



The Washington Flyer
April 22, 2011

He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.
Matthew 28:6

AACS National Competition

Last week, the AACS National Competition was held from April 12 to 14 in Greenville, South Carolina. Over 2,000 students and sponsors from over 200 AACS schools nationwide participated in the exciting event. Students performed or submitted entries in eighty categories in the areas of Bible, music, speech, art, and academics. Throughout the week, Mr. Keven Brownfield preached a series of challenging chapel messages. Bob Jones University staff graciously facilitated the student activities and accommodations. The three-day competition culminated at the Thursday night awards ceremony. Several individuals and schools were chosen to participate in a showcase highlighting some of the best entries. For the ninth consecutive year, [Virginia \(Old Dominion Association of Christian Schools\)](#) won the AACS Cup of Excellence as a result of accumulating the most points of any state. [Illinois](#), [Tennessee](#) and [South Carolina](#) were among the top states. The AACS offers our warmest congratulations to all the students who participated and made this year's National Competition a memorable event. To view the complete list of this year's winners [click here](#).

D. C. Opportunity Scholarship Victory

The 2011 budget negotiations resulted in a surprising [victory](#) for school choice. The final agreement (H.R. 1473) that will fund the federal government for the remaining portion of the 2011 fiscal year, included a reinstatement of the successful D.C. Opportunity Scholarship program (DCOSP). The 2004-2009 scholarship program was part of a three-pronged approach that divided money between public, charter, and private schools in the District of Columbia. Students who were in failing or under-performing schools were able to use the scholarships to attend the private school of their choice, including religious or parochial schools. Speaker John Boehner made the reauthorization of this program one of his top legislative [priorities](#) this session through his sponsorship of the SOAR Act. Earlier this session, the House [voted](#) in favor of reopening the program to new students. Some D.C. Council Members and several [teachers unions](#) opposed the measure for a variety of reasons, although there seemed to be widespread support among Congress, D.C. residents, and program beneficiaries. In March, the President issued a Statement of Administrative Policy that expressed his opposition to the legislation but did not expressly state that he would veto the measure. Ultimately, the April 8 budget compromise did include the provisions of the SOAR Act, a great [victory](#) for school choice advocates and the children and parents in D.C.

Race to the Top Funds in Budget Deal

In the race to prevent a government shutdown on April 8, lawmakers were able to broker a deal that was somewhat palatable to both sides. The Department of Education's 69.8 billion discretionary budget was decreased by 1 billion dollars for the 2011 fiscal year. About twenty education [programs](#), most already slated for elimination in the President's 2012 budget, were cut or eliminated by the agreement. The Pell grant program for college students was capped at \$5,500 per student, eliminating the prior option that allowed two applications per year. The Administration did receive substantial [funding](#) for two of its major educational objectives: Race to the Top and Investing in Innovation (i3). Both programs were part of the 2009 stimulus package initiative. The Administration initially sought a 1.35 billion dollar funding increase, as well as an extension of the Race to the Top competitive grant program to the district level. However, the [controversial](#) program did not appear to have many supporters in Congress; and under the terms of the final deal, the program received [700 million](#) for a third

round but will remain available only to states with winning applications. The Investing in Innovation program also received an additional 150 million dollars.

Pro-Life Gains in the Continuing Resolution

During the protracted [budget](#) battle, several Democratic lawmakers berated Republican House leadership over the inclusion of so called “[social issue](#)” riders that they claimed were halting the effort to avoid a government shutdown. The attempt to defund Planned Parenthood, the nation’s largest abortion provider which received approximately 363 million dollars in federal funding last year, and to reinstate the [Dornan Amendment](#) (ban on taxpayer funded abortions in D.C.) provoked vitriolic reactions on the House floor and a flurry of media [statements](#) from enraged Representatives. Although the House had previously voted to defund Planned Parenthood, the measure was thought to be a virtual non-starter in the Senate, and the President had previously [stated](#) that he would veto the measure. The budget compromise did guarantee that Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid would allow the Senate to vote on the measure, and, in a party line vote, the Senate did [vote](#) to continue funding for Planned Parenthood as predicted by pundits. While the continued funding of abortion providers is deplorable, this recorded vote will help frame the debate in the 2012 Congressional [election](#) campaign cycle. The longstanding Dornan amendment, which many prominent Democrats had voted for numerous times, became an important issue during the negotiations. Despite vehement objections by some, the pro-life Dornan amendment was included in [H.R. 1473](#). Taxpayers will no longer be forced to pay for elective abortions of D.C. residents. Several other “family planning” funding appropriations such as those for the United Nations Population Fund (15 million decrease), International Population Control (73 million decrease) and Title X Funding which includes Planned Parenthood funding (17 million decrease) were also reduced by the measure. Although there is much more work to do to protect the unborn, these budget provisions are a step in the right direction.

DOMA Defense Update

On March 9, the Bipartisan Legislative Advisory Group (BLAG) directed the House of Representatives to litigate cases that involve the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA). President Obama recently instructed the Department of Justice no longer to defend the 1993 law because he felt that it was not constitutional. This left several precedent-setting cases pending in the court system without defense. Therefore, in absence of a federal defense, House leadership immediately began to ascertain their recourse. On April 18, Speaker of the House John Boehner sent a Dear Colleague [letter](#) to Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi urging her to support his call for the transfer of funds intended for defense of DOMA from the Department of Justice to the House of Representatives. Former Solicitor General [Paul Clement](#), who has argued over fifty cases before the Supreme Court, has been retained by the House to pursue the defense of the law. Marriage advocates, such as the National Organization of Marriage, have [praised](#) the selection of the highly capable Paul Clement. Currently, two critical Massachusetts [cases](#) involving DOMA are on their way to the First Circuit Court of Appeals.

In Case You Missed It:

[Weekly Market Update](#) provided by Jeff Beach of the [AACS Investment Team at Merrill Lynch](#)

[Fourth Circuit Victory for Academic Freedom](#)

[Chinese Church Faces Increased Persecution](#)

[National Day of Prayer Upheld in Ruling](#)

[Court Upholds National Day of Prayer Constitutionality](#)

