



# ILLINOIS Family Institute

Boldly bringing biblical principles to public policy in the Land of Lincoln.

Newsletter | Spring 2017

Celebrating  
25 Years!  
Since 1992

[www.illinoisfamily.org](http://www.illinoisfamily.org)



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

**I**t is a fact: we live in a post-Christian culture. America is growing more and more hostile toward expressions of faith and overt devotion and all expressions of traditional Judeo-Christian values. In our current climate, **choosing to lead a Christian life is not easy.** Such a choice runs contrary to our culture and the expectations of most of mankind. The default position of the world is that we will blindly, perhaps even eagerly, follow its selfish pursuits. God, however, expects His followers to **set our minds on the things of Heaven and deny ourselves**, unashamedly and unapologetically.

Jesus emphasized the necessity of this attitude when He warned:

“Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because **narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life**, and there are few who find it.” ~Matthew 7:13-14

Likewise, the Apostle Paul exhorts us to keep our eyes on the true and lasting prize:

“**I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.**” ~Philippians 3:14

So, what does it mean to **set our minds on heavenly things** — the things of God? What does it mean to **deny ourselves**? As professing followers of Jesus Christ, these are questions with which we must wrestle. It is important to regularly examine our heart in order to assess our level of commitment to the Lord and to the Gospel.

I believe we have three choices as to our level of commitment:

- 1. We can decide to put God’s will foremost in our lives *some* of the time.
- 2. We can decide to put God’s will foremost in our lives *most* of the time.
- 3. We can decide to put God’s will foremost in our lives *all* of the time.

- 3. We can decide to put God’s will foremost in our lives *all* of the time.

Scripture shows us that Peter made each of these choices at different stages of his Christian life.

In Mark 8:31-38, we see Peter at the **first level of commitment**, foolishly rebuking Christ as Jesus taught His disciples that He must suffer and die. At this point in his life, he loved Jesus, but he only desired the pleasant things associated with following the Lord: the awesome miracles, the beautiful teaching, and the prestige of being close to Jesus as a member of His inner circle. Christ’s work on the cross and His death had no place in Peter’s theology and part-time commitment to God’s will.

There are many self-identifying Christians who try to coexist in two spheres of life — a Christian life focused on the abundant blessings God pours out on believers and a secular life focused on earthly comforts and achievements. But following Jesus also means facing trials, making difficult choices and sacrifices, and **submitting to God’s will in all matters.**

Many cultural Christians fear being perceived as too fanatical in the practical application of their faith by family, friends, and neighbors. The fear of man — derision and rejection — often seems more immediate and consequential in their lives than



Setting  
**ABOVE**

*continued on page 4...*

# Gideon's Army

by Kathy Valente, Director of Operations

**Scripture says we don't receive because we don't ask God.** (James 4:2) It also tells us that the Lord wants us to present our requests to Him. (Philippians 4:6) God has never needed a large number of people or those of any social status to do His work. Jesus chose twelve and those twelve turned their culture upside down.

We've named it Gideon's Army.

During the time of Gideon, the Israelites had sinned and turned away from the Lord; so He gave them over to a godless oppressive nation, the Midianites. They turned away often. We're still doing it today.

The Israelites cried out to the Lord and He sent an angel who appeared to

a man named Gideon, whom He had chosen to save Israel.

Gideon questioned God's judgment in choosing him by saying, "but how can I save Israel? My clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my family."

The Lord answered Gideon, "I will be with you, and you will strike down all the Midianites, leaving none alive."

If God has chosen you to accomplish something that you feel utterly incapable of, be encouraged! He equips those He chooses.

You know the rest of the story. God whittled down Gideon's army to 300 men, so they would not boast that it was in their strength they were victorious. With God,



they defeated over 120,000!

God hasn't changed since those early days. He longs for us to cry out to Him in prayer. He is still "able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us..." (Ephesians 3:20)

What seems like insurmountable odds to us is nothing for our God!

Won't you please join with many others and be a part of Gideon's Army? You'll receive a monthly email and together we will appeal to our all-powerful God to bring healing to our land. (2 Chronicles 7:14)

## Pro-Life Billboards



Illinois Family Institute is partnering with pro-life advocates to challenge millions of our neighbors about abortion. We are putting up pro-life billboards with the simple and bold statement **"Abortion Takes Human Life,"** but we need your financial partnership to make this a success.

In 2016, pro-life advocates reached 8.8 million viewers in Cook County and DuPage County with this message. They went around the biased media by going straight to the people, receiving an overwhelmingly positive response from the public. In 2017, we want to build on that success. This is an opportunity to push our culture away from abortion and towards life. Changing our culture requires bold and clear communication that reaches a large audience. This is an opportunity to save mothers and babies from abortion. Many who see these billboards will someday play a role in deciding whether or not they will abort an innocent baby. We can reach them before they're tempted by abortion.

Help us raise funds to place these billboards throughout the Chicagoland area and then throughout the state of Illinois. We need your help to reach our culture with this life-affirming message.

## Become a Monthly Sustaining Partner

Monthly giving is what sustains us as we work to defend religious liberty, life, marriage and the family in the Land of Lincoln. No amount is too small. Contact the IFI office for more information on how to **become a monthly Sustaining Partner by calling 708-781-9328.** Thank you and God bless you for partnering with us!



**Highest Abortion Rates:**  
 ▶ Washington D.C.  
 ▶ New York  
 ▶ New Jersey

**Lowest Abortion Rates:**  
 ▶ Wyoming  
 ▶ Mississippi  
 ▶ South Dakota

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# The Delusional War on Warmth

by Viv Forbes

For decades, global warming scaremongers have been stealing energy from the environment using windmills, solar collectors, and biofuels, force-fed by carbon taxes and emission trading schemes. Their delusional dream is to cool the globe.

However, there has been no global warming for nearly 20 years. Right now, the great ice sheets are growing thicker and record snow is blanketing much of the climate change leader, the Northern Hemisphere landmass. Solar panels are blinded by snow and turbines don't turn in the cold still air or else they have to be shut down because of icing or high winds. Like all green things, wind and solar power often hibernate in winter.

Meanwhile, the unloved all-weather energy producers (coal, gas, and nuclear) are straining at their limits, as families huddle around heaters fearing the first flickers of failure from overloaded power grids.

No food is produced from land smothered in snow — farmers fear late frosts and welcome early spring rains and warmth.

For thousands of years, Earth has experienced long cycles of ice separated by short warm inter-glacials. Today's warm era is already thousands of years old, and it appears that Earth's climate is fluctuating naturally toward the next glacial cycle. Only fools would assist the return of the ice.

Warmists are making a massive mistake by assuming that global cooling is better than global warming. They are ignoring their precious "Precautionary Principle."

A frigid ice house is far more dangerous and destructive than a warm greenhouse. ❄️

*Disclosure: Viv Forbes is a geologist who has studied geological and climate history; and a farmer who watches the pastures die in the dry cold winters as the livestock and wildlife wait for the warmer weather and spring storms.*



ILLINOIS  
Family  
Institute

FORUM

CLIMATE CHANGE &  
THE CHRISTIAN

What's True, What's False,  
What's Our Responsibility?



**E. CALVIN BEISNER, PH.D.**

Founder & National Spokesman,  
The Cornwall Alliance for the Stewardship of Creation  
[www.cornwallalliance.org](http://www.cornwallalliance.org)

APRIL 26<sup>TH</sup> → ARLINGTON HEIGHTS

APRIL 27<sup>TH</sup> → ORLAND PARK

APRIL 28<sup>TH</sup> → PEORIA

WHAT OTHERS SAY ABOUT DR. BEISNER

"... an excellent speaker who ...  
held my 200-person Bible class spellbound for an hour!"  
— Dr. Wayne Grudem, Scottsdale Bible Church

"I've known two people in my life whose knowledge I would describe as encyclopedic.  
You're one of them!"  
— Dr. R. Fowler White, Dean of Faculty, Knox Theological Seminary

"The people loved his lectures, with many ... wishing that he could have spoken more."  
— Rev. Phil Kayser, Providential History Festival, Omaha, NE

Contact Us: 708-781-9328 | [www.illinoisfamily.org](http://www.illinoisfamily.org)

IFI is on the front lines working to promote public policy that will help Illinois families to flourish. **But we can't do it without you!** Sign up to receive up-to-date emails about issues important to you and your family. It's simple! Go to [www.illinoisfamily.org](http://www.illinoisfamily.org) and click on **Sign Up For Email Updates.**

Sign up for our  
newsletter  
and e-alerts



## NO Taxpayer Funding of Abortion Act

On January 24<sup>th</sup>, the U.S. House of Representatives voted 238 to 183 to permanently ban taxpayer funding of abortion. Eight of the eighteen Illinois U.S. Representatives voted in favor of this bill, along party lines with the lone exception of Democrat U.S. Representative **Dan Lipinski** of Chicago, who voted on the side of life.

The No Taxpayer Funding of Abortion Act (H.R. 7), introduced by U.S. Representative **Chris Smith** (R-NJ), makes the Hyde Amendment permanent. Thus far the amendment, which prohibits federal money from being used to fund

abortions through Medicaid, has been subject to annual renewal.

A January 2017 Marist poll revealed **61% of Americans don't support using tax dollars to pay for abortions.**

The No Taxpayer Funding of Abortion Act also removes abortion funding from Obamacare while legislators consider replacements for Obama's signature healthcare law. ❄️





# Feds Are Simply Out-of-Touch by David E. Smith

On January 9<sup>th</sup>, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) issued a press release claiming that the costs of raising a child from birth through age 17 – for a middle-income married couple is estimated to be \$233,610 or almost \$14,000 annually. As the father of seven children, let me say that this is utter nonsense.

Moreover, the USDA fails to identify the multiple benefits of raising children, such as the physical, spiritual, intellectual and emotional advantages. These benefits are not just unquantifiable, but inestimable. The value of raising,

nurturing and training children far surpass the outlandish financial estimates of Washington D.C. bureaucrats.

With the USDA's exaggerated estimates, how do we expect to encourage



married couples to return to the healthy birth rate of more than 2.1 in the United

States? We're shortsighted if we fail to see that the current U.S. trend is unsustainable and portends economic trouble, including lower living standards for most citizens. We simply have to look at Japan, Greece or Italy for a lesson in the detriments of low birth rates.

Federal officials are simply out-of-touch with Middle America. Most of us don't spend hundreds of dollars on a hammer and we spend far less than they estimate to raise our each child every year.

Maybe the federal government can learn something from working families? 🌱

from the **Executive Director — David E. Smith** *(continued from page 1)*

the fear of God, and it exerts a greater effect on their thoughts, words, and actions to the point where there may even be times they are ashamed of being a Christian.

We see Peter at the **second level of Christian commitment** in Matthew 26:69-74. As Jesus had foretold, Peter has just denied knowing Christ three times, and Matthew reports that Peter cursed and swore, saying, "I do not know the Man!"

Between the time of his rebuke of Jesus and his insistent denials of knowing Him, Peter's faith in Jesus had grown. Peter intended to wholeheartedly follow Jesus, but when it came down to a moment of crisis and persecution, Peter bailed. His spirit was willing, but his flesh was weak, and he gave in to the fear of man.

**Are there areas in our lives where our commitment falters due to the fear of man?** Maybe we are reluctant to pray before a meal in a restaurant because we're afraid of what the others might think? Or perhaps we hesitate to "like" or "share" a friend's Facebook post because doing so would identify us as a Christ follower? Whether it is with family or friends, at work, school, or on social media, I think we can all pinpoint a time when we denied Christ, even never uttering a word.

Finally, after the resurrection and the baptism in the Holy Spirit recorded in Acts 2, we see a totally different Peter. The Apostle has **committed to put God's will foremost in his life all of the time!** Mature in Christ and indwelt by the Holy Spirit, Peter was bold to preach the risen Lord, even before the High Priest and the Sanhedrin. When they severely threatened to beat and punish him, he replied:

"Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you more than to God, you judge. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." ~Acts 4:19-20

And in Acts 5, Peter firmly

answered the authorities:

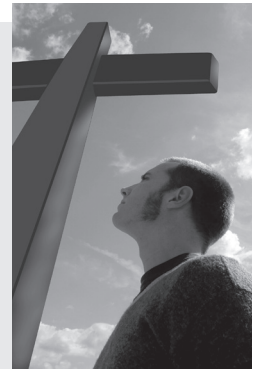
**"We ought to obey God rather than men . . ." ~ Acts 5:29**

Peter, the impudent and impetuous fisherman who had the audacity to brashly rebuke the Messiah, grew by the grace of God and the power of the Holy Spirit, into a man who confidently stood up to religious and political rulers. Peter, the scared disciple who denied the Son of Man three times because his fear of man outweighed his fear of God, became a bold man of the Gospel who rejoiced that he was counted worthy to suffer shame for the name of Christ!

Moving beyond a superficial attempt to put God's will foremost in our lives requires **intentionality and the power of the Holy Spirit**. It is impossible for us to deny our selfish, human inclinations in our own "strength." But our weakness is no reason to give up hope — we can certainly look to Peter for inspiration. The more time he spent with Jesus, the more he became conformed to the image of the Savior, desiring to put God's Will first at all times.

While Peter's transformation is an excellent inspiration for us, **Jesus is our perfect model and example**. His life was marked by His all-encompassing reverence for His Father. Jesus never worried what people thought of Him. Not even once did He compromise for personal gain or for the opinions of man. Christ endured the hard road of the cross to bear the wrath that we deserve for our sin, including our sinful, misplaced fear of man. The Lord's singular goal was to bring honor to His Father and to do His Will.

If we are to be conformed to the image and likeness of Christ, we would do well to follow His example: deny ourselves, disregard the opinions of man, and above all, set our minds on the things of our Heavenly Father. May this be our deepest desire as we strive to glorify God to the world around us. 🌱



*Setting* our minds  
**ABOVE**

# Drugged Driving and Marijuana-Related Deaths on the Rise

by Kathy Valente, Director of Operations

**A**s Illinois lawmakers push to decriminalize marijuana and other drugs, drugged driving is now on the rise in Illinois, according to a December 27, 2016 ABC7 Chicago News report.

**Brian Greenenwald**, a 10-yr officer and drug recognition expert on the Riverside Police Department, says they have seen a 900 percent increase in drugged driving arrests in the last year.

This is alarming! As more and more of our neighbors and relatives fall prey to marijuana use (medicinal or otherwise), highway safety plummets. This should not be surprising, as marijuana use impairs reaction time, perceptual-motor coordination, and performance attention, information processing and diminished response to emergency situations. These serious side-effects are associated with an increase in auto accidents and fatalities. That number could increase as Illinois lawmakers expand the list of qualifications for “medical” marijuana and push for even lower penalties and an increase in the amount of drugs allowed in a person’s possession. These state policies send the message that marijuana use is no big deal, it is akin to a speeding ticket and/or medicine.

One of the biggest hurdles is overcoming the false perceptions many have about marijuana. It’s *not* harmless and it *is* addictive. In addition, marijuana smoke contains a great number of

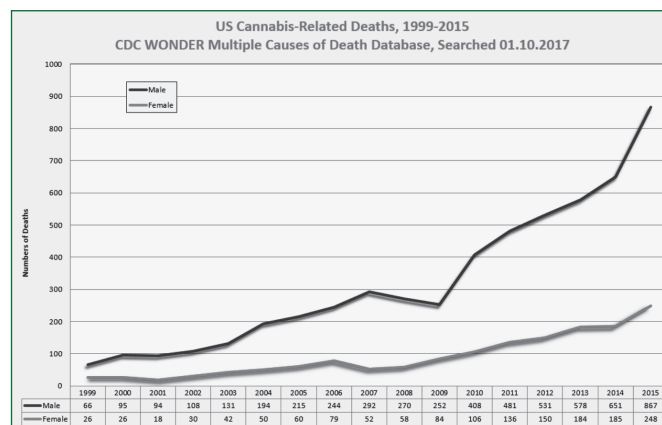
carcinogens — many more than tobacco.

Marijuana use during adolescence and teen years is associated with lower test scores and not completing school. Memory, learning, and executive functioning are all affected; plus several studies connect a reduced IQ with heavy adolescent and teen use.

Especially among youth, there is a correlation with the onset of psychosis and schizophrenia. Yes, you read that right! There are a number of scholarly studies that report the connection between marijuana use and mental illness.

To make matters worse, edibles are marketed to appeal to young people as lollipops, hard candy and gummy worms. Candy bars are packaged in the image of popular brand names. A candy bar, normally considered one serving, may have 100 mg of THC and be intended for 6 or more servings. Nationwide, several deaths have been linked to edibles.

Are we surprised to learn then that overdoses are responsible for tens of



thousands of emergency room visits each year?

In the **four years preceding Colorado’s legalization**, 76 cases of children 9 and under were reported to the state’s poison control center for exposure to cannabis. In just **one year after legalization**, from 2014 to 2015, there were 87 marijuana-exposure cases reported.

## More Troubling News

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention data clearly dispels the myth that “Nobody ever died from marijuana”.

If you’re concerned that more impaired drivers will be on the road and more teens and adolescents will start using as a result of the misguided attempts by lawmakers to decriminalize marijuana and move toward recreational use, please call your state lawmaker(s) or call the IFI office for their phone number(s).

More information is available at [www.illinoisfamily.org/marijuana](http://www.illinoisfamily.org/marijuana). ☞



## Looking for Truth?

**L**eftist news media outlets are grasping at anything right now.

IFI however, works to inform, educate and encourage Christians in the state of Illinois. Through our emails, video reports and the IFA podcast, we point to the current issues that you might not hear about through the mainstream media and

what opportunities are available for pro-family, pro-life citizens.

Please subscribe to the **IFI YouTube Channel** to get timely video reports & other special presentations!

Please subscribe to **IFI email alerts** for breaking news and to stay up-to-date on pending legislation in Springfield and Washington D.C.



Watch for new podcasts to be released every Tuesday throughout the year. You can find us on podcast applications like Google Play Music, iTunes, SoundCloud, and Pocket Casts. You can also listen to our podcasts on our website at [ifaction.org/podcast](http://ifaction.org/podcast). ☞

# Former Transgenders Talk About De-transitioning

by Laurie Higgins, Cultural Affairs Writer

**“Progressives” promote the lie that “gender identity” is immutable in order to rationalize and normalize an incoherent ideology and destructive medical “treatments.”** Leftists desperately hope that the mainstream press, always in thrall to sexual radicalism, will avert its gaze from the growing “de-transitioning” movement. Thankfully, social media is here to occasionally shine light on alternative reality, that is to say, objective reality.

In an illuminating YouTube video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0hEMLbUxRQA>, **Carey Callahan**, a young liberal woman, describes her “de-transition” from identifying as a “transman” and exposes some inconvenient truths about the “trans” community on which the mainstream press never reports:

**I used to believe I was...a trans guy, and I stopped believing that.... When I was trans...I felt that my trans identity should not be pathologized, that it was a healthy beautiful thing... that I was making these decisions from a clear state of mind....Looking back, I do not think I was in a clear state of mind, and I absolutely think that I was operating under some delusional ideas about what it would take to pass as a dude. The feelings that I had interpreted as gender dysphoria were actually long-term trauma symptoms that I had never addressed.**

**Every step of the process, every step I took in affirming that trans identity, life got worse....People in my little trans bubble were some of the most anxious people I’ve ever met... and coping with it in a real weird way. Lots of everyday drug use, eating disorders, compulsive working out... lots of over-the-top sex stuff, cutting, alcoholism....It was obvious that people...were not doing well.**

Another de-transitioner <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v4IR2dGhiXM>, this one a young man who had been

pretending to be a woman, explains his epiphany regarding his “transition”:

**I felt like I was just doing something [i.e., “transitioning”] I didn’t need to do. I don’t feel that it 100% came from me. I don’t feel that organically, by myself, I would have done that. It was just something that the circumstances I was in, and the surroundings I was in, the influences I had...made me make these moves....At some point, I realized...I really didn’t want to do it. People told me that I would have less doubts and I would feel super confident and sure of myself as a female when I took the hormones, but honestly as soon as I got on them, I started questioning myself more and more.**

A de-transitioner who calls herself “Crash” shares <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1BTSGnvzYfM> her convictions regarding the tragic reasons many women adopt a male identity:

**Sometimes women take on a trans identity and transition due to trauma that we live through....I don’t think many people know this....I know a lot of other women who feel like their dysphoria or trans identity or transition...were a reaction to trauma. For those of us who transition, we didn’t go into our transitions...thinking that we’re reacting to trauma....We had dysphoria that we were trying to alleviate by changing our bodies....**

**Some women end up identifying as trans...because we lived through trauma that is in some way connected with us being women, with having a female body....A lot of us survive sexual violence. We were raped or survived some other kind of assault. A lot of us are child sexual abuse survivors. Some of us were attacked for being lesbians...My mom’s suicide played a huge role.**

The Left says that “gender identity” is immutable and, therefore, even young children should be able to access medical



help to refashion their bodies in such a way as to make it match the sex that corresponds to the cultural conventions these children prefer. In other words, young boys who “identify” as girls do so based on their desire to wear girls’ clothing, have long hair, and play with girls’ toys. But the Left says these are merely arbitrary, socially constructed norms. So, why change their bodies? Rather than rejecting their bodies, why not reject the norms that they believe have no objective reality or meaning?

Of the many tragic consequences of this science-denying sexuality dogma is the fact that “gender identity” is not fixed and that “transitioning” is harming people. Society is marching blindfolded into a brave new dystopian world whose victims are increasingly children who will one day tell their stories of regret—stories like that of de-transitioner, **Cari Stella** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9L2jyEDwpEw&t=5s>, who “transitioned socially at 15,” started taking testosterone at 17, had a double mastectomy at 20, de-transitioned at 22, and recently said this:

**[De-transitioners] are not just statistics....We’re real people....I’m a real live 22-year-old woman with a scarred chest, a broken voice, and a five o’clock shadow.**

Are castration, mastectomies, and chemically-induced sterility for young adults really the signposts on the path to the right side of history? ❧



# St. Louis Hospital to Open New Pediatric Sex Change Program

by David E. Smith

St. Louis Children's Hospital recently announced they are establishing a "Pediatric Gender Center." The focus of the center is to provide what they are calling "comprehensive care for transgender children and youth."

The Gender Center is providing "hormone blockade" and "cross-hormone treatment" to children "served" at St. Louis Children's Hospital. They claim to have "treated" 60 patients this year.

Hormone blockade is described as a medication that blocks pubertal development. It "stalls the development of secondary sexual characteristics of biologic gender."

In girls, it halts breast development and female weight distribution. In boys, it interrupts androgen production to prevent facial hair growth and deepening of the voice.

Cross-hormone treatment involves providing the female hormone estrogen to boys and the male hormone testosterone to girls.

Hormone blockade is said to be reversible, while cross-hormone treatment may cause irreversible physical changes and damages. Dr. **Michelle Cretella**, president of the American College of Pediatricians, states that "propagating the lifetime use of toxic hormones as healthcare for children...is institutionalized child abuse."

Writing in the *Wall Street Journal*, **Dr. John McHugh**, former psychiatrist in chief at Johns Hopkins Hospital, makes this important point:

People who undergo sex-reassignment surgery do not change from men to women or vice versa. Rather, they become feminized men or masculinized women. Claiming that this is a civil rights matter and encouraging surgical intervention is in reality to collaborate with and promote a mental disorder.

He also made this politically incorrect observation:

Policy makers and the media are doing no favors either to the public or the transgendered by treating their confusions as a right in need of defending. This is a mental disorder that deserves understanding, treatment, and prevention.

Leftists who endorse this form of institutional abuse of children should answer the question **Laurie Higgins** likes to pose: If there is a disconnect or lack of correspondence between a child's objective immutable biological sex and his subjective feelings about his sex, why would "progressives" assume the problem or error is with the child's healthy, normally functioning body rather than his subjective feelings about his body? ❧



## BIGGER Government?

by David E. Smith

According to the comptroller's office, the state of Illinois is about \$11 billion behind on paying its bills. If that were not enough, Illinois has a public pension debt of \$130 billion, property taxes that are twice the national average, and a sad credit rating that hovers just above the "junk" level. Plus, we haven't had a balanced budget in years despite the fact that the state constitution requires one.

Add in the fact that we have entrenched political leaders who continue to exasperate these problems, and you get what we've got: a noxious environment.

It's no wonder net migration from Illinois to other states is at a record high!

According to the Illinois Policy Institute, from July 2015 to July 2016, Illinois' population declined by 37,000 people. "It's the only state in the region with a shrinking population." When people are repeatedly frustrated at the voting booth, those who can, vote with their feet.

Thankfully, not all Illinois lawmakers are missing the warning signs. But too many are. The Illinois Senate leadership — both State Senate President John Cullerton (D-Chicago) and state Senate Minority Leader Christine Radogno (R-Lemont) — have proposed a plan that includes multi-billion tax hikes with little

spending reforms. Rather than talk of reducing waste, making cuts in spending, or considering more efficient government, the Illinois Senate wants to increase the size and spending of Illinois government by reaching deeper into the pockets of working families and small businesses.

This is a serious concern after years of a stagnant economy. Middle class families have seen their annual wages fall since 2009. More people are on food stamps now and poverty has increased.

Unlike lawmakers, families in the Land of Lincoln cannot simply vote to increase their revenues because their bills have increased or they have failed to pay them on time.

Let your state lawmakers know your view on bigger, more expensive government. ❧



**13%** The *New York Times* recently reported that San Francisco has seen its percentage of children fall to 13 percent of the overall population — and the lowest in the nation. Juxtapose this sad figure with the 2015 Barna study that reports that San Francisco also has the lowest church attendance in the nation. Coincidence? We think not. ❧

# Prayer Requests . . .

I urge, then, first of all, that **petitions, prayers, intercession** and thanksgiving be made for all people — for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. — 1 Timothy 2:1-2

**A**lthough the November election is behind us, there's still much work to do — on our knees.

All government officials have a tremendous duty before them to uphold the State and U.S. Constitutions and serve the general welfare of the American people. As Christians, we have an obligation to pray for them because it benefits us, our families, our

neighbors, and society as a whole.

Pray that all elected officials would do good, seek justice, defend the oppressed and make the hard decisions to establish sound moral and fiscal policies. Pray for their spiritual and physical safety and well-being. ☸

*Although we may disagree with the politics and worldview of many of the officials above, Christians have the privilege of going "above their heads" to appeal to an omnipotent God who is able to turn the heart of a king like a stream of water.*

(Proverbs 21:1)

## Please Pray...

Pray for **President Donald Trump** — that God gives him an abundance of wisdom, discernment and understanding. Pray that god-fearing advisers surround him. Pray for God's blessings on the nomination of **Neil Gorsuch** to the U.S. Supreme Court.

### U.S. Congress

Pray for U.S. Senator **Richard Durbin**, your U.S. Representative and for those newly elected: U.S. Senator **Tammy Duckworth** and U.S. Representatives **Raja Krishnamoorthi** (D-Schaumburg) of the 8<sup>th</sup> District and **Brad Schneider** (D-Deerfield) of the 10<sup>th</sup> District.

### State of Illinois

Pray for **Governor Bruce Rauner** and **Illinois Comptroller Susan Mendoza** and the following **23 newly elected state senators and representatives**:

#### Illinois State Senate:

**Omar Aquino** (D-Chicago)  
**Christina Castro** (D-Elgin)  
**Paul Schimpf** (R-Murphysboro)  
**Dale Fowler** (R-Harrisburg)

#### Illinois State House of Representatives:

**Teresa Mah** (D-Chicago)  
**Julia Stratton** (D-Chicago)  
**Melissa Conyers** (D-Chicago)  
**Justin Slaughter** (D-Chicago)  
**Nick Sauer** (R-Barrington)  
**Steve Reick** (R-Woodstock)  
**Tony McCombie** (R-Savanna)  
**Michael Halpin** (D-Rock Island)  
**Ryan Spain** (R-Peoria)  
**Daniel Swanson** (R-Woodhull)  
**David Welter** (R-Morris)  
**Jerry Long** (R-Ottawa)  
**Lindsay Parkhurst** (R-Kankakee)  
**David Olsen** (R-Downers Grove)  
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