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CONTACT—Benjamin May  
[bmay@policyimpact.com](mailto:bmay@policyimpact.com)  
(202) 413-0119  
[www.wcf9.org](http://www.wcf9.org)

## **SUPREME COURT UNDERMINES RIGHTS OF CHILDREN World Congress of Families Calls for Dialogue and Engagement**

**SALT LAKE CITY**— “The natural family was here long before the Supreme Court — long before governments — and it will be here long after they are gone,” said Janice Shaw Crouse, Executive Director of the World Congress of Families IX, reacting to the Court’s decision in *Obergefell v. Hodges* to legalize same-sex marriage in the United States. “The Supreme Court cannot by dictate erase every child’s need—every child’s right—to a mother and a father.”

The Supreme Court ruling overturns the constitutions of 31 States that declare marriage as a union between a man and woman, as well as contradicts Article 16 of the United Nation’s Universal Declaration of Human Rights: “The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State.”

“Almost 60 million unborn children have lost their lives to abortion since the Court’s flawed ruling on *Roe v. Wade* in 1973,” said Crouse. “Now, with this ruling, the Court is undermining what the UN’s Universal Declaration of Human Rights acknowledges as government’s fundamental duty to protect children by protecting the natural family. It denies the right of children to a mother and father, and the consequences will be as dire as those attending *Roe v. Wade*, perhaps even more so.”

Crouse said the Court’s decision underscores the importance of the World Congress of Families and other organizations working to support the need of children to be raised by both their mother and father, as nature designed. “If the Court does not recognize this basic element of human ecology—then we must energize an effective cultural movement to protect our children and our future by defending the rights of the most vulnerable, and help our societies rediscover and reclaim the benefits of this uniquely sustainable and beneficial structure.”



According to Crouse and the organizers of the World Congress of Families IX, constructive and engaged discussion will begin in earnest in Salt Lake City on Oct. 27-30, when, for the first time in its 20-year history, the World Congress of Families will be held in the United States.

Focused on the welfare of the natural family, the World Congress of Families IX will also address other critical issues, including human trafficking, the exploitation of children, preventing and overcoming addiction, the dangers of pornography, and strengthening the home as the center for social, educational, economic, and spiritual life.

“We will have the leading academics, ecclesiastical leaders, parliamentarians, and advocates of the natural family from around the world on the largest media stage in the world,” said Crouse. “There will be four days of presentations, papers, forums, and workshops on ways to strengthen the natural family, including the consequences of the Supreme Court ruling for children, communities, and nations, as well as for those whose faith and practices may be in disagreement. This includes robust discussion regarding religious liberty.

“Never has honest analysis and respectful dialogue been more important than now,” Crouse said. “The World Congress of Families welcomes all people of good will to participate in open and straight forward discussions in Salt Lake City October 27-30. We will focus on research findings and informed commentary to strengthen the natural family against those factors — both within the family and from the outside culture — that undermine and/or weaken the family, and the rights of innocent children to be given life and to be raised by a loving and protective mother and father.”

The World Congress of Families is the largest gathering of pro-family advocates in the world, providing sound scholarship and effective strategies to affirm and defend the natural family, thus encouraging a sustainable and free society.