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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

March 22, 2019

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Jewish Caucus Members Outraged at Illinois Family Actions' String of Hate Speech

Call on State Police for Full Investigation; Request Revocation of Lobbying Privileges

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. – Members of the Illinois Legislature’s Jewish caucus are demanding action in response to a pattern of hate speech and imagery posted by Illinois Family Action and its parent organization, Illinois Family Institute, on its website and social media pages.

On March 20th, Illinois Family Action posted an article comparing Democrats to Nazis. Under pressure to remove the post from its website, a second post appeared the next day, with even more hateful language comparing reproductive rights to the Holocaust. A third social media post unleashed a vicious attack on state Rep. Kelly Cassidy, a member of the Jewish caucus, and an openly gay state representative who is a strong supporter of a women's right to choose.

“We consider an attempt to use Nazi imagery and a genocidal equation on matters regarding a legal right to health care service, clear cut hate speech,” said state Rep. Sara Feigenholtz. “This pattern of hateful actions are exactly what ignites a call to action for violence.”

“We call on the Illinois State Police to do a full investigation of these incidents,” said state Rep. Jonathan Carroll. “These two organizations maintain full credentials as lobbyists to freely move throughout the Capitol complex.”

“We can’t ignore the horrors of recent synagogue and mosque shootings. They are fresh in our minds,” said state Sen. Laura Fine. “Words matter. Words such as these incite hate speech and lead to violence.”

“Dr. Barnett Slepian was murdered in cold blood in his home by sniper fire while celebrating the Sabbath with his children and wife,” said state Rep. Yehiel Kalish. “He was gunned down because he provided a full range of reproductive health care to his patients.”

The Jewish caucus will be filing a joint resolution to make clear the Illinois General Assembly objection to this hate speech and encourage an investigation.

The members of the Jewish caucus in the House are Jonathan Carroll, Kelly Cassidy, Daniel Didech, Sara Feigenholtz, Robyn Gabel, Jennifer Gong-Gershowitz, Will Guzzardi, Yehiel Kalish, and Bob Morgan. The caucus also includes state Senator Laura Fine.

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