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The philosophy of the school room in one generation will be the philosophy of government in the next.
Abraham Lincoln

Texas Bill Aims To Prevent Adoption of Common Core Standards

The Texas [legislature](#) is currently considering H.B. 2923 that would prohibit any district in the state from adopting national curriculum standards. The bill specifically mentions standards that are developed by the National Governor's Association (NGA) or the Council of Chief State School Officers such as the Common Core Standards (CCS). The Common Core Standards Initiative (CCSI) seeks to establish a national set of K-12 math and English standards. [Detractors](#) of the "one size fits all" instructional approach claim that this effort will resort in a standardization of mediocrity. The current standards of several states, like Massachusetts and Texas, are superior to the Common Core Standards. The promoters of the Common Core Standards counter that adoption of CCS will make states with lower standards improve their academic outcomes. Although initially adoption of the standards was slow, recent federal competitive grant programs, such as the 4.35 billion dollar Race to the Top, resulted in almost all states signing on to the standards in order to gain points on their grant applications. Current education regulations prohibit the direct federal funding of a national standard. However, the lure of potential grant money convinced many cash strapped localities to push their state leaders to cede local control to the government in exchange for additional money. In the end, only 11 states and D.C. received a share of the Race to the Top [funding](#) stream. Texas Governor [Rick Perry](#) garnered a considerable amount of media attention for his criticism of the CCSI as well as the Race to the Top program. Governor Perry contends that the resources and manpower that must be devoted to developing winning grant proposals far outweigh the purported benefits of adopting the standards. Currently, there are six states that have not joined the Common Core Standards Initiative.

Law Firm Drops DOMA Defense

The attempt by the House of Representatives to pursue the continued defense of the [Defense of Marriage Act](#) (DOMA) met a serious obstacle this week. Section 3 of the act expressly prohibits the federal government from recognizing same sex marriages and allows states to determine their own statutes in regard to the matter. Currently, thirty seven states have their own DOMA laws. Earlier this year, President Obama instructed Attorney General Holder and the Justice Department no longer to defend the 1996 statute because he felt it was unconstitutional. Last week, the House announced that former Solicitor General Paul Clement would argue the cases on their behalf. Traditional marriage advocates applauded the choice of Clement, citing his record arguing cases before the Supreme Court. In a surprising development, the Atlanta based firm of King and Spalding, Clement's employer, announced that they would no longer represent the House in the numerous cases involving DOMA. One week after signing the contract with the House, the firm's president released a statement that cited an inadequate vetting process as the reason for reneging on their contract with the House. Evidently, gay rights [activists](#), most notably Lambda Legal and the Human Rights campaign, issued dire warnings to firms that considered participating in the case, planned protests at the firm's headquarters, and threatened to run a full page ad in the *Atlanta Journal Constitution*. Immediately after the firm's announcement, Paul Clement [resigned](#) from the vacillating firm and issued a blistering letter decrying the firm's decision. In his resignation letter, Clement included a quote from one of the firm's most prestigious partners, Griffin Bell, in which he said the following: "you are not required to take every matter that is presented to you, but having assumed a representation, it becomes your duty to finish the representation." Clement has now joined a Washington based

firm and will continue to defend DOMA in the court. House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi praised King and Spalding's decision and opined that taxpayer money should not be used to defend the law. In an *L.A. Times* editorial the writer opined that "sharp witted counsel on both sides making the strongest possible arguments" would provide the best result. In light of the fact that many [high profile plaintiffs](#) retain lawyers despite the public outrage over their alleged crimes, it is particularly [troubling](#) that a prestigious law firm, caving in to intimidation by special interest groups, would fail to deliver the promised legal defense that America's adversarial court structure has been based upon since its inception.

California Bill Requires Controversial Course Offering

On April 14, the California Senate passed the Fair, Accurate, Inclusive and Respectful Education Act in a 23 – 14 vote down party lines. State Senator Mark Leno (D) [reintroduced](#) the measure that aims to dispel unfavorable views about homosexuals (GLBT) that can possibly lead to bullying, negative stereotyping, and suicide. The legislation would require California schools to teach gay history to all students. Specific implementation details, such as student age, grade level or type of curriculum plan, would be determined by the school district. [Critics](#) of the proposal believe that this approach will undermine parental control and expose children to controversial and objectionable material. By the 2013-2014 school year, any textbooks that could potentially reflect adversely on homosexuality would be banned by the bill. Some critics allege that in an attempt to be politically correct, California has created a history [curriculum](#) that is a discombobulated conglomerate of social and ethnic diversity special interests. Currently, teachers must include specific lessons that highlight positive contributions made by entrepreneurs, labor, women, African Americans, Mexican Americans, Asian Americans, American Indians, etc. The measure has been sent to the Assembly for further consideration.

Drop in Early Education Funding

A recently released [study](#) by the National Institute for Early Education Research reported that many states have been forced to decrease their early education outlays during the current recession. The study estimates that the average per pupil expenditure has decreased by \$114 dollars. Although the report credits the Administration's stimulus package with mitigating some of the harmful effects of the spending cuts, some question whether the current multibillion dollar programs produce satisfactory long term [outcomes](#) when compared to the outcomes for those children who are not enrolled in taxpayer funded, early education programs.

Anniversary of the KJV Bible

Since this year marks the 400th [anniversary](#) of the King James Bible (1611–2011), Representatives Robert Aderholt (R–AL) and Nick Rahall (D–WV) have introduced a bipartisan [resolution](#) to commemorate the KJV Bible for its innumerable positive contributions to American culture and institutions. After several centuries, the Bible is still the best selling and most widely published book in the English language. The resolution notes the widespread affect of the Bible on speech, literature, sermons, music, the [Founding Fathers](#), American justice and governmental systems, etc. Next week, there will be a variety of events celebrating the KJV Bible on the National Mall and at George Washington University. The exposition at the Mall will feature a fully functioning replica of a Gutenberg printing press, rare Bible display, complimentary John and Romans New Testaments, musical selections and a rally. The university will host several guest lectures and a fine arts presentation.

In Case You Missed It:

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

[He is Risen Indeed](#)

[Counting the Cost: Continuing Persecution of Chinese Christians](#)



