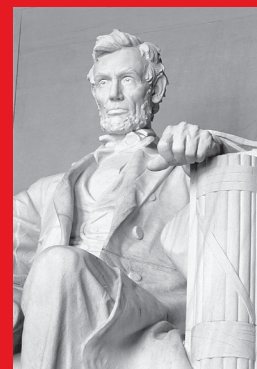


Illinois *Family* Institute



Upholding marriage & family, life & liberty in the Land of Lincoln

With the Illinois Primary Election right around the corner (March 20th), I want to encourage my pro-family friends and neighbors to think deeply and pray earnestly about the candidates vying for your vote.

from the **Executive Director — David E. Smith**

The high profile race in the Republican Party for the presidential nomination and the issues being debated about the economic crisis, energy independence, the budget and revenue problems of our federal government receives plenty of media coverage. Lost in the rhetoric is the fact that America needs a bold leader who will work to solve not only the budget and debt problems, but someone who will champion the sanctity of life, the institution of marriage and decency.

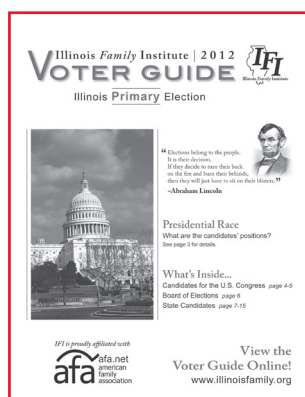
The next GOP nominee must understand that job number one of the federal government is protecting our inalienable rights starting with the right to life. And he must understand that the federal government has no more important obligation than to uphold, defend and promote the vital building blocks of western civilization: marriage.

In addition to these domestic priorities, it is vital that the next president recognize that radical Islamists have declared war on America. He must be willing to fight this enemy. As you know, radical Islamists hate America and are going to continue to attack us no matter how accommodating or how nice we are to them. Neutrality is not an option.

On the state level, where media coverage is often sparse, we have an amazing opportunity to change the political landscape in Springfield. *Every* single state senator and state representative is up for election this year — all 177 state lawmakers. This happens every ten years after the Census and political redistricting.

Additionally, a record number of state lawmakers have decided to retire. Without these incumbents defending their seats, we have tremendous opportunities to be competitive in seats pro-family candidates haven't won in a generation.

Use the enclosed non-partisan *Voter Guide* to educate yourself and other voters about where the candidates stand on issues related to the family and other important issues facing our state and nation. Our unique *Voter Guide* is used by thousands in Illinois to help inform their vote. And please keep this primary election in your prayers over the next several weeks. ★



Don't Put Country First

by Dr. Rob Rienow

Founder, Visionary Family Ministries



Are you concerned about where our nation is headed? Are you burdened over the decline in morality and faith in our culture? Do you wonder what kind of world your grandchildren will grow up in?



Visionary Parenting

by Dr. Rob Rienow

Readers will capture a fresh, God-sized vision for their family. It begins with understanding God's purpose for the family and taking an honest look at the current state of the home. Dr. Rienow shares foundational truth that God created the family to ensure that the next generation grows up to know, love, and serve Him. He reminds readers of the instructions from God given to parents in Deuteronomy 6:5-7 that will transform your home.

Suggested donation of \$25 or more.



These are some of the core questions of our day. However, they are not the most important questions. If you are a parent or a grandparent, God has given you a more essential mission than leading our nation toward godliness, and that is leading your own children and grandchildren toward godliness. If we are not careful, we can pour our greatest efforts toward changing and restoring our nation, while we lose the souls of our own children.

Repentance

This is the exact path I was on as a youth pastor. For ten years I gave the best of my heart, passion, and ministry to teens and their families in the church and the community. God blessed those efforts in many ways, but I was neglecting my family. While I was giving everything to families at church, I had absolutely no plan to pass my faith to my children at home. I was praying with friends, but not with my family. I had developed plans to teach young people God's truth in the Bible, but was not doing it at home with my own sons and daughters.

In the summer of 2003, God brought me to a deep place of repentance and turned my heart to the most important ministry and calling He has given me — which is to partner with my wife and “make disciples” of our children.

The devil loves us to put second things first. He loves it when we put our jobs before our families. Our friends before our spouses. Our hobbies before our church. In the Christian world he is particularly good at getting believers to put their “ministry” ahead of the discipleship of their children.

How many Christian leaders have had “great” public ministries while their own children rebelled against both them and the Lord? How many Christian leaders have been passionate to lead our nation back to its Christian heritage but shattered their families in the process? Let these things never be said of us!

Begin at home

The first and the greatest commandment in Scripture is found in Deuteronomy 6:5. “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength.” This is the purpose of life for us and for our children. In verses 6-7 God then gives His people a specific mission and a concrete action. “Impress [the Word of God] on your children. Talk about [His Word] when you sit at home.”

Pray daily with and for your children. Plead with them to repent of their sins, trust Christ, and follow His Word in everything. If you have prodigal children who have wandered away from the Lord, do not stop praying for God to use *you* to lead them back to the Lord.

We *are* called to transform our nation. We *are* called to reach the whole world with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. But let us never forget that fulfilling those divine calls begins at home with our own children and grandchildren. Give to them the greatest ministry of your life! ★

Learn more about how the Visionary Parenting book, DVD curriculum, and live conference can encourage your family and your church at www.VisionaryFam.com.



Rob and Amy Rienow have been married for 17 years, and they have been blessed with six children. Together they lead Visionary Family Ministries whose mission is to build the Church of Jesus Christ through a global reformation of family discipleship.

Springfield Update

Please take a few moments to contact your state lawmakers about the bills below. These are some of the bills which are currently on IFI's radar screen as lawmakers go back into session on January 31st.

PRO ✓

Ultrasound Opportunity Act

(HB 4085) — This bill would require abortion providers to simply offer an ultrasound picture to women considering abortion. The choice of whether or not to view the ultrasound picture is still hers. Research has proven that between 70 and 90 percent of "abortion minded" women who see images of their unborn children choose life.



Springfield Switchboard
(217) 782-2000

Abortion Clinic Safety Regulations (HB 4117) — would require abortion clinics that perform more than 50 abortions a year to meet basic safety regulations of other similar outpatient treatment centers.

Marriage Amendment — SJRCA 16 and HJRCA 10 would permanently define marriage as the union of one man and one woman in the Illinois state constitution. The threat to natural marriage is clear and present. In January, a group of out-of-touch lawmakers met in Chicago to discuss their strategy of bringing homosexual marriage to Illinois.

CON ✗

"Comprehensive" Sex Ed — HB 3027 has already passed the Illinois Senate and is pending a vote in the Illinois House. This bill would mandate that public schools who teach sex education teach "comprehensive" sex education in grades 6-12. Illinois law currently mandates that schools teach abstinence until marriage.

Teaching "comprehensive" sex education is currently optional and a local school decision.

Gambling/Casino Expansion

— Representatives of the state's casinos, the horse racing industry and the offices of Governor Pat Quinn and Mayor Rahm Emanuel of Chicago met last month to see if they could reach an agreement on gambling expansion. We fully expect another push for casino expansion.

Medical Marijuana — HB 30 would permit out-of-state patients to smoke marijuana without police interference; would permit persons to grow and possess marijuana and operate a motor vehicle in violation of DUI laws. ★

Marriage "equality" in the Land of Lincoln?

Six months after Illinois' "civil union" legislation went into effect, forces committed to redefining natural marriage are already planning their next steps. A recent article in the *Huffington Post*



reports that a "group of Illinois lawmakers have begun laying the groundwork for their latest push to bring marriage equality to the Land of Lincoln," despite the fact that through the civil union law, same-sex couples already receive all the benefits they claimed they wanted.

This meeting included the Illinois General Assembly's three openly homosexual members: State Representatives **Greg Harris** (D-Chicago), **Kelly Cassidy** (D-Chicago), and **Deborah Mell** (D-Chicago). State Representatives **Ann Williams** (D-Chicago), **Sara Feigenholtz** (D-Chicago) and State Senator **Heather Steans** (D-Chicago) are also listed as part of the coalition to redefine marriage.

Anyone paying attention should have expected this because homosexual activists have explicitly stated that civil unions are merely a stepping stone to their real goal: the eradication of marriage as it's been understood throughout history.

It's not benefits they seek; it's the societal approval that accompanies legal recognition of homosexual unions as "marriage." Of course, homosexual unions will never in reality constitute marriages, but like the proverbial emperor who had no clothes, when the government acts like they are marriages, society will play along with the foolish game of pretend.

Contact your state lawmakers today and ask them to uphold natural marriage and to support a state constitutional amendment to permanently define this foundational institution. We can stop this destructive policy from moving forward, but we must take up the fight again, and be willing to make our voices heard. ★

TURN YOUR PHONE INTO FUNDS

Your noncash donation will help us fund important programs.

When you donate your unused cell phones or other noncash items, we'll turn them into cash that helps make a real difference. It's quick, it's easy and it's guaranteed to make someone smile, including yourself.

VEHICLES
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CELL PHONES
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INVENTORY

Illinois Family Institute
Upholding marriage & family, life & liberty in the Land of Lincoln

Donate Now:
Call: 1 (877) 897-4273
Visit: www.idonate.com/nonprofit/illinois-family-institute

Illinois Family Institute Prayer Requests

Our nation was founded upon Christian principles, and they governed us well for the majority of our existence. Now, forces in society strive to undermine our religious freedoms and replace them with man-made reasoning and ideas. Instead of a solid rock foundation built on Biblical principles, they strive to replace it with humanistic principles of sand and clay.

Only God can undo the harm that has been done to our nation and rebuild the foundation of its laws, its government, and its people. Pray this month — and throughout 2012 — that a revival would begin in our churches and spread throughout the nation. Optimism is possible as we focus on God Almighty and His power, as we decrease and allow Him to increase in our lives.

Pray for our state legislators as they tackle their difficult job. Pray that they would make wise decisions, governed by truth, with the interests of their constituents at heart. Pray for legislators and their staffs as they consider the budget and work to solve a deficit of unimaginable proportion.

Pray for Governor Patrick Quinn who has the job of leading our state. Pray that his leadership would be strong, yet considerate, insightful, and courageous. Pray that he would not bow to special interests and partisan divisiveness, but rely on wisdom and truth.

The problems facing our state are enormous, but because our God lives, we can be optimistic. We can trust Him, Who is the same yesterday and today and tomorrow.



Please Pray...

...for the sanctity of marriage

- for endurance & strength in the continuing battle to defend God's institution of marriage.
- that support would build for a state constitutional amendment defining natural marriage.

...for the protection of life

- and praise God that the Rockford abortion mill has closed.
- praise God that recent reports place the teen birth rate at record lows — and it appears teens are embracing the message of abstinence. Pray that these successes will not be undermined by the push for liberal “comprehensive” sex education. (HB 3027)

...for parental authority

- that the right of parents to determine what — and when — their children learn about sensitive issues relating to sexuality and homosexuality would not be undercut in the name of “tolerance” or “sex education.” (HB 3027).
- that parents will understand the insidious way that messages opposing religious faith are creeping into public schools—veiled under “tolerance.” Pray for children who will be exposed to overtly pro-homosexual messages.

Pray that parents will be aware & involved, and that children will be able to reconcile messages that conflict with the lessons they've learned at home and church.

...for Illinois Family Institute

- that we are successful in our efforts to educate key lawmakers on issues that affect Illinois families, including the harms of gambling and the destructiveness of “medical” marijuana proposals.
- for IFI's continued efforts to serve God in 2012 — by transforming the laws & culture of Illinois. Please pray for the income necessary to fulfill what God desires of IFI.

**“We wait in hope for the Lord;
He is our help and our shield.
In Him our hearts rejoice,
for we trust in His holy name.
May Your unfailing love rest upon us,
O Lord, even as we put our hope in You.”**

~ Psalms 33:20-22

Illinois Family Institute is a non-partisan, non-profit 501c3 organization. Gifts to IFI are tax-deductible. IFI has a working relationship with the Alliance Defense Fund, the American Family Association, the Family Research Council, the Liberty Counsel and Thomas More Society.

IFI, P.O. Box 88848, Carol Stream, Illinois 60188

phone: 708-781-9328 | fax: 708-781-9376 | web: www.illinoisfamily.org | e-mail: ContactUs@illinoisfamily.org