



# ILLINOIS Family Institute

Boldly Bringing a Biblical Perspective to Public Policy in the Land of Lincoln.

Newsletter | Spring 2021



Who is he who condemns?

**It is Christ who died,**

**and furthermore is also risen,**

who is even at the right hand of God,

*who also makes intercession for us.*

ROMANS 8:34



illinoisfamily.org



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



In parenting, academics, or other areas of daily life, it is not enough for a parent or instructor to introduce a concept or skill only once and then expect the child, student, or even an employee to thoroughly understand or have mastery of the subject at hand. The most effective instruction and training utilizes ongoing reinforcement and encouragement.

This is an approach the Apostle Paul takes. During his missionary travels, he visited with many believers and, later, he often wrote to these people to underscore the exhortation and counsel he had shared with them in person.

Writing to the Thessalonians concerning false teachers, Paul urges them to:

*“not be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ had come. **Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first,**” ~ 2 Thessalonians 2:2-3a*

Paul wrote this second letter to the Thessalonians because false teaching directly opposed what he had taught them. It was a dangerous obstacle to their faith and spiritual growth and Paul knew he needed to reassure them by reinforcing the **Truth** he had given them. Like the Thessalonians, if we believe error regarding any Biblical truths, it will have damaging effects on the way we live.

As an aside, let me say that I believe the falling away that Paul speaks of here refers to the ultimate end time rebellion. The falling away that occurred in Paul's day and continues to occur in every subsequent generation to this day is much like the troubling tremors that precede an earthquake of epic devastation.

**Let No One  
DECEIVE  
You by Any Means!**

Consider the professing church — people and churches in the world who **profess** to be Christian. The time is coming, and has already begun, when people who profess to be Christians will deny the Christ who's in the

title they claim, the very Christ they profess.

Even now, do most churches that bear the name of Christ or claim to be comprised of Christians truly believe in the resurrected Lord, the Son of God Who mediates for us before the Father? A startling recent headline from the Bible Belt should give us pause: “Nashville Church Comes Under Fire for Denying the Bible is God's Word.” And over the years, the IFI staff, in speaking with pastors, has encountered those who support abortion and the LGBTQ agenda.

Along with the professing church, we have the emerging church and secular “priests” such as Oprah Winfrey, Victoria Osteen, and Steve Harvey who tell their millions of devotees that there are multiple roads to heaven.

Clearly, there has been a great departure from Christ and His Word, as evidenced by the dramatic decline in orthodox teaching over the past several decades. Thankfully, Paul's warning to the Thessalonian Christians is preserved in the New Testament for our benefit — **Let no one deceive you by any means!**

Paul is not saying let no one lie to you, let no one *try* to deceive you, let no one be deceptive, let no one tempt you. All of those things are beyond our control. Rather, **his warning centers on our response.** We are deceived when we *choose* to believe something is true when it is false.

So, what should our response be to the deception of false teachers and false doctrine?

*... cast down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing*

*continued on page 5...*



## Salt and Light Written by Pastor Calvin Lindstrom

If a mission agency sending missionaries to a Muslim country found that most of its missionaries were being converted to Islam, you would have to conclude there is a problem.

And when surveys show that the vast majority of young people raised in Christian homes are not remaining in the faith, we have to conclude there is a problem.

Now, I am not implying that sending your children to a Christian school or teaching them at home somehow brings salvation. But God does call for Christian parents to provide their children an

education in the fear of the Lord.

Yes, we desperately want our children to be salt and light, but they need to be given a proper training in order to do this. There is so much in education that a child will never be given unless that child is given a Christian education.

And then consider how much of government controlled education is vile, blasphemous, and harmful for our children.

We must do better. We must follow God's call. The salt and light argument is no excuse for not providing a Christian education for your children. ✕

It is not uncommon to hear Christians argue that a good reason for children to be in the government schools is so that they can be salt and light.

I don't doubt that some children do bring a good witness. But if we consider this idea from the bigger perspective, we must conclude by saying that this is not what God intends.

**Planned Parenthood's** annual report for 2019-2020 reveals that the number of abortions they performed for that year at 354,871 — the highest number ever recorded. The report also acknowledged receiving \$618.1 million in taxpayer funding through Government Health Services Reimbursements & Grants.

At the same time, their report tells us that their other services are dropping. In the last decade: Breast exams are down 67%. Pap tests are down 70%. Prenatal visits are down 79%. According to our friends at Pro-Life Action League, Planned Parenthood now performs 40 percent of all abortions in the U.S. And according to Jill Stanek from Live Action, **Planned Parenthood is responsible for the deaths of 8.6 million unborn children since 1970.**

Did  
**YOU**  
**KNOW?**



## SCOTUS Protects Women Against the Abortion Industry

Some good news out of the Supreme Court of the United States in January, which ruled to halt mail-order distribution of abortion pills. This is an important step taken to protect women everywhere from the abortion industry, who constantly puts profits over patients.

This ruling affirms guidelines set by the FDA that state that abortion pills cannot be administered remotely, only in-person, in a healthcare facility. One of the two abortion drugs taken together to cause an early miscarriage, called Mifeprex, has a Risk Evaluation and Mitigation Strategies (REMS) label on it, indicating it is a dangerous drug with known serious risks. Chemical abortions, when compared to surgical abortions, have a higher complication rate and result in a higher rate of emergency room visits. The abortion industry was fighting this regulation because they can have more clients, make more money, and use less of their staffs' time if they can simply mail out these dangerous abortion pills.

While this is a positive advance in that it limits the abortion industry and protects the safety of women, ultimately, no matter how it is prescribed, the abortion pill (also known as chemical abortion) is inherently dangerous because it always results in the killing of an innocent life in the womb. Let's hope this ruling is just one step on the road to ending all abortion. ✕

## Also in this Issue...

Gov. Wants To Cut Tax Credit Scholarship Program . . . . .	p. 3
Adolescent Marijuana Use Increases Where Legal . . . . .	p. 3
2020 Traffic Fatalities Up in IL . . . . .	p. 4
from the Executive Director . . . . .	p. 5
<b>New Alliance Seeks to Rescue IL Children</b> . . . . .	p. 6
Big Tech Censorship . . . . .	p. 7
Sports Gambling: Bait to Hook All Who Enter . . . . .	p. 8
<b>Baby Owen Update</b> . . . . .	p. 9
IL Lawmaker's New Bill on Public Bathrooms. . . . .	p. 10
Avoid Johnson & Johnson Coronavirus Vaccine . . . . .	p. 11
<b>A Spectacular Victory for Religious Liberty!</b> . . . . .	p. 11
IFI Prayer Requests . . . . .	p. 12





# Gov. Pritzker Wants To Drastically Cut Tax Credit Scholarship Program

Written By Calvin Lindstrom,  
Pastor and Administrator at Christian Liberty Academy in Arlington Heights

In 2017, the state of Illinois surprisingly made a very good decision in establishing the Invest in Kids Act which allowed private citizens to make a contribution for private school scholarships and receive a tax credit for their donation. It is a carefully regulated process, but it works.

The total amount of tax credit that could be granted per year was \$75 million dollars. That might sound like a lot of money but consider that the Illinois State Board of Education has a proposed budget of \$9.64 billion dollars. So \$75 million is less than 1% of this budget. In comparison to the total budget for our state, \$75 million is a pittance (about .18% of the total budget).

Recently **Gov. Pritzker** outlined a \$41.6 billion budget for the entire state. As part of his savings, Pritzker wants to lower the tax credit to only 40% which will certainly reduce the incentive and ability for people to donate to this program that helps over 3,800 lower income students to afford a private education.

Illinois on average spends about \$13,000 per student. So taxpayers are getting a fantastic deal through this program in terms of savings. Private

schools in Illinois save the state far more than \$75 million dollars a year. I think an excellent case can be made that cutting this program will cost taxpayers even more money, but logic and financial stewardship are not characteristics of our state unfortunately.

Many people have loved the story of Robin Hood. Whatever the truth of the story is, people like to see the poor get back funds from the rich who have stolen from them. Many politicians like to think that through their policies they are helping to give back to the poor. But increasingly in our state what we are seeing is the anti-Robin Hood. Gov. Pritzker wants to take more from the taxpayers so that the rich and connected in our state can get even more.

We are living through a spiritual-legal-moral revolution in our nation. The issue at hand is more than just money. We recognize that, ultimately, we are in a spiritual battle. We must first be in prayer for the sake of our state and for the sake of many who have been helped out of government indoctrination centers. We also must express our strong disapproval to Gov. Pritzker and our state legislators about cutting this program in any way. In



fact, the \$75 million should be increased. Let's raise our voice on this vital issue. ✂

➔ **ACTION:** Contact Gov. JB Pritzker and your state lawmakers to urge them to uphold, expand and solidify the "Invest in Kids" program. The Springfield switchboard number is (217) 782-2000.

**“There has never been a program** in Illinois that has afforded more opportunity for children of low and middle income families to learn **as the tax credit scholarship program**. These children are safe and test results show they are learning. We are going to be urging lawmakers to expand and improve the program rather than trying to effectively end it as the Governor's recommendation attempts to do. — **Robert Gilligan**,  
Executive Director of the Catholic Conference of Illinois

*Save the Date!*

**Saturday, May 22, 2021**  
Revive Church | Collinsville, Illinois



The Trojan Horse of  
**Critical Race Theory  
& Escaping Public Schools**

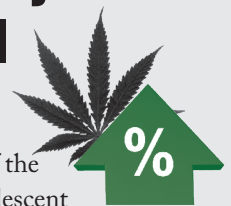
For more info visit: [illinoisfamily.org](http://illinoisfamily.org)  
and click our "Events" tab.

## New Study: Adolescent Marijuana Use Increases Where Legal

Not surprisingly, a new study in the Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs finds that marijuana use among some adolescent groups increases in states where the recreational use of the drug is legal. In California, there was a seven year decrease in adolescent marijuana use prior to the drug's legalization, but there was a two-year increase in marijuana use after its legalization. According to the study, "there was a significantly greater likelihood of both lifetime and past-30-day marijuana use after recreational marijuana legalization..."

Researchers surmised that "(t)he expanding retail market and diversity of marijuana products may increase both opportunities for adolescents to obtain marijuana from commercial or social sources and the appeal of marijuana products like edibles." ✂

To read the study, go to <https://bit.ly/3rArTQZ>





# 2020 Traffic Fatalities Up in Illinois with Less Drivers on the Road

*Written by Kathy Valente*

According to a February 12, 2021 *Chicago Tribune* article, “Nearly 160 more people died on Illinois roads last year than in 2019, **making 2020 the deadliest year for Illinois drivers in 13 years.**”

Could it be that “legal” recreational marijuana played a significant role? Could it be that our very short-sighted state lawmakers failed to consider the consequences of having more inebriated drivers on our roads?

On January 1, 2020, recreational marijuana became legal to buy and sell in Illinois. Sales for the year exceeded what they anticipated. In fact, sales crossed the \$1 billion mark in December. That’s an awful lot of people getting stoned in Illinois. And many of them got behind the wheel.

Marijuana impairs motor coordination, perception, reaction time, judgment, attention, and memory... *for days at a time!* Impairment varies from person to person based on tolerance and potency, but a user’s fine motor skills can be impaired for 72 hours or longer after use.

The Institute for Behavior and Health compiled data from a variety of sources including AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, Governors Highway Safety Association, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and several others. They found that the incidence of drug-impaired driving had increased during the COVID-19 pandemic.

**THC**, the active ingredient in marijuana, **was found more often in drivers of fatal vehicle crashes** than

alcohol in 2020.

Also of concern is the significant percentage of adults 18 and older who tested positive for two or more impairing substances, resulting in a multiplicative effect. The European Union Driving Under the Influence of Drugs, Alcohol and Medicines (DRUID) study found the use of multiple drugs can produce a “highly increased crash risk” and the combination of alcohol and drugs can produce an “extremely increased crash risk” whereby an individual is up to 200 times more likely to be involved in a crash.

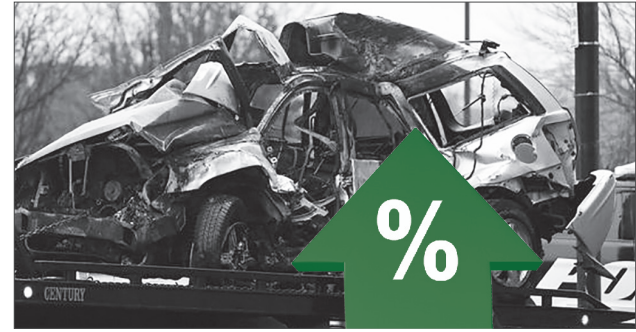
Unlike alcohol, there is no impairment threshold for drugs. According to the Institute for Behavior report, drug levels do not consistently correlate with specific levels of impairment. For example, when an individual smokes marijuana, THC concentration in blood peaks quickly and begins to drop very soon after. However, impairment is longer lasting.

As if they have not done enough to harm Illinois families, lawmakers have introduced a number of bills this session in Springfield they hope to pass that will increase drug trafficking in our communities, provide an easy way for ex-convicts to open their own marijuana business, potentially cause more traffic fatalities and introduce more young people to the world of drugs.

**HB 79** would require that schools “must include instruction on the medical and legal ramifications of cannabis use.” It might sound reasonable at quick glance, but because it’s legal for recreational use and there are dozens of “medical” uses already with intent to include even more, any instruction could potentially nudge children into experimentation. After all, it’s medicine and medicine can’t hurt you, right?

**HB 144** allows a county or municipality to issue a license to allow for the consumption of marijuana and marijuana-infused products at any temporary event, club, or tour.

**HB 193** allows for home delivery of



marijuana and marijuana-infused products.

**HB 715** allows for a county or municipality to allow persons to bring their own cannabis to any place open to the public.

**HB 1871** allows newspapers to advertise marijuana and marijuana-infused products, unless readership is 30% under the age of 21. (Commercialization was great for Colorado marijuana businesses and bad for children. One newspaper ad offered a 20% discount with a student ID.)

**HB 3085** expunges the criminal history of anyone arrested for any criminal cannabis violation after January 1, 1970 and releases all criminals convicted of a sole cannabis charge. (Most incarcerated criminals have plea-bargained down from a more serious crime when cannabis was a factor, leaving the cannabis charge the sole charge.)

**HB 3306** increases square footage for cannabis growers; raises the number of craft cannabis grower licenses; removes prohibitions for craft cannabis growers to be 1,500 feet of each other; allows cannabis craft growers to be free from paying taxes for 2 years after date of license.

**HB 3916** offers reduced cannabis licensing and escrow fees for a marijuana retail business to a person or family member who has been imprisoned.

**SB 2404** authorizes 200 licenses for non-storefront and storefront organizations to become “medical cannabis dispensing organizations” to deliver to people’s homes. ✂

➔ **ACTION:** Please speak out to your state lawmakers about our state’s embrace of marijuana. The Capitol switchboard number is (217)782-2000.

**VINDICATE** the weak and fatherless; Do justice to the afflicted and destitute.

**RESCUE** the weak and needy; Save them from the hand of the wicked.

PSALM 82:3-4





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

**every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ,**  
~ 2 Corinthians 10:5

Deception is by no means limited to New Testament history. From the Garden of Eden right up to today, Satan was and is the master deceiver and instigator of widespread deception as he masquerades as an angel of light (2 Cor. 11:13-14). His schemes and supernatural acts are a deadly snare to those who are influenced by the dazzling pull of what they see, hear, and feel.

Satan is comfortably at home in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. He has infiltrated every social media platform and manipulates our institutions to promote false narratives designed to draw people away from God's Truth including radio/television/print media, advertising, academia, Hollywood, and the music industry.

He is behind sexual anarchy and gender confusion, devaluing life and the murder of the unborn, the indoctrination of young children in government schools, just to name a few. The list goes on and on.

Therefore, a Christian must always **examine and weigh the emotional aspect of human experience against the eternal, unchanging Truth of God's Word**, but in order to do that, **we have to know God's Truth.**

We must immerse ourselves in Scripture daily so as not to be deceived by persuasive words, human philosophy, and the basic principles of the world, nor give heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons. (Col. 2:4, 8; 1 Tim. 4:1) Instead, believers must be "rooted and built up in Him and **established in the faith**, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving." (Col. 2:7)

The faith, we have been taught is, "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things **not seen**" (Heb. 11:1) that "comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." (Rom. 10:17) **Genuine faith is inextricably linked with God's Word.**

If our faith is based on the temporal things and experiences of this world, that

which we can see, smell, hear, taste, and touch, we have heeded a deceiving spirit and we will eventually fall away from the Truth we once professed.

Be forewarned, the **consequences of deception** are sobering and should drive us straight to God's Word. In 2 Timothy 3:1-7, Paul enumerates them:

**"Men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away! For of this sort are those who creep into households and make captives of gullible women loaded down with sins, led away by various lusts, always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth."**

We live in a time when people have become so deceived, they are enraged by what is good and true. Inflamed with hatred, they stop at nothing. They silence the truth, slander those who promote good, belittle, berate, intimidate, and threaten Christians, and most heinous of all, they *celebrate* that which is evil.

In my opinion, abortion is the greatest sin in America, second only to unbelief, because it targets and destroys God's crown jewel of creation — His image-bearers. The innocent blood of approximately one million pre-born human beings a year is an anathema before our Holy God. (Prov. 6:17)

Satan's goal is destruction, deception, and murder. So how can a Christian hope to evade his snares? We must stand firmly **rooted in God's Word, which directs and empowers the way we think and live.** Paul instructed Timothy to "give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all." (1 Tim. 4:13,15-16)

Secondly, **God's Truth protects us against deception through the gift of discernment.** If we judge *all* things by the Truth of God's Word, we will never be deceived. In his first epistle, John instructs the churches, "Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world. (1 John 4:1) Our protection lies in being a diligent student of God's Word and a lover of what is good. Knowing God's Truth will enable us to recognize the artificial and counterfeit.

Finally, **God's Truth warns us against delay.** God is patient and kind; He "is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance." (2 Peter 3:9) But there will come an end to his patience.

If, as you read this, you realize you have never claimed God's promise of salvation through the blood of His Son, NOW is the time to respond to His gracious and merciful offer. (John 3:36; Acts 4:12; 1 John 1:9)

For those of us who profess the Lordship of Jesus Christ, we must examine ourselves regularly. (2 Cor. 13:5) We dare not let ourselves become "lukewarm." (Rev. 3:16) We must encourage one another to be in God's Word, to obey His commands, and to practice the fruits of the Spirit. If we do this, God can and will use us in amazing ways to advance His Kingdom.

**Let no one deceive you by any means!** Christ will come again at a time of the Father's choosing. May He find us faithful and fruitful when our King returns. ✠





# New Alliance Seeks to Rescue Illinois Children from Indoctrination

*Written by Alex Newman*

**C**hildren and families under siege in Illinois will soon be getting a lifeline!

A national organization working to rescue children from the increasingly radical indoctrination and sexualization in public schools just announced a new partnership with the non-profit Illinois Family Institute (IFI) to help get as many kids out of the system as possible.

The nationwide group, known as **Public School Exit (PSE)**, was formed in 2019 by a team of concerned Christian leaders, attorneys, pastors, educators, and advocates. The goal: Facilitate an exodus of as many children into the safe sanctuary of homeschools and good private schools.

In pursuing that mission, PSE is joining forces with IFI — the state's premier pro-family organization — to deal with the urgent situation in Illinois. From mandating LGBT indoctrination in government schools to forcing teachers to accept and promote highly controversial "progressive" ideology in the classroom, the state is at the forefront of the escalating educational abuse in America.

"Illinois is one of the worst states in the nation when it comes to imposing anti-American, anti-Christian extremism on captive children in public schools," said PSE President **Dran Reese**, a homeschool mom with many years of experience in ministry. "However, even conservative states are moving in that direction, so we hope the lessons we learn in Illinois will help in our nationwide efforts as well."

As part of the partnership between PSE and IFI, which was formalized in March, 2021, with an agreement between the two, the well-respected Illinois organization will utilize PSE materials, its powerful line-up of experts in the field, and its own vast network to encourage pastors and parents to get children out of the deteriorating public schools.

"It's high time for Christian parents and grandparents to recognize the fact that government schools are undermining and supplanting Judeo-Christian faith," said IFI Executive Director **David Smith**.

## PUBLIC SCHOOL EXIT

*Rescuing Our Children*

[publicschoolexit.com](http://publicschoolexit.com)

"The nonsense and profane values they are teaching students are the antithesis of what the Bible teaches us. Parents and grandparents cannot afford to allow these secular ideologies and destructive philosophies to mislead our children from what is good, honest and virtuous."

Consider that the government's own data from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) prove conclusively that the overwhelming majority of children in Illinois are not even proficient in core subjects. Meanwhile, the moral values being imposed on children in public schools would shock most parents, IFI and PSE leaders said.

"Taxpayer-funded schools have all but rejected academics as their principal responsibility," added Smith. "Instead, at the behest of Big LGBTQ Inc, BLM and Planned Parenthood, their focus has shifted toward indoctrinating our children. And children are being taught to hate America."

Government school systems, Smith continued, are broken. "It's time for parents and grandparents to take action to protect their children's spiritual, mental and physical wellbeing," he said. "It's time to get our kids out of government schools."

PSE and IFI leaders point to the Bible, which clearly instructs parents to teach their children Biblical truths "diligently" throughout the day, every day. (Deut. 6:4-9). Parents are also instructed to "train up a child in the way he should go." "We dare not allow left-wing agents of deception do that training in our government schools," noted Smith, celebrating the partnership

with a well-established national organization to deal with the crisis.

On the church front, IFI and PSE will work together to help pastors and churches understand the problem. Then, they will work together to help pastors and churches set up Christian schools, homeschool co-operatives led by parents, micro-schools, scholarship programs, independent learning academies, or other options to help protect the children in their congregations. PSE's list of renowned church and education leaders are standing by ready to assist.

"The Bible speaks very clearly to all these issues, and Christians across the nation are starting to realize that something must be done," explained PSE Chairman Lt. Col. E. **Ray Moore** (Ret.), a longtime ministry leader who has been promoting a Christian "Exodus" from public schools for decades. "We are so grateful to be able to work with IFI — known as one of the top pro-family groups in America — on this critically important mission. The timing could not be better."

PSE's world-class team of advisors includes leading attorneys, educators, pastors, celebrities, and experts who — combined — have all the expertise needed to get the job done, and to do it well. With help from the boots on the ground, depending on the needs of particular communities or churches, PSE and IFI will assemble the necessary expertise to ensure that every parent in a congregation or community has options.

The team even includes, among other stars, **Diane Douglas**, who



*continued... ➤ ➤*

(continued from page 6)

served as Arizona's superintendent of Public Instruction until 2019, when she recognized that the government schools were now rotten to the core and were not safe for children. Now she is working to get victims out as quickly as possible. "Parents must act to protect their children, because public schools are not going to do it," she explained.

The tide is rapidly shifting on this issue, too. Just in the last year, the number of homeschooling families has doubled from 5 percent to 10 percent of families with school-age children as people flee from government schools in unprecedented numbers. Some school districts have seen more than a 10 percent decline in enrollment as families seek other options.

Top voices are joining in as well. Before he passed away this year, talk-show titan **Rush Limbaugh** repeatedly urged parents to get their children out of public schools. Responding to LGBT mandates in New Jersey schools, evangelical leader **Franklin Graham** encouraged parents to withdraw from the system, too.

Even former President **Donald Trump** repeatedly urged parents to protect their children from what he described as "failing government schools," noting that indoctrination in public education was responsible for the "mayhem" in America's streets last summer.

Christian actress and leading homeschool advocate **Sam Sorbo**, a fervent campaigner on the issue and a member of PSE's advisory board, celebrated the new partnership, too. "More and more people are waking up to the tragic state of what we currently call education, but what is, essentially, only schooling. Training. Conditioning," Sorbo said in a statement about the news. "We welcome partnering with all enlightened organizations!"

Similar arrangements with other state-level pro-family organizations are already being explored. Many millions of families have already made the choice to pursue better education alternatives for their children. And in Illinois, that movement is about to be supercharged. ✱

## Big Tech Censorship

**A**merica was founded on the idea that all should have the opportunity and the right to speak freely, even about controversial topics, and explore ideas in order to have healthy dialogue in society. That ideal of freedom, however, is in jeopardy.

Over the past year, conservative leaders throughout the nation are finding themselves having to deal with left-wing executives from some of America's biggest tech giants regarding their new speech policies and practices clearly meant to quash our conservative voices and our reach.

We know that these tech companies — mainly **Facebook, Twitter, Google, Amazon, and Apple** — have been using their platforms to deliberately censor views that their corporate overlords don't agree with. It isn't hard to see how censorship by the world's social media giants could become a huge problem given how many Americans rely on social media for news, views and expression.

U.S. Representative **Jim Jordan** (R-OH) has been an outspoken critic of this suppression. The Amazon Smile charity giving program, he said, won't allow customers to give to conservative groups such as Family Research Council or Alliance Defending Freedom. And you can add Illinois Family Institute to that list. Yet, Amazon Smile does allow donations to Planned Parenthood.



Corporate bias towards liberal ideas — and more importantly, against conservative ones, is one part of the intolerant cancel culture that is being nurtured by Leftists.

We wonder if they will they start banning groups and speech that relate to homeschooling? Parental decisions over vaccines? Whether or not it's appropriate to reopen churches and businesses? Whether or not wearing a mask helps

## Think Different.



\*and you will be deleted.

prevent the spread of COVID-19?

Free speech isn't free when it's banned from being expressed or confined to one's own mind. Yet that's exactly what Leftists are doing. And Big Tech has joined with them to enforce their bigoted rules.

IFI is deeply concerned about this and we are constantly reviewing how we can best communicate. It is clear that we, too, could be shut out completely and so we must explore how we can invest in other, safer, freedom-focused platforms that won't censor conservative views. We need your help to make sure our messages aren't shoved under a rug by Big Tech. Help us spread the word about our email list to your like-minded friends in your church and community. It is perhaps the best way we can stay in touch, other than the new conservative social media platforms like **Gab, MeWe, Rumble** and **Parler**.

The status quo will not remain unchanged. Freedom is under attack, and so are the values and institutions we hold dear — life, marriage, parental rights, economic freedom, free speech, religious liberty, and more. But together, our voices can prevail over censorship! **Your financial support is vitally important in our efforts to reach a wider audience.** ✱



## Religious liberty

is in danger of becoming a second-class right.

— U.S. Supreme Court Justice  
**SAMUEL ALITO**





# SPORTS GAMBLING: Bait to Hook All Who Enter

Written By Jerry Prosapio & Ken Darnell

**M**y name is **Jerry Prosapio**, and I am a former compulsive gambler. By the grace of God and help from recovery programs, I have been free from any form of gambling for the past 37 years! However, I continue to attend recovery meetings for compulsive gamblers to be a blessing to those who are seeking help, just as I once was the recipient of such help.

I did bet on games (sports betting); however, the only available method of sports betting was through illegal bookmakers. Not only were methods of betting limited, but available options were extremely limited. I could bet the odds on which team was going to win, or I could place an over/under bet on what the final score of the game would be. Today, with the exponential increase in the passage of open sports gambling in Illinois, all destructive avenues of betting are open in an all-out effort to hook all who enter. As an aside, it is very disturbing that recently most newcomers to the gambling help programs are seeking help because of addiction to sports gambling! Many have lost entire 401k plans or have maxed out multiple credit cards. Marital issues, including separation and divorce, are only the tip of the iceberg as a result of addiction to sports gambling!

With today's online sports betting, single bets on the outcome of games are no longer the only option available. Now live bets can be made during the game based on ever-changing odds. During innings in a baseball game or quarters in a football or basketball game, specialty bets can be made on a never-ending number of options. Bets can be placed on who will get the first hit in a baseball game or who will make the first basket in a basketball game or which team will make the most three point shots, etc. Bets are even placed on who will win the coin toss in a football game. This betting extends to all sports, including soccer, tennis, golf, etc.

The biggest lure to hook new gamblers to their site is to offer risk-free first bets. Different companies offer first free bets if you lose, matching one's deposit up

to a high amount. Other offers include winning a lot of money on a team making a three point shot. These types of promotions have one goal in common—to capture and addict new bettors. These sites must hook new gamblers in order to make a profit and thrive!

**Today, there are 23,000,000 compulsive gamblers in the United States facing bankruptcy and a host of other problems.** The average debt



for each compulsive gambler is \$55,000 ([www.debt.org](http://www.debt.org))! Gamblers made sports wagers totaling around \$435 million in October 2020, which was just the fourth full month of betting operations in the state, according to figures released by the Illinois Gaming Board. For this year's Super Bowl, in Illinois the amount bet was \$45,610,513. In the entire country, 4.3 billion dollars was bet on the Super Bowl, with 23 million Americans placing bets ("Illinois Sports Betting Scores Big in Super Bowl LV," *Chicago Sun Times*, 2/8/21).

Moreover, young problem gamblers are up to nine times more likely to attempt suicide, according to a recent study. A team led by Dr. Heather Wardle from the University of Glasgow said there was a "substantial and significant" association between harmful gambling and attempted suicide among 16 to 24-year-olds. A survey of 3,500 people found that a third of young men in this age group who attempted suicide in the last year were problem gamblers. This was nine times higher than those who had not made a suicide attempt.

When I (**Ken Darnell**) think about the latest sports gambling craze and gambling in general, I have several

questions and concerns. First, how did we go from gambling being a shady, corrupt, back alley activity to it being a totally acceptable, church sanctioned, government sponsored activity? Part of the answer lies in the modern day moral environment of "morality by majority." No longer are issues and activities evaluated by a common benchmark based on the intrinsic, inherent nature of the activity itself compared to biblical values and standards! But, "morality by majority" says if everyone is doing it, it must be acceptable. However, majority does not dictate morality; only God's divinely inspired, infallible Word is the standard for judging morality.

Two fundamental truths are at work. Remember, first of all, that lines move and, secondly, sin is subtle and progressive. The universal sin question first posed by Eve in the Garden of Eden is, "What's wrong with it?" and Satan's classic answer is, "Nothing, one time won't hurt or make a difference." All addictions start with a first time exposure. For example, it is a fact that 20% of all first time slot machine players become addicted. The gambling industry focuses money and research to determine the most effective way to get people to place that first bet, buy that first lottery ticket, or sit down to a slot machine for the first time.

Gambling by its very nature is predatory, parasitic, exploitative, and deceptive. As a Christian, we must ask ourselves, "Is it right to pour our money into such a corrupt, predatory industry?" Many contend that the Bible does not explicitly address gambling. While no direct biblical mandate forbids gambling, it is clear that gambling violates several clear biblical principles. Some of which are as follows:

- Gambling violates three of the Ten Commandments.
- Gambling involves deliberate exploitation.
- Gambling results in irresponsible stewardship.

*continued... >>*



*(continued from page 8)*

- Gambling is extremely addictive.
- Gambling conflicts with the biblical work ethic.
- Gambling compromises the biblical role of government.
- Gambling is incompatible with the love thy neighbor principle of Scripture.
- Gambling usurps the sovereignty of God.



Without undo elaboration, allow me to make several observations. Gambling violates three of the Ten Commandments—Thou shalt not covet, Thou shalt not steal, and Thou shalt have no other gods before Me.

Covetousness is the wheel that turns the gambling industry. Colossians 3:5 tells us to mortify, put to death, covetousness, which is idolatry.

Gambling has been described as institutionalized stealing (consensual theft). When you win, your winnings represent someone else's loss. There is no exchange of goods or services.

When we put our trust in the spin of a wheel, or the push of a slot machine, or the result of an athletic event, we are putting these in the place of God.

Allow me to briefly address only two of the biblical principles violated. Gambling is blatantly irresponsible stewardship of God-given assets. Deuteronomy 8:18 tells us that God gives us the ability to get wealth and Ephesians 4:28 tells us plainly that we may have to give to him that needeth! The Christian's first responsibility regarding financial assets is to tithe! Secondly, we are admonished to give to the needs of others and not to recklessly put money into gambling, with astronomical odds against winning.

Is the biblical role of government to live parasitically off the most vulnerable of society? Our government has gone from protector to predator. It is statically proven that every compulsive gambler costs society \$13,600 per year and that every dollar of revenue that the government collects from gambling includes \$3.00 in social costs to cover the ABC's of gambling—addiction, bankruptcy, and crime. It is a sad commentary that Barna's research tells us that "Christians are indistinguishable from society in a wide range of behaviors including gambling!"

So how does a person, especially a Christian, react to gambling in general, but especially to the sports gambling craze? It is by not swallowing the hook of risk-free first time betting designed to turn you into a compulsive gambler. Please examine the Scriptures which tell us that God will supply all of our needs according to His riches through Christ Jesus! ❀

**Please note** that the authors of this article, **Jerry Prosapio** and **Ken Darnell**, are available to school groups, churches (especially youth groups), or other organizations to address the destructive effects of gambling on individuals and our society. Jerry has a powerful testimony of deliverance from compulsive gambling and Ken has a PowerPoint presentation addressing the biblical perspective on gambling.

Please prayerfully consider this presentation for your group. **If you are interested, please contact us at 708-389-1127 or jergoodnews@aol.com.**

## Illinois recently approved the creation of 6

**new casinos** in the state — including one in Chicago. Did you know that multiple studies show that casinos lead to a plethora of social ills, including increased substance abuse, mental illness and suicide, violent crime, auto theft and larceny, and bankruptcy. The latter three all increased by 10 percent in communities that allowed gambling. Moreover, the National Gambling Impact Study Commission found that having a casino within 50 miles doubles one's likelihood to become a problem gambler. ❀

Did  
**YOU**  
**KNOW** ❀



## Baby Owen Update

We are happy to report that **Baby Owen** has successfully recovered from **5 surgeries in his first year of life**. His last surgery took place in January, just a few days before his first birthday. We praise God for answering all of our prayers for Owen's wellbeing and then some! And we are eternally grateful to all of our Christian brothers and sisters who were praying for his multiple medical challenges. ❀



# Illinois Lawmaker's New Bill Seeks to Eradicate Single-Sex Multiple-Occupancy Public Bathrooms

Written By Laurie Higgins

On Feb. 19, 2021, State Senator Melinda Bush (D-Grayslake) proposed amendment SB 457 to the “Equitable Restrooms Act.” Her amendment is called the “Equitable Restrooms Act—All-Gender,” which offers a hint to its content. This excerpt from her amendment makes clear what Bush wants:

*The purpose of this Section is to promote the privacy, safety, and gender inclusivity of all Illinois residents and visitors. ...*

*Any multiple-occupancy restroom may be converted into an all-gender multiple-occupancy restroom. If a multiple-occupancy restroom is to be converted into an all-gender multiple-occupancy restroom and a multiple-occupancy restroom serving a different gender is located adjacent or in proximity to the all-gender multiple-occupancy restroom, then both multiple-occupancy restrooms must be converted into all-gender multiple-occupancy restrooms. ...*

*If an all-gender multiple-occupancy restroom is newly constructed, a newly constructed or previously existing restroom located adjacent or in proximity to the newly constructed all-gender multiple-occupancy restrooms must also be designated as an all-gender multiple-occupancy restroom. (emphasis added)*

Maybe someone could ask Senator Bush how exactly the privacy and safety of Illinois girls and women are promoted via mixed-sex bathrooms.

Bush's amendment will mandate that if an existing single-sex multiple-occupancy bathroom is converted to a mixed-sex bathroom, any nearby single-sex multiple-occupancy bathroom *must* be converted to a mixed-sex bathroom. Further, if a new mixed-sex multiple-occupancy bathroom is constructed, any bathroom nearby must *also* be a mixed-sex bathroom.

For those who don't remember, Melinda Bush was one of the prime movers of Illinois' malignant “Reproductive Health Act,” more accurately called the Kill Babies Bill. Apparently, there are a lot of Grayslake voters who don't much care



about girls of any age.

As I have said repeatedly, the end game for the “trans” cult is not unrestricted access to opposite-sex private spaces for a handful of delusional cross-sex impersonators. The end game is the eradication of all public recognition of sex differences, which means no private spaces for anyone. No private spaces for girls and women. No private spaces for boys and men.

“Trans”-cultists believe girls and women should have *no* single-sex multiple-occupancy bathrooms available to them anywhere. And “trans”-cultists believe boys and men should have no single-sex multiple-occupancy bathrooms available to them.

If “trans”-cultists and their ignorant allies like Melinda Bush get their way, all girls and women will be forced to enter public bathrooms and walk past men using urinals.

This is the primitive, uncivilized dystopia leftists are socially constructing and imposing on all Americans: a world without modesty and privacy. To them, accommodations for modesty and privacy point to sex differences, and *that* is something they will not abide.

If biological sex as manifest in biology and anatomy has no intrinsic and profound meaning relative to undressing, nudity, or intimate bodily functions, then there remains no reason for any sex-segregated private spaces anywhere for anyone.

But if objective, immutable biological sex is intrinsically and profoundly meaningful with regard to feelings of modesty and the desire for privacy when

engaged in intimate bodily functions or undressing, then the refusal to respect and accommodate biological sex differences in private settings is evil.

In our brave new socially constructed dystopia, single-sex group bathrooms are passé. Mixed-sex group bathrooms are all the rage, and they're coming to public schools, colleges and universities, big-box stores, sports arenas, concert venues, restaurants, theaters, office buildings, airports, bus stations, and train stations.

What Illinois and the nation need are a few good men and women to rise up and lead a movement of all decent people against this injustice. Just imagine what kind of country we will bequeath to our children and grandchildren if we continue to do nothing now. ❀

➔ **ACTION:** Urge your state senator and representative to **vote against SB 457 and the foolish agenda that fails to recognize biological facts.** Ask them to protect the privacy, dignity and safety of **ALL** Illinois citizens. The Capitol switchboard number is (217)782-2000.



**Students should not be forced to choose** between their faith and their education, and an institution controlled by a religious organization should not have to sacrifice its religious beliefs to participate in department grants and programs. — Former U.S. Education Secretary **BETSY DEVOS**





# Catholic Bishops: Avoid Johnson & Johnson Coronavirus Vaccine Created With Cells From Aborted Babies

printed at LifeNews.com March 2, 2021

**The nation's Catholic bishops have issued new instructions for American Catholics urging them to avoid the Johnson & Johnson coronavirus vaccine if possible because it was made using cells from babies killed in abortions.**

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved the Johnson & Johnson vaccine over the weekend and the Biden administration just announced a partnership that will greatly increase the number of its vaccines for distribution nationwide.

According to research from the Charlotte Lozier Institute, developers used cell lines created from aborted babies in the design and development, production and confirmatory lab tests for the new vaccine. No cells from aborted babies are

in the actual vaccine.

Today, Bishop **Kevin C. Rhoades** of Fort Wayne-South Bend, chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' (USCCB) Committee on Doctrine, and Archbishop **Joseph F. Naumann** of Kansas City in Kansas, chairman of the USCCB's Committee on Pro-Life Activities, issued a statement on the Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine. They said it presents moral problems. "The approval of Johnson & Johnson's COVID-19 vaccine for use in the United States again raises questions about the moral permissibility of using vaccines developed, tested, and/or produced with the help of abortion-derived cell lines," the bishops said.

...



Johnson & Johnson

Many Catholics also have expressed concerns about the vaccine from AstraZeneca because it also used a cell line created from an aborted baby's kidney in development, production and testing.

...

It appears that all currently available COVID-19 vaccines have a connection to aborted babies, some more than others. The Charlotte Lozier Institute identified several that are being developed ethically without cell lines derived from aborted babies, but they are not available yet.

... ✂

## A Spectacular Victory for Religious Liberty!

**On March 8, 2021, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that government officials can be personally held liable for religious freedom violations.**

This is monumental!

In an 8-1 decision, the Court ruling reversed an Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals decision. *Uzuegbunam v. Preczewski* was filed by a former student of Georgia Gwinnett College whose ability to share his Christian faith was unduly hindered.

In 2016, **Chike Uzuegbunam** was told he could only use one of two "speech zones" at certain times of the day to share his faith and those zones consisted of less than 1% of the campus. Uzuegbunam complied but was threatened with discipline by campus police if he continued. The college accused him of violating the school code which forbade "offensive" speech.

Justice **Clarence Thomas** wrote, "It is



undisputed that Uzuegbunam experienced a completed violation of his constitutional rights when respondents enforced their speech policies against him."

Justice **John Roberts** issued the lone dissent. After Uzuegbunam filed his case, the college reversed its policy and Justice Roberts agreed with the lower court that the case was then moot.

Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF) sued the school on behalf of Uzuegbunam for damages amounting to one dollar. Tyson Langhofer, the director of ADF's Center for Academic Freedom, told The Daily Caller News Foundation in January, "The only permit students need to speak on campus is the First Amendment."

This is good news for religious liberty in America! ✂

“



**Adoption** was such a positive alternative to abortion, a way to **save one life and brighten two more:** those of the adoptive parents.

— GEORGE W. BUSH

**Illinois was declared the most corrupt** Did YOU KNOW?

**of 10 largest states**, according to federal data. "Illinois averaged over one federal public corruption conviction a week during the Madigan era. That is the most convictions per capita among the top most populous states between 1983 and 2018." (Illinois Policy Institute)

# Prayer Requests . . .

Pro-life warrior **Abby Johnson** recently lambasted the Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC) for their failure to uphold Biblical marriage, and for permitting left-wing subversive groups like the Log Cabin Republicans and Atheists for Liberty to exhibit at the conference.

Abby is quoted as saying "We have a problem in the conservative movement because we are allowing diversity to trump Jesus Christ... We are too worried about offending our neighbor and we should be 100 percent worried about offending the heart of God."

We should pray that more Christian leaders, especially those who fill the pulpit, would be as bold in the public square.



Scripture tells us that **"The fear of man brings a snare, but one who trusts in the Lord will be protected."** — Proverbs 29:25

## Please Pray . . .

### Pray for the Sanctity of Life:

- Pray that our state and federal lawmakers would have a change of heart and mind about the sanctity of life and help those around them see how morally debased it would be to force citizens against their will to be involved in funding of the killing of unborn babies.
- That the Parental Notification of Abortion Act would remain in place to protect a minor girl from making a life and death choice for her unborn child.

### Pray for Religious Liberty:

- Please pray that the U.S. Senate does not vote to pass the Equality Act. Pray that pro-family leaders and groups would continue to speak out against this legislation and bring awareness to how dangerous it is to our freedoms and religious conscience rights.
- Pray that thousands of Illinois voters would call U.S. Senators Durbin and Duckworth and tell them to vote against the Equality Act.

### Pray for Family:

- That Christian parents recognize the dangers of government education and would act proactively to safeguard their children from the godless indoctrination taking place in classrooms.
- Please pray that God would place sincere Christian leaders within our state and federal government that support families' and parents' rights to affirm God-given gender—rather than political pawns who advocate for left-wing policies that hurt children and their families.

- Pray that God would open the eyes of our state and federal lawmakers and ask God to give these men and women boldness to voice their concerns about the foolishness of transgender ideology. Pray that God would use the political process to help people see the danger in normalizing these invasive, risky procedures for children.
- Please pray for children who might be struggling with their gender identity—that God would place resources and people in their path that will point them to the redemptive Word of God and restorative healing in their lives.

### Pray for Parents:

- That those who can't afford Christian schools for their children would prayerfully consider homeschooling.
- That they would understand that training and instructing their children in the Lord is their responsibility.

### Pray for Churches:

- That they would understand the intense indoctrination taking place in government schools and prayerfully consider starting small church schools or provide financial help to families who want to remove their children from public schools.

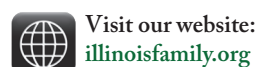
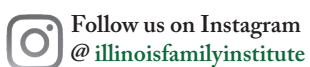
### Pray for Pastors:

- That they would preach about the moral issues that are ruining our nation from a Biblical perspective and provide their members a clearer understanding and how to respond.

### Pray for IFI:

- That God would provide wisdom, additional staff, and resources to move forward with a tremendously important educational project. ✂

## Stay up-to-speed on news impacting the family



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

Illinois Family Institute | P.O. Box 876 | Tinley Park, Illinois 60477

phone: 708-781-9328 | fax: 708-781-9376 | web: [illinoisfamily.org](http://illinoisfamily.org) | e-mail: [ContactUs@illinoisfamily.org](mailto:ContactUs@illinoisfamily.org)

Boldly Bringing a Biblical Perspective to Public Policy in the Land of Lincoln.