

For Faith & Family

[Print](#) | [Back](#)

**eSalt Volume 6 Issue 1 2005**



Bringing you **IMPORTANT** news from our nation's capitol

Volume 6 Issue 1 2005

A publication of the Southern Baptist Convention's Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission  
901 Commerce st. #550, Nashville, TN 37203 (615) 244-2495 FAX (615) 242-0065

[www.faithandfamily.com](http://www.faithandfamily.com)

505 Second St. NE, Washington, DC 20002 (202) 547-8105 FAX (202) 547-8165

A *For Faith & Family* Ministry Partner

Richard D. Land, President Tom Strode, Editor Jerry Price, Assistant Editor

©2005 all rights reserved

"We have a right, we have a responsibility, we have an obligation to be involved in the civic process. We are to hold up a moral standard as salt. Jesus commanded us to be salt and light . . . Southern Baptists, let's heed the call to stand in the gap and repair the hedge and claim the promise of God when he said, 'If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land' (2 Chron.7:14). May there be a new birth of freedom, may there be a new birth of morality, may we stand in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, and heed the watchman on the wall."

Dr. Richard Land  
President, SBC Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission

## Special Issue

### ERLC unveils legislative agenda for 2005

By Richard Land and Barrett Duke

Coming off the most encouraging congressional session in years and starting the 109th Congress with even more conservative lawmakers and a conservative President and administration makes 2005 a very promising year.

In the 108th Congress, we saw significant action on many of our concerns. We made considerable progress on life-affirming issues. Passage of the Partial Birth Abortion Ban Act was the first-ever rollback of the abortion-on-demand culture created by the Supreme Court in 1973. In addition, approval of the Unborn Victims of Violence Act made it a federal crime to harm unborn babies during the commission of certain federal crimes against their mothers. We also saw life-affirming legislation passed to help protect prisoners from sexual predators in prisons. Rape should not be part of the incarceration experience. The Prison Rape Elimination Act will force the corrections system to take prison rape seriously.

Progress on the human rights front came with the unanimous passage of the North Korean Human Rights Act by both the House of Representatives and Senate. The Korean dictator, Kim Jong Il, has imprisoned hundreds of thousands of his people for political reasons. While his henchmen rape, gas, torture, starve and murder the people, Kim Jong Il and his supporters live extravagantly off the world's sympathy. In return, Kim Jong Il exports counterfeit money, weapons systems and drugs. The North Korean Human Rights Act guarantees that he will no longer engage in these practices without penalty.

Those are just highlights of the many victories we enjoyed during the 108th Congress.

We expect to add significantly to our gains in the first session of the 109th Congress, which as a result of the 2004 elections is the most pro-life Congress since Roe v. Wade was decided in 1973. For example, we will continue to press for respect for human life by supporting the Child Custody Protection Act, which will make it a federal crime to transport an under-age girl across a state line to avoid parental notification laws in the minor's home state. We also will promote the Unborn Child Pain Awareness Act, which will require abortion doctors to inform mothers seeking abortions about the reality that unborn babies 20 weeks and older feel pain and to offer to provide the unborn babies anesthesia prior to the abortion.

We will also continue to support President Bush's courageous, principled stand on human embryo research. Considerable pressure was brought to bear on the administration last year to allow federal money for embryo-destructive research. We stood against that call, and we will continue to fight off every effort to overturn the President's ban on expanding federal funding of embryo-destructive research. In fact, we will take the offensive again and press for passage of a total ban on all human cloning, whether for reproductive or therapeutic purposes. A human embryo is a human being in the earliest stages of development. Therapeutic cloning kills embryos in order to harvest their parts. Reproductive cloning results in the destruction of hundreds of embryos before any successful cloning procedure. In addition, reproductive cloning will lead to massive abuses, such as genetic manipulation, patenting and brokering in cloned human body parts.

And, of course, we will work for passage of a marriage protection amendment. Marriage is first and foremost a gift from God designed to bring two human beings, one male and one female, together in an intimate union to be enjoyed for a lifetime. It is not a legal right. As the linchpin of the family, marriage is the bedrock of civilization. If we weaken that linchpin, everything and everyone suffers, especially our children—the future. While the amendment did not pass last year, there was more support for it in the House and Senate than most of the critics imagined. There will be even more support for it in the 109th Congress. We will press for another vote in 2005.

We will also champion human rights. Too many people around the world are still dominated by dictators. Human freedom is threatened in any environment where the people are powerless. We look forward to the introduction of sweeping legislation that targets the world's last dictatorships for extinction. This new bill, known now as EDAD (Ending Dictatorships and Assisting Democracies), focuses United States foreign policy on a direct course to encourage the emergence and strengthening of democratic governments around the world. The bill will authorize a vast assortment of tactics to encourage people to press their governments to adopt democracy as their country's form of governance. The bill has the teeth to rid the world of the last remaining dictators without any military intervention. We can hardly imagine a world of nations governed by the people. Yet this bill can make that a reality.

The 109th Congress offers us a great opportunity on many fronts. We have mentioned only a few of them. Other fronts include religious liberty in the workplace and public arenas; conservative judges, including the Supreme Court and the federal judiciary; morality in the media, and the end of the trafficking of women and children around the world and in our own country. May God grant us the power, the resources and the wisdom to give voice to Southern Baptist convictions and interests in our nation's capital effectively and in the Spirit of Christ.

*Richard Land is president of the ERLC, and Barrett Duke is the agency's vice president for public policy and research.*

[Back to Top](#)

Don't leave your family unprotected! Get Bsafe Online for your home (and office) computer! Use Bsafe with your existing Internet Service Provider and block pornographic and other dangerous Web sites today.

Check out Bsafe Online today by clicking on the Bsafe logo in the top of column at right.

Bsafe is endorsed by the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission  
(We protect our employees with Bsafe Online on our office computers.)

For updates on critical matters of public policy or to contact your federal elected officials, go to the Capital logo near the top of the column at right, type in your zip code and click on GO. You can also reach the Capitol Hill switchboard by calling (202) 225-3121.

For information on **Bible-based resources** useful for educating your family on the moral and ethical issues of our day and for engaging the culture, such as our informative Culture Response Kit, contact the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission at (800) 475-9127 or visit our online store. Click on the Family Bookstore logo in the column at right near top of page.

[Terms & Conditions](#) | [Privacy Statement](#)