

Sessions cites Bible to defend separating immigrant families

By COLLEEN LONG
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Attorney General Jeff Sessions cited the Bible on Thursday in his defense of his border policy that is resulting in hundreds of immigrant children being separated from their parents after they enter the U.S. illegally.

Sessions, speaking in Fort Wayne, Indiana, on immigration, pushed back against criticism he had received over the policy. On Wednesday, a cardinal in the Roman Catholic Church said that separating mothers from their babies was "immoral."

Sessions said many of the recent criticisms were not "fair or logical and some are contrary to law."

"I would cite you to the Apostle Paul and his clear and wise command in Romans 13, to obey the laws of the government because

God has ordained them for the purpose of order," he said. "Orderly and lawful processes are good in themselves and protect the weak and lawful."

Last month, the attorney general announced a "zero tolerance" policy that any adult who enters the country illegally is criminally prosecuted. U.S. protocol prohibits detaining children with their parents because the children are not charged with a crime and the parents are.

According to U.S. Customs and Border Protection, more than 650 children were separated from their parents at the U.S.-Mexico border during a two-week period in May.

White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders said Thursday that she hadn't seen Sessions' comments but affirmed that the Bible did back up the administration's actions.



Mike Moore/The Journal-Gazette via AP

United States Attorney General Jeff Sessions speaks about immigration in Fort Wayne, Ind., on Thursday. Sessions cited the Bible in his defense of his border policy that is resulting in hundreds of children being separated from their parents.

"I can say that it is very biblical to enforce the law. That is actually repeated a number of times throughout the Bible," she said. "It's a moral policy to follow and enforce the law."

In an unusually tense series of exchanges in the

White House briefing room, Sanders wrongly blamed Democrats for the policy separating children from parents and insisted the administration had made no changes in increasing the use. Until the policy was announced in April,

such families were usually referred for civil deportation proceedings, not requiring separation.

"The separation of illegal alien families is the product of the same legal loopholes that Democrats refuse to close, and these laws are the same that have been on the books for over a decade, and the president is simply enforcing them," she said.

"We don't want this to be a problem," she said.

Cardinal Daniel DiNardo, the archbishop of Galveston-Houston, told the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops on Wednesday that he was joining other religious leaders in opposing the government's border policy.

"Our government has the discretion in our laws to ensure that young children are not separated from their parents and exposed to irreparable harm and trauma," DiNardo said in a statement.

BRIEFLY

Heppner churches join forces for Bible school

HEPPNER — Several Heppner area churches are combining efforts to offer a vacation Bible school to area children.

The event kicks off Monday, June 18 and runs nightly from 6-8 p.m. through Thursday, June 21 at Hope Lutheran Church, 695 E. Cowins St., Heppner. People are invited to come early on Monday. A barbecue at 5 p.m. is planned to kick off the event. A light supper will also be served the other nights at 5:30 p.m.

Everyone is invited regardless of religious affiliation. There is no charge for participants. For more information, call 541-676-9940 or 541-676-9970.

Nazarene church hosts Doughnuts for Dads

HERMISTON — After a successful Muffins with Moms, the Hermiston Church of the Nazarene is rolling out Doughnuts with Dad.

In celebration of Father's Day, people are invited to enjoy a doughnut and table games prior to the morning service. The event is Sunday at 9:45 a.m. at 1520 W. Orchard Ave., Hermiston. The worship service follows at 10:30 a.m.

For more information, contact 541-567-3677, hermistonnaz@gmail.com or visit www.hermistonnazarene.org.

Taxpayer-funded abortion ban close to reaching ballot

By CORLYN VOORHEES
The Oregonian/OregonLive

An initiative to ban state-funded abortions in Oregon could become the first ballot measure put before the state's voters without the aid of paid signature-gatherers since 2000.

Oregon Life United, the political action committee behind the anti-abortion initiative, has collected about 120,000 signatures, said Jeff Jimerson, a Corvallis resident and director of the committee. The group needs at least 117,578 valid signatures by July 6 to get its proposed measure on the ballot. It aims to collect 150,000 to account for the large share of signatures it anticipates will be deemed invalid, he said.

The initiative would prohibit the use of state funds to pay for abortions except in cases of rape and incest or instances where the mother's life is at stake, in line with federal regulations that have strictly limited the use of federal money to pay for abortions since 1976.

If backers are successful, their measure would be the first anti-abortion mea-

sure on the ballot in more than a decade. A 2006 measure would have required abortion providers to provide 48-hour written notice to parents or guardians of unemancipated minors seeking abortions. Voters rejected it 55 percent to 45 percent.

Oregon Life United has tried twice before, without success, to get the same initiative before Oregon voters. This year they have managed to collect more signatures, Jimerson said, largely because the organization's structure is larger and more experienced. In 2012 and 2014, it took 116,284 valid signatures to get an initiative on the ballot. The group gathered about 72,000 signatures in 2012 and about 98,000 in 2014, Jimerson said.

He is optimistic things will be different this year and voters will see the proposal on the November ballot.

Oregon is the only state that has not implemented restrictions on abortion since the historic 1973 U.S. Supreme Court decision in Roe v. Wade. It is one of 17 states that allow state funds

to pay for abortion.

In 2017, Gov. Kate Brown signed a new law that requires health plans sold in Oregon to cover a variety of services, including abortion, at no out-of-pocket cost to those insured. This applies to Oregonians insured under the Oregon Health Plan, the state- and federally-funded Medicaid program.

Proponents of state-mandated abortion coverage have argued that it makes reproductive health services accessible to all, especially those who can't afford an abortion out-of-pocket, and could be more cost-effective for the state in the long-run. Opponents have argued that taxpayer money should not go towards abortions, citing moral opposition due to personal and religious beliefs.

If the initiative ends up on the ballot and voters approve it, abortions would no longer be covered under the Oregon Health Plan. In 2015-2016, the health plan paid \$2.4 million for 3,769 abortions, or about \$642 per procedure, according to Oregon Health Authority documents received through

a public records request. The Oregon Health Authority does not publish the cost data on their website.

Historically in Oregon, anti-abortion ballot initiatives have either not drawn enough signatures to appear on the ballot or been shot down by voters. Since 1999, according to the Secretary of State's website, there have been 16 initiatives relating to abortion. Only the 2006 measure to require parental notice made the ballot.

In recent years, volunteer-only petition circulation has not succeeded. The last time an initiative made the ballot without the help of paid signature-gatherers was in 2000. Three volunteer-led initiatives made the ballot that year: one to regulate gun sales, another to ban body-gripping animal traps and a third to limit what schools could teach about homosexuality. Only the one requiring background checks for guns sales passed.

This election cycle, Oregon Life United filed the paperwork to allow the option to pay petitioners. But Jimerson said they haven't done so.

He credits the increased number of signatures gathered this year to time spent building a network of supporters, which "grows and grows each time we try it," he said.

The initiative is mostly backed by Christian churches from various denominations, including Catholic, Nazarene, Mormon, Lutheran and Baptist, as well as religious leaders such as Archbishop Alexander Sample, who heads the Catholic Archdiocese of Portland, said Jimerson.

Pendleton Faith Center Church welcomes their new Pastor.

Pastor Jeff Geesey family is moving up from Gilbert, AZ.

Pastor Jeff studied at Life Pacific Bible College and was the lead pastor at Life Community church for 10 years. Pastor Jeff said "Mentoring youth is where his heart is". Pastors Ray and Julie O' Grady retired in February after 25 years of shepherding God's sheep at Faith Center.

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Evening - 6pm
Adult - Study
Youth - Small Group
Kids - Rangers & Girl's Ministries

THURSDAYS
Celebrate Recovery - 6pm
Celebration Place - Kids - 6pm
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WEEKLY
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WORSHIP COMMUNITY

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Tom Inch, Pastor
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To share your worship times call 541-278-2678

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Evening Service at 5 o'clock

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Pendleton
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Sabbath School 9:20 am
Worship Service 10:45 am

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555 SW 11th, Hermiston 567-9497
Nursery provided for all services
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Worship - 10:45 AM 6:00 pm
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10:30 am Fellowship
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Children's Sunday School - 10:20 am
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Open Hearted... Open Minded

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Tuesday Kingdom Seekers: 7pm
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Bible Study.....10:00 AM
Red Lion Hotel (Oregon Trail Room)
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Sunday School: 9:30am
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Sunday Morning Worship 11:00 AM
Sunday Bible Classes 9:45 AM
Sunday Youth Group 6:00 PM
Mon. Community Women's Study 9:30 AM & 6 PM
Awana Kids Club (K-6th grade) Wed Men's Study 6 PM
MOPS meeting the 1st Thur of the Month 6 PM

The Salvation Army Center for Worship & Service
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