

2013 Session in Review, 2014 Plans



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The 2013 Legislative Session is officially over and The FAMiLY LEADER gives it mixed reviews. This year's session was perhaps the greatest in history for school choice with huge victories for both private and home school families, gambling expansion was stopped, and the largest tax cut in state history was passed.

But not a single pro-life bill passed the House or Senate, little changes were made to taxpayer funded abortions and abortion providers, and the Iowa Marriage Amendment failed to pass in both the House and Senate.

This year's team included Chuck Hurley, Danny Carroll, Greg Baker and Tamara Scott.

Here is a brief overview of some of the issues we focused on at TFL:

Iowa Marriage Amendment



The Republican controlled House decided against advancing the marriage amendment out of committee. Several cosponsors from last year were reluctant to sign the bill in 2013 and others were late in doing so. We extend our appreciation to the following cosponsors of HJR 6, Iowa Marriage Amendment, which includes 35 of the 53 Republicans and 0 of the 47 Democrats:

ALONS , HEARTSILL , SCHULTZ , WINDSCHITL , KLEIN , SHEETS , DOLECHECK , FRY , BRANDENBURG , GASSMAN , SALMON , KOESTER , PETTENGILL , LANDON , BACON , L. MILLER , VANDER LINDEN , HEIN , HAGENOW , SHAW , ROGERS , FORRISTALL , DEYOE , SANDS , FISHER , DRAKE , SODERBERG , COSTELLO , JORGENSEN , BALTIMORE , RAYHONS , WATTS , GRASSLEY , WORTHAN , and HUSEMAN

The marriage amendment is eligible for consideration during the 2014 session and will be a priority of The FAMiLY LEADER as we look forward to next year.

Education



Education reform was a priority this past session. The FAMIly LEADER along with other interest groups worked to include benefits for home school and private school families. We are very pleased to report that several important provisions related to school choice were included in the final legislation. These included instruction options and reporting relief for home school families. Private schools gained freedom in accreditation and will see an increase in the statewide cap on tuition assistance tax credits. Parent taught drivers education was also legalized for home school parents.

We extend our appreciation to House Republicans who made home school and private school issues a priority. We also extend special gratitude to Representative Salmon and Gassman who led the effort on the House Education Committee.

We also want to thank Eric Goranson with Iowa Association of Christian Schools, Tom Chapman with the Iowa Catholic Conference, and Bill Gustoff with NICHE. It was their hard work that made success a reality.



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Abortion



The FAMiLY LEADER fought hard to prevent tax dollars from going to abortion providers (like Planned Parenthood). Each year millions of dollars find their way into the bank accounts of abortion providers. Our primary focus this year was on the Health and Human Services budget bill. We asked pro-life legislators to refuse to vote for the budget bill if it did NOT prohibit tax funds from going to abortion providers. While the bill passed the House with bipartisan support on the last day of the session, eleven House Republicans held firm and voted NO. They included:

SHAW, SHEETS, SCHULTZ, ALONS, HEARTSILL, SALMON, GASSMAN, FISHER, WATTS, GARRETT AND BRANDENBURG

These heroes deserve our gratitude for standing against the status quo and voting their conscience regardless of the cost. Well done!

Personhood legislation, which protects life at conception, was introduced again this year in the Iowa House by Representative Shaw and several other Republicans. However, it once again failed to get support in the Judiciary Committee and was not given the opportunity to come to a vote.



Senator Dennis Guth, from Klemme, introduced the Human Life Amendment which would amend the Iowa Constitution to say that the inalienable right to life of every person at any stage of development shall be recognized and protected. The FAMILY LEADER will be working on this amendment every legislative session until it is ratified in Iowa. Senator Guth is a champion in the fight to protect life.

We look forward to working with Dan Becker and Personhood USA in the fight to protect life from conception to natural death in future legislative sessions.

Life, Marriage, and Family Rally

TFL hosted their annual Life, Marriage, and Family Rally  this year in the Iowa Capitol on April 23rd. This year Dan Becker with Personhood USA joined us for our rally. The day started with a legislative breakfast. Over 25 representatives and senators came to listen and ask questions of Dan Becker on the Personhood initiative.

[wowslider id="4"] Over 100 people attended the rally that took place on the first floor rotunda of the Iowa Capitol. This year's rally's key focus was on defunding of abortion providers. The rally also focused on marriage, gambling, and other pro-life legislation. Dan Becker along with Bob Vander Plaats, Danny Carroll, Chuck Hurley, Tamara Scott, and Greg Baker addressed the crowd. Following the rally everyone lobbied the Iowa Legislature for two hours on the issue of funding for abortions and abortion providers. Many spent the time to visit with their legislators on this important issue as well as thank them for their service and pray for them and their families.

to Des Moines several times during the session.

Possible agenda items for the 2014 session

1. Iowa Marriage Amendment – passage in both chambers
2. Human Life Amendment – passage in both chambers
3. De-fund abortionists – passage in both chambers and signed by the Governor
4. Passage of Education Savings Accounts for private and home school families

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