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“While we are zealously performing the duties of good citizens and soldiers, we certainly ought not to be inattentive to the higher duties of religion. To the distinguished character of Patriot, it should be our highest Glory to laud the more distinguished character of Christian.”

George Washington, 1778

Elections Pave Way for New Initiatives on School Choice

Last week’s midterm elections brought about a [major shift in support of school choice efforts](#). The likely new Speaker-to-be John Boehner, a leading voice in the school choice movement, helped spearhead the creation of the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program. This successful program was zeroed out in the President’s budget in 2009. With school choice advocates now leaders in the U.S. House, many believe the program will be reinstated. The House Education and Labor committee is also poised to direct more initiatives that will promote school choice. Rep. John Kline, current ranking member on the committee and strong supporter of choice, will likely become the chairman of the committee in the 112th Congress. In the past, Rep. Kline stated to the Council for Advancing Private Education (CAPE), “We believe that parents need to have as much choice as possible, as much decision-making power as possible, when it comes to influencing their children’s education.” Rep. Kline will also be a leader working with the Department of Education in drafting the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Many believe Rep. Kline will be a strong advocate in protecting private and religious schools and will also be a balance to ensure that the President’s push to expand early education will be met with common sense solutions and not overreaching federal programs.

The Senate will also be welcoming newly-elected Senators [Marco Rubio \(FL\)](#), [Pat Toomey \(PA\)](#), [Dan Coats \(IN\)](#), [John Boozman \(AR\)](#), [Rand Paul \(KY\)](#), [Kelly Ayotte \(NH\)](#), [Rob Portman \(OH\)](#), and [Mike Lee \(UT\)](#). All are determined to help advance school choice and give parents greater options and benefits in determining what is best for their child’s education. Senator-elect Marco Rubio has put together a [12-point plan](#) for improving education in America, with his first point being a universal education tax deduction. Pat Toomey stated during a [campaign debate](#), “We’ve got a staggering number of kids in schools in Philadelphia and Pittsburgh and in between who really don’t have much of a chance in life because they’re not getting the education they need. I really think that the money for funding education should follow the child, and parents should have a choice of any school, public or private, religious or nonreligious.” The House and Senate are now aligned with prominent members who value school choice and the parents’ right to have a legitimate voice in their child’s education.

Elections Bring Positive Outlook on Traditional Marriage

With major pro-marriage victories being won throughout the states, Americans are finding themselves in a nation that is led by newly-elected leaders determined to bring the nation back to its traditional values and principles. The [National Organization of Marriage](#) (NOM) recounted [numerous pro-marriage victories](#) in several states. The Minnesota legislature, the Iowa House, the New Hampshire legislature, and the Maine legislature were all flipped to a pro-marriage majority. These historic wins will allow for the protection of traditional marriage and a likely repeal of same-sex marriage in the state of New Hampshire, where Republicans now hold a veto-proof majority. In Iowa, traditional marriage was on the ballot as voters had the unique

opportunity of firing the three judges who legalized same-sex marriage in their state just last year. All three judges were denied retention based solely on their activist decision to allow same-sex marriages. Plans to repeal the Defense of Marriage Act have also been thwarted by the newly elected pro-marriage majority in the U.S. House of Representatives.

The majority of states are facing a conservative led majority in their state governments, and pro-marriage victories were won throughout the nation; however, in several states the fight is far from over. [Hawaii, California, Illinois, Rhode Island, and New York](#) now have what many same-sex marriage advocates are calling a gubernatorial “dream team.” With advocates leading in these state legislatures and with the states led by governors who support same-sex marriages, “all are likely to sign gay marriage bills—and all are likely to have the chance to do so,” stated Cheryl Wetzstein of the *Washington Times*.

Library of Congress Surplus Books Program

The AACCS Legislative Office recently became aware of the [Library of Congress Surplus Books Program](#) that could greatly benefit Christian schools. The program is designed to donate books to public agencies of local and state governments or other federal agencies, educational institutions (full-time, tax-supported, or *nonprofit schools*, school systems, colleges, universities, museums, and public libraries), and *nonprofit, tax-exempt organizations* (non-commercial institutions or organizations that have tax-exempt status). The Library of Congress receives more than 20,000 items every day, and about half of those items are donated through the Surplus Books Program.

The surplus books collection is not organized in any order but is comprised mostly of soft-bound or hard-bound books; there are no magazines or journals. The subject areas include the humanities, history and area studies, social sciences, education, science, and some foreign language materials. Most of the collection is geared for secondary and higher levels, but there are some children’s materials available. There is, however, quite a collection of Christian religious books.

There are two ways you can participate in this program. First, you can contact your U.S. Representative by letter (on your school’s official letterhead) and ask that he assist you in this program. In the letter specify the genres of books you may be interested in (Science/History/Foreign Languages) as well as the age. While you will not have to travel to D.C. to pick up the books or pay for shipping, the books you receive will all be handpicked by your Representative’s staffer and you may not have much say in what you get. Also, going through a federal office may limit you on how many “religious” books you will receive, as they do not want to be seen “promoting” religion. Another way to participate in the program would be to travel to D.C. with a letter on the school’s official letterhead that designates the person who will pick out and pick up the books. Then your designated person can hand in the letter and walk up and down the stacks of books and take whatever he wishes. There is no limit to how many books you can take. While this is perhaps the best way to benefit from the program, it also requires a bit of planning.

In Case You Missed It:

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

[Bible in High Demand for Troops in Afghanistan](#)

[16-Year-Old Chooses Life for Baby Despite Parents' Wishes She Abort](#)