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“When we view the blessings with which our country has been favored, those which we now enjoy, and the means which we possess of handing them down unimpaired to our latest posterity, our attention is irresistibly drawn to the source from whence they flow. Let us then, unite in offering our most grateful acknowledgements for these blessings to the Divine Author of All Good.”

James Monroe, 5th U.S. President

Seclusion and Restraint Bill Hearing

Last week, the House Education and Labor Committee marked up [H.R. 4247](#), “Preventing Harmful Restraint and Seclusion in Schools Act.” Sponsored by Rep. George Miller (D-CA) and Rep. Cathy McMorris Rodgers (R-WA), the purpose of this bill is to “prevent and reduce the use of physical restraint and seclusion in schools.” The bill passed the Committee, 34-10, and is on its way to the house floor to be voted upon.

While the goal of this bill is certainly something AACS would support, concerns remain about the language of the bill that could introduce unnecessary regulation into our private schools, specifically through the requirements it would establish for reporting and teacher training. The AACS Legislative office met with both offices of the sponsors of this bill and voiced the concerns over the regulations that could be imposed on private schools. Both offices were receptive to the concerns raised, and the final bill that passed the Committee mark up did include language that protects those private schools which do not receive any federal funds (see p. 28, Sec. 11(b)(1)) from unnecessary regulations.

While AACS was pleased with the inclusion of this language as this protects the vast majority of AACS schools from government intrusion, a concern still lies for those private schools which may participate in some of the federal programs offered under the “equitable participation” opportunities (i.e. professional development, supplemental educational services). As these schools are considered to receive “indirect” federal funding, they would still fall under the definition of “school” (Sec. 4(11)) that would be regulated by this bill. Rep. John Kline gave the following [statement](#) at the mark up highlighting this concern:

I’d also like to raise a concern about the application of this legislation to private schools. While some modest steps have been taken to reduce the federal burden on private schools, this bill would still impose a significant new mandate on independent schools that have traditionally been excluded from such Washington requirements. None of the incidents uncovered by the GAO (Government Accountability Office) took place in private schools; their inclusion in this bill seems both unnecessary and intrusive.

While AACS has been assured that the regulations are intended for only those schools where seclusion and restraint is an issue and that schools which do not practice seclusion and restraint would not be affected by the reporting and training requirements, AACS is working to get this clarified as the language of the bill is unclear in this regard.

Conversations with Rep. McMorris Rodgers and her staff indicate that they are not interested in federal intrusion into private schools and are interested in working with AACCS and the rest of the private school community to work on making the bill better as it moves forward to the House floor.

Planned Parenthood Study “Disturbing”

Just one week after a study showing the significant impacts that abstinence education has had on today’s youth, the International Planned Parenthood Federation announced an “intensive” sex education report that would radically promote an extreme form of “comprehensive” sex education for children as young as [10-years-old](#). The report, “Stand and Deliver,” claims, “Young people’s limited access to education, employment, money and information (about sex, gender roles and relationships, for example), and the lack of opportunities they have to make decisions about their own lives and access sexual and reproductive health services makes them vulnerable to poor sexual and reproductive health.” The report also attacks religious groups charging, “Young people’s sexuality is still contentious for many religious institutions. Fundamentalist and other religious groups — the Catholic Church and madrasas (Islamic Schools) for example — have imposed tremendous barriers that prevent young people, particularly, from obtaining information and services related to sex and reproduction. Currently, many religious teachings deny the pleasurable and positive aspects of sex.” Dr. Gill Greer, director-general of IPPF, further argued, “Greater investment in primary and secondary education for girls, comprehensive sexuality education for boys and girls, both in and out of school, which can break down gender stereotypes, and provision of [youth](#)-friendly services that ignore taboos and stigma around intimacy and sex will empower girls and young women.”

While Planned Parenthood made its case, conservatives [criticized](#) the report for promoting promiscuous behavior from children as young as 10-years-old. “This report isn’t about doing what is right for young people and certainly not about offering them the very best options in life. It is about advancing an ideological agenda that is hostile to traditional families, religious faith and the good of children,” stated Jeanne Monahan, director of the Center for Human Dignity at the Family Research Council. She continued, “Stand and Deliver” dangerously oversexualizes children as young as ten. Not only are the recommendations developmentally inappropriate, but they advocate behaviors in ten-year-olds that can lead to such disturbing problems as pedophilia and statutory rape. Why can’t Planned Parenthood let kids be kids?”

Co-author of *All Things Girl: Modern and Modest*, Teresa Tomeo, issued her concern about the report for promoting promiscuity at such a young age. “Despite the fact that sexually transmitted diseases, teen pregnancies, and teen abortions are on the rise, Planned Parenthood thinks pushing sexual promiscuity to kids as young as 10 is a good idea. It’s difficult enough for families to fight the constant flow of messages from the mass media that attack a chaste lifestyle; a healthy lifestyle that will protect kids from physical, psychological, and spiritual damage and now this.”

Other critics were troubled at the report’s elimination of the parental role in sex education. Michelle Turner, president of the Maryland-based Citizens for a Responsible Curriculum, said “What are they trying to do? They are trying to eliminate the role of mom and dad in the family. For Planned Parenthood to decide that governments, private organizations and religious organizations should make decisions about kids’ sexuality is just going too far.” She further argued, “It is part of a bigger push to change the way we think about sex. That sex is all about pleasure and there are no consequences. They are wrong. No matter how much we teach children, some will make mistakes. They will forget. And Planned Parenthood doesn’t want to deal with that.”

“Celebrating Life” Faced Staunch Criticism

Despite weeks of harsh criticism and staunch opposition, a “pro-life” advocacy commercial that aired during the Super Bowl has since proven to be a tasteful pro-family advertisement. Many who had expected former Florida Gator’s Heisman trophy winner Tim Tebow to impose his Christian beliefs on all society were surprisingly shocked to see an appropriate reminder that family is important and that despite tough times, family and life should be valued. Focus on the Family (FOTF), the sponsor of the ad, along with CBS received harsh criticism for airing the 30-second clip of Tim Tebow with his mother Pam Tebow. The Women’s Media Center along with other pro-abortion women’s groups wrote a [letter](#) objecting to the ad stating, “By offering one of the most coveted advertising spots of the year to an anti-equality, anti-choice, homophobic organization, CBS is aligning

itself with a political stance that will damage its reputation, alienate viewers, and discourage consumers from supporting its shows and advertisers.”

Once aired, however, many were impressed with the appropriate manner in which the ad emphasized the importance of family and the Tebow’s decision to “celebrate life.” Focus on the Family issued a [press release](#) before the initial airing stating, “Tim and Pam share our respect for life and our passion for helping families thrive. They live what we see every day – that the desire for family closeness is written on the hearts of every generation. Focus on the Family is about nurturing that desire and strengthening families by empowering them with the tools they need to live lives rooted in morals and values.”

Gary Schneeberger, FOTF’s vice president of [media relations](#), believes the ad has allowed the ministry to begin a national dialogue about “the sanctity of life, the importance of celebrating life, and celebrating family.” Many believe that the ad will initiate a new approach to talking about the life issue, making the topic less divisive and more of an open conversation.

To view Focus on the Family’s “Celebrating Family, Celebrating Life” Ad please click [here](#).

In Case You Missed It:

[Tennessee Allows Bible in Public Schools](#)

[Referendum on Marriage in D.C. Appealed](#)

[Policy Requires Military Bases to Stock Plan B](#)



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