

2004 Highlighted Efforts of Hawaii Family Forum

- ◆ **PHYSICIAN-ASSISTED SUICIDE:** Hawaii Family Forum (HFF) organized a mass media and grassroots campaign to block the effort to legalize physician-assisted suicide (PAS) in Hawaii. Although the physician-assisted suicide bill was heard and passed by the House Judiciary Committee, it failed to make it out of the House. The battle, however, is not over—proponents will be back in force in 2005.
- ◆ HFF continued to coordinate the efforts of Hawaii's Partnership for Appropriate & Compassionate Care (HPACC) a coalition which includes the Hawaii Medical Association and various other medical, disability rights, and pro-life groups. One measure supported by HPACC that passed this session was the **PAIN PATIENTS BILL OF RIGHTS**. This bill gives rights to pain patients and authorizes doctors to prescribe medically necessary doses of controlled substances to treat serious pain. It passed the Legislature and was transmitted to the Governor for signature on April 30, 2004.
- ◆ **GAMBLING:** Along with the Hawaii Coalition Against Legalized Gambling, HFF continues to stop the effort to legalize gambling in the State of Hawaii. Hawaii remains only one of two states without any form of legalized gambling. Although no bills were heard this session, proponents will once again be back at the capitol in 2005.
- ◆ Reinstatement of Megan's Law (**MEGAN'S AMENDMENT**): Because the 2001 Hawaii law was overturned by Hawaii Supreme Court, HFF supported legislation (constitutional amendment) granting public access to information on convicted sex offenders. We also supported legislation that added convicted pornographers to the list of sex offenders. The bill was signed into law by Governor Lingle on May 10, 2004 with HFF staff present at signing.
- ◆ **CIVIL UNIONS** HFF strongly opposed this bill. This bill, if it had passed, would have established civil unions and repealed the reciprocal beneficiary law. As written, it extended the same rights and obligations as spouses in a marital relationship to civil union partners and would have forced Hawaii to recognize same-sex marriages and civil unions from other states. The bill died in committee as it did not have a quorum to vote. Proponents of civil unions will not give up. This issue most likely will be back in the 2005 legislative session.