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Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other.

John Adams

AACS Legislative Director on National Radio Broadcast

This week on the nationally syndicated Janet Mefferd Show, Maureen Van Den Berg addressed the impact of the Common Core Standards (CCS) on Christian, private schools. In her radio interview, Mrs. Van Den Berg outlined the history of the CCS's drafting and their subsequent adoption by states eager to receive a portion of the four billion dollar Race to the Top competitive grant program. Mrs. Mefferd noted that although the CCS currently covers only English and math content areas, it is easy to see how standards will soon be crafted to cover subjects such as history and science. The aforementioned subjects can tend to be highly controversial areas. Mrs. Van Den Berg offered cautionary examples of the potential danger that political correctness and social agendas could cause in curriculum content. She also mentioned problematic areas such as credit transfer and college acceptance that could unfairly disadvantage Christian school students. Although Christian school students' standardized testing scores are higher than their publicly educated counterparts, institutions of higher education could choose to invalidate courses not taught from curriculum aligned with the Common Core Standards. To listen to the interview, [click here](#) (Hour 2, from 7:00 to 19:47 minute mark).

Education Becomes Campaign Issue

This week on the campaign trail, both Presidential candidates spent significant time [disparaging](#) their opponent's plan for federal involvement in education. In several speeches geared toward college students, President Obama dismissed former Governor Mitt Romney's admonitions to "shop around" and "ask parents" for college aid money as out of touch. He also warned students that Governor Romney's plan to reduce spending would result in \$115 billion in cuts to education spending and prevent one million students from receiving federal tuition assistance. Governor Romney blamed the President's policies for the steep rise in college costs and the lack of jobs for graduates. His aides explain that the proposed cuts in the Ryan budget would not affect the number of Pell Grant loans available for applicants in the short term but would reduce the number of people eligible for the program over time. Originally, the Pell Grant program was intended to make college more affordable for low income students. The federal takeover of student loans has come under more scrutiny as the number of loan repayment defaults has risen and taxpayers are left to absorb the losses. Student loan debt is approximately one trillion dollars and has [surpassed](#) credit card debt as the number one source of debt in our country.

Religious Liberty Report Released

The Liberty Institute in conjunction with the Family Research Council released a [report](#) detailing over 600 incidents of religious hostility in America over a ten year period. After a hearing in which Senators John Cornyn and Ted Kennedy requested additional information about specific incidents, these groups worked together to document cases of religious hostility. Incidents range from public schools banning tee shirts which contained Christian references to loss of [employment](#) and eviction for a Christian couple

who displayed religious artwork. Kelly Shackelford from the Liberty Institute opined that “America today would be unrecognizable to our Founders. Our First Liberty is facing a relentless onslaught from well-funded and aggressive groups and individuals who are using the courts, Congress, and the vast federal bureaucracy to suppress and limit religious freedom. This radicalized minority is driven by an anti-religious ideology that is turning the First Amendment upside down.”

Texas Can Continue to Defund Abortion Providers

On August 21, the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals [ruled](#) that the state of Texas can continue to deny funding to abortion providers that wish to participate in the Medicaid Women’s Health Program. Earlier this year, the legislature voted in favor of S.B. 7 which prohibits taxpayer funding from being funneled to groups that perform abortions. Planned Parenthood, the nation’s largest abortion provider, sued the state on behalf of nine Texas locations. The organization which has assets totaling one billion dollars would stand to lose millions of dollars if Texas wins the legal battle. According to the Susan B. Anthony List, ten states have attempted to defund Planned Parenthood. In several cases, Planned Parenthood has sued to prevent their exclusion from certain programs. The Administration has [circumvented](#) several states’ decisions (Indiana, New Hampshire, Texas) by directly funding Planned Parenthood affiliates.

GOP Delegates Approve Most Conservative Platform in Recent History

Prior to next week’s convention, committee delegates met this week to revise and approve the party platform for the upcoming November elections. There were several [attempts](#) to insert language altering the definition of marriage and recognizing civil unions for the first time. Both amendments were defeated in committee. Groups such as the Family Research Council, Wallbuilders, and the American Conservative Union participated in the committee discussions and articulated the need for strong pro-life, defense, and traditional marriage language. As a result of Rep. Ron Paul supporters’ influence, a section calling for the restoration of constitutional government and an audit of the Federal Reserve were also included in the document. A working group also voted to include funding for abstinence education in lieu of contraceptive-based sexual education in public schools. On Monday, the 2,286 delegates will vote to adopt the platform formally. *The Washington Times* characterized the final document as the “most conservative plan in party history.”

Pro-Lifers Remember Nellie Gray

On Friday, mourners will gather to celebrate the life and achievements of prominent pro-life leader, Nellie Gray. Mrs. Gray [organized](#) the annual March for Life Rally to memorialize the 54 million children that have been aborted since the infamous *Roe v. Wade* decision in 1973. Every year in January, hundreds of thousands of pro-lifers travel to the nation’s Capital to attend the March for Life events and hear speeches from members of Congress, clergy, and pro-life leaders. Bob Morrison summarized Mrs. Gray’s impact this way, “If you come to the March for Life, you will see the tens of thousands of young people, celebrating life, so hopeful for change. If you then seek Nellie Gray’s monument, look around you.”

In Case You Missed It:

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

[120 Pro-Family Leaders Outraged after U.S. Ambassador Participates in Czech ‘Gay Pride’ Event](#)

[Pakistani Girl Accused of Blasphemy](#)