

Republicans join FRC in ad countering hate group listing

by [Adelle M. Banks](#)

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WASHINGTON (RNS) The Family Research Council, joined by prominent Republican allies, is mounting an aggressive defense to a decision by the Southern Poverty Law Center to designate the powerful conservative lobby as a hate group.

"The group, which was once known for combating racial bigotry, is now attacking several groups that uphold Judeo Christian moral views, including marriage as the union of a man and a woman," reads a Wednesday (Dec. 15) FRC ad placed in the print editions of Politico and the Washington Examiner.

The ad, in the form of an open letter, was signed by more than two dozen Republican leaders, including several potential GOP presidential candidates: Minnesota Gov. Tim Pawlenty, former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee and Sen. Jim DeMint of South Carolina.

Other signatories included House Speaker-designate John Boehner of Ohio and House Majority Leader-elect Eric Cantor of Virginia.

The ad follows a Nov. 22 report from the Alabama-based civil rights watchdog adding the FRC and four other conservative religious organizations to its list of hate groups for their "demonizing propaganda aimed at homosexuals."

The report's editor, Mark Potok, told Religion News Service the groups on the list were chosen for "propagation of known falsehoods" and not because of their religious nature.

The ad says the signatories "stand in solidarity" with FRC and other groups known for their opposition to gay marriage.

They also expressed dismay at criticism of the Manhattan Declaration, a 2009 statement that opposes abortion and gay marriage. An iPhone app promoting the manifesto was recently removed from Apple's online store after liberal critics objected to it.

"This is intolerance pure and simple," the ad reads. "Elements of the radical Left are trying to shut down informed discussion of policy issues that are being considered by Congress, legislatures, and the courts."