

FAITH & JUSTICE

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A Colorado Nurse Fights For The Right To Save
Babies Through Abortion Reversal

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Minutes With Kristen

Leading The Charge To Protect Women's Sports At The UN

By Kristen Waggoner, CEO, President & General Counsel

In October, I had the privilege of bringing an urgent message to the United Nations on behalf of female athletes everywhere. Speaking at a meeting as part of the UN General Assembly, my message was simple: to be safe and fair, female sports must be reserved for females only.

I was joined by a remarkable group of advocates convened by our own ADF International. They included Reem Alsalem, the UN special rapporteur on violence against women and girls; British Olympic swimmer Sharron Davies; and American collegiate athlete and ADF client Lainey Armistead. All spoke in unison for our daughters.

Every woman and girl deserves a level playing field. Yet increasingly, we see males entering women's sports and private spaces, with devastating consequences. Alliance Defending Freedom has stood against this trend from the beginning. Behind our efforts is the truth of Genesis 1: that God created us immutably male and female, and that His design is "very good."

The tragic cost of denying this reality is falling heavily on women. According to the UN special rapporteur's groundbreaking report, which gained global attention, female athletes have lost nearly 900 medals to males competing in the female category. The unavoidable truth is that an average male athlete can often beat

an elite female athlete. Yet women are being forced to pretend otherwise, losing out on fairness, safety, and opportunities.

Lainey's story underscores what is at stake. Her college scholarship, which provided a path to her dream

of becoming a lawyer, came through playing soccer. She knows that the value of fair competition extends well beyond the playing field. It's why she's coming alongside ADF to defend women's sports at the U.S. Supreme Court.

At the UN, the special rapporteur's words resonated far and wide: "Failure to protect the female category in sports is one of the most egregious forms of violence against women and girls." This statement marks a crucial shift in the global conversation on women's sports. Female athletes have suffered for too long under an ideology that elevates fiction over fairness. And they should not have to be the ones defending their own rights.



Kristen Waggoner speaks at a UN event about the need to protect women's sports and private spaces.

Female athletes have lost nearly 900 medals to males competing in the female category.

“

ADF has petitioned the U.S. Supreme Court to hear cases brought by West Virginia, Idaho, and three female athletes we represent. These cases give the Court a historic opportunity to set the record straight, allowing states to protect female sports for females only.

We cannot stand idly by as our daughters are taught lessons in losing, allowing years of early wake-ups, long practices, sweat, and even tears to be disconnected from the results. Every girl deserves to know that while she might not always win, she has a fair shot. ADF will continue to lead this global human rights issue until gender ideology is fully defeated. 🦋

News & Quick Takes

Case Updates From Around The World



Maria Arcara and Selene Cerankosky

Virginia

Two female law students are challenging school officials for punishing them

after they expressed concerns about allowing men to access women's restrooms at Antonin Scalia Law School at George Mason University.

Maria Arcara and Selene Cerankosky shared their concerns in a group chat when a male law student informed the group that he had submitted a proposal to add feminine hygiene products to male restrooms.

In response, Cerankosky said that if women accessed male restrooms, she believed that men would seek to access private female spaces, which would violate her safety and privacy as well as her religious convictions about human sexuality. Arcara voiced her agreement.

Two weeks later, the university issued no-contact orders that prohibited the women from having contact with the male student. This action could jeopardize the women's academic success and future careers.

ADF sued the university on the women's behalf for violating their free speech and religious freedom.

Pennsylvania

A Pennsylvania court ruled in favor of three moms who asserted their rights were violated when a first-grade teacher presented a lesson on gender identity without giving parents a chance to opt out.

The teacher read two books with characters who identified as transgender and told her students, "When children are born, parents make a guess whether they're a boy or a girl. Sometimes parents are wrong." After school, some children expressed confusion about the lesson in conversations with their parents.

When the moms objected to the instruction, the school district administration backed the teacher's conduct even though advance notice and opt-out rights were permitted

for other sensitive topics, including movies and conversations about religious holidays.

"The heart of parental authority on matters of the greatest importance within their own family is undermined when a teacher tells first-graders their parents may be wrong about whether the student is a boy or a girl," wrote the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Pennsylvania in its opinion.

David Berardinelli, one of more than 4,800 attorneys in the ADF Attorney Network, represented the parents in U.S. District Court.



Colorado

The state of Colorado has agreed to pay more than \$1.5 million in attorneys' fees for violating the First Amendment rights of Denver-area graphic artist Lorie Smith and her studio, 303 Creative. The settlement follows the U.S. Supreme Court's 2023 ruling that the state violated Smith's First Amendment rights by forcing her to create designs that violated her beliefs about marriage.

Colorado officials censored Smith's speech for nearly seven years before she was victorious at the high court. They also relentlessly pursued Colorado cake artist Jack Phillips for years, filing complaints against him for expressing only messages consistent with his religious beliefs. (Read a Q&A with Phillips on p. 19.)

The Supreme Court's landmark decision in Smith's case has been cited over 1,000 times in court opinions, briefs, and other legal publications.

I'm free to create art consistent with my beliefs without fear of Colorado punishing me anymore.

“

Lorie Smith





Olga Izquierdo

Peru

The Prosecutor’s Office of Peru upheld a woman’s freedom of expression after she criticized a Lima airport policy that allowed “anyone with a feminine identity” entry to a women’s restroom.

Olga Izquierdo posted three videos sharing her safety concerns, which she had expressed in a formal complaint with the

airport administration. The videos went viral, with over 12.5 million views. A gender ideology activist who viewed them filed a criminal complaint against Izquierdo, alleging that her speech constituted a crime of discrimination.

After the Prosecutor’s Office opened an investigation, ADF International provided its expert opinion, outlining international human rights law and freedom of expression protections. The Prosecutor’s Office decided not to press charges against Izquierdo.



Congregants sing together in Breccia di Roma’s non-traditional worship space.

Italy

A Protestant church in Rome has appealed to Europe’s top human rights court to defend its freedom to worship in the place of its choosing.

In 2015 Breccia di Roma purchased a building previously used as a shop. Like all places of worship in Italy, the building was eligible for a tax exemption. But the Italian Tax Agency claimed the building’s interior architecture was not sufficiently religious in appearance, presenting photos of

a synagogue, a mosque, and a Catholic church as examples of “conventional” places of worship. The church, it said, was therefore required to pay commercial taxes.

Two courts affirmed that evangelical places of worship “can look different” from those of other denominations, but the Italian Supreme Court ruled against the church. Supported by ADF International, Breccia di Roma is challenging the discriminatory decision at the European Court of Human Rights.

Why should the Tax Agency decide what a place of worship should look like?



Leonardo De Chirico, Pastor, Breccia di Roma



All I did was pray to God, in the privacy of my own mind – and yet I stand convicted as a criminal?



Adam Smith-Connor

United Kingdom

In October, a British court convicted an army vet for praying silently near an abortion facility in Bournemouth, England.

Adam Smith-Connor had stopped to pray for a few minutes within a “buffer zone” in November 2022 when police officers interrogated him on “the nature” of his prayers and then arrested him.

In its decision, the court reasoned that his prayer amounted to “disapproval of abortion” and

ordered him to pay legal fees of 9,000 pounds (over \$11,000).

At the time of Smith-Connor’s conviction, five councils across the U.K. had active buffer zones – areas outside abortion facilities where authorities have banned various expressions of pro-life or Christian beliefs. Weeks after his conviction, the UK Parliament rolled out buffer zones around every abortion facility in England and Wales.

Smith-Connor will pursue an appeal against his conviction with support from ADF UK.



Special Feature

Christian Persecution In Nigeria Is Severe — And Growing Worse

By Karen Kurtz

The attacks started on Christmas Eve.

In a coordinated assault in 2023, armed militants descended on largely Christian villages, burning houses, farms, and churches, and killing about 200 people in north-central Nigeria's Plateau State. The brutal attacks continued through Christmas Day, driving about 20,000 Nigerians from their homes.

Today, about half the buildings in each village are in ruins, their roofs gone and many of their walls reduced to rubble. In one village a modest church building still stands, but the home nearby where its pastor and his family once lived is abandoned. The attackers set fire to their house and car, walked the pastor to a scattering of rocks nearby, and beheaded him. Villagers found his head in a field the next morning.

A dangerous place for Christians

More Christians are killed in Nigeria than in all other countries combined. In 2022, roughly 5,000 Nigerian Christians were murdered for their faith. In 2023, over 7,000 Christians were targeted and killed in northern Nigeria, according to one estimate. The number continues to grow.

"Northern Nigeria is one of the most dangerous places in the world to be a Christian," says Sean Nelson, legal counsel for global religious freedom with ADF International. "Living out their Christian faith can be a life-and-death situation for many of the Nigerian clients that we help."

Christians and other religious minorities often face threats of death and destruction of property through violence like the Christmas Eve attacks. Some are



confronted with blasphemy laws, forced marriages and conversions, and violations of due process.

“ADF International is committed to turning this around,” Nelson says. He traveled to Nigeria in 2024 to meet with Christian leaders and allied lawyers who are defending the rights of Christians. He also talked with clients who are receiving legal support from ADF International — like Rhoda, Adah, Ezekiel, and David.

Rhoda, a Christian mother of five, was imprisoned in May 2022 for allegedly sharing a video on the messaging app WhatsApp regarding the lynching of a Christian college student.

The video allegedly condemned the attack on Deborah Emmanuel Yakubu, who was murdered and set on fire a few days earlier by a mob of Muslim classmates for sharing her Christian faith. Rhoda was charged with “blasphemy.”

Blasphemy laws punish individuals for speech that others find offensive to their own beliefs. They are found in many countries, like Nigeria, that implement Islamic Sharia law.

For a year and a half after her arrest, Rhoda was detained in a jail cell with little access to family members and attorneys. Following a national outcry, a judge granted her bail in December 2023. But she faced up to five years’ imprisonment if convicted of the charges against her.

In response to appeals from ADF International and other religious freedom advocacy organizations, United Nations experts sent a joint allegation letter to the Nigerian government highlighting the danger of blasphemy laws as a violation of international human rights. The letter called attention to Rhoda’s case.

Through advocacy efforts and the work of ADF International and its allied lawyers, Rhoda was fully acquitted in December 2024. She is now in a safe location with her family.



Rhoda shares with Sean Nelson how her faith was strengthened during her trial and imprisonment.

Northern Nigeria is one of the most dangerous places in the world to be a Christian.



Sean Nelson, ADF International Legal Counsel

Adah* was 19 when friends in her majority Muslim state in northern Nigeria introduced her to Christianity in 2023.

Interested, she turned to a pastor and leaders in a local evangelical church

who often worked with Muslims who were thinking about becoming Christians. Following a series of conversations, she decided to become a Christian — then immediately received violent threats from friends and family members. She fled to a majority Christian state, where a local church provided a safe home and discipleship training.

Below, Sean Nelson and Nigerian religious leaders visit Christian villages targeted during Christmas Eve attacks in 2023. Shown here, from left:

- 1) a home now in ruins, 2) the site where a pastor was beheaded, 3) houses destroyed by fire, 4) Nelson and religious leaders at a mass grave, 5) Nelson speaks to a congregation whose pastor was beheaded.



Two weeks after Adah’s escape, her home community lodged a complaint with police against the pastor and church leaders who had advised her before her conversion. The pastor, Ezekiel*, and an evangelist, David*, were kidnapped, tortured for two weeks, and then handed over to police in early 2024. The police insisted that the church bring Adah to the station to be released to the local community before Ezekiel and David could be released.

If Adah had been returned, she would have risked being lynched or imprisoned. Instead, local ADF allied lawyers helped her file a Fundamental Rights Enforcement claim stating that she had the right to convert to Christianity and to receive a protective order against any violent attempts against her. Adah obtained the requested court order and remains in a loving and safe church community.

ADF allied lawyers also intervened on behalf of Ezekiel and David. After the kidnappers handed them over to the police, Ezekiel was freed with no charges. But police falsely charged David with kidnapping and convicted him without a lawyer in a three-day sham trial. He faces the possibility of years in prison. Allied lawyers obtained bail and appealed his conviction. Both men continue to work with their church community.

Despite persecution, joy remains

On the last day of his trip, Nelson and 10 Nigerian religious leaders visited many of the villages targeted during the Christmas Eve attacks. Walking into an abandoned church in one village, they were astonished to find a shining white cross still in its place at the front of the roofless structure. Soon, they began to hear music. Villagers were approaching, singing a Nigerian praise song and joyfully clapping to the music as they entered the church.

The villagers had seen cars parked in front of the church — an unusual sight in their remote location. “They came over because they wanted to talk to us, to talk about what was going on,” Nelson says. “They said the only times they had had any Westerners or people who would help, they would just drive through. We were the first people to actually get out and talk to them.”

Nelson learned that, after the attacks, the villagers

had found a temporary home in internally displaced persons (IDP) camps that offered relative safety and humanitarian support. But conditions were poor and worsening, and they had decided to return to their homes a month before.

The Holy Spirit truly dwells with these people in the most difficult circumstances.

“

Sean Nelson, ADF International
Legal Counsel



WATCH a video to learn more about what Christians are facing in Nigeria. Visit JoinADF.com/FJ-Nigeria.

Now the entire village was there, joining in the worship. Nelson recognized the word “Hallelujah,” and one of the religious leaders who accompanied him translated the rest: “And God will thank you for your love towards us.”

“It was one of the most powerful moments of my life,” Nelson says. “The Holy Spirit

truly dwells with these people in the most difficult circumstances.”

ADF International is working to change those difficult circumstances. During his visit, Nelson says, he learned just how widespread the injustices against Christians are in Nigeria and was reminded how necessary the work of lawyers is to defend their right to freely practice their faith.

“I saw their need with my own eyes,” he says. “I was struck with ‘Whatever I can do to help these people, I want to do it.’” **A**

** Names have been changed for security reasons.*

Alliance Profile

Katy Faust

By Liana Imperato

Katy Faust doesn't like to make waves. But in 2012, amid the then-growing national debate on same-sex marriage, Katy's passions were stirred enough to start with a ripple: a blog where she wrote anonymously about marriage and family.

Now, as a full-time advocate for children's rights, Katy traces her work back to that blog.

Under the shield of anonymity, she wrote boldly about same-sex marriage, divorce, in vitro fertilization (IVF), and surrogacy. Ultimately, her position on each issue came down to putting children first. "At some point, every adult will have to say, 'It's us or them,'" says Katy. "And a just society says, 'It's them — the children.'"

She considers this heart for children an outpouring of her God-given identity. A few years ago, she says, God revealed a specific name and purpose He had for her: "friend of the suffering."

**The thing about kids is they don't vote.
It is up to us adults to recognize and
defend their rights.**

“

Katy Faust

Seeing children suffering at the hands of bad policies and a morally bankrupt culture compelled Katy to keep speaking out — even after an online activist revealed her identity, exposing her and her church to significant backlash.

But the Lord, she says, used this for good. Now a public figure, Katy could do even more, submitting amicus briefs, leading workshops, and putting her name and face to her work.

In 2018, she launched Them Before Us, which seeks to protect children's rights by changing hearts and changing laws. "If you are really going to have a proper defense of children, you have to do both," Katy says.

A proper defense of children, Katy believes, means protecting them in five critical areas.

It involves, first, standing for the sanctity of **life** amid the "two-front war" against abortion and IVF. Second, upholding God's design for **family** by affirming the essential place of mothers and fathers and the right of parents to guide and protect their children.

Third, guarding every child's **mind** — their right to innocence — and fourth, their **body**, untraumatized by medical experimentation. And, finally, their **future**, by considering the long-term effects of government policies on children.

"The thing about kids is they don't vote," Katy says. "It is up to us adults to recognize and defend their rights because there is no other way they are going to be protected."

As she reaches more hearts with the Them Before Us message, Katy also wants to equip the church to do the same.

Her organization offers a small-group curriculum for churches, providing a comprehensive, scriptural approach to marriage and family issues.

Katy has also published books and articles, spoken at events and on podcasts, and is producing a documentary with Focus on the Family. All of those efforts, she says, come back to her identity as a friend of the suffering.

"That's the only reason I fight, because I'm so burdened for these children... I see what distorted cultural, legal, technological, and ideological aims have done to [children]," Katy says. "And that's where I say, 'Fight me. Now we go'" — wherever that fight needs to happen. **A**

Katy is married to Ryan Faust and has four children, ranging in age from 15 to 21.



Out Of The Cold

A Colorado Nurse Fights For The Right To Save Babies
Through Abortion Reversal

By Chris Potts

It'll be fine," Mackenna Greene told herself. And kept telling herself as the long day ran on, and on, and on. "You're making the right decision," her brain assured her, "for you and your family."

She had good reasons, her brain assured her, for aborting this new child in her womb. At 25, Mackenna was excited about starting a new career. A second baby could only mess that up. She and her boyfriend already had a 2-year-old, but things hadn't been too smooth between them lately; another child would only complicate that. Plus, finances were tight enough as it was.

"Abortion," Mackenna says, "was my get-out-of-jail-free card. The easy way out. I just told myself, 'This is what you have to do.'"

But her heart kept offering a second opinion. "I don't know that you should do this," it told me. "Think of all the repercussions." But her brain pushed back, hard: "The less you think about it, the easier it will be. Just do it."

Abortion meds aren't hard to find, Mackenna learned: just Google "abortion," place an online order, and the drugs arrive a day or so later. "Good," she thought: no doctor, no nurse, no awkward conversations.

"The whole process was ... cold, is the best way I can explain it."

Sitting at the kitchen table, though — the pill in her hand — the enormity of her decision seemed to hang in the air.

"You think, 'one little pill can do that much damage?'" Mackenna says. But there was no one to encourage her in another direction. "There was no human interaction: 'Do you need something? Do you want to talk to somebody?' No, I didn't." She gulped down the pill.

Guilt, it turns out, is harder to swallow. All the next day, Mackenna's heart nagged at her. "Am I still pregnant now, or have I done something irreparable?" She kept closing her laptop, too distracted by the question to work. Mostly, she cried.

At home, the tears kept coming — and then her mother decided to come over. And to come inside.

"She *never* comes over," Mackenna marvels. "We usually just meet at her house. I know God was working that day." Standing there, her mother sensed Mackenna was upset about something. And suddenly, it all came pouring out.

"You could see in her eyes that she was taking a second to not judge me. She was like, 'What do I do? How can we fix

this?'" Mackenna didn't know, so she turned to Google again: "*Can you reverse an abortion?*"

A number appeared for the Abortion Pill Reversal hotline. Mackenna steeled herself and called. The kindly woman on the other end of the line said they had someone, a nurse practitioner, who might be able to help. They would have her call.

Her name, they said, was Chelsea.

Abortion was my get-out-of-jail-free card. The easy way out.

“

Mackenna Greene



Mackenna Greene (left) keeps a warm place in her heart for the woman, Chelsea Mynyk, who answered her desperate call for help.

Chelsea Mynyk can't remember when she didn't love babies. And mothers. And anything having to do with giving birth.

"It's something that's been ingrained in her since she could remember anything," says Daniel, her husband of 15 years. "She remembers her younger sister being born. Even as a 2-year-old, she knew she wanted to be a midwife, like the one who delivered her younger sister."

"I just remember the midwives letting me listen to the babies' heart taps," Chelsea says, "I thought, 'Wow! This is amazing. I want to do this when I get bigger.'"

"When she was a baby herself," says her mother, Tammy, "I made her a little book with magazine pictures

others." But the journey took some long and winding roads.

While in college, she worked as a nurse's aide. But it wasn't what she sensed as God's calling for her life. Though her nursing studies focused on labor and delivery, she soon found that "a lot of the hospitals here required that I help with abortion procedures. I wasn't comfortable doing that ... so I wasn't getting hired."

Instead, she found work in pregnancy care centers, training in ultrasound and apprenticing with a midwife. She especially enjoyed her interactions with expectant mothers. But, listening to their stories, she also began to notice a difference between the warm encouragement

the care centers offered women experiencing a difficult pregnancy ... and the sometimes cool, detached tone of hospital doctors, who often questioned their maternal decisions.

"Why are we doing this to these women?" Chelsea wondered. Wanting better options for the mothers she was working with, she decided to earn an advanced degree — one that would allow her to offer a more supportive kind of prenatal care. That decision took her to school in Florida, where she met her husband; after she graduated, they made their way back to Colorado to begin a family.

Within a few years, she had completed another degree and soon, as a certified midwife and nurse practitioner, she was helping women choose for themselves if they were willing to take the risks of sometimes complicated, unpredictable pregnancies.

I'm a strong believer in trying to equip women to be in charge of their own health," Chelsea says. Her background, she found, helped her to be especially attentive to women who often feel "powerless," she says, as they face the pressures of childbirth and a sometimes chilly medical establishment.

"As a nurse, you have to work at the bedside a lot," Chelsea says. "And a lot of patients tell me that nurses just listen a little bit differently than a doctor." Often, women tell her, "they feel like they're just rushed in and out of an appointment that's only 10-15 minutes long. They don't feel like they're heard."



of babies, and she would flip through it. She just always loved babies." As her daughter grew older, Tammy says, she was fascinated with the story of Florence Nightingale. "That was very inspirational to her."

Following in Florence's footsteps "was kind of a journey," Chelsea says. "I always had a heart for helping

I try to help [women] see that they're loved, they're valuable, they're seen.

“

Chelsea Mynyk



The Mynyks' ministry involves their whole family, including their smiling 12-year-old son (back left), whom Chelsea's doctor urged her to abort.

Chelsea created a baby book titled "A Little Miracle" that chronicles the early journey of their second son's life. Shown here are images of his first week of life in the neonatal intensive care unit.



About eight weeks into her second pregnancy, Chelsea's doctor diagnosed her with a subchorionic hemorrhage, in which the placenta pulls away from the wall of the uterus and then reattaches. As a result, the doctor said, Chelsea would likely have a miscarriage, or the baby would be born with Down syndrome. The doctor recommended an abortion.

"We don't believe in that," the Mynyks told her. The doctor thought they'd misunderstood. "But that's the best thing you can do for you and your baby," she said — and kept saying. But Chelsea and Daniel remained adamant. Twelve weeks later, another ultrasound showed that Chelsea had begun to miscarry ... but the process, somehow, had stopped.

Chelsea, on the other hand, books her appointments for an hour, "so we have that time to talk with them, get to know them, get to know what they're struggling with ... how they're sleeping, eating. We're taking in the whole person."

In the course of her midwife work, the little girl who always wanted to help bring babies into the world delivered about 100. And the thrill, Chelsea says, never got old.

"There's a kind of 'overwhelming-ness,' she says, to seeing new life come forth. "It's a beautiful thing."

Even more beautiful, she found, is giving birth to your own. Chelsea and Daniel now have four healthy children, but two pregnancies changed their lives — and Chelsea's work — forever.

Seeing hints of Down syndrome, the doctor again urged the Mynyks to abort the baby. "By the way," she told them, "congratulations. You're having a boy." Chelsea couldn't understand how a physician could celebrate a child and simultaneously urge its destruction.

"Imagine all these women who don't have that foundation of being pro-life, and they get pressured like that," Chelsea says. "No wonder they give in." She determined to find a way to provide OB-GYN services that didn't offer abortion as a knee-jerk reaction to pregnancy complications.

That decision was cemented when her second son was born — without Down syndrome. He's now 12, "and just a joy," Chelsea says. "Our little miracle baby."



Chelsea Mynyk sorts through the large collection of maternity items she keeps in stock to give to new mothers she helps through her clinic.

The Mynyks' next child, a daughter, was born healthy. But their fourth — another girl — didn't get the kind of miracle her older brother received. Chelsea miscarried ... an experience that chilled the young mother to her core.

"It was just a really challenging time," she says. "One of the darkest in my life.

"When you go through something like that, it deepens your understanding and concern about other people," Chelsea says. "And it shaped how I respond and want to reach out to women.

"I felt — and other moms have told me this, too — just ... alone." Women see other moms, she says, and think, "I know she had a miscarriage, but she seems to be fine. What's wrong with me?" Christian women, in particular, Chelsea says, think, "I should be different." But "that's not true," she says, and she wants to help her patients understand that.

"You're not alone," she tells them. "Even Christians struggle with feeling that loss. And that's OK. I'm here for you."

Chelsea says she was a long time getting past her own emotions, in the wake of two difficult pregnancies. But the coming of her two youngest children helped

her move past some of the pain of her own loss ... while the pressures she endured during her second son's gestation moved her and Daniel to look at opening a full-service women's health clinic of their own.

They renovated the basement of their house to create an examination room, a small kitchen, and an extra bedroom — all in a homey, restful setting where Chelsea can offer women exams, neonatal assessments, sonograms, a listening ear, good medical advice, and, on occasion, even gentle spiritual counsel. In most cases, she offers her services for free, to women who couldn't afford such care otherwise. She also dispenses medications, where needed ... including, in the last year or so, a remarkable new resource: abortion pill reversal (APR).



The reversal medication is just natural progesterone," Chelsea says — a hormone that women usually produce in abundance during pregnancy. If given in time, APR works by supplying enough progesterone — hopefully — to counteract the effects of the abortion drug. Statistics show that the APR protocol may have saved over 5,000 unborn lives; studies indicate it has a 64-68% success rate.

Of the four women whom she's helped complete the reversal treatment, Chelsea says, "I've had three successful ones." Unfortunately, that's three more than the state of Colorado would approve.

I have moms coming to me, in tears, desperate to reverse what they've done. I can't imagine not being able to offer this.



Chelsea Mynyk

Colorado Senate Bill 23-190 became law in 2023, banning doctors and nurse practitioners like Chelsea from offering, advertising, or prescribing APR. Anyone doing so could face a \$20,000 fine per violation and risks losing their medical license. That poses a

tough question for professionals like Chelsea, who have strong convictions against abortion.

“I feel religiously obligated to offer this option to women,” she says. “To try to make that a choice. So, do I go with this unconstitutional law, or do I follow what God has called me to do?”

Her concerns were relieved, at first, when a pregnancy care center in the Denver area, Bella Health + Wellness, filed a lawsuit challenging the new statute. Bella’s attorneys asked the court hearing the case for an injunction, allowing its medical staff to continue prescribing the reversal medication while their case proceeded. That injunction was granted, and Chelsea, following the case, assumed it covered all medical providers prescribing APR — including her.

She learned otherwise when she received a letter from the state Board of Nursing, telling her that an anonymous third party had called for the suspension of her license because she was still offering her patients APR. The injunction, it seemed, applied only to Bella.

“I was devastated,” Chelsea says. “I thought, ‘This is it — I don’t get to practice anymore.’ I wasn’t sure what I would do.”

“She asked me to look for legal representation,” Daniel says. He suggested reaching out to Alliance Defending Freedom, which he knew had been defending Colorado cake artist Jack Phillips. ADF attorneys applied for Chelsea to join the Bella lawsuit, filed by a fellow Christian legal ministry, the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty. The two ministries are now working together on the lawsuit.

“This case is a big deal,” says Kevin Theriot, senior counsel with the ADF Center for Life. While ADF is involved in other reversal cases around the country, he says, Colorado was the first state to outlaw abortion pill reversal outright.

Why would a state want to deny pregnant women the chance to save their children?

“It doesn’t make any sense,” Theriot says. “You would think people who are ‘pro-choice’ would say that women ought to be able to reverse the abortion if they want to. But the pro-abortion lobby opposes APR. It undermines their narrative, that women who want an abortion are always sure of their decision and never regret it.” In fact, requests for reversal “show that oftentimes they are not sure and change their mind.”

“The Colorado law is part of a concerted effort we’re seeing across the country to crack down on pregnancy care centers,” says Julia Payne, legal counsel with the ADF Center for Life. “A lot of states seemed to want to shut down these facilities, even before the *Dobbs*

decision. Now they’re making an even more concerted effort to do so.”

Those efforts, she says, involve everything from misinformation about what services the clinics provide to accusations that they’re misleading women who come to them for abortion. More recently, state officials have turned to misrepresenting the safety and success of APR.

While Theriot says he’s “prayerfully optimistic” about Chelsea and Bella’s chances for success, he does expect Colorado officials to appeal if they lose. And if judges rule for the state, Chelsea could be open to the penalties the law prescribes. But she considers winning the lawsuit worth the risk.

The Colorado law is part of a concerted effort we’re seeing across the country to crack down on pregnancy care centers.

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Julia Payne, ADF Legal Counsel



“Is it too late?” Mackenna asked Chelsea, after taking the abortion reversal pill. Chelsea could make no promises but wrote the word “hope” on Mackenna’s next sonogram. Colorado’s new law may rob many would-be mothers of that same hope.

Abortion pill reversal, she says, “is a life-saving measure. I have moms coming to me, in tears, desperate to reverse what they’ve done. I can’t imagine not being able to offer this — it’s safe, it’s effective, and these women want it.”

**It's hard to look at her, sometimes,
and think, 'You might not be here because
of a selfish decision that I made.'**

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Mackenna Greene

But most of all, Chelsea says, “it’s a religious obligation. God says in the Bible that He made us in His image. We are image-bearers of Christ, from conception, so protecting and preserving life is my duty as both a Christian and a provider.”

Happily, the judge who granted the injunction to Bella extended it to Chelsea, too; for now, she can continue offering reversal treatment to mothers who want it. And Mackenna wanted it very much indeed.



Mackenna and her daughter, Sayla, whose life was saved through abortion pill reversal.

To Mackenna’s surprise, “Chelsea was the most nonjudgmental, welcoming individual. She gave me a *hug*. She went above and beyond, appeased all concerns, and I’m forever grateful.”

At the time, though, nothing was certain. It had been 24 hours since Mackenna swallowed the abortion drug, and every ticking minute was a strike against her child’s survival. Chelsea prescribed the reversal medication, and

Mackenna took it faithfully. That left little else to do but wait. And pray.

“I was not very religious at all, going into this,” Mackenna says. But “after meeting with Chelsea and realizing the gravity of the situation we’d gotten ourselves into, I really did start leaning into God. I was at a really desperate time in my life, and I needed somebody else to share that burden with.

“To be able to go to God and say, ‘I am so sorry for not being a better member of this relationship ... but let me repent. Let me make up for that. Let’s work together — regardless of what happens. I need Your help.’”

“**W**ho am I going to get on the phone?” Mackenna wondered, waiting for Chelsea’s call. She was dreading something cold: a smug lecture, a voice dripping with contempt. Thankfully, she says, neither the woman on the hotline nor, later, Chelsea, offered anything like that.

“Everyone I’ve come in contact with has been so supportive,” she says. “Not judgmental at all.” Still, with Chelsea, “it was really hard telling that woman what I’d done.” Coming into her clinic, she saw Bible verses and other signs of Chelsea’s faith, “so I was really afraid of what her opinion would be of me.”



You would think people who are ‘pro-choice’ would say that women ought to be able to reverse the abortion if they want to.

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Kevin Theriot, ADF Senior Counsel

Beginning to read the Bible, Mackenna and her boyfriend came upon a term used frequently in the Psalms: *Selah*. “It’s Hebrew, and just means ‘pause’ — taking a breath. That’s how I feel now: like I can take that moment and breathe.” She decided to name her daughter — born late last summer, in perfect health — “Sayla.”

“I wasn’t ready for the guilt that I feel, even after a successful reversal,” Mackenna says. “I have a hard time forgiving myself. It’s hard to look at her, sometimes, and think, ‘You might not be here because of a selfish decision that I made. Please forgive me.’”

“It’s like she was just always meant to be here,” she says. “I have a great relationship with God now. It’s crazy how leaning into Him can help the pieces kind of align.

“Life is just easier, when you lean into Him.”

Her experiences with Chelsea — the warmth she found at her clinic, after the cold contact she felt with abortion drug providers — has made Mackenna a fervent opponent of Senate Bill 23-190.

“It’s insane to me how it’s easier for a woman to obtain the abortion drug than it is for her to receive the life-saving care to reverse that,” she says. “If you’re going to be a state that allows freedom to choose — ‘my body, my choice’ — that has to be followed through. Even if a woman decides to

change her mind on an abortion, it’s still her choice to change. So, why is she being judged and prohibited from doing so?

“I love that

Chelsea didn’t have that mentality,” Mackenna says. Instead, “she’s like, ‘I’m going to help you and do everything I can to love you and your baby.’”


“You don’t know what God’s going to ask you to do,” her mom, Tammy says. “It takes a lot of courage to stand up and do this. Chelsea tends to be a shy, introverted person, and here she is in the limelight. It’s hard for her ... but she is doing what God has asked her to do.”

“A ministry like this is not for the faint of heart,” Daniel says. “It means a lot to me, to see this strong desire in Chelsea ... to look for opportunities to find people who have needs and figure out how to meet them. To see lives change.”

“A lot of these people — the women, and their partners with them — are coming from broken places, where they felt like they were less than, or not good enough,” Chelsea says. “I try to help them see that they’re loved, they’re valuable, they’re seen.

“Sometimes — seeing just how we treat them differently than how they’ve been treated before in healthcare systems, or with family members — they want to know, ‘Why are you different? Tell me how I can have that peace ... that hope that you talk about.’ It’s just amazing to see how God works. We’ve seen couples actually come to know Jesus through that.

“I love that I get to bring hope to them: the hope of Christ, the hope of having their baby in their arms one day. Even apart from abortion pill reversal, just offering women and families hope.”

Hope. Mackenna knows, now, what a warm thing that is. 

WATCH Chelsea and Mackenna share their story. Visit JoinADF.com/FJ-Reversal.

My View

Why I Blew The Whistle

I Could Face Prison For Exposing A Hospital's Secret Gender Program

By Dr. Eithan Haim

Clichés are funny things. They're easy to dismiss, but sometimes there's nothing truer in this world. For example, we've all heard parents say their new child is "the most perfect baby ever." I've never taken those comments seriously, but now I know those parents have all been lying.

Because I met my daughter for the first time on September 25. And she is, without a doubt, the most perfect baby ever. She is a little ray of sunshine in this dark cloud (see, there's another cliché) I have lived under for the last few years.

The day after my daughter was born, I had to leave for a pretrial conference because I had been indicted by the United States Department of Justice. The DOJ is threatening to put me in prison for the first 10 years of my daughter's life.

The reason? I told the truth.

I'm a pediatric surgeon, and truth is the most valuable currency I share with my patients — those who trust me with their lives while they lie anesthetized on a table. Children and parents all over my home state have put that same trust in Texas Children's Hospital (TCH). But the hospital has betrayed them again and again.

You see, instead of pursuing treatment rooted in evidence and science, TCH was selling ideology.

The hospital was performing surgeries and providing puberty-blocking drugs and cross-sex hormones to kids experiencing discomfort with their biological sex. These dangerous

drugs and procedures are known to inflict irreversible damage, including the risk of sterility and stunted brain development.

Thankfully, many are awakening to the reality that this so-called "gender-affirming care" has no proven long-term benefits.

In February 2022, Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton issued an opinion stating that these harmful procedures for minors qualified as child abuse. Afterward, TCH announced that they would stop providing those services, essentially shutting down their gender program.

Or so they said.

They never shut anything down. I know this because I worked there as a surgical resident, and I knew the people performing the procedures. Three days after the hospital issued its statement, a surgeon implanted a puberty-blocking device in an 11-year-old girl. Over the next year, the hospital continued to perform harmful procedures on young, vulnerable children.

I was faced with a choice: stay silent, finish my residency, and continue chasing my dreams — or speak up. Only one option would allow me to sleep at night.

With the help of an investigative journalist, I blew the whistle on TCH and exposed the fact that it was secretly continuing to provide dangerous drugs and



Dr. Eithan Haim with his attorney, Marcella Burke, at ADF Summit 2024.

A crowd advocates for children outside the Supreme Court prior to oral arguments in *U.S. v. Skrmetti* in December. The case supports Tennessee's efforts to defend its law protecting children from experimental medical procedures. ADF filed a friend-of-the-court brief with the high court supporting the law.

surgeries to minors. The story came out on May 16, 2023. On May 19, Paxton announced an investigation into TCH.

The Department of Justice took notice. A month later, armed federal agents showed up at my door to tell me that I was being criminally investigated for a case regarding "medical records." I knew the government was trying to silence me, but in the months that followed, it became clear that the corruption was worse than I ever could have imagined.

The DOJ prosecutor never reviewed the evidence against me. That didn't stop her from asking me to admit wrongdoing and apologize to the "victims" to avoid a felony conviction.

The prosecutor even claimed that my wife, who was undergoing a background check to become an assistant U.S. attorney, had interfered with a criminal investigation by advising me of my right to an attorney. The prosecutor said she would not mention my wife's behavior "unless [she] becomes difficult."

Throughout this process, I have been so thankful for my attorney, Marcella Burke of Burke Law Group, and her team and for the financial support we have received from Alliance Defending Freedom.

This investigation has cost me almost everything. My wife and I jeopardized our careers, exhausted our savings, and were ready to drop our defense because we couldn't afford to continue. But ADF stepped in, giving us the resources to keep fighting.

I could make all of this go away at any moment. I could stop fighting, and I might have a good reason staring up at me from her crib. But my baby girl is exactly the reason I can't quit. Every time I hold her, I'm reminded of the responsibility we all have to protect the next generation. I spoke up so we could leave a better world for our children.

Call it a cliché if you must. But I know there's nothing truer in this world. 🐾

Dr. Haim's attorney, Marcella Burke, is an ADF Allied Attorney. Her team includes alumni of Blackstone Legal Fellowship, ADF's leadership program for Christian law students.

This investigation has cost me almost everything.

“

Dr. Eithan Haim



Do No Harm

In addition to helping fund Eithan Haim's case, ADF is involved in other important legal efforts to protect children from harmful medical procedures.

Alabama's legislature passed the Alabama Vulnerable Child Compassion and Protection Act in 2022, which prohibits the use of puberty blockers, cross-sex hormones, and harmful surgeries on children. The law protects vulnerable children who may be suffering from gender dysphoria from experimental medical interventions that can have dangerous, irreversible, life-long effects.

Activists and politicized interest groups immediately challenged Alabama's commonsense law. At the state's request, ADF intervened and has been representing Alabama in defense of the law. The U.S. Court of Appeals for the 11th Circuit overturned a lower court's ruling, allowing the law to take effect while the case proceeds.

Idaho passed a similar law in 2023, the Vulnerable Child Protection Act, limiting dangerous medical procedures like puberty-blocking drugs and harmful surgeries. The law has faced similar legal challenges from activists. Again, ADF stepped in to represent the state alongside attorneys from Cooper & Kirk.

After a lower court stopped the full law from going into effect, the Idaho attorney general's office appealed that decision to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit. But the 9th Circuit denied the request.

Idaho appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court, which narrowed the lower court's ruling, permitting the state to protect children while the case continues. Idaho is now asking the 9th Circuit to allow the state to fully enforce the law.

Q & A

Jack Phillips

Twenty Seconds Changed His Life — And A Lot Of Other Lives, Too

By Charles Snow

Jack Phillips is a cake artist and owner of Masterpiece Cakeshop in Lakewood, Colorado. He became an unlikely public figure in 2012, when he politely declined to create a custom cake celebrating a same-sex wedding because doing so would violate his religious beliefs — a decision that launched a 12-year legal battle.

The men who requested the cake filed a complaint with the Colorado Civil Rights Commission, which ruled that Jack violated the state's anti-discrimination law by declining the request. After six years of litigation, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in 2018 that the commission had expressed impermissible hostility toward Jack's faith.

On the same day the Supreme Court announced it would hear Jack's case, an activist attorney called his shop to request a custom cake that would celebrate a gender transition. Jack declined the request, again citing his religious opposition to the cake's message, and the attorney filed a lawsuit against him. The Colorado Supreme Court dismissed the suit in October.

Alliance Defending Freedom, which has defended Jack throughout his legal ordeal, sat down with him to discuss what these years and experiences have meant to him and his family.

F&J: You've gone through so much since your legal journey began more than 12 years ago. How are you different now?

JP: The biggest difference is my ability to rely on God's sovereignty in all situations. I think a lot about the hot July day that changed my life. Two men came into Masterpiece Cakeshop to look at wedding cakes. I serve people from all backgrounds, but I cannot express every message through my custom cakes. So, I told the men that I'd gladly sell them anything in my shop, but I cannot create custom cakes that celebrate a same-sex wedding. That conversation was just 20 seconds, but it ignited a firestorm that I wasn't expecting. I knew I needed help, but I didn't know where to start. A few days later, a friend at Focus on the Family told me there are organizations that can help in situations like this, for free. That was so good to know because, at the time, I couldn't afford to take a

lawyer out to lunch, much less hire one. That very day I was connected with Alliance Defending Freedom, and we've been on this journey together ever since.

F&J: How did God prepare you for that 20-second, life-changing conversation and for all that lay ahead?

JP: Before we opened Masterpiece Cakeshop in 1993, my wife and I had lots of conversations. We knew that there were cakes we couldn't create — messages that we just couldn't promote. We knew that we couldn't create cakes with profanity or to celebrate Halloween, for instance. We even talked about same-sex wedding cakes. God taught us how to love our customers well, even when we couldn't create the cake they were requesting. He taught us how to decline things politely and explain that our decisions were based on the messages in the cake themselves, not who was standing in front of us at the counter. He had been preparing me for nearly 20 years for that 20-second conversation.

F&J: Many readers who have followed your story may think, "I couldn't go through something like that." What would you say to them?

JP: I would urge them to remember God's promises in scripture. One verse in particular comes to mind — 2 Chronicles 16:9: "For the eyes of the Lord range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts

I think people could hear my story and think it turned my world upside down.... But looking back now, I can say that it turned my life right-side-up.

“

Jack Phillips

are fully committed to him.” God promises to strengthen you, friend. The Lord has used that verse over and over again to remind me of His sovereignty and love for me. I needed that encouragement because it wasn’t all roses.

That night in July 2012 was the darkest night of the entire 12 years for me. No one had ever gotten angry at one of our cake decisions. I started getting hateful calls and death threats. As I walked into the grocery store on the way home from the cakeshop, the Lord put 2 Timothy 1:7 on my heart: “God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and a *sound mind*.” Not fear, but a sound mind. I realized that this was His battle, not mine. That showed up so many times throughout the 12 years. One time in particular sticks out. After you start getting hate-filled calls, it makes you cautious about answering the phone. But I picked up the phone one day with a smile on my face, which I always tried to do. The voice on the other end simply asked how they could pray for me. That had an indelible impact on me.

F&J: Your story has made an impact on many people. What has this meant to you?

JP: I’m humbled by that. A few people come to mind. There’s Lorie Smith, a Christian web designer just down the road from me here in Colorado. She saw how Colorado was using one of its laws to attack me, and she wondered if she’d find herself in the same trouble. She contacted ADF, and you guys took her case. Her case eventually went to the U.S. Supreme Court, and she won a huge victory for free speech. There’s a man I know who identifies as a former gay activist who testified on my behalf in one of my cases. He’s become a good friend. And near and dear to



God can use anything to accomplish His good purposes.

“

Jack Phillips

my heart is my nephew, who came to faith in Christ during this journey.

I think people could hear my story and think it turned my world upside down. In some ways, I guess it did. But looking back now, I can say that it turned my life right-side-up. It changed my life completely. God can use anything to accomplish His good purposes.

F&J: Many who read this magazine have supported you and followed your story for years. What would you like to say to them?

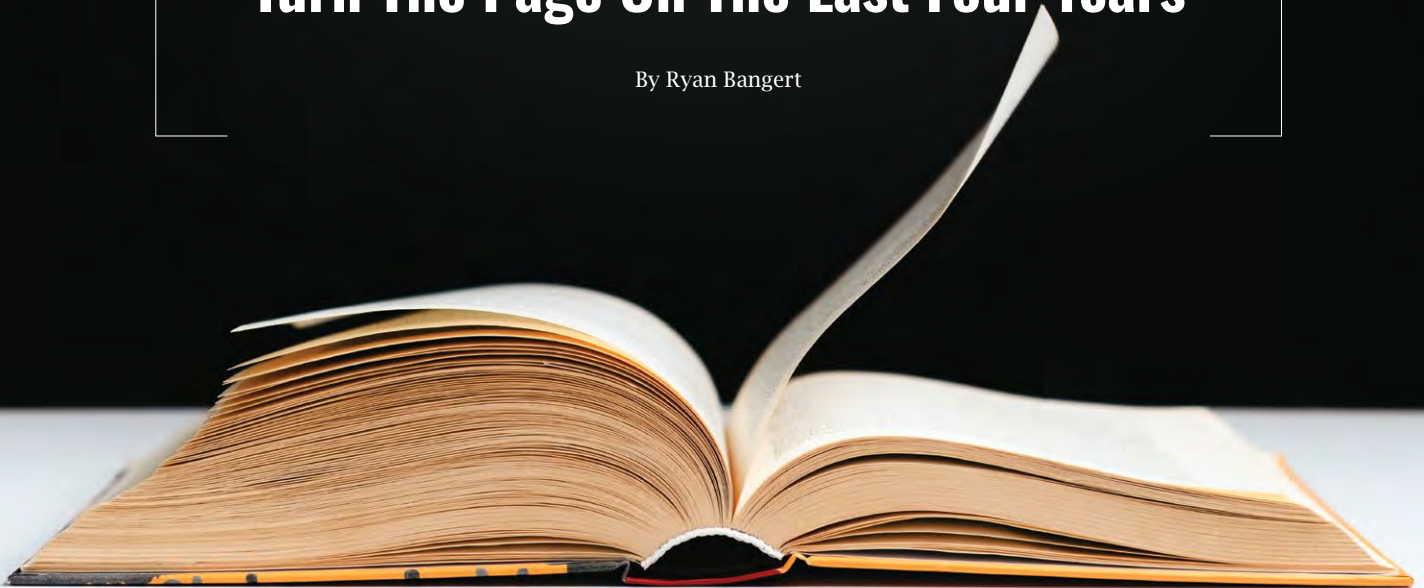
JP: I’d say that I never expected this. Never. I never thought that the

decisions I made in my little cake shop would land me at our nation’s highest court. But I am also so glad that the Lord put this trial in my life. I’ve gotten to tell my story, share my testimony of how my faith in Jesus Christ has impacted my life, and help people understand that free speech is for *everyone* — even to people like the hosts of “The View.” I gotta be honest, I didn’t even know what “The View” was before Kristen [Waggoner] and I were on the show. ADF has been with me every step of the way. For those who have supported me, I cannot thank you enough. I’ve felt your prayers. **A**

Opinion

How The Trump Administration Can Turn The Page On The Last Four Years

By Ryan Bangert



Elections matter. Presidential elections in particular matter because the winner controls the vast apparatus of the federal administrative state. For the past four years, the Biden-Harris administration has steered federal agencies to implement policies that confuse the distinction between male and female, undermine religious liberty, compromise freedom of speech, and promote abortion on demand.

When President Biden took office, Alliance Defending Freedom promised to hold him accountable to the Constitution when his administration took actions that threatened fundamental liberties:

- When the Department of Housing and Urban Development issued a directive that would force private Christian colleges to place males in female

dorms, ADF filed a lawsuit on behalf of the College of the Ozarks challenging the directive.

- When the Department of Education issued a new rule unlawfully reinterpreting Title IX — which prohibits schools and universities from discriminating based on sex — to encompass discrimination based on gender identity, ADF sued the Department *five times*, winning each time.
- When the U.S. Department of Agriculture tried to take away federally funded school lunches from low-income children attending a Christian school in Florida simply because it would not post signs contradicting its religious beliefs, ADF sued and forced the USDA to back down.

Just as an election can usher in officials determined to violate fundamental freedoms, it can just as quickly usher them out.

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Ryan Bangert

- ADF took the Biden-Harris administration to the Supreme Court — twice — when it sought to use the administrative state to force emergency room doctors to perform abortions and eliminated basic safety protocols governing the distribution of the chemical abortion drug mifepristone.
- ADF testified before Congress opposing the Biden-Harris administration’s weaponization of federal law enforcement agencies to spy on the financial transactions of conservatives.
- ADF sued the Department of Labor when it sought to force employers to mandate COVID-19 vaccines for their employees. We also supported a challenge to the White House’s pressure campaign to force social media companies to deplatform voices that disagreed with its COVID-19 policies.

This list conveys only a sampling of the challenges ADF brought against the Biden-Harris administration’s unlawful actions. However, it captures the reality that for the past four years, the administrative state has consistently threatened the constitutional liberties of all Americans.

But just as an election can usher in officials determined to violate fundamental freedoms, it can just as quickly usher them out. The new Trump-Vance administration has an opportunity to turn the page on the last four years by promoting policies that protect women and children from gender ideology, defend freedom of speech and religious liberty, and safeguard unborn life.

The early returns are promising. The Trump administration stated its commitment to defend freedom of speech and religion, end the weaponization of the administrative state against fundamental liberties, cut federal funding for schools pushing radical theories like gender ideology, and keep men out of women’s sports. The Trump administration can advance those priorities by unwinding the bad policies implemented by President Biden and advancing an affirmative agenda consistent with the new president’s stated policy goals.

The broad outline of the affirmative policy agenda should include several key points.

First, the federal government must stop funding and promoting harmful practices. This includes stopping the flow of funds to pay for dangerous surgical and pharmaceutical gender interventions, whether through Medicare, Medicaid, foreign funding, or the Departments of Defense or Veterans Affairs. This also includes getting the federal government entirely out of the business of promoting abortion, whether through foreign aid or through social programs like Title X.

Second, the federal government should stop promoting harmful gender ideology. The Trump administration should promptly repeal the Biden-Harris administration’s ill-considered Title IX rule unlawfully redefining “sex” to include “gender identity” as well as mandates for medical professionals and insurance providers to perform or pay for harmful “gender-transition” procedures. In addition, the National Institutes of Health could follow Europe’s lead by funding national studies on the safety and effectiveness of gender transition drugs and surgeries — such as a U.S. version of the U.K.’s Cass Report, which found that research on these experimental procedures is “remarkably weak.”

For the past four years, the administrative state has consistently threatened the constitutional liberties of all Americans.



Ryan Bangert

Third, the federal government should immediately stop supporting radical litigation positions. For instance, the U.S. solicitor general recently stood side by side with the American Civil Liberties Union at the Supreme Court, attacking Tennessee’s law protecting children against harmful gender procedures. In addition, the DOJ has filed briefs attacking other good state laws, such as West Virginia’s law protecting female athletes against competition from males — legislation that ADF helped draft and is now defending in court.

Fourth, the federal government must exit the censorship business. From condemning concerned parents who raise issues with school boards as “domestic terrorists” to pressuring social media companies to deplatform political opponents, the Biden-Harris administration has built a dreadful record on free speech. President Trump has an opportunity to entirely reorient the federal government away from crushing viewpoints it disfavors.

These are just a few of the steps the Trump administration can take to redirect the ship of state in a pro-freedom, pro-family, and pro-life direction. Elections matter. Let’s make this one count for good. 🇺🇸

Ryan Bangert is Senior Vice President of Strategic Initiatives & Special Counsel to the President at ADF.



USE TAX TIME TO
MAXIMIZE
YOUR KINGDOM
IMPACT

As tax season approaches, consider how you can maximize your giving through tax-advantaged gifts.

If you are 70 1/2 or older and looking for a way to invest more in the work of Alliance Defending Freedom while also lowering your taxable income, consider an IRA charitable distribution. A gift from an IRA usually counts toward the Required Minimum Distribution (RMD), if one is due. Your gift will help ADF advance every person's God-given right to live and speak the truth.



To Explore Your Next Step:

Visit JoinADF.com/IRA or contact our Legacy & Planned Giving team at 480-444-0020 or GiftPlanning@adflegal.org.

