

CATHI HERROD

PRESIDENT, CENTER FOR ARIZONA POLICY

The historian Garry Wills once mused how Americans are periodically astonished to see evangelical Christians blazing on the national stage in what he described as a “cyclic pattern of flarings and fadings.”

No such musings are necessary in Arizona, where evangelical Christians’ influence on policy has been consistently palpable for decades, much of which can be credited to the Center for Arizona Policy and its president, Cathi Herrod.

Much of that success is owed to the Legislature’s decidedly conservative and aggressively pro-life leanings, but also fueling it is a savvy strategy, a keen understanding of the nuances of the legislative process, and a powerhouse in Herrod.

Herrod, who earned her law degree from the University of Texas at Austin, has her share of critics. But to supporters, she is a smart strategist, an effective articulator of the center’s agenda and a fearless apologist of the conservative right.

Love her or hate her, Herrod gets the job done. Indeed, in the past two decades, the center, which



was founded in 1995 as the vanguard in the fight to preserve traditional values, has successfully persuaded the state’s leaders to enact more than 100 measures — from restricting abortion to giving heterosexual couples adoption preferences. The courts have also struck down several laws for which the center advocated.

“She’s tenacious. She’s a hard worker,” said Senate President Steve Yarbrough, who met Herrod

before he became a legislator and who quickly found out she provides better arguments than he could come up with.

Sen. Nancy Barto, a Republican from Phoenix, met Herrod while they were both moms with young children at a church in Scottsdale. “What was so impactful for me was to see a mom with whom I could identify, getting involved in issues impacting the family with such passion and energy, as well as from a place of knowledge,” Barto said. “She was inspiring and made me want to learn more.”

Herrod grew up in Texas but always considered Arizona a second home, as her dad lived here, which meant she got to spend her summers and holidays in Arizona.

She was drawn to politics early on — she ran a relative’s campaign for a local school board and city council as a high school student.

“To me, engaging in public policy is admirable and necessary, also fascinating. I stay because of my deep concern for the future of our state and country,” Herrod said.

“She’s tenacious. She’s a hard worker.”

-Senate President Steve Yarbrough

PATRICE KRAUS

LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR, LEAGUE OF ARIZONA CITIES AND TOWNS

In the kingdom of term limits and constant turnovers, institutional knowledge is king.

And few can match Patrice Kraus’ experience, skill and political acumen as a lobbyist.

Before joining the League of Arizona Cities and Towns, Kraus had spent two decades as lobbyist for the city of Chandler. Previously, she worked for the Arizona Senate and in Gov. Rose Mofford’s administration.

But it made sense that Kraus would intimately know the cities’ needs and come to fight for them at the state Capitol. City government is in her blood. Her father was mayor of Conesville, a small town in Iowa, and she had grown up around the state’s political caucuses.

Call it serendipity, but her bachelor’s degree diploma was signed by Arizona Gov. Evan Mecham, and her graduate degree diploma was signed by Gov. Fife Symington. Kraus interned in the Senate in 1987, went to work for Mofford after Mecham’s



impeachment, briefly went back to the Senate, and eventually ended up lobbying for the city of Chandler.

Ken Strobeck, the league’s executive director, said Kraus excels at analyzing and coming up with the best options when presented with any policy proposal.

“She kind of has a little phrase that actually is pretty good: Can we kill it? Do we want to kill it? And should we kill it?” Strobeck said.

Chandler Mayor Jay Tibshraeny, who is now the league’s president but previously served in the Legislature, can attest to Kraus’ analytical prowess.

An expert in reading the political tea leaves, Kraus knows when to keep fighting bad legislation and when to adjust strategies to make a proposal that is certain to pass more palatable, the mayor said.

“Right now, the league, we’re lucky to have her as we work through these periods of time when local government is under fire. She’s the right person in that job at the right time,” Tibshraeny said.

Kraus once contemplated going to law school, but realized that it’s the policy side of things that she’s fascinated by.

“I love that legislative process, with all the twists and turns,” Kraus said.

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-Ken Strobeck, executive director, League of Arizona Cities and Towns.