



WISCONSIN FAMILY ACTION
Marriage|Family|Life|Liberty

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Wisconsin Family Action Responds to Future of Family Commission Report

MADISON, WI – Wisconsin Family Action President Julaine K. Appling today issued the following statement in response to the recently released final report of the Future of the Family Commission:

“Wisconsin Family Action commends Governor Walker, Secretary Anderson, and the members of the Future of the Family Commission for recognizing that successful families are the foundation of thriving communities and a prosperous Wisconsin. Having read the Commission’s final report, we can say that while we have a different perspective on certain points, there are particular areas on which we agree—namely, the importance of encouraging and strengthening married families and addressing the impact of social isolation.

“As noted in the [Wisconsin Family Prosperity Index \(FPI\)](#) report we co-authored with the American Conservative Union Foundation in June, Wisconsin’s marriage rate ranks 44th in the nation. Given all the research illustrating the strong connection between marriage and economic prosperity, it just makes sense for Wisconsin’s leaders to prioritize and encourage marriage. This has been a focus of Wisconsin Family Action’s executive budget and legislative work over the years, and I’m glad to see the Commission reinforce it.

“The out-migration crisis currently facing Wisconsin is also addressed in our Wisconsin FPI report. More Wisconsinites are leaving the state than are moving in. This only serves to exacerbate the isolation of our families as extended family members re-locate in search of better opportunities. Our leaders must do more to ensure that we have the social and economic conditions necessary to keep people in the state.

“One omission of concern to Wisconsin Family Action can best be described as ‘good fertility.’ The report acknowledges what the research shows to be true—children of married parents do better socially, academically, and economically. Instead of including recommendations for encouraging childbearing in marriage, though, the Commission focuses solely on preventing “bad fertility,” *i.e.*, out-of-wedlock pregnancy. In fact, the emphasis on contraception even within marriage serves only to compound Wisconsin’s declining birthrate and the looming population crisis it portends.

“For at least a decade, Wisconsin Family Action has sounded the alarm about our state’s forty-year below-replacement birth rate, which over time will lead to what is called a ‘Demographic Winter.’ This phenomenon occurs when the death rate exceeds the birth rate resulting in an increasingly shrinking population, which, as the Wisconsin FPI clearly shows, some Wisconsin counties are already experiencing. State leadership must take steps to turn this tide. This reality is already showing up in our schools and our workforce.

“For the sake of Wisconsin’s best natural resource—her families—and for the general prosperity of the entire state, Wisconsin Family Action looks forward to working with Governor Walker and the legislature to address these and other issues raised in the Future of the Family Commission’s report.”

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Wisconsin Family Action is a statewide organization engaged in strengthening, preserving and promoting marriage, family, life and liberty in Wisconsin.