-1 vote.

The decision appeared to be influenced by concerns brought forward by Christians in the community. The proposed ordinance did not contain any protections to ensure that religious liberty was protected.

Pastor Jeff Griffith, of Denham Baptist Church, urged the Council to consider whether the so-called "Fairness Ordinance" was truly fair towards all citizens, including Christians. While clearly expressing that he and his church loved and welcomed all, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity, he presented a report from the National Center for Life and Liberty which analyzed the proposed ordinance. It listed changes needed to ensure that U.S. Constitutional rights were not violated and that the law would truly be fair.

Though 10 Kentucky cities have adopted such ordinances, most states, Kentucky's General Assembly, and the overwhelming number of Kentucky localities have not deemed it necessary.

So-called "Fairness Ordinances" have been pushed by LGBT activists throughout the country and state. Despite their name, the language has been used across the nation and in Kentucky to force business owners to speak a message they disagree with and support a message contrary to their sincerely held religious beliefs.



Additional concerns include the fact that it goes beyond what is required by Federal or State law; privacy and safety concerns arise from forcing restrooms to be open for members of the opposite biological sex; and the language is often orchestrated by outside groups to cause division that didn't exist

beforehand.

As a constitutional law expert who supports "Fairness Ordinances" recognized, it "sort of reduces religious liberty to 'freedom of the church,' and its internal operations."

## Strategy of LGBT Activists

Like the majority of states, Kentucky has not seen the need for a statewide "fairness" law. However, the Fairness Coalition has implemented a strategy of targeting small cities throughout the Commonwealth with local ordinances during the past sixteen years.

In October 2014, Silas House wrote a New York Times op-ed titled "Small Towns, Small Hearts." Writing on Berea's decision not to pass a so-called "fairness" ordinance, he said "the real front in the battle for equality remains the small towns that dot America's landscape."

Their strategy for conquering the state legislature has turned the small towns of Kentucky into the front lines of battle. They often fly under the radar and limit community opposition by working through college campuses, local human rights commissions, and other groups.

# Casinos are here without authorization – **CALL!**

*There are only two ways left to stop them: 1) Gov. Bevin can do it; and 2) The Family Foundation's 8-year-and-counting court case.*

The only way to stop the six casinos that have come to Kentucky with their slot-like “historical racing” machines is to have one of the two Branches of government that still have leverage to step up and do the right thing; that would be the Executive Branch or the Judicial Branch.

The most obvious one is the Executive Branch with Gov. Bevin as its head. The Horse Racing Commission is the entity that has been promoting the casinos and it is in the Executive Branch under the governor's authority. In fact, this is his Horse Racing Commission that he reconstituted after he took the reins of office.

Clearly, Gov. Bevin has blasted an entire other Branch of government -- the Judicial Branch -- when the Kentucky Supreme Court ruled against his pension reform bill last Fall. If he can speak firmly to them, why can't he speak firmly to his own Horse Racing Commission to get this wanton expansion of gambling properly in check.

The second institution of government that could make a difference is the Kentucky Supreme Court, as it has been asked to hear the 8-year-old court case that The Family Foundation has engaged with its attorney, Stan Cave.

The case was decided in Franklin Circuit Court last Oct. 24 but the decision was quite nonsensical, stating that “pari-mutuel” horse racing doesn't need to be “mutual.” That kind of word game is exactly what the gambling proponents have done throughout the case, taking commonly understood concepts and twisting them so they fit into their expanded gambling vocabulary.

The court case could easily take another year of appeals.

Stopping this expansion is critically important for a number of reasons, but one is simply the financial dangers that it poses to the state. When the Family Foundation last battled significant casino efforts in 2009 and 2010, The Foundation brought forth four

academic studies from different universities that indicated an average pathological (addicted) gambler cost society \$11,304.00, \$13,200, \$13,585.00 (this third study was by Murray State University) and \$19,000.00 annually.

The Kentucky Counsel on Problem Gambling estimated there were 35,000 pathological gamblers in the state at that time. When one multiplies 35,000 times \$13,585.00, one gets the TOTAL cost of addicted gamblers to society each year. That number comes to over \$475,000,000.00. That's \$475 million dollars annually!

**If you've called, please call again! We *MUST* stop these casinos!**

**Therefore, we must speak to the Governor regarding casinos. (And to the Legislative Branch for gambling bills, see page 6) Here's the Governor's Message Line:**

***Call 1-502-564-2611***

**Call & leave this message with the Governor's receptionist:**

***“Please, Gov. Bevin, act NOW to stop the ‘Historic Racing’ casinos.”***

## Louisiana law case could be the tipping point

*The case deals with abortion so it could give some indication where the Court, now with Kavanaugh and Gorsuch, wants to go.*

Much has been debated about what the US Supreme Court will do with the abortion case coming out of Louisiana. The measure on trial, known as Act 620: Unsafe Abortion Protection Act, requires an abortion clinic to have admitting privileges in a hospital, thereby protecting women in case there is a problem with a surgical abortion. The law, and the court's decision on it, is looked at as a precursor regarding what the new SCOTUS will do on future cases dealing with abortion regulations now that Kavanaugh has been seated.

On Feb. 1 this year, Justice Samuel Alito temporarily blocked Act 620's abortion restrictions from going into effect until Feb. 7, pushing off the question for another week as to whether the high court would have to weigh-in on the issue of abortion rights.

Now the full Court has placed a stay in order to give it time determine whether to hear the case or simply allow the 5th Circuit Court of Appeals ruling to stand.

If SCOTUS accepts the case and allows the decision to stand, pro-lifers in Louisiana win because the Court of Appeals sided with Louisiana, declaring the law constitutional. According to Phillip Jauregui with the Judicial Action Group in Washington, D.C.:

*“The value in this decision is that we will have the opportunity to see how the full court, with Gorsuch and Kavanaugh, rules. A similar issue was before the Supreme Court in a 2016 Texas case while Justice Scalia's seat sat empty. The court*

**Clearly, if new additions Gorsuch and Kavanaugh rule with Roberts, Thomas and Alito then the vote would be 5-4 against the abortionists.**

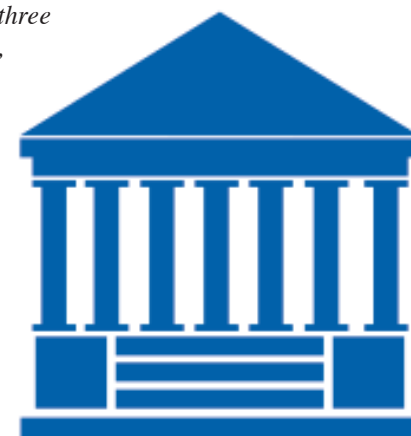
*in 2016 ruled 5-3 with the abortionists. The three justices dissenting in that case were Roberts, Thomas and Alito.*

*The facts in this case are distinguishable from the Texas case and the abortionists' claims are not persuasive, so it is not necessary to reverse the Texas case to rule against the abortionists here. However, reversing the Texas case would be great as well, but right now we are not talking about the merits – only the staying of the law while the merits are decided.”*

Clearly, if new additions Gorsuch and Kavanaugh rule with Roberts, Thomas and Alito then the vote would be 5-4 against the abortionists.

Not only will this case shed light into where the new Court will stand, but it also illumines the entire process of laws making it to the US Supreme Court. Act 620 was originally passed in Louisiana, but has been bounced in a number of courts and is finally knocking on the door of its ultimate hearing. Many other pieces of legislation passed by the states are working their way up to SCOTUS.

The scenario is interesting because it was the Center for Reproductive Rights asking for the stay, underscoring that the pro-abortionists have their back to the wall.



# Legislators need your encouragement. Make YOUR toll-free call (one call on each)



## SB152: The Parental Rights Act - sponsored by Sen. Steve West

This bill affirms parental rights as fundamental rights. These include the right of the parent to direct and consent to the medical care, education, upbringing and religious training of their children. It requires the state to have a compelling interest before it restricts parental rights.

**Advocates say:** It is the parents' right and responsibility to direct the care of their children. Historically, parents' rights have been considered fundamental rights. But, in 2000, a US Supreme Court opinion opened the door for reinterpretation. Since then there has been a disturbing trend of government allowing others to make decisions for children without parental consent or even knowledge. Children have been removed from homes without due process because a government official questioned a decision parents made for their child.

**Opponents say:** This law isn't needed. The United Nations says that parents already have rights and children must also. Children, in consultation with professionals should be able to make their own decisions. If the parents do not agree, a child should be given other guardians and allowed to determine for themselves what path they wish to take, whether it be education, religion, medicine or any other area. Children's rights to determine for themselves should be respected and overrule the rights of parents.

**STATUS:** At press time, SB152 was set to be heard in the Senate Judiciary Committee on Feb. 21 in order to begin its journey. If passed, it could be heard in the full Senate the week of Feb. 25 and then onto the House, having just enough time to become law if enough support is generated.



## SB117 and HB254: Higher Education Free Speech Act - *These two identical bills are sponsored by Sen. Will Schroder and Rep. Savannah Maddox respectively.*

Both bills require state colleges and universities to adopt policies to protect the right of students and faculty to speak, write and learn without the threat of intimidation. Each would also protect the right of student groups to invite speakers regardless of the popularity of their views. (Note: One of these two bills must pass BOTH Chambers – SB117 through the Senate then House OR HB 254 through the House then Senate – for the law to be enacted.)

**Advocates say:** This legislation is needed because of the increasing amount of intimidation practiced by those who disagree with religious or conservative points of view. In light of the many recent events on college campuses across America where invited speakers with conservative views have been prevented from speaking, sometimes by university administrators, it's time to protect the true academic environment, so all points of view can be shared peacefully.

**Opponents say:** News reports overstate the problem of intimidation on college campuses. These situations are just more liberal students exercising their free speech rights. In addition, they say that there are some views that constitute hate speech. These views, they argue, should be prohibited, particularly those they regard as racist, sexist and homophobic.

**STATUS:** At press time, SB117 was scheduled to be heard in the Senate Education Committee on Feb. 21. HB254 was set to be heard in the House Education Committee on Feb. 26 to begin its journey. If passed, SB117 could be heard in the full Senate the week of Feb. 25 and then onto the House. Similarly, HB254 could be heard by the full House during the week of March 4 and have just enough time to pass the Senate.

## Call 1-800-372-7181

Call the Legislative Message Line and leave a message (in red below). You will not have to speak to your legislator(s). Just leave a message with the receptionist for "the Senators\* (or Representatives) in (my) county." [\* Check "STATUS"]

Double your impact by having your spouse call as well. Call on each bill on different days. When finished giving your message, ask the receptionist to "Copy my message to Senate President Stivers & Pro-Tem David Givens and Speaker Osborne and Pro-Tem David Meade." This way you will reach key Leadership.

### #1 "Pass SB152: The Parental Rights Act - sponsored by Sen. Steve West"

This bill will protect the family by having government stand in support of (NOT AGAINST) parents in tough situations.

### #2 "Pass SB117 & HB254: Higher Education Free Speech Act - sponsored by Sen. Will Schroder & Rep. Savannah Maddox"

This bill guarantees campuses will maintain First Amendment rights for all, contrary to many colleges today.

### #3 "Pass these Pro-Life Bills: Senate Bills 9 & 50 and House Bills 5 & 148

Kentucky could be a leading state on the issue of the sanctity of life. These bills accomplish that objective.

You can call in the evening! The Legislative Message Line is open 7:00 AM until 9:00 PM EST Mon-Thurs, closing at 6:00 Fridays.

## Pro-Life/Sanctity of Life Bills - Senate Bills 9 & 50 and House Bills 5 & 148



**Senate Bill 9 – Fetal Heartbeat Abortion Ban** by Sen. M. Castlen. SB 9 prohibits an abortion after the detection of a heartbeat, except for medical emergencies.

**Advocates Say:** If the absence of a heartbeat indicates death, then the presence of a heartbeat indicates life. Furthermore, the unborn child has distinctly different DNA than it's mother. Therefore, once a heartbeat is detected it is not just about a woman's body, but abortion is the killing of an innocent individual person. The state has a compelling interest in protecting life.

**Opponents Say:** This law is unconstitutional. It is none of government's business what a woman does with her own body. It should be up to the woman and her doctor to decide. Life begins once the baby is born.

**STATUS:** SB9 has passed its Senate Committee and the full Senate with a 31 to 6 vote on Feb. 14. At press time, it was still awaiting an assignment to a committee in the House.

**Senate Bill 50 – Abortion Prescription Reporting** by Sen. R. Mills. SB 50 clarifies in law that medications given by a physician with the intent of causing an abortion must be reported as an abortion and included in the statistical reporting done by the Kentucky Bureau of Vital Statistics.

**Advocates Say:** Chemical abortions are becoming more common and current law is unclear. Such abortions are a combination of potent medications that cause the death and expulsion of an unborn child and should be reported.

**Opponents Say:** This law is unnecessary because most abortions are already reported. This is an other attempt to overturn *Roe v. Wade*. This is an undue burden on women and their physicians.

**STATUS:** This bill passed its Senate Committee and passed the full Senate with a 30 to 6 vote on Jan. 11. At press time, it was set to be heard Feb. 21 in the Health and Family Services Committee in the House.

**House Bill 5 – Human Rights Unborn Children Anti-Discrimination Act** by Rep. M. Prunty. HB 5 prohibits abortion based solely on the sex, race or disability of the unborn child.

**Advocates say:** We must resist efforts to create "designer babies" where children who do not meet certain "requirements" are discarded. A preborn child should not be killed simply because of their sex, race or perceived disability.

**Opponents say:** It is a woman's right to choose if she wants a child, which child, and under what circumstances. Government must not limit her choices. This is just another attempt to take away the reproductive freedom.

**STATUS:** At press time HB5 was set for a hearing in the House Veterans, Military Affairs and Public Protection Committee on Feb. 20. If passed, it has just enough time to pass the full House and complete its journey in the Senate.

**House Bill 148 – Post *Roe v. Wade* Abortion Ban** by Rep. J. Fischer. Should either *Roe v. Wade* be overturned or an amendment to the Constitution restores Kentucky's authority to prohibit abortion, this bill would prohibit abortion except for the life or physical health of the mother.

**Advocates say:** Innocent, helpless unborn children should not be denied the basic human right to life. Innocent life is precious and must be protected. Abortions are being used as birth control and even "celebrated" by their advocates. A society that condones the killing of its most helpless and innocent members is a society in decline.

**Opponents say:** If abortion is not legal, women will die. They will be forced into back alleys again. This is nothing more than a patriarchal, regressive plot to subjugate women. It is a woman's right, alone, to choose.

**STATUS:** This bill passed its House Committee and then the full House with a 69 to 20 vote on Feb. 15. At press time HB148 was awaiting assignment to a Senate Committee. It has enough time to complete its course in the Senate to be passed.

# Gambling expansion is bad policy! – **CALL!**

*The legislative efforts to expand gambling are now coming from some Republicans. Phone calls are the best tool to stop them.*

Four gambling bills have already been introduced this Session but here is the GOOD NEWS: House Bill 175, the one that expands gambling the most, was *NOT VOTED OUT* of its House committee on Wed., Feb 13. Yes, it may still be able to be passed, but it was clear on Wednesday that calls coming into Frankfort from citizens across the state have thrown cold water on the embers of its future.

Stan Cave, attorney for The Family Foundation, who testified against HB175 before the House Licensing and Occupations Committee on Feb. 13, outlined some of the key problems with the bill. He testified that, because of limited time, he was unable to address all the problems with the bill, but listed several issues that were sobering to the committee. Among them were:



sobering to the committee. Among them were:

1) HB175 is not constitutional. The Kentucky Constitution does not allow the kind of gambling described in HB175 – only pari-mutuel betting on horse races, a state lottery, and charitable gaming – so a Constitutional Amendment would be needed, not just this simple statute;

2) It includes far more than the “Sports Wagering” as the bill was stated to authorize. Literally in the bill, it authorizes betting on the “Emmys” and “Oscars.”

3) The Kentucky Horse Racing Commission, which is given significant oversight of this new expansion of

gambling, does not have to follow the Executive Branch Ethics Law. That fact has caused all kinds of problems in the eight and a half year court case that The Family Foundation has been in regarding the proliferation of slot-like, “historical racing” machines into six casinos across the state.

According to Cave, “They’re trying to slip daylight past the rooster.”

**Call weekly to stop the expansion. Calls need to keep coming!**

[At press time, HB175 was still in its House committees, awaiting a hearing and a vote.]

## Call 1-800-372-7181

Call the toll-free Legislative Message Line and leave this message for “*all the legislators from my county*” (State Senators and Representatives) and “*copy this message to Speaker Osborne and Senate President Stivers.*”

*“Please vote against any gambling bill!” And, “Hold a hearing on the new ‘Historic Racing’ casinos.”*

And, call the Message Line and leave this message for “*all the Senators from my county*” and “*copy this message to Senate President Stivers and Pro-Tem David Givens.*”

*“Please pass House Concurrent Resolution 5 in order to study cannabis (marijuana) properly.”*

# Cannabis must be *fully* researched – **CALL!**

*House Concurrent Resolution 5 (HCR 5) calls on the FDA to properly study cannabis, just like it does all other medications.*

ALL of the herbs and grasses of the field, and ALL of the shrubs and trees have been given to man to use and develop for his benefit. Cannabis is one of those plants. The question of the day in the 2019 Session of the General Assembly is: “Will it be used “by man” for benefit or harm?”

Advocates for the legalization of marijuana – both recreational and medicinal – have plenty of stories about how it “helped this” or “alleviated that.”

And the fact is that every one of those stories *MAY* be true.

However, those opposed to its legalization – both recreational and medicinal – point to their own stories and studies that indicate it there are harmful side effects associated with its use, particularly with its regular use.



Every one of those stories *MAY* also be true.

The problem in Frankfort revolves around how to get to the place everyone wants to be: That is, “How can we get the ‘good’ out of the cannabis plant without getting any of the ‘bad’?”

House Concurrent Resolution 5 (HCR 5), sponsored by Rep. Danny Bentley (*R-Russell*), is likely the answer. For years, marijuana could

not be easily studied because it was a “scheduled” drug. Therefore, it was difficult to get both grant money and enough of the plant (legally) to conduct credible studies. With “medical marijuana” now legal in some states, more studies are being done. HCR5 calls for the FDA to expedite research and approval of cannabis,

and have it refined and dosed like all other proposed medicines.

By doing this, doctors will have clear information regarding drug interactions, contra-indications, required doses and the most effective way to administer it.

Lawmakers have been put in difficult position – balancing the demand for possible help for some difficult cases while also seeking to do no harm.

“If ‘medical marijuana’ is legalized,” said Joyce Ostrander, policy analyst for The Family Foundation, “people will be smoking, eating or vaping the plant – not just the effective, refined ingredient. There will be no FDA oversight and no incentive for pharmaceutical companies to invest in develop-

ing safe and effective compounds.”

As much as ‘big pharma’ has been blamed for the opioid crisis, if “medical marijuana’ is legalized, when harm occurs it is unlikely growers will be held liable. Furthermore, people truly in need of new therapies will not be offered cannabis medications, but instead will be faced with the choice to use pot or some product that has not gone through FDA approval.

A resolution similar to HCR 5 passed the House of Representatives in 2018 but stalled in the Senate. This year, HCR 5 passed its House committee unanimously.

**STATUS:** *At press time HCR5 had passed its House Committee but was awaiting debate on the House Floor.*

# Trump, Republicans move forward on judges

*Trump and the Republican-held Senate have already made a HUGE impact in the federal judiciary . . . but they want to do more.*

As President Trump's second year in office came to a close, he and U.S. Senate Majority Leader McConnell's greatest ongoing accomplishment, the lifetime appointments of Federal Judges, stalled.

That was despite McConnell's desire to "do a significant, additional package of judges before the end of the year."

Senator Flake (R-AZ) announced a blockade of all judicial nominees until the Senate voted on a bill to shield the special counsel from any interference by President Trump. As the deciding vote on the Senate Judiciary Committee, Flake froze nominees at that stage of the process. Confirmation by the full Senate also became much more difficult, erasing the Republican's slim 51-vote majority and requiring Vice President Pence's vote to break any tie.

At press time, there have been no confirmations this year. That is due in large part to the "reset" of the nomination and confirmation process resulting from a new Congress taking office in January.

November's election results will likely help with that shortcoming. Loss of control in the U.S. House will likely greatly hamper the Republican legislative agenda, meaning more time for the U.S. Senate to focus on judicial confirmations. This is further aided by the Republican pick up of some more reliable votes.

For some perspective, there are currently 150 vacancies of the Federal Judiciary. That's 16.9 percent of authorized judgeships. 60 nominees are currently pending.

The Family Foundation's Executive Director, Kent Ostrander, signed onto a January 22 letter urging the "timely and orderly confirmation of judicial nominees."

Citing "unprecedented obstruction by Democrats of Trump's executive branch and

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**For some perspective, there are currently 150 vacancies of the Federal Judiciary. That's 16.9 percent of authorized judgeships. 60 nominees are currently pending.**

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**The change would cut debate time by over 93 percent, requiring just two hours of debate. The rules currently allow up to 30 hours.**

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judicial appointments," Republicans on the Senate Rules Committee approved a change to the rules, shortening debate time for judicial nominees.

On February 13, members of the Senate Rules Committee approved a change to the rules to shorten the debate time for judicial nominees. It was a 10-9 party-line vote.

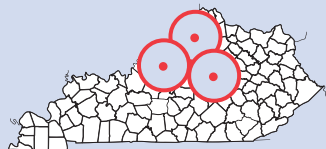
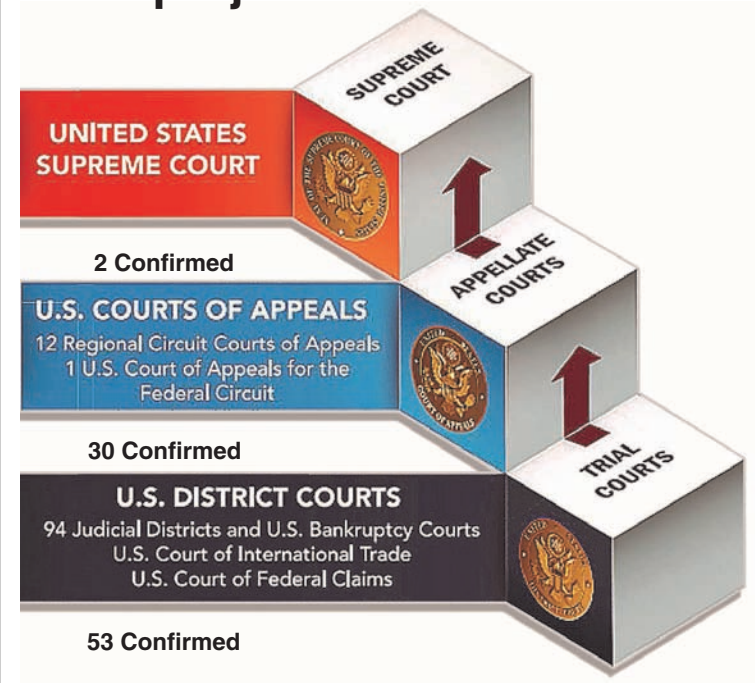
The change would cut debate time by over 93 percent, requiring just two hours of debate. The rules currently allow up to 30 hours.

If Republicans use the so-called "nuclear option," they can pass the rule change with a simple majority over any Democrat objections. Sen. Blunt

explained the need for his proposal by pointing to Democrats' 128 filibusters on President Donald Trump's nominees and claiming it was more than any other president in history.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell is expected to bring the rule to the Senate floor.

## Trump's judicial confirmations



## The Kentucky Marriage Movement

**Lexington, March 5 - April 9**

**Love & Lordship Series for Men - Greg Williams**  
Blackburn Correctional Facility (Tues afternoons)  
3111 Spurr Road, Lexington, KY 40511

**Carrollton, March 1-2**

**Love & Lordship Retreat - Greg Williams**  
Katrina's School of Dance Studio  
310 Main Street, Carrollton, KY 41008

**Willisburg, March 6 - April 17**

**Love & Lordship Series - Greg Williams**  
Isaiah House (Wed mornings)  
2084 Main Street, Willisburg, KY 40078

**For more information, call (859)255-5400 or go to [www.kentuckymarriage.org](http://www.kentuckymarriage.org)**

Getting them moving is the first step! (It's hard but worth the work.)

## Bills that are moving

Getting a bill moving is the first “hard” part. It’s great that a bill is filed, but there it sits, perfectly still. At that point, someone has to draw enough attention to it, and get “several shoulders behind it” in order to start the momentum that *MAY* see it through to passage of both the House and the Senate (or Senate and then House, depending on which Chamber it was filed in). A bill must pass both Chambers before it can become law. And sometimes, even if it passes both Chambers, it still does not become law because the Governor has the prerogative to veto any law that has made it through the General Assembly.



Below are some bills that have started moving and therefore, have a chance at passing if they garner enough support. The regular portion of the 2019 Session ends on March 8. Though bills can pass after that, it becomes more difficult. (More information on these can be found on pages 4-5):

**Senate Bill 152: The Parental Rights Act** - At press time, SB152 was set to be heard in the Senate Judiciary Committee on Feb. 21.

**Senate Bill 117 and House Bill 254: Higher Education Free Speech Act** - At press time, SB117 was scheduled to be heard in the Senate Education Committee on Feb. 21. HB254 was set to be heard in the House Education Committee on Feb. 26.

**Senate Bill 9: Fetal Heartbeat Abortion Ban** - SB9 had passed its Senate Committee and the full Senate with a 31 to 6 vote on Feb. 14.

**Senate Bill 50: Abortion Prescription Reporting** - This bill passed its Senate Committee and passed the full Senate with a 30 to 6 vote on Jan. 11.

**House Bill 5: Human Rights Unborn Children Anti-Discrimination Act** - At press time HB5 was set for a hearing in the House Veterans, Military Affairs Public Protection Committee on Feb. 20.

**House Bill 148: Post Roe v. Wade Abortion Ban** - This bill passed its House Committee and then the full House with a 69 to 20 vote on Feb. 15.

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**Contributing Editors**

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*Michael Johnson*     *Greg Williams*

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**The Family Foundation**

**P.O. Box 911111**

**Lexington, KY 40591-1111**

**859-255-5400**

**e-mail: [kent@kentuckyfamily.org](mailto:kent@kentuckyfamily.org)**

**Web site: [www.kentuckyfamily.org](http://www.kentuckyfamily.org)**

The Family Foundation  
P. O. Box 911111  
Lexington, KY 40591-1111

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All of us love to watch a great UK or U of L basketball game . . . or any school of our choice. In that situation we squirm and jump and “help” our team to victory. And when it’s done, we are delighted (or sad) about the result. But the fact remains that the world has not changed a bit. Yes, fine athletes have given their best and played with sportsmanship -- all good -- but the real world doesn’t change. It’s just “good fun.”

Here’s the reality: When substantive bills move and are amended, and then pass or fail, it is just as exciting as a great ball game . . . and the world *DOES* change. If it is a good bill, it changes the world for you, your children and your grandchildren. Join with us and “get in the game.” It’s not just a spectator sport.



**Kent Ostrander is the executive director of The Family Foundation**

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