

THE LUTHERAN CENTER for RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

For Establishing and Sustaining a Confessional Lutheran Presence in Washington, D.C.

Lutherans Protecting Liberty

WHY THIS MATTERS

We are living in a time when Christian values and morals no longer hold sway, where the culture of the day has permeated society in an effort to:

- › Chip away at Americans' most basic religious liberties despite the protections of the First Amendment;
- › Rapidly deconstruct the biblical definition of marriage;
- › Redefine the definition of the family, the very building block of our culture;
- › Write off as inconsequential the lives of 55 million preborn Americans; and
- › Castigate the public expression of our Christian faith, attacking any form of "bearing witness" — the catalyst that is the heartbeat of who we are as Lutherans.

There are other Christian denominations and religious groups in the United States that are already working to put an end to a crumbling culture. A number of them have asked and prayed that the LCMS would take a leading role in that charge on a national level: confessing the faith (witness), speaking out on behalf of others (mercy), and educating and advocating (life together) because of the distinctive and compelling theological insights we possess.

The LCMS has the unique gift and task of bearing witness to Christ as our forefathers in the faith have done for thousands of years. An LCMS office in Washington, D.C., will be at the very epicenter of where a compelling Christian witness will be needed most in the years to come.

As we consider what could be seen as a daunting challenge, we recall the words of Mordecai to Queen Esther: "For if you keep silent at this time ... you and your father's house will perish. And who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" (Esther 4:14).

Like Esther, the LCMS' time is now.

As baptized children of God, we are free in Christ to be boldly and joyfully faithful at this time and in this place, using Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions as our only guide. Christ is faithful. His plan for the LCMS and for the United States is good and perfect and best. And He alone — using His gifts of Word and Sacrament — will equip us for the daunting challenges ahead, reassuring us that He alone can change hearts and minds in these turbulent and trying days.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Lutheran Center for Religious Liberty is to ignite and fuel a uniquely Lutheran response to increasing intrusions, limitations and challenges by the government in the realm of the Church while educating, encouraging and equipping LCMS members and organizations to take informed action in support of marriage, life and religious liberty.

PURPOSE

- 1. Engage** federal and state officials and other partners through advocacy and networking;
- 2. Educate** future generations about serving God through vocations in government, law and public policy; and
- 3. Connect** with Lutherans involved in government affairs. Where the government, the culture and faith conflict, Lutherans can and must speak up and out in support of religious liberty.

TARGET AUDIENCE

The LCRL will benefit confessional Lutherans, namely those individuals belonging to congregations of the LCMS and other orthodox Lutheran church bodies, as well as auxiliaries and Recognized Service Organizations of the LCMS. Services and programs will be tailored toward a number of distinct subsets of the target audience.

ADVANTAGES

The Lutheran Center for Religious Liberty will:

- › Provide information on impending legislation, government infringement and other matters of concern to the LCMS members.
- › Create a direct LCMS presence in the nation's capitol and in proximity to other Lutherans and like-minded partners, helping to build coalitions and accomplishing more together than alone.
- › Provide a venue to facilitate the engagement of Lutheran youth in the public square as well as encourage vocations in government service or politics.

FUNCTIONS

- › Educate and inform
- › Advocate and network
- › Strategize and defend
- › Communicate and share