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does not bring about the blessings of liberty but the bondage of sin,” said President of the Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood and Professor at Boyce College Denny Burk. “No Christian should argue in favor of a policy that so blatantly defies the created order and the flourishing of our neighbors.”

While the smoke from this latest political battle over marriage still hangs in the air, Christians shouldn’t give up on advocating for the truth in the public arena. They must be faithful to the Creator who defines marriage. Yet we must temper our stand with care and compassion to our opponents because the same Creator who defines marriage also tells us to love our neighbor as our ourselves.

Richard Nelson is the founder and executive director of CPC.

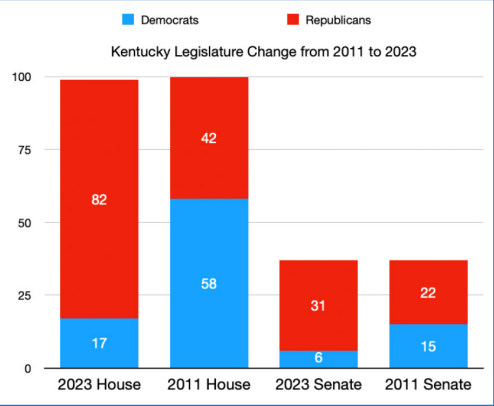
Most CPC Candidates Win in 2022!

100% (10/10) of our Endorsed & Recommended State Senate Candidates Won

100% (6/6) of our State Senate candidates won in the races we engaged

97% (36/37) of our Endorsed & 84% (16/19) of our Recommended State House Candidates Won

87% (13/15) of our State House candidates won in the races we engaged

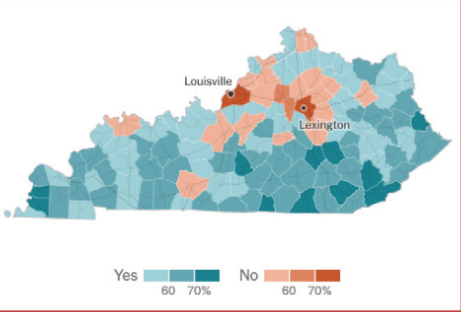


How the KY Legislature has changed since CPC was founded

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How Did Kentucky Vote on the Yes for Life Amendment?

To protect human life, nothing in this Constitution shall be construed to secure or protect a right to abortion or require the funding of abortion.



98 of the 120 counties voted for the amendment!

These counties voted against it:

Bourbon	Jefferson
Boyle	Kenton
Campbell	Madison
Carroll	Nelson
Clark	Nicholas
Fayette	Oldham
Franklin	Rowan
Hardin	Scott
Harrison	Shelby
Henderson	Warren
Henry	Woodford

Map Credit: NY Times

Amendment #2 Narrowly Defeated

Even though Amendment 2 failed at the ballot box, the margin of victory was a mere 66,000 votes. Counties near Lexington and Louisville were bombarded with TV messaging that was filled with lies and deception, leading many Kentuckians to vote “no.” Considering that the opposition raised and spent nearly \$9 million to defeat the measure, the pro-life community came close to victory, Nelson said. “Even though we were outspent nearly 9-1, and faced a massive misinformation campaign, Kentuckians in the majority of the 120 counties voted in favor of Amendment #2,” Nelson said. “We have nothing to be ashamed of in this worthy cause.”

Post-Election Analysis: 8 Takeaways for Republicans

History tells us that the political party outside of the power of the White House usually does well in a mid-term election, especially if the president’s approval rating is low and the economy fares poorly. It was supposed to be a Red Wave where Republicans took back Congress and possibly win back the U.S. Senate. The Red wave turned out to be a trickle. As of this writing, Republicans won the U.S. House of Representatives with 220 seats to Democrats 213 seats (there are two seats too close to call). Democrats won the Senate with 50 seats to Republicans 49 seats. A runoff for the Georgia seat will be on December 6. So what happened? Let’s start at the federal level.

Relitigating 2020 Election is a Loser. According to exit polls and election analysis by The Hill, candidates who focused on claims of 2020 election fraud fared poorly. Pennsylvania GOP gubernatorial candidate Doug Mastriano lost by double digits. Analysts believe he dragged the entire GOP ticket down. Michigan GOP gubernatorial candidate Tudor Dixon lost by double digits. New Hampshire U.S. Senate candidate Don Bolduc, who backed election fraud claims in the primary then reversed himself, lost to Democrat Sen. Maggie Hassan by 10 points. GOP candidate for governor in Maryland Dan Cox arranged tour buses for the Jan. 6 2021 rally that ended up violent and deadly. Cox tweeted “Pence is a traitor” after he certified the 2020 result. Pennsylvania Republican candidate for the U.S. Senate Mehmet Oz and Nevada’s Adam Laxalt also went down to defeat. According to

Maryland’s Republican Gov. Larry Hogan,”people who tried to relitigate the 2020 election and focused on conspiracy theories and talked about things the voters didn’t care about, they were almost universally rejected.” Altogether, six of seven Republican Secretary of State candidates who relitigated the 2020 election lost their races.

One of the most talented GOP gubernatorial candidates was Arizona’s Kari Lake who ran for governor. Lake, a former television news anchor and articulate speaker, could fire up a crowd. She identified herself as a “stop the steal” candidate and unfortunately never escaped its baggage. She also unnecessarily offended the John McCain wing of the Arizona GOP. She wasn’t the only GOP “stop the steal” candidate in Arizona who lost. Mark Finchem, candidate for Arizona secretary of state lost by nearly five points. U.S. Senate candidate Blake Masters also lost. On the other hand, Arizona Congressional Republicans who refused to relitigate the 2020 election and focused on the future won. In the end, Arizona Congressional Republicans flipped two House seats. Arizona is important to examine because it has been a Republican state, traditionally led by Republicans, with one of the nation’s most conservative governors, Doug Ducey leaving office. That seat will now be filled by a particularly weak Democratic candidate who refused to debate during the campaign.

Malice and Vindictiveness Repels. Candidates who are constantly attacking and calling their opponents names might give red meat to their base but

such antics repel swing voters who would rather not see politics turn into a blood sport. Four days before the election, Arizona gubernatorial candidate Kari Lake foolishly cursed John McCain supporters. “We don’t have any McCain Republicans in here, do we?” Lake asked from a campaign stage. “Alright, get the hell out. Boy, Arizona has delivered some losers, haven’t they?” Being unnecessarily offensive is never a good idea. Never. Lake needed McCain voters to win, but instead of building a bridge, she chose to repel potential voters. Instead of assembling a legal team to challenge the results, it would serve Lake better to spend time on an honest assessment as to how she could have won over a majority of votes. Bridge building is a must for winning candidates.

Opponents’ Negatives Aren’t Enough to Win. Even though Pres. Biden’s approval ratings are very low, even though inflation is at record levels, and even though voters are feeling it in their wallets, the negatives of grievance-peddling candidates are even more repelling. Democratic negative ratings cannot be the only thing that drives voters to vote Republican. This was a surprise lesson. What was of greater concern to voters, especially those independents and mainline Republicans was that they were repelled by cranks, conspiracy theorists, name-callers, and malcontents potentially holding office. That prospect was unacceptable to many voters. Nationally, 13 percent of Republicans voted for Democrats. In other words, a sizable number of GOP voters

were particular about the kind of Republican they wanted to represent them. Voters in the mid-term election wanted measured officials who refused to dwell on the past and lead the U.S. into the future.

Inflation and Abortion Top Issues. According to exit polls, inflation was the most important issue to 31 percent of voters. Abortion was the second most important single issue for 27 percent of voters. Voters in California, Michigan, and Vermont voted to enshrine abortion rights into law. Voters in Montana and Kentucky voted down pro-life measures. The U.S. Supreme Court’s Dobbs ruling that overturned Roe v Wade in June played a big factor. Abortion proponents spent big to defeat pro-life measures and groups like Planned Parenthood and the ACLU used the recent ruling to misinform and scare voters.

Voters Believed Democracy Threatened. According to exit polls, more than 66 percent of mid-term voters believed democracy is either “somewhat threatened” or “very threatened.” Interestingly, voters on the right and left agree, yet they have different reasons. The January 6 hearings held by Congress earlier in the year played a large role in forming public opinion about the viability of the democratic process and the peaceful transfer of power. Revelations of former Pres. Trump pressuring key Republicans in Arizona and Georgia to overturn election results were especially damaging. Twenty percent of mid-term voters said they were “not very confident” or “not at all confident” that their state’s election results would be fair. This group overwhelmingly voted for the GOP.

Casting a Vision is Critical. Proverbs 29:18 says that “where there is no vision the people perish.” This maxim is true for political candidates as well. Too many Republican candidates failed to cast a vision for a stronger, more vibrant republic, where communities are safe, businesses prosper, families can provide for their children, and the economy thrives. Those are winning issues. Any amount of time spent relitigating 2020 results took away from the messaging that resonated with voters.

Competency Matters. Voters expect their public officials to be competent. Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis carefully and responsibly managed the state for the past four years. He led with confidence with hurricane recovery efforts that devastated parts of Southwest Florida. He delivered historic tax relief earlier this year, vetoed unnecessary spending, and managed state government in a responsible way that attracts growth. He also signed legislation that prohibits LGBT politicization in K-3 classrooms. Voters will reward competent candidates who can manage main priorities of government. They will also give latitude when it comes to contentious social issues. DeSantis strong candidacy helped Republicans win at all levels, including an additional four state Senate and nine state House seats.

Get Out The Vote is Crucial. Republicans have rejected early voting and mail-in voting where available. Democrats have a better job getting their voters to vote early. Republicans must catch up with early voting strategies. They must also expand their voting base by reaching voters disengaged from elections.

Consider giving a year-end gift to help CPC make an impact across Kentucky in 2023

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COMMONWEALTH ★★★POLICY CENTER★★★ *Director's Corner*

Greetings from Frankfort! Allow me to start with some good news. Overall, CPC did well in state and local elections. 10 of 10 of our endorsed and recommended state Senate candidates won. Of the six Senate races we engaged, every single candidate won. In the Kentucky State House, 52 of 56 candidates that we endorsed or recommended won (93% success rate). Of the 15 House races we engaged, 13 of our candidates won (86% success rate). As it is, Republicans hold 80 House seats (Dems hold 20) and 31 Senate seats (Dems hold 7).

Several CPC candidates, some personal friends, won key local races. Charlie Castlen is the new Daviess County Judge Executive, Doug Gorman won his race for Warren County Judge Executive, and Keith Taul won his race as Hardin County Judge Executive. Kenny Ernstberger won the race for Calloway County attorney and Cade Foster is the new McCracken County Attorney. These up and coming conservatives are expected to lead well in their respective roles.

We didn't do as well in the three judicial races that we engaged. Joe Fischer, candidate for the Sixth District Supreme Court seat lost by a margin of 55 to 45%. Shawn Marie Alcott lost by a wider margin for outgoing Chief Justice John Minton's 2nd District open seat. And Joe Bilby came up short against Franklin County Circuit Judge Phillip Shepherd. Voters in judicial races sided with candidates who have some judicial experience.

We came up short on Amendment #2. Even though a majority of Kentucky counties voted in favor of Amendment #2, it wasn't enough to overcome the lopsided vote margins in Louisville and Lexington and counties within broadcast range. According to the latest KREF report Protect Kentucky Access spent nearly \$9 million to defeat the measure. The out of state money was deployed to confuse and scare Kentucky voters. The Yes for Life Alliance raised approximately \$1.1 million (according to the latest report). The final vote was 52%-48%.

The good news is that abortion is still outlawed in Kentucky and our hope is that the State Supreme Court will uphold the Human Life Protection Act which was argued by Attorney General Daniel Cameron and his team on November 15.

We're planning a briefing for newly elected legislators in mid-December. This is an opportunity to get to know several of them better and see how we might collaborate. We've also been working on priority legislation for 2023 and anticipating engagement in constitutional office races which will begin to heat up now that the election is behind us.

Overall, it's been a good year for CPC. With that said, as we close out the year, would you consider making a year-end contribution? It takes resources to fuel our work and to pay the staff so that we can do this full-time. Thank you in advance for your consideration!

Yours in Christ,

Richard Nelson

Richard Nelson
Executive Director

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COMMONWEALTH POLICY

Reinforcing the Commonwealth's Founding Principles - Renewing the Commonwealth's Future Promise

DOES MAN/WOMAN MARRIAGE MATTER ANYMORE?

On November 29th, Congress passed the Respect for Marriage Act (RMA) which codifies same-sex marriage into federal law, and nullifies the 1996 Defense of Marriage Act. Altogether, 12 Republican Senators joined all 50 Democrats and voted in favor of the RMA.

Eighteen years ago, 75 percent of Kentuckians agreed that marriage is exclusively between one man and one woman. Today, 71 percent of the public favors homosexual marriage according to a Gallup survey. Congress has now followed suit. One prominent evangelical writer argues that the RMA upholds the value of pluralism and alleviates the fear of same-sex couples' families being torn apart. But is this the standard by which good public policy is made?

'Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh' So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate.
Matthew 19:5-6

Post modern America appears to be on a mission to re-create the rules for life and redefine those very institutions meant for our personal good and the good of society. I argued 10 years ago that once marriage is redefined, gender will eventually be redefined. For if one can contort the gender requirement for marriage, one can contort gender as it relates to individuals as well. I take no pleasure in being right on this point. After all, gender ideology does real harm to real people.

The authority to define one's

own gender has been bestowed by secular elites. Failure by the rest of society to conform to preferred pronouns result in being canceled. Marriage redefinition puts us on a similar trajectory. Despite purported religious freedom protections for nonprofits being compelled to recognize same-sex marriage in the RMA, this landmark law will eventually be used to punish and coerce. This is why Senator Ron Johnson (R-WI) and 35 of his colleagues voted against the bill. "The substitute amendment did not provide sufficient protection for those with strongly held religious beliefs and leaves a lane open for discrimination by activist groups, state governments and the IRS," Johnson said.

It's ironic that just as the federal government divested itself from the most controversial social issue over the last 49 years (abortion on-demand), it's federalizing another divisive social issue that harms the rest of society. Children deprived of a mother or father lose. So do conscience rights for individuals operating in the marketplace. And with the embrace of nationalized same-sex-marriage, our society moves another step away from God's created order.

"For the Bible teaches that marriage is a part of God's good creation order. Defying that order

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The Commonwealth Policy Center is a non-profit public policy group helping Kentuckians value life, protect natural marriage, defend religious liberty, and promote fiscal integrity.

Learn more about our work at
CommonwealthPolicyCenter.org

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