



**The Washington Flyer**  
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*“Finally, let us not forget the religious character of our origin. Our fathers were brought hither by their high veneration for the Christian religion. They journeyed by its light, and labored in its hope. They sought to incorporate its principles with the elements of their society, and to diffuse its influence through all their institutions, civil, political, or literary.”*

Daniel Webster

### **States Expand Tax Credit Scholarships**

The fight for more school choice continues as states begin to acknowledge the benefits of competitive choice and incentives for quality education. Both Florida and Iowa have expanded tax credit scholarship programs. These programs have made a significant impact in their state’s fiscal accountability as well as evidencing the benefits of school choice.

Governor Charlie Crist of Florida approved a [bipartisan measure](#) to allow insurance companies to donate up to 75% of their 5.5 percent corporate income tax to scholarships for families who wish to send their children to private schools and who make an income of less than \$25,400 a year. Insurance companies and businesses will be able to accrue a tax credit by donating, giving them an incentive to help give low-income families a choice in the education for their children. The program is not only a victory for school choice and parental involvement but it also fiscally responsible, having saved the state of Florida nearly \$39 million in the 2007-2008 school year.

In a similar manner, Iowa Governor Chet Culver signed into law [an expansion](#) to a state-wide scholarship program that gives low income families the choice to decide where their children should receive an education. The law will allow organizations to accept up to 25% of their donations from corporations. The scholarship program originally allowed only tax credits for individuals who donated, but in May, a provision was added to include corporations. This new provision will expand the amount that may be donated to organizations which provide the scholarships that may allow for more students to be involved in the program.

Proponents of school choice are happy with the bill but wish that every student in the state would have a choice in their education. Eric Goranson, chairman of Iowa Advocates for Choice in Education stated, “We are very excited about the precedent it sets for school choice, the possible relationships we may be able to forge with the business community, and the ability to ensure as many children as possible have access to the school of their family’s choice.”

### **Home Schooler forced to attend Public School**

Parental rights have come under attack this week as a New Hampshire judge ordered a 10-year-old home schooled girl to attend public school. The [reason for the decision](#) was based on her “sincerely held” religious beliefs and her “rigidity” on questions of faith. While the court found the girl to be “well liked, social and interactive with her peers, academically promising, and intellectually at or superior to grade level” the ruling was determined by “the impact of beliefs on her interaction with others.”

The girl’s parents divorced nearly 10 years ago and the child has been homeschooled by her mother since first grade, using curriculum that meets all state standards. In addition, the child has attended supplemental public

school classes and has been involved in a variety of extra-curricular activities. Indeed, even the judge found her schooling to be up to par, stating, “It is clear that the home schooling...has more than kept up with the academic requirements of the...public school system.” So what’s the problem?

According to the guardian ad litem, a state official who was negotiating a new parenting plan for the child determined the young girl “appeared to reflect her mother’s rigidity on questions of faith” and believed that the girl’s interests “would be best served by exposure to a public school setting” which would help to expose the child to “different points of view at a time when she must begin to critically evaluate multiple systems of belief...in order to select, as a young adult, which of those systems will best suit her own needs.”

The Alliance Defense Fund, after hearing of this illegitimate decision, has [filed motions](#) with the court, stating, “Parents have a fundamental right to make educational choices for their children.” John Anthony Simmons of Hampton, the ADF-allied attorney who will be handling the case, stated, “The court is essentially saying that the evidence shows that, socially and academically, this girl is doing great, but her religious beliefs are a bit too sincerely held and must be sifted, tested by, and mixed among other worldviews. This is a step too far for any court to take.”

According to the U.S. Department of Education’s National Center for Education Statistics found in their annual study, *The Condition of Education 2009*, the number one reason parents choose to home school their children is “to provide religious or moral instruction,” followed by “concern about school environment” and “dissatisfaction with academic instruction.” The very reason that thousands of students are being home schooled yearly was determined by this court to be the very reason this young girl must be placed in a government run school. As ADF Senior Legal Counsel Mike Johnson stated, “there is clearly and without question no legitimate legal basis for the court’s decision, and we trust it will reconsider its conclusions.”

### **Bearing False Witness?**

In an attempt to incorporate religious leaders in the support for health care reform, President Obama held a conference call last week with many [religious leaders](#) who lean toward the left or who are self-proclaimed allies of the liberal agenda. During the call, the President accused those who are criticizing or spreading “disinformation” about the proposed bill of being guilty of “[bearing false witness](#).”

Specifically, he addressed the claims that the health care reform legislation being considered in Congress would include “death panels,” health care for illegal immigrants, and abortion. Denying these charges, he stated, “These are all fabrications that have been put out there in order to discourage people from meeting what I consider to be a core ethical and moral obligation, and that is that we look out for one another. That I am my brother’s keeper, I am my sister’s keeper. And in the wealthiest nation on earth right now, we are neglecting to live up to that call.”

However, some religious groups would disagree with the President’s claims, and they take issue with his use of the language “bearing false witness” in describing those who speak out against federal funding of abortion in health care legislation. Tony Perkins, president of the Family Research Council, pointedly responded to the President in a [blog and video clip](#), saying, “Mr. President, if what you say is true, which the present House bill would suggest is not the case when it comes to government funded abortion, why not let your *no* be *no* and accept one of the dozen amendments that have been offered that make it clear that abortion will not be a part of the government healthcare plan. Until you let your *yes* be *yes* and your *no* be *no*, Mr. President we can not have a true debate about the core ethical and moral obligation of insuring all Americans have access to affordable healthcare – a discussion we look forward to having.”

[A group of pro-life Democrats](#) in the House of Representatives has also expressed concern over provisions for federal funding of abortions in the health care legislation. In a [letter to Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi](#) dated June 25, 2009, these Representatives pointed out that “without an explicit exclusion, abortion could be included in a government subsidized health care plan under general health care,” and they pledged not to support any health care legislation that did include explicit language excluding abortion coverage.

Despite the President's numerous statements that he wishes to see a reduction in abortions, it would seem he fails to understand that the more the government funds organizations which profit from abortions, the more abortions are performed.

**In Case You Missed It:**

[Minnesota Town Allows Religious Activities to Meet at Library](#)

[Science Czar: Born Baby "Will Ultimately Develop into a Human Being"](#)

[Pharmacists can Refuse to Dispense Abortion Pills](#)

[Abortion Fight Grows Bigger as Health Care Reform Heats Up](#)

[Marriage Amendment in Wisconsin Supreme Court](#)



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