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We can easily manage if we will only take, each day, the burden appointed to it. But the load will be too heavy for us if we carry yesterday's burden over again today, and then add the burden of the morrow before we are required to bear it.

John Newton

Direct Loan Issues Harm College Students

Thousands of students are stuck in default on their higher education loans because of the [mismanagement](#) of loans by the Department of Education (DOE). The DOE's Direct Loan Program oversees every federal loan for higher education. Despite [claims](#) by Secretary Duncan that the program is functioning "smoothly," thousands of complaints have been registered, revealing a wide-spread range of issues with the program. Reported problems include security breaches of students' personal information, inaccurate reporting of loan status, and failure to help borrowers find the best and most accurate payment methods. At a recent hearing, Rep. Foxx asked the Secretary for a [written plan](#) for fixing these problems.

Victory for Marriage in North Carolina

On Tuesday, by a vote of 61% NC voters overwhelmingly approved a constitutional amendment defining marriage as between one man and one woman. In the battle leading up to the vote, [Return America](#) compiled a FAQ document that corrected mischaracterizations by opponents of the measure who had falsely warned that approving the amendment would scare away business, among other things. In a 2011 study, *Moody's Analytics* illustrated that 8 of the top ten industrial states have a marriage amendment on the books. A total of 30 states now have constitutional amendments that support traditional marriage. To view the "State of Marriage in the States," [click here](#).

American Federation for Children National Policy Summit

The annual American Federation for Children National Policy Summit [demonstrated](#) the bipartisan appeal of school choice initiatives. Governor Bobby Jindal (R-LA) and Governor Chris Christie (R-NJ) were joined by liberal commentator Juan Williams and Mayor Cory Booker (D-Newark) to deliver speeches praising the benefits of school choice. In New Jersey, lawmakers are considering the Opportunity Scholarship Act which would provide low income children with more educational options. Gov. Jindal touted the significant reforms enacted by the Louisiana legislature this year. Governor Christie vowed to fight for school choice in New Jersey. Meanwhile, Newark Mayor Cory Booker declared "I cannot ever stand up and stand against a parent having options, because I have benefitted from my parents having an option."

Arizona Defunds Planned Parenthood

On Friday night, Arizona Governor Jan Brewer [announced](#) that she would sign the "Whole Woman's Health Funding Priority Act" (HB 2800) defunding Planned Parenthood and other abortion providers. Planned Parenthood is the nation's largest abortion provider. The Susan B. Anthony List along with Arizona Right to Life, Alliance Defense Fund, Center for Arizona Policy, spearheaded efforts to educate lawmakers and stage rallies across the state. This legislation closes loopholes that allowed taxpayer

money to be used directly or indirectly to fund abortions in the state. Planned Parenthood is considering a legal challenge to the law.

Alliance Defense Fund Effort

The Alliance Defense Fund has launched an [initiative](#) to challenge the restrictive free speech rules in place on many college campuses across the nation. This counteroffensive included sending 40 letters to higher education institutions in 23 states. The letters address policies that prohibit religious student groups from receiving a portion of the student fees available to other groups. They also address policies that ban groups from requiring leaders to share the beliefs of the group. Elizabeth City State University in North Carolina has notified ADF that they have amended their free speech policy. The group hopes that other schools will follow suit.

ACLU Fights to Remove Ten Commandments

On Monday, Matt Staver, founder of Liberty Counsel, defended the Giles County School Board's "open forum" policy against the ultra-liberal American Civil Liberties Union of Virginia. The school board has allowed private individuals to sponsor a display entitled "Foundations of American Law and Government" which includes eleven documents. In addition to the Ten Commandments, the display also includes the Magna Carta, the Constitution, and the Declaration of Independence. Even though textbooks cite the influence of the Ten Commandments as a major influence on several law codes, the ACLU contends that the display constitutes an establishment of religion. Similar cases have allowed the displays to remain.

Pastor Youcef Update

In a disturbing [turn](#), the American Center for Law and Justice has reported that the Iranian government has sentenced embattled Pastor Youcef Nadarkhani's lawyer to prison for nine years. Pastor Youcef has received international attention for his refusal to renege on his conversion to Christianity even in the face of execution. Mohammad Ali Dadkhah, a noted human rights attorney, represented Pastor Nadarkhani and several other Iranian Christians who had been charged with the "crime" of apostasy (turning against the Muslim faith). After his conviction, he can no longer practice law or teach for ten years. The future of these brave Christians now hangs in the balance. This government persecution is an attempt to discourage other lawyers from representing Christians for fear of similar treatment. Earlier this week, Pastor Youcef wrote an open [letter](#) to his church and supporters in which he thanked Christians for their support and asked for their continued prayer. Please pray for the Christians in Iran. To follow this story, [click here](#).

In Case You Missed It:

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

[Chen Guangcheng's Fight Against Forced Abortion](#)

[Thousands Back Texas Legal Battle to Defund Planned Parenthood](#)

[Obama Supports Gay Marriage After Biden and Duncan Express Their Views](#)

[Dig Deeper: Children's Access to Pornography a Concern](#)