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On every question of construction, carry ourselves back to the time when the Constitution was adopted, recollect the spirit manifested in the debates, and instead of trying what meaning may be squeezed out of the text, or invented against it, conform to the probable one in which it was passed.

Thomas Jefferson, 1823

Health Care Reform Signed into Law

Nearly seven months after the President and Democrat Leadership had planned, and after numerous [back-room deals](#), the Senate's Health Care bill [passed](#) the House with a vote of [219-212](#), and was signed into law two days later on March 23, 2010. In order to garner the votes to pass the health care bill, the House also passed a reconciliation bill which included "promised" changes that will go into affect once the reconciliation bill becomes law. The reconciliation bill was then sent to the Senate where a "vote-a-rama" occurred. This allowed an unlimited number of amendments to be offered and voted upon. Senate Democrat leadership urged all Senate Democrats to vote against all Republican amendments in order to ensure no changes be made to the reconciliation bill. However, while none of the amendments passed, Republicans were successful in challenging certain provisions in the bill regarding Pell Grants. Changes were made sending the bill back to the House to be voted on once again. Late Thursday evening, the House passed the final reconciliation bill with a vote of [220-207](#). The bill now awaits the President's signature so the changes can be made to the health care bill that is now law.

But the opposition to the health care law continues to rise. [State legislators](#) across the country are unhappy with the new federal health care law, calling it unconstitutional. According to one [report](#), "at least 36 state legislatures so far have proposed measures to challenge the constitutionality of the new federal bill, while 29 states are also calling for ballot questions to amend their constitutions and 13 are looking to change state law."

Neither the current health care law nor the reconciliation bill contain any pro-life protections. In order to garner "pro-life" Democrat votes, the President agreed to sign an Executive Order to address the pro-life concerns. The Executive Order, however, does [not address](#) pro-life concerns. It not only contains weak language and protections for life, but it also is a vulnerable fix that can be repealed at any time. The President's first Executive Order signed when entering office was to repeal the Mexico City policy, a policy that banned federal money from funding abortions in foreign countries. Therefore, the Executive Order is an extremely weak and non-permanent "fix" to the abortion issue. The President signed the Executive Order in [private](#) with only a few "pro-life" Democrats attending.

Also included in the reconciliation bill is the student loan bill which passed the House last fall but had yet to receive a vote in the Senate. This provision is a government overhaul of the private student loan industry for higher education. The original student loan bill also included several billion dollars in early education funding; however, when the bill was added on as a provision to the reconciliation bill, the funding was dropped.

Secretary of Education Arne Duncan has made known intentions of allocating a [separate vehicle](#) for the early education funding.

One amendment that was offered during the Senate “vote-a-rama” and failed by vote of 36-59 was an [amendment](#) offered by Sen. Bennett (R-UT) to allow the residents of D.C. a vote on same-sex marriage. This summer the un-elected members of the D.C. City Council passed a measure that allows same-sex couples to marry in D.C. Some Members of Congress introduced legislation that condemns the Council for this action; however, the Democrat leadership has refused to schedule a vote. The vote on Sen. Bennett’s amendment was the first vote on the D.C. marriage issue to take place in the U.S. Congress. Supporters for this referendum hope that a court will allow their case to be heard since all legislative options have been exhausted.

Church Service Held in U.S. Capitol

For the first time in over a hundred years, Members of Congress along with their families and staff met in Statuary Hall, the old House Chamber, for a morning worship service. Nearly 300 people were present to praise and worship God.

In December of 1800, Congress first approved the use of the Capitol building as a church building, and services were held on a regular basis in Statuary Hall from 1807 until after the Civil War. The church at the Capitol became the largest church in D.C. by 1867, with 2,000 people in attendance each week. Many of the attendees included Members of Congress as well as Presidents from Jefferson through Lincoln.

Leslie Goodman, Legislative Correspondent for Rep. Virginia Foxx (R-NC), described the service as a blessing and an encouragement to have the opportunity to worship in the Capitol. She stated the following:

On Sunday morning, I had the distinct privilege of participating in the first worship service to be held in the Capitol in 130 years. The Congressional Prayer Caucus organized a bipartisan nondenominational service for Members of Congress and staff. We sat in Statuary Hall (which is the old Chamber of the House of Representatives) just a stone's throw from the current House Chamber with our Bibles open praying for our nation. It was a surreal experience to sing Amazing Grace with so many in our Nation's Capitol Building on what is sure to be a historic day. What a privilege to live in a country where we can worship God freely in the Capitol Building.

To watch a short clip of the service, please click [here](#).

California Pastors Seek State Constitution Amendments on Religious Freedom

A group of pastors in California have filed two [amendments](#) to the California State Constitution which would allow individuals to freely share their faith in Jesus with others as well as express every part of the Bible. While the California State Constitution currently includes a Bill of Rights that allows for religious freedom, there have been recent cases involving the free exercise of religion which have compelled the non-profit Christian organization [Yes Jesus is Lord](#) to file the amendments. Pastor Allan Esses, founder of the organization and advocate of the amendments, stated, “Although the Bill of Rights guarantees religious liberty, recent restrictions on the free exercise of religion have compelled the organization to submit clarifications of citizen’s First Amendment rights, similar to the need felt by some of the nation’s Founding Fathers to clarify in the Bill of Rights what they believed existed in the Constitution.”

Tremendous support has been shown for the amendments in California from pastors, their congregations, and other organizations. Keith Wiebe, president of the American Association of Christian Schools (AACS), reiterated the importance of freely practicing faith in society, saying, “The American Association of Christian Schools represents many Christian Schools and their attendant ministries in California. The free exercise of religion is at the core of Christian Education and of any civilized society.” The Golden State Association of Christian Schools (GSACS) also supports the measure. Dr. Dan Davidson, president of the GSACS stated, “The Golden State Association of Christian Schools represents thousands through its ministry. The preservation of

first-amendment rights in these days of Constitutional assaults is vital to our liberty, for students, families, schools, and churches.”

The amendments seek to protect pastors and individuals from overreaching legislation that seeks to silence people of faith in the name of tolerance. Recent cases and current state legislative efforts that could prohibit pastors from evangelizing on street corners or prohibit Bible studies from meeting in homes are just a few of the reasons why many Californians believe a state constitutional amendment is needed. Due to federal legislation, including the hate crimes law which was passed last year, many pastors and Christian organizations are concerned about their freedom to speak out against immorality in our nation’s churches and communities. Pastor Essex continued to express the need for the amendments stating, “We are grateful to Almighty God for our freedom, but the threat to our religious liberties is increasing in our state and in our country. As the move to enact so-called ‘hate-crime’ laws continues, it is necessary to spell out what is included in free speech rights. Second, it is important to point out places in which the free exercise of religion can occur.”

“Seek Social Justice: Transforming Lives in Need”

Addiction, poverty, divorce, homelessness and the breakdown of the family run rampant in our society. These serious issues are being addressed in many forms through government programs, church initiatives, and organizations. Yet what is the individual’s responsibility to these issues, and what responsibility should institutions like the government take to solve these problems? The Heritage Foundation, a non-profit conservative research organization, has developed a curriculum titled “Seeking Social Justice” that is designed to give individuals, specifically focusing on youth, knowledge and practical insights on how they can influence society through meaningful relationships with their family, their church, and their communities.

The Heritage Foundation is offering the 6-lesson DVD with small study group guides to schools, churches and individuals for free! The lessons include the following topics:

- Lesson 1- Rethinking Social Justice: Getting to the Root of the Problem
- Lesson 2- Cultivating Justice from the Ground Up: Marriage, Family, and Friendship
- Lesson 3- Serving the Whole Person: Churches and Ministries
- Lesson 4- Restoring Dignity and Purpose: The Importance of Work
- Lesson 5- Maintaining the Social Conditions for Justice: The Role of Government
- Lesson 6- Breaking Ground: What You Can Do To Seek Social Justice

The lessons offer a great opportunity for teachers, administrators, and pastors to educate their students and congregations on the personal responsibility in seeking social justice. For more information, to watch the trailer, and to order or download the free resources please click [here](#).

AACS Schools and Students Continue to Give to Haiti

AACS parents, students, and schools have continued to give donations after the tragic earthquake that devastated the country of Haiti. AACS President, Keith Wiebe, sent a letter to all AACS member schools urging them to give a love offering to help the people in Haiti. AACS students answered the call to the desperate need, and to date, a total of **\$43,929.50** has been sent to Haiti relief by AACS students.

This money has been sent to CrossWorld Missions, a mission organization with missionaries located in Haiti working tirelessly to give aid. If you or your school would like to give, we are continuing to send funds each week as we receive them. Please send your contribution to AACS Haiti Relief Fund, 602 Belvoir Avenue, East Ridge, TN 37412. You can also make an online donation by clicking [here](#) and selecting “Outreach.” All contributions sent to AACS for the “Haiti Relief Fund” will go in their entirety to the relief work taking place in Haiti.

In Case You Missed It:

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

[Sec. Gates Implements "Don't Ask" Changes Without Congressional Approval](#)

[Religious Music Censored at Public School](#)



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