



The Washington Flyer  
May 20, 2011

*America will never be destroyed from the outside. If we falter and lose our freedoms, it will be because we destroyed ourselves.*

**Abraham Lincoln**

### **Education Reform Bill Update**

Representative [Duncan Hunter](#), chairman of the Early Learning, Elementary and Secondary Education subcommittee, [introduced](#) the first in a series of bills aimed at reforming America's educational system. On May 13, Rep. Hunter introduced [H. R. 1891](#) entitled "Setting New Priorities in Education Spending Act." The measure would reduce the number of K – 12 programs from 80 programs to [43 programs](#). Education and Workforce Committee Chairman John Kline praised the elimination of wasteful and duplicative programs. Furthermore, Kline noted that the billions spent on education have [not produced](#) better results; therefore, attention must be focused on the effective distribution of resources. The programs targeted for elimination fall into five main categories: programs selected for elimination by the 2011 Continuing Resolution budget deal, programs identified for elimination by the President's 2012 [budget proposal](#), approved programs that were never funded, programs that have been defunded recently, and programs determined to be duplicative or out of the scope of federal involvement. Even Start, a program that promoted low income family literacy, was selected by the Office of Management and Budget for elimination since DOE studies show that nonparticipants actually performed better than participants. Other programs, such as Women's Educational Equity (2.4 million), were chosen because they have accomplished their goals: studies show that the stereotypical math gap between male and female students has closed and that female students have higher reading scores. The President's 2012 budget request identified a number of programs to be consolidated in light of the fact that monies exist in other programs for the same purpose. For example, other programs that awarded money to certain ethnic studies courses are already funded under various titles in ESEA and could therefore be eliminated at a savings of over 66 million dollars annually. Finally, the Teaching America History competitive grant program (118 million dollars) rewarded schools for teaching American history as a separate subject, but this would be eliminated completely by Duncan's bill rather than simply consolidated into one discretionary pool of revenue. In his floor statement, Rep. Hunter declared that it was time "to trim the fat. At a time when approximately one-third of American fourth graders can't read, we must concentrate on education initiatives that have a track record of putting the needs of students first."

### **Marriage Battlegrounds in the States**

The [battle](#) to combat the legislative attempts to redefine marriage is occurring across the country. Earlier in the year, traditional marriage proponents were victorious in the Maryland and Rhode Island legislatures by defeating attempts to pass laws allowing same sex marriage. In both states, reports claimed that passage of the bills was "inevitable," but churches and traditional marriage advocates made their representatives aware of their opposition, and both bills were defeated. In some [states](#), after a same sex marriage bill was defeated, a civil union alternative was introduced in the state legislatures. Most recently, New York has been the center of the marriage controversy. Past Governors expressed support for the redefinition of marriage but were sidelined by other issues. The current NY Governor, Andrew Cuomo, has openly [declared](#) that homosexual marriage is one of his main legislative priorities and has leveraged his considerable political popularity to advance the same sex marriage agenda. Groups such as the National Organization for Marriage (NOM) and [New Yorker's Family Research Foundation](#) (NYFRF) have sponsored advertising and hosted [informational](#) bus tours to combat the millions of dollars that same sex marriage [advocates](#) have been pouring into the state. State Senator Ruben Diaz

lead a Marriage Rally in the Bronx on May 16. On May 24, the NYFRF will be hosting a [“Mayday for Marriage”](#) rally at the Capitol in Albany. Brian Brown, president of NOM, has [pledged](#) that they will dedicate one million dollars to defend New York legislators who stand against the measure or to defeat those who vote in favor. Finally, in North Carolina, marriage advocates held a rally on May 17 in Raleigh. Event organizers, which included the [North Carolina Christian School Association](#) and [Return America](#), urged legislators to pass a bill that would allow the state’s voters to vote in a 2012 referendum to affirm traditional marriage. North Carolina is the lone state in the southeast that does not have a marriage amendment. Over 5,000 people gathered to hear remarks from state representatives, area pastors, Tony Perkins (Family Research Council president) and keynote speaker Dr. David Gibbs of the Christian Law Association. To view the rally [click here](#).

### **Department of Education Acknowledges Agenda**

[Critics](#) of the national standards initiative have long argued that the Department of Education role in the initiative violates federal statutes. The allegations have surfaced again after Department spokesperson Peter Cunningham commented on the issue last week. Cunningham stated that while the DOE does fund a national curriculum, it does not mandate a national curriculum. He also acknowledged that the DOE uses incentives to [fund their agenda](#). Arkansas school reform researcher Jay Greene cited 1979 legislation which states that no agency official has the authority “to exercise any direction, supervision, or control over the curriculum, program of instruction... or over the selection or content of...textbooks, or other instructional materials by any educational institution or school system, except [as] authorized by law.” The DOE used the controversial and untested Race to the Top initiative to link winning grant applications to the adoption of the Common Core standards (CCS) and to joining a national consortium developing assessments for the CCS. The CCS guidelines specifically prohibit schools from using over 15% of supplemental materials which greatly restricts instructors’ ability to tailor lessons that that will be the most effective for their students. The federal statutes reserve the responsibility for education to states and local school systems. Opponents of the CCS cite their troubling restrictions and question the legality of unelected bureaucrats actively incentivizing a particular agenda.

### **AACS TORNADO RELIEF EFFORT: Update on AACS Schools Hit by Southern Storms**

The AACS relief effort for AACS schools that were damaged by the tornadoes last week in the southeast is now underway. At least five ACEA schools were affected with direct damage to either school buildings or homes of teachers and school families, and physical injuries were also sustained by some of the school families. Affected schools include Tuscaloosa Christian School, Flint Hill Christian School, Brooklane Baptist Academy, Cullman Christian School, and Faith Christian Academy-Athens. Cullman Christian School students meet in buildings on two campuses, and the elementary building was destroyed ([view photo here](#)). *We would like to challenge every student in an AACS school to donate at least \$1 to relief for those schools and teachers affected by the storms in Alabama.* Please consider presenting this challenge to your school and your students. An immediate response is needed if we are to offer any timely help. Thank you for your prayers for these people and your help for this relief effort.

*Please note: All donations will be used entirely for Tornado Relief, and disbursements will be made with approval of the AACS Executive Committee and coordinated through the Alabama Christian Education office. Donations should be sent to AACS, 602 Belvoir Avenue, East Ridge, TN 37412. Donations can also be made on the AACS website using the “Donate Online” option. Select “Missions” from the drop down list.*

### **In Case You Missed It:**

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

[Kansas Joins 5 States in Banning Taxpayer Funding of Abortion](#)

[Oklahoma Governor Signs Equal Opportunity Education Scholarship Act](#)

