



**The Washington Flyer
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We have abundant reason to present to the Supreme Being our annual oblations of gratitude for a liberal participation in the ordinary blessings of His providence. To the usual subjects of gratitude I can not omit to add one of the 1st importance to our well being and safety; I mean that spirit which has arisen in our country against the menaces and aggression of a foreign nation. A manly sense of national honor, dignity, and independence has appeared which, if encouraged and invigorated by every branch of the Government, will enable us to view undismayed the enterprises of any foreign power and become the sure foundation of national prosperity and glory.

John Adams, State of the Union Address 1798

State of the Union Address Includes Education

As President Obama took to the podium this week to deliver his first [State of the Union Address](#), much was expected from the 44th President. With recent falling approval ratings and a huge victory for Republicans in Massachusetts, many expected the President to address the economy and the stunning unemployment rate. In a speech that ran for over an hour, the President focused on jobs for nearly two-thirds of its entirety. He also focused on clean energy and outlined his proposal for tax cuts and a spending freeze.

The President did mention his desire to focus on [education reform](#) and to support what works. He stated, “The idea here is simple: instead of rewarding failure, we only reward success. Instead of funding the status quo, we only invest in reform - reform that raises student achievement, inspires students to excel in math and science, and turns around failing schools that steal the future of too many young Americans, from rural communities to inner-cities.” The President also stated his intentions of reauthorizing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). While legislative staff on Capitol Hill believe education reform will not be a priority until after a jobs creation bill and some form of healthcare reform pass, education groups including AACS are continuing to voice concerns and to educate Congress on the necessity that protections for private schools be in place when considering education reform.

Governor Bob McDonnell, delivering the [Republican response](#) to the State of the Union also acknowledged that education reform should be a priority, but that Congress should be more attentive to alternatives and consider school choice as a major component of reform. “The President and I agree on expanding the number of high-quality charter schools, and rewarding teachers for excellent performance,” said the Governor. “More school choices for parents and students mean more accountability and greater achievement. A child’s educational opportunity should be determined by her intellect and work ethic, not by her zip code.”

Perhaps the most anticipated topic of the speech was healthcare. The President did acknowledge that healthcare reform would not be the main focus of 2010; however, he also expressed his determination to pass healthcare

reform, stating, “Here’s what I ask of Congress, though: Do not walk away from reform. Not now. Not when we are so close. Let us find a way to come together and finish the job for the American people.”

The President maintained a [distance](#) from most social issues including abortion, which has been one of the most contentious issues with the proposed healthcare plan. However, he did state his intentions of [repealing](#) “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell,” stating, “This year, I will work with Congress and our military to finally repeal the law that denies gay Americans the right to serve the country they love because of who they are.” In his Republican response, Gov. McDonnell focused on limited government and on the economy, while also stating the importance of preserving life: “Many Americans are concerned about this Administration’s efforts to exert greater control over car companies, banks, energy and health care. Over-regulating employers won’t create more employment; overtaxing investors won’t foster more investment. And no government program can replace the actions of caring Americans freely choosing to help one another. The Scriptures say ‘To whom much is given, much will be required.’ America must always be a land where liberty and property are valued and respected, and innocent human life is protected.”

Christian School Students Participate in March for Life

While the weather was grim, the 2010 March for Life proved to be a [huge success](#). This year’s march saw over 250,000 participants, making it the largest march since its beginnings. Memorializing the 37th anniversary of *Roe v. Wade* (1973), the March began with a rally in which many national pro-life leaders and Members of Congress spoke on this year’s theme: “Stand Up Now and Unite for the Life Principles.”

Perhaps the most notable and inspiring aspect of the March was the overwhelming majority of young people present. “We have seen just how quickly change really does happen in America, and I think that this generation, the folks here understand that, and they can taste it. They know that if we do what we need to do, we do what we are supposed to do, we change this culture towards life and we can end abortion within our lifetime,” stated Shaun Kenney, executive director of the [American Life League](#).

The American Association of Christian Schools was also pleased to have students from a member school, Engleside Christian School in Alexandria, VA, attend the March. When asked why the students wished to be a part of the event, 11th grade student Kenton Dayvault stated, “I participated to represent the next generation of voters seeking to communicate with our lawmakers that unborn children have the right to life.” Thomas Leffler, also a junior at Engleside, talked about the opportunities to share with lawmakers their beliefs, saying, “I personally believe that abortion is murder, an injustice to life, based on Biblical principles. It was important for me to participate in this visible demonstration for our governmental leaders to show them that there are numbers of people willing to stand up for the rights of unborn children. I also had the opportunity to present our position to staffers at Senator Webb’s office.”

“We were so pleased to have Christian schools represented at the march this year and hope more will be able to join next year,” stated Maureen Wiebe, Legislative Director of the American Association of Christian Schools. “What a blessing to pray with these students in front of the Supreme Court and see their commitment to Christ and their passion for the pro-life cause.”

To find out more information about the March for Life or how you can be involved next year, please click [here](#) or email [Sarah Griffith](#).

German Homeschooling Family Granted Asylum in U.S.

In a stunning decision this week by immigration Judge Lawrence O. Burman, a German homeschooling family who fled persecution in Germany in 2008 was [granted asylum](#) in the United States. Germany’s High Courts have ruled homeschooling as a “parallel society” that should be “stamped out.” In fact, in 2006 Germany’s highest criminal court ruled that the government was allowed to take custody of children whose parents want to homeschool for reasons of conscience, allowing only families that travel throughout the year to be exempted.

The Romeikes, who fled in August of 2008, expressed gratitude for the decision, stating, “We are so grateful to the judge for his ruling. We know many people, especially other German homeschoolers, have been praying for us. Their prayers and ours have been answered. We greatly appreciate the freedom to homeschool we now have in America and will be building our new life here.”

The Judge issued his decision stating, “We can’t expect every country to follow our constitution. The world might be a better place if it did. However, the rights being violated here are basic human rights that no country has a right to violate. Homeschoolers are a particular social group that the German government is trying to suppress. This family has a well-founded fear of persecution...therefore, they are eligible for asylum...and the court will grant asylum.” Mike Donnelly, staff attorney and director of international relations for Home School Legal Defense Association reported, “This decision finally recognizes that German homeschoolers are a specific social group that is being persecuted by a Western democracy. It is embarrassing for Germany, since a Western nation should uphold basic human rights, which include allowing parents to raise and educate their own children. This judge understood the case perfectly, and he called Germany out. We hope this decision will cause Germany to stop persecuting homeschoolers.”

Many supporters of homeschooling in Germany hope that this decision will “send a loud message” to the leaders of their country. Netzwerk Bildungsfreiheit, a German organization working to support homeschooling in the country stated the following:

This decision reveals to the rest of the world that the German state acts outside the mainstream of Western democracies. Germany is in the company of countries like China, North Korea and others where fundamental human rights are not respected. Germany’s behavior exposes the totalitarian character of the German school [of] law that takes away a parent’s right to educate their children. A decision on behalf of the Romeikes puts blame on the German government and is a serious warning to Germans (sic) officials to change their policies and further accept the rights of the parents. We hope that the decision will send a clear message to authorities in Germany to make changes right away!

Mike Smith, President of HSLDA, also praised the decision saying, “We are pleased to have been able to support this courageous family, and we hope and pray that this decision will have a decisive effect on German policy makers who should change their laws to recognize parents’ rights to educate their own children.”

In Case You Missed It:

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

[Pro-Life Super Bowl Ad gets "O.K." from CBS](#)

[Pro-Abortion Dawn Johnson Re-Nominated](#)

[Brief Filed to Affirm Personhood of Unborn](#)