



2024

ANNUAL REPORT

COMMONWEALTH
★ ★ ★ POLICY CENTER ★ ★ ★

EST. 2012

MEET THE CPC TEAM



Pictured above: CPC was blessed with new office space in 2024. We tripled the size of our office, which allows us to host events, including legislative briefings.

OUR MISSION

The Commonwealth Policy Center (CPC) is dedicated to preserving the bedrock values of life, religious liberty, marriage, and fiscal responsibility in the Commonwealth of Kentucky. We affirm as stated in the Kentucky Constitution that our civil, political, and religious liberties come from God.

OUR WORK

CPC educates the general public, works for sound public policies, and influences elections on behalf of conservative candidates.



RICHARD NELSON
Executive Director / Founder



JENNY BENNETT
Executive Administrator



COLE CUZICK
Director of Political Outreach



FREDDY HIGGINS
Intern



JACOB OGAN
Intern



CHRISTOPHER PARR
Director of Research



ALEX RICHEY
Director of Content & Engagement

Dear Friends and Supporters,

Greetings from Frankfort! I'm pleased to share with you our annual report, which features the positive work in which CPC engaged in 2024. It's been a banner year! However, as I write, the topic leftists and legacy media journalists are fixated on is whether or not a biological male who identifies as female should be allowed to use women's restrooms in the U.S. Capitol. Think about that for a minute. Democrats just lost an election, largely because of their far left, out of touch policies. And they're going to focus on whether or not a man should be able to use a women's restroom? This is the kind of nonsense that voters had enough of and, in part, led to Republican majorities serving in both Houses of Congress and the White House.

Some argue the GOP is making a proverbial mountain out of a mole hill. But the political left's attempt to re-order reality at the expense of women's privacy and safety from gender-confused males is a hill worth fighting over – politically speaking. Rep. Nancy Mace (R-SC) thinks so. She moved to keep the first transgender person elected to Congress out of her (and other biological women's) personal private spaces. Democratic Presidential nominee Kamala Harris was unsure about many of her positions. But she doubled down on President Biden's policy requiring public schools to treat biological males the same as females. The political left positions such policy as compassionate and tolerant. Except that it is not.

An important aspect of CPC's work is to re-introduce a moral vocabulary back into a culture that has lost its moral compass. We are bringing in state and nationally recognized conservative figures into Kentucky conversations: David Bahnsen, Rep. Dave Brat, Brian Domitrovic, Nancy Pearcey, and Bob Russell, among others. *The Common-*

wealth Matters weekly program airs on a dozen radio stations and two television stations weekly. If you haven't subscribed, please do so, and please encourage your friends to subscribe. *The Commonwealth Minute*, our 60-second commentary, airs on 49 stations.

A major issue debated in the Kentucky legislature this past year was DEI (diversity, equity, and inclusion), which focuses on equal outcomes through grading rubrics that consider external characteristics such as race and ethnicity over performance in the classroom. Such policies fail to prepare the next generation to meet real world demands. The ugly fruit of DEI was recently revealed by Dr. John Marshall, the Chief Equity Officer for Jefferson County Public Schools, who made a post on X which broad-brushed white people as dangerous. He said, "Regardless of the rooms, meetings, classes, etc., you're in, know THE MAJORITY of whites could care less about you & have no issues harming you." CPC called on Marshall to either apologize or resign. We are committed to ridding public schools of divisive DEI programs that promote racism.

Of course, it's not just enough to expose bad ideas and reject bad policies. If we're going to change the culture, it takes casting a vision for the good, the true, and the beautiful. And it's not just enough to talk about good ideas either. It's about implementing those ideas. The conservative movement ably points out the folly of the left. But in order to effectively change the culture, conservatives must roll up their sleeves, get into the arena, and do the things that affect real change to preserve a culture for our children and grandchildren. Conservative Christians must practice faithful presence in the cultural arena. This is what CPC is doing.

We're traveling the state, speaking to various groups, recruiting candidates to run for office,

and engaging with pastors and elected leaders. We are training candidates to run winning races. We are on major news platforms debating the issues (see page 9). We're also holding important conferences where conservative Christians gather, like the ones in Bowling Green and Lexington earlier this year (see pages 4 and 5). We're calling out Governor Beshear's immoral overreach banning family therapists and counselors from counseling gender-confused minors about their God-given biology and orientation. At the same time we are working on positive legislation to make course corrections and institute sound public policy that makes for a better commonwealth.

When it comes to elections, we're not just criticizing candidates, but we are researching candidates and documenting their positions in voter guides that are widely disseminated. Listen to what one state House candidate said about the impact:

"I truly appreciate what your organization stands for. That candidate mailer y'all created was outstanding! It wasn't negative; it just showed how the candidates in this primary have and will vote. I thought it was so effective that I made copies of it and handed it out when I was door knocking for the primary! Thank you so much for all y'all do and stand for. God Bless you, Kentucky and the United States of America."

This candidate went on to handily win his primary over a well-funded liberal Republican. And such efforts have translated into tremendous success. 90% of CPC's endorsed state legislative candidates won their election (see page 10). Listen to what one incumbent Republican House member said about our endorsement:



Former Attorney General Daniel Cameron with CPC Executive Director Richard Nelson at our Towards a Better Bluegrass Conference held in Lexington on October 18th.

"Thank you! I'm so excited for the wins we got here in Boone, but even greater that Trump won and we have reclaimed the Senate. Praise God. Thanks for all of your support. I cannot think of an organization whose endorsement I'd rather have."

As to the impact of our candidate training, several state House, Senate, and judicial candidates who attended CPC's training back in February won their races! We are making a positive difference across the Commonwealth!

As you'll see in the following pages, the CPC team has been busy at work, actively engaged, and moving the needle in the commonwealth in a principled conservative direction. Please know that we've only been able to do this work through your prayers and financial support. And for that, I extend a hearty "thank you."

Please keep us in prayer as we press on toward a productive 2025. May God bless you.

Very sincerely yours,

Richard Nelson

Richard Nelson
Founder / Executive Director

AN EVENING WITH DR. ALBERT MOHLER

Over 600 people attended “Honoring God in a Culture That Celebrates Sin,” an event hosted by CPC featuring Dr. Albert Mohler, President of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville. Senior Pastor Jason Pettus and Living Hope Baptist Church hosted the event on February 8 in Bowling Green. The culture’s opposition to God’s design for human sexuality is sobering, but Christians still have great reason for hope through the redemptive power of Jesus Christ.



Dr. Albert Mohler presenting on “Honoring God in a Culture That Celebrates Sin” in Bowling Green on February 8th.



Nelson on a Q&A panel with Dr. Albert Mohler and Pastor Jason Pettus in Bowling Green on February 8th.

Dr. Mohler spoke on our culture’s rejection of God’s design for human sexuality and the Christian responsibility to show the world a better way to happiness and fulfillment. He reminded attendees that our first responsibility is to evaluate our marriages, families, and communities through a Biblical worldview, ensuring that they reflect God’s good design to our neighbors. Afterwards, Mohler joined Nelson and Pettus in a panel that answered audience questions about how to faithfully respond to cultural challenges and navigating them with family and friends. To view the conference recording of “Honoring God in a Culture That Celebrates Sin,” go to CPC’s YouTube channel.

TOWARDS A BETTER BLUEGRASS CONFERENCE

On October 18, CPC hosted over 150 legislators and business and community leaders in Lexington for an all-day conference focusing on our fourth pillar: fiscal responsibility. “Towards a Better Bluegrass: Sources of Kentucky’s Economic Strength” featured speakers and panels on a diverse array of topics such as family-friendly tax policy, the economic benefits of school choice, and pushing back against DEI and ESG programs in business. The conference helped attendees think through how to be faithful and productive in their businesses and advocate for public policy that allows for economic flourishing in their families and communities.



Former Congressman Dave Brat (R-VA) gave the keynote address at Towards a Better Bluegrass Conference on October 18th.

Former Congressman Dave Brat, who now serves at Liberty University, delivered the keynote address on the biblical foundations of government and economics. Former Kentucky Attorney General Daniel Cameron spoke about his new role pushing back against corporate wokeness at the 1792 Exchange. And economist Brian Domitrovic, of The Laffer Center, spoke about taxes, debt, and limited government. Several other community leaders and state legislators led sessions on school choice, energy policy, and stewardship. We’re grateful to The Campbell House for hosting the event and to our sponsors, whose generosity made the event possible. Look for more CPC initiatives promoting fiscal responsibility in the future!



Former Kentucky Attorney General Daniel Cameron spoke on “Depoliticizing the Workplace.”

ENGAGING PROGRAMS



THE COMMONWEALTH MATTERS

2024 was a big year for *The Commonwealth Matters*, our long-form interview program, as two television stations began broadcasting it across Kentucky. This year CPC Exec. Director Richard Nelson hosted conversations with guests such as Prof. Robby George, David Bahnsen, Nancy Pearcey, and multiple state political leaders about the important issues that shape our commonwealth. *The Commonwealth Matters* is now released as a podcast on all platforms, a radio show on radio stations around Kentucky, a YouTube program, and a TV program on WBNA (Louisville) and WBPM (Bowling Green).



Prof. Robby George of Princeton University discussing Fidelity Month on The Commonwealth Matters on June 5th.



David Bahnsen joined us on The Commonwealth Matters to discuss his new book Full Time: Work & the Meaning of Life on August 14th.

THE COMMONWEALTH MINUTE

Americans are increasingly looking for alternatives to the legacy media. CPC fills that need for Kentuckians by producing a 1-minute program called *The Commonwealth Minute*. We provide commentary on the latest local and national news facing Kentuckians. This program is seen on two TV stations (WBNA & WBPM) and heard on 49 radio stations across Kentucky. It is also posted everyday on our website, Facebook, and X.

CPC RESOURCES

EQUIPPING KENTUCKIANS

CPC seeks to equip Kentuckians with the resources they need to be informed of what is happening in Frankfort, how to think through the important political issues from a biblical worldview, and where political candidates stand on issues voters care about. To that end, we were diligent in sharing opinion pieces, press releases, voter guides, podcast episodes, other resources on social media, and our website throughout the year. Be on the lookout in the coming year for new and creative ways we will be helping you be an informed citizen of the Commonwealth.

PRESS RELEASES

CPC regularly publishes press releases and media alerts to inform media outlets about our perspective on significant events in Kentucky politics and culture. While there's no shortage of political reporting and commentary in our state, our goal is to quickly and succinctly contribute to public conversation from a conservative perspective. Many of our press releases provide information about CPC's political activity, and they explain our positions on key issues facing the commonwealth. This is one way we advocate for conservative policy in our state government and influence our institutions to reform for the good of all Kentuckians.

★★ WHO WILL REPRESENT YOUR VALUES? ★★		
The image shows two men, Adam Moore (D) and Thomas Jefferson (R), standing side-by-side. Adam Moore is on the left, wearing a blue shirt, and Thomas Jefferson is on the right, wearing a suit and tie. Between them is a small text box that reads: "The information below was compiled from voting records, public statements, PAC donations, and a candidate questionnaire distributed by the Commonwealth Policy Center, a nonprofit, nonpartisan Kentucky organization."		
KY House District 45 General Election Day: November 5, 2024		
Adam Moore (D)		Thomas Jefferson (R)
NO ¹	Pro-Life	MIXED ⁵
NO ²	Pro-2nd Amendment	YES
NO ³	Pro-School Choice	YES
NO RESPONSE	Cut State Income Tax	YES
NO RESPONSE	Sexually Explicit Performances in Public	NO
YES ⁴	Transgender Surgeries for Minors	NO
NO RESPONSE	DEI	NO

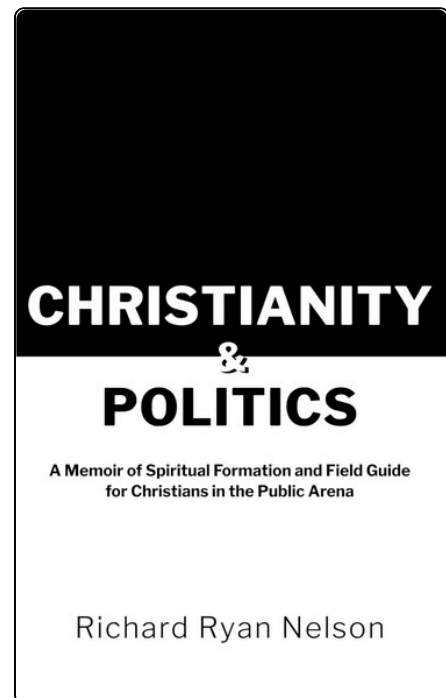
CPC voter guide that was mailed to Kentucky voters.

OPINION PIECES

CPC staff members published 25 opinion columns this year to inform readers about important developments in state and national politics and evaluating them from the perspective of our four pillars: life, marriage, religious liberty, and fiscal responsibility. Many engaged prominent debates in the 2024 legislative session, and addressed major news stories at both a state and national level. We're grateful to the many outlets, such as *National Review*, *Kentucky Today*, and the *Northern Kentucky Tribune*, who published our columns, and we look forward to continuing to contribute to the public conversation in 2025.

CHRISTIANITY & POLITICS RELEASED IN SEPTEMBER

This year, CPC Exec. Director Richard Nelson published his long-awaited memoir, *Christianity & Politics*. Sharing from decades of experience working to shape public policy, Nelson offers this practical field guide for Christians seeking guidance about how to engage in politics in a God-honoring and biblical manner. *Christianity & Politics* outlines Richard's work founding the Commonwealth Policy Center and ultimately changing the political landscape for generations of Kentuckians. You can purchase a copy of the book on Amazon.



Nelson on a Q&A panel with Dr. Hershael York and Dr. Colin Smothers at the Bookstore at Southern Seminary on October 22nd.

Nelson also went on a book tour, where he spoke to over a dozen churches across the state and the Bookstore at Southern Seminary on the topic of a Christian approach to the public arena and other ideas from his book. He also was interviewed by several radio stations, including American Family Radio. Nelson shared principles he's learned in his three decades of work in the policy and political realms.

LEGISLATIVE VICTORIES

CPC had success during the 2024 legislative session, which ran from January to April. During the 60-day session, CPC advocated for a variety of pro-life, religious liberty, school choice, and diversity, equality, and inclusion (DEI) reform policies. Our legislative victories were HB 2, a recommended ballot measure to change Kentucky's Constitution to allow for school choice, and HB 278, a bill that restricts minors from viewing porn online. There were some other good bills that passed one legislative chamber but failed to gain full passage. Those bills included SB 6 and HB 9, which were two different approaches to eliminating and restructuring DEI programs at Kentucky's public universities, and SB 239, a bill to expand medical rights of conscience for medical professionals. Legislators are expected to make a renewed push for both bills in the 2025 session.



Executive Director Richard Nelson joined the KET Kentucky Tonight panel to discuss DEI in higher education on January 29th.



CPC hosted a press conference at the Capitol on September 20th to respond to Gov. Beshear's executive order banning "conversion therapy."

CPC provided key insights for the DEI conversation by participating in a debate on KET, writing op-eds and policy backgrounders, and producing podcast episodes detailing the downfalls of its well-intentioned but misguided implementation. We were a vocal proponent to see HB 278 improved and passed in the final days of the legislative session. Due to its passage, major porn outlets have left Kentucky instead of abiding by the new age requirement laws. In September, we hosted a press conference with Dr. Hershael York, Christian counselors, and State House and Senate members to respond to Gov. Beshear's executive order banning "conversion therapy." We will be involved with the legislature's pushback against this measure in the upcoming session.

ELECTION ENGAGEMENT

CPC actively engaged 76 state house and senate races in the 2024 primary and general election with candidate comparison guides, paid ads, text messages and mail pieces. In the primary, we were successful with a majority of the races engaged and a 90% win rate for candidates endorsed by CPC in the general election. 100,000 voters on Facebook viewed our election resources in total. Another helpful resource was our 26 candidate forums, with 4 being in-person with a crowd of 200 citizens. Several candidates on the ballot, including newly elected District Court Judge Jenny Hines, State Representative-Elect TJ Roberts from Northern Kentucky, and State Senator-Elect Aaron Reed of Shelbyville, attended our candidate training held in February.



CPC's Candidate Forum for Senate Dist. 17 in Shelbyville on April 25th.



State Rep. Jason Petrie (R-Elkton), State Sen. Robby Mills (R-Henderson), and Richard Nelson at our candidate training at the Frankfort Country Club on February 2-3.





CPC Staff, from left to right: Cole Cuzick, Jacob Ogan, Freddy Higgins, Richard Nelson, Christopher Parr, Alex Richey, and Jenny Bennett.



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