2022: Amid year of historic victories and disappointing setbacks, we must boldly stand

With the 2023 session upon us, we have a great opportunity to stand for Kentucky families and the Biblical values that make them strong.

There is no doubt that 2022 has been a year of historic victories and disappointing setbacks.

While we are certainly disappointed in the close defeat of pro-life Amendment 2 on November 8, pro-life Kentuckians must remain steadfast in our resolve to continue fighting for the unborn and defending Kentucky’s pro-life laws that continue to save lives.

One of the big silver linings from the election is that pro-life majorities in the General Assembly have grown even larger, with pro-life candidates having success up and down the ballot across Kentucky. I encourage you to join us in praying for the Kentucky Supreme Court as they consider the abortionists’ challenge to our pro-life laws – a decision will likely come before year’s end!

In spite of setbacks, I continue to thank the Lord for the victories won during these last 12 months, including:

- Two historic legal victories at the U.S. Supreme Court with Roe v. Wade being overturned and Coach Kennedy winning a huge victory for religious freedom. The Family Foundation was proud to have joined legal briefs in both cases.

With the 2023 session almost upon us, we have a great opportunity to make further progress for Kentucky families, including strengthening parental rights and stopping evil transgender mutilation surgeries and hormone experiments on children. These are two top issues that the General Assembly needs to address in 2023.

We must also boldly counter those that will want to retreat from saving every unborn life and defending marriage as the union of one man and one woman. The Family Foundation will continue to educate and advocate boldly for God-honoring policies, grounded in Biblical truth, no matter how the wind of public opinion blows!

Thank you for your faithful support, prayers, and engagement which have made a tremendous impact this year. No doubt, 2023 is poised to be another monumental year for keeping our Kentucky values strong.

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**ELECTION RESULTS: KY gives clear pro-life mandate despite Amendment 2's narrow failure**

Kentuckians reward pro-life legislators and leadership despite confusion sown by deceptive ads and millions in out-of-state blood money.

**DECEPTION & OUT-OF-STATE DOLLARS SOW CONFUSION ON AMENDMENT 2**

Planned Parenthood, America's largest abortion provider, and other radical pro-abortion advocates flooded Kentucky with deceptive ads and millions of dollars in blood money — all to defeat Amendment 2's protection for the Commonwealth's bipartisan pro-life laws (which these radicals are currently challenging in court).

The narrowness of Amendment 2's defeat is a testament to how pro-life Kentucky truly is, given that millions were spent to bombard Kentuckians with deceptive ads designed to sow widespread confusion and mislead voters.

**Kentuckians Increased Conservative Supermajorities**

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**CONSERVATIVE SUPERMAJORITIES INCREASE**

After November 8's election, Kentucky voters have increased the strong supermajority hold that Republicans have held over both legislative chambers of the Kentucky General Assembly during the past two years.

With the flip of five seats in the House, Republicans increased from 75 to 80 of the 100 seats.

With the flip of one seat in the Senate, Republican domination increases from 30 to 31 of the 38 seats.

**NOTABLE NEWLY-ELECTED CANDIDATES TO FURTHER PARENTAL RIGHTS & FAMILY VALUES**

Gex "Jay" Williams (KY Sen. Dist. 20 - R)
One of the issues Williams emphasized was that "parents should have a say in their child's education."

Candy Massaroni (KY House Dist. 50 - R)
Massaroni ran on a platform of "Faith. Families. Freedom."

Marriane Proctor (KY House Dist. 60 - R)
Proctor has emphasized how "virtual school illuminated the flaws in our education system, including critical race theory" and expressed alarm that "parents who demanded better for their children were labeled domestic terrorists."

Steve Rawlings (KY House Dist. 66 - R)
Among the pillars of Rawlings's campaign was "returning control to parents" in education, "advocating for true school choice," and "prohibiting any public school from promoting racially divisive concepts in curriculum and instructional programs."

Steve Doan (KY House Dist. 69 - R)
Doan ran as a strong pro-life and conservative voice from northern Kentucky.

**KENTUCKY GIVES LAWMAKERS CLEAR PRO-LIFE MANDATE**

Despite the narrow defeat of Kentucky's pro-life constitutional amendment (Amendment 2), there can be no doubt that Kentuckians have sent their elected representatives to Frankfort with a clear pro-life mandate.

On June 24, the U.S. Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade*, its unlawful 1973 decision "legalizing" abortion, declaring it "time to heed the Constitution and return the issue of abortion to the people's elected representatives."

On Nov. 8, Kentuckians cast their votes and made clear that they desire their elected representatives to continue the Commonwealth's declared policy of "recogniz[ing] and [ ] protect[ing] the lives of all human beings regardless of their degree of biological development."

- Kentuckians re-elected all 28 legislators in contested races who were supportive of Amendment 2 and other pro-life laws
- Kentuckians rejected nearly half of legislators in contested races who opposed Amendment 2 and other pro-life laws
**Beshear & KY Dept. of Ed. trample parental rights with LGBTQ pronoun "guidance" for kids**

The Beshear administration's actions undermine parents' fundamental right to direct the upbringing of their children.

Gov. Beshear’s administration is taking a page right out of the Biden administration’s playbook and implementing it right here in Kentucky’s schools. The Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) has created an LGBTQ “toolkit” that promotes radical sexual ideology (like the “genderbread person”) and tramples parental rights. This “guidance” applies to and pressures all of Kentucky's public schools.

The publication from the KDE clearly highlights the fact that it is unacceptable to refuse compliance with the mandates given based on the radical LGBTQ agenda.

This action reveals that the Beshear administration is absolutely determined to coerce teachers and indoctrinate public school children to adhere to the unreasonable and illogical philosophy of the LGBTQ movement.

Another disturbing facet of the document released by the KDE is the unquestionable attack that the department is launching on parental rights. The guidelines given in the resource are an attempt to subvert parental authority which should be supreme in a child’s life as his or her parents know what is best for them.

Anderson County Public Schools recently implemented this guidance and suspended a staff member who blew the whistle after his concerns were ignored. The Family Foundation advocated for parental rights at a local community gathering and school board meeting.

The KDE is endeavoring to force upon children the LGBTQ worldview, all the while keeping their parents in the dark. Thus, stripping parents of the right to exhibit authority over their children and ensure that what their children are being taught is true.

With this action, Beshear is undermining parental authority and assaulting parents’ rights in every public school. Parents’ rights must be protected as fundamental by the KY General Assembly or situations such as this one will only continue to take place.

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**Oppose this radical policy at KentuckyFamily.org/TakeAction**

**School Choice is desperately needed in KY**

Parents know their children best and there is no one in a better position to make the necessary decisions for their educational needs.

The need for school choice here in our Commonwealth is exponentially growing and expanding. At this moment, with the need for educational choice all across America, momentum is building in the effort to accomplish educational options for students and parents.

This momentum is revealed in Kentucky by a recent report’s revelation that nearly 100,000 students in our Commonwealth have now opted out of traditional public schools and have started relying on other paths of education such as private schools, homeschooling, etc.

Furthermore, in 2021, the Kentucky General Assembly passed the “Educational Account Opportunity Act” (EAO Act) that helped cover certain educational expenses for Kentucky families from a privately funded needs-based program. The program provided tuition assistance to help students attend PK-12 non-public schools in counties which have a population of over 90,000 people.

Unfortunately, educational choice opponents targeted the EAO Act by filing a lawsuit against the bill, and the Franklin County Circuit Court struck it down. Gratefully, now, however, the Kentucky Supreme Court has taken up this case and is considering the constitutionality of the EOA Act.

School choice is gaining great momentum in the Commonwealth and is desperately needed for multiple reasons. One of the main reasons that school choice is needed is to protect and respect parental authority.

Many parents in the Commonwealth have great concern with the recent advancing of LGBTQ ideologies by the public school system, pushing the radical ideology on students and undermining parental authority. The Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) has employed various maneuvers, like the release of their “toolkit,” to forcibly push LGBTQ propaganda throughout Kentucky schools, all the while keeping parents in the dark.

Kentucky’s educational policy needs to reverse course and stop undermining parental authority, rather prioritizing it. Dr. Gary Houchens, professor of educational administration at Western Kentucky University put it best when he wrote, “To the fullest extent possible, every education policy that comes out of Frankfort should put parents in the driver’s seat when it comes to their children.”

There is a growing effort across the nation that is catching fire that focuses on putting parents in a place of authority over their children’s education. This effort centers on shifting funds to the students and allowing their parents to make the decision of where their child or children will be educated. For example, Arizona's governor just signed into law a universal education choice program that allows every parent to use educational funds to pay for the school of their choice, whether it be private, charter, public, etc., that best fits the needs of their children.

The reality is, no one is in a more advantageous position to make decisions for their children’s educational needs than the children’s parents. The Kentucky legislature needs to consider bold measures in the upcoming session that will protect parental authority and advance school choice.
The question few are willing to ask: Does the baby have a constitutional right to life?

GUEST ARTICLE: The perspective of Stark Davis, a Kentucky Public Policy Attorney and volunteer for The Family Foundation

From Roe to Dobbs, to the recently attempted pro-life Kentucky Constitutional Amendment, to the EMW Surgical Center case, the question that is asked over and over is: “Does a woman have a Constitutional right to an abortion?”

The scientific and legal reality that an abortion destroys another human life necessarily opens the door to the follow-on question: “Does a baby in a mother’s womb have a Constitutional right to life?” But few seem willing to ask this and by failing to do so, we miss the more fundamental legal question and the higher moral question.

During the EMW Surgical Center case at the Kentucky Supreme Court it was even suggested that the Kentucky Constitution is neutral on abortion, which I do not believe is true. The Kentucky Constitution includes the right to life for all of us, including the fundamental right to life for babies in the womb.

In the Kentucky Constitution (Preamble, Bill of Rights, Section 1) the first “inherent and inalienable right” listed for all people is: “The right of enjoying and defending their lives and liberties.” We cannot evaluate “liberties” without defending the “lives” of those involved.

This fundamental Constitutional right to life in our Kentucky Constitution (Bill or Rights Section 1) and in the U.S. Constitution (Amendments 5 and 14) should not be violated by a law allowing abortion, unless that law addresses a compelling state interest, and the least restrictive alternative is applied—such as when the mother’s life is at risk.

Applying existing legal concepts, such as self-defense, or the compelling interest test discussed above, allows the doctor to work with the mother, as they do with any such life-threatening situation, to protect human life. Doctors must use their best professional judgment, working with their patients on a case-by-case basis. As with any case, and as with any medical professional, decisions are open to review and possible legal challenge when questions arise about whether appropriate care was given.

In Dobbs, the U.S. Supreme Court recognized there is no right to abortion in the U.S. Constitution. What is in both the Kentucky Constitution and the U.S. Constitution is that a baby in the womb, as a human being, has a fundamental Constitutional right to life. It is time for us to make this bold case, it is the true moral and legal position.

Thinking Biblically: How rape and incest exceptions would impact our pro-life witness

All human life has inherent worth and value, making it worthy of protection regardless of the circumstances of his or her conception.

Being pro-life is a position and stance of no retreat — it is the uncompromising belief that, at the point of conception, the pre-born child has a right to life and should not experience forced termination through abortion.

Unfortunately, our world is fallen, which can muddy the water at times in our thinking surrounding pro-life issues. To state that our “world is fallen” is to say that humanity has been infected with sin and that our world suffers the consequences of that infection (Genesis 3). Confusion for those who are pro-life arises when horrible circumstances occur due to living in this fallen world, such as rape and incest.

Should one be pro-life, but have exceptions, such as an instance where a woman has been raped and conceived?

After much contemplation, study, and conversations with theological scholars, I have been convinced that to be pro-life, one must remain committed to cultivating a consistent worldview for society where human life remains protected even when the conception of human life happens in extremely difficult and ultimately, sinful, circumstances.

If I’m honest, I’m not comfortable with that conclusion on an emotional level and would likely anguish over it should the horrors of rape or incest ever hit close to home. But the reality is that all human life deserves protection, regardless of how one’s life is conceived — it is the right, consistent, and just position; regardless of the undeniable horrors, pains, and tragic wrong of sexual assault. Here’s why:

First, a reason from theology. The Biblical teaching is clear that all human life is created in the image of Almighty God (Genesis 1:26-27). Regardless of the circumstances in which one is conceived, even in the case of rape or incest, that pre-born child is still just as much of an image bearer as every other human being.

Every embryo in the womb is an image bearer. Thus, every image bearer in the womb should be protected from termination through abortion. Furthermore, each is an innocent life, and the Lord hates the shedding of innocent blood (Proverbs 6:16-19).

Second, a reason from science. It is an undeniable scientific fact at this point, with medical advancements, that human life begins at the point of conception. Recent studies reveal that 95 percent of biologists are certain life begins at fertilization. Therefore, from a scientific and medical standpoint, abortion kills a living pre-born human being, regardless of the situation in which one is conceived.

Third, a reason from justice. One must remember, in the case of rape or incest, it is not the unborn child’s sin that needs to be punished, but rather the abuser's. Neither the woman (the victim) or the pre-born child (the second victim) is provided justice when the child is killed. In fact, the killing of the pre-born child because of the circumstances surrounding conception is an additional injustice. Sin and injustice never diminish wrongdoing and wickedness, and only lead to continued and compounded suffering.

The bottom line is this… no matter the cause of one’s conception, the inhabitant of the womb is innocent and made in the image of Almighty God. Each and every unborn child in the womb has inherent worth and value and is fully deserving of the right to life. Therefore, the avenue in which one is conceived should play no role in the decision of whether or not an unborn person has the right to life, as all human life deserves protection and respect.

Baxter Boyd, our Christian Engagement Coordinator, has a heart for equipping Christians to effectively engage the culture for righteousness. He obtained his Master of Divinity from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in public theology from Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.
The apostle Paul’s plea in Galatians 6:9 for us not to “lose heart in doing good” and assurance that “in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary” has long strengthened the resolve of pro-life advocates and continues to do so today.

It can be tempting to overemphasize the defeat of Kentucky’s pro-life constitutional amendment, along with other recent pro-life defeats elsewhere in the nation, and despair. But we must focus on what is true, excellent, and worthy of praise (Philippians 4:8).

We serve Immanuel, God with us, and are never alone (Matthew 1:23; 28:20). Despite the evil in our world, God remains on His throne and is still in control (Psalm 9:7-8; 47:8; 103:19; Acts 7:49). We are judged on whether we faithfully represent Christ as His ambassadors to culture, not on how society responds. Let us dwell on these truths.

Though our work continues, we must understand that the need for perseverance is inherent in every quest to end an entrenched societal injustice because it takes time to win hearts and minds, thus transforming a culture.

The United States witnessed this with the abolition of slavery, the Civil Rights Movement, women’s suffrage, and other important chapters in our national history. We even know this to be true from the 49 years it took for the U.S. Supreme Court to finally overturn Roe v. Wade and return the issue of abortion to the states.

There are also silver linings in the midst of the recent election (see page 2).

I pray that taking this moment to regain a proper perspective has restored hope, and given you courage — allowing us to move forward with resolve.

Michael Johnson, our Senior Policy and Communications Advisor, has a passion for what is right and true — especially protecting the inherent dignity and worth of each human life.

Focus shifts to Kentucky Supreme Court, as fate of pro-life laws now in the hands of 7 justices

Kentucky's pro-life laws reflect the consistent pro-life position of the Commonwealth throughout its history and should be upheld.

The Kentucky Supreme Court needs to “judge with truth,” protect the precious “right to life” for the preborn, and resist the temptation to become a "super legislature."
Next steps for Kentucky's pro-life movement as the 2023 General Assembly nears

We expect the legislature to use its pro-life supermajorities to pass bills to help support pregnant mothers and families.

Pro-life candidates who either have pro-life voting records or ran on a pro-life platform had success in Kentucky up and down the ballot, increasing Republican supermajorities in both legislative chambers. We expect and will be working alongside the legislature to use that power to support pregnant women, including possible changes to the Commonwealth's adoption laws. We also want to prioritize making sure that Kentucky enforces its existing pro-life laws, including prohibitions on the dangerous mail order distribution of the abortion pill.

There are also rumors circulating that there may be an attempt to weaken Kentucky's current pro-life laws by legalizing certain abortions through the passage of additional exemptions. We will be working with pro-life legislators to stand firm against those concerning efforts.

If an activist Kentucky Supreme Court decides to invent a right to abortion within the Kentucky Constitution, aggressive options will have to be explored for responding to such an egregiously wrong power grab.

KY Lawmakers must protect children from mutilation and hormone experimentation

A substantial majority of Americans agree that the transgender movement has gone too far with encouraging kids to transition.

A recent McLaughlin & Associates poll of likely voters revealed that 75 percent of Americans who have an opinion on the issue believe that "the transgender movement has gone too far by encouraging underage minors to use drugs and surgery to transition to the opposite sex."

69 percent of those who have an opinion say that the increase in transgenderism among underage minors "is the result of them being influenced to question their gender due to social media and other cultural influences."

Alarming, evidence suggests that public schools are one of those cultural influences increasing transgenderism among our children. The transgender movement has built a whole infrastructure in schools designed to persuade and help children to change their gender identity without their parents' knowledge.

Governor Beshear has even brought that radical ideology and those extremist tactics into Kentucky schools, using the Kentucky Department of Education to intimidate and twist the arms of those who dissent (see page 3).

70 percent of voters who have an opinion on the issue believe that "the medical industry promoting gender transition for young children is motivated by financial gain." There is good reason for this belief...

A doctor at Vanderbilt University Medical Center was caught on tape encouraging the university to pursue gender transition surgeries because they were "huge money makers" — the procedures often cost $100,000.

There are also detransitioners who are suing doctors for breaching the standard of care and gross misdiagnosis.

The major gender transition clinic in Europe, Travistock, has shut down over concerns it was unsafe for children and rapid studies on the effects of puberty blockers have been ordered. The clinic is also facing a mass lawsuit from at least 1,000 children and their families.

Puberty blockers earned a warning label from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration in July, after six minors (ages 5-12) suffered severe symptoms.

At their 2021 conference, 80 percent of American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) members supported a resolution calling for "more debate and discussion of the risks, benefits, and uncertainties inherent in the practice of medically transitioning minors," but that discussion has not happened. Earlier this year, the AAP allegedly stifled debate on an internal proposal to undergo a "systematic review of evidence and policy update for management of pediatric gender dysphoria."

The transgender movement and Governor Beshear have gone too far in targeting our children. Kentucky's General Assembly must take action during the upcoming session to protect our children from this harm.
"Respect for Marriage Act" is Anything But

This dangerous bill goes further than Obergefell v. Hodges and lacks meaningful religious liberty protections, threatening Christians.

The “Respect for Marriage Act” is truly anything but a bill that respects marriage. The so-called Respect for Marriage Act's aim is to cement same-sex marriage as federal policy. It claims to merely codify the 2015 U.S. Supreme Court decision of Obergefell v. Hodges, but goes even further than ensuring same-sex couples the right to “marry.”

This bill is easily summed up by characterizing it as misleading and dangerous. It actually disrespects God’s creation of the institution of marriage.

God is the One who instituted marriage and defined it as being a union between one man and one woman in a covenant bond with each other, but this bill tramples on it and expands it to include relationships the Scriptures call an abomination.

From a Scriptural point of view, one can clearly see God’s standards for marriage when He created the institution. In Genesis 1:27, there is an account of God making man, the “adam” (in Hebrew) which can be translated as humankind. Man was not flourishing in this reclusive nature of solitary existence, and thus God determined to make man a suitable helper (Genesis 2).

God then caused “adam” to go to sleep, He took a rib, literally translated in Hebrew as “half” and created Eve, a woman to be Adam’s helper. The text then goes on to say that man and woman unite in marriage and become one flesh (Genesis 2:24). From this summary of God’s institution of marriage, it is seen that marriage can only be the union between two people who exhibit the complementary halves of humanity, which is one man and one woman.

Again, this bill attempts to make it federal policy to disrespect the sacred union of marriage. Not only is this bill misleading it is also extremely dangerous.

First, this bill threatens our precious First Amendment right to religious liberty. This bill could easily become a weapon for governmental threat and coercion, used to intimidate and punish those who hold to a Biblical view of marriage.

Second, this bill threatens religious institutions. Institutions that hold to a Biblical view of marriage, refusing to cave and adopt a view of marriage that is progressive, could be targeted with anti-discrimination lawsuits. Especially vulnerable are religious foster care and adoption agencies; though all religious institutions, churches, and non-profits could be targeted.

The (Dis)Respect for Marriage Act is yet another attempt to further erode the bedrock institution that serves as the foundation of humanity, the family. America must truly reinstate a sacred respect for marriage, as a nation, if we desire to flourish and be blessed.

Governor Beshear's overreach on marijuana threatens our form of government

Beshear seeks to void Kentucky law by preemptively issuing a blanket pardon for anyone who breaks the law in a way he approves.

On November 15, Governor Beshear signed an executive order meant to enable Kentuckians with certain conditions to use "medical" marijuana.

Although news headlines claimed Beshear legalized medical marijuana, the reality is that marijuana possession remains illegal within the Commonwealth. Beshear has merely declared preemptively that he will issue a blanket pardon to law breakers; that he will get them off the hook for their unlawful behavior.

Beshear's order is an attempt to effectively void a law he is sworn to enforce. The Kentucky General Assembly is currently having an active debate about the merits and risks of "medical" marijuana. The people's elected lawmakers have rightly expressed great concern as more scientific research emerges and the societal cost of marijuana legalization becomes more evident.

It is on the basis of that current research, including the degree of uncertainty on some claims, that The Family Foundation opposes legalization at this time.

Yet the democratic process has been usurped by a single individual who believes himself to be above the law and is willing to substitute his own personal judgment for the reasoned deliberations of the people’s elected lawmakers.
A year-end request: Help us keep KY values strong in 2023!

We need your help before year's end to fulfill our mission in 2023.

I pray you and your family had a blessed Thanksgiving and are preparing to have a wonderful Christmas! In the midst of this holiday season, my prayer is that we all keep our focus on the true reason for the season – the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

There is no doubt that 2022 has been a year of historic victories and disappointing setbacks. We need your help to both finish 2022 strong and gear up for a big 2023.

I humbly ask that you give as generously as you can before year’s end. Here are several of our pressing needs:

First, our team is already working around the clock to prepare for the 2023 General Assembly. We have a great opportunity to make further progress for parental rights and other critically important issues.

Second, we urgently need to further grow our staff at The Family Foundation and are looking to hire a new full-time team member. As the attacks on our values reach unprecedented levels in our nation, the mission and work of The Family Foundation are vitally important and must continue to expand.

Third, we need to replenish our financial resources after investing heavily in strategic pro-life education and outreach efforts over the last 18 months. I am trusting the Lord that this work and investment will continue to pay dividends in the years to come as the fight to end legalized abortion presses forward.

As we approach year's end, I hope you will prayerfully consider supporting The Family Foundation so we can fulfill the mission the Lord has called us to in 2023!