



**The Washington Flyer
September 19, 2014**

*“I hope we once again have reminded people that man is not free unless government is limited.
There’s a clear cause and effect here that is as neat and predictable as a law of physics:
As government expands, liberty contracts.”*

Ronald Reagan

Country School Board Reverses Decision to Opt Out of Common Core Testing

One week after Florida’s Lee County school board voted to opt out of all state and federal testing, they reversed that decision with a vote to [resume](#) the assessments, including the standardized tests associated with the Common Core Standards. At the initial meeting of the first vote, more than 30 people spoke to the board [urging](#) them to drop the assessments because too much testing was hindering the actual learning of the students. School board members in favor of keeping the assessments claimed that it would be unwise to opt out without a plan to replace the assessments, and that dropping the assessments would have far-reaching effects. Once the school board voted to opt out of the assessments, the state [threatened](#) to withdraw all funding if they did not reinstate the assessments, prompting the school board to hold another vote and reverse their decision. With so much state and federal funding tied to the assessments, school board member Raquel Regalado points out they are “very limited with what they can do.” This lack of local control is one of the main arguments against the Common Core Standards and assessments. Despite claims by proponents of the standards that they are state-led and voluntary, it is becoming clear that a rejection of the standards and assessments will bring negative [consequences](#) to a district or state.

Government’s Early Learning Initiative Expanding

The Department of Education announced last week that [twenty-nine](#) states have submitted notices of intent to apply for the \$250 million Preschool Development Grant Program. Education Secretary Arne Duncan has stated that the goal of this program is to help prepare states for President Obama’s Preschool for All program, a federal-state partnership intended to expand state preschool programs for low- and middle-income families. While proponents of this program claim that government involvement is necessary to provide early education that prepares the nation’s children for future education and successful careers, the AACCS has voiced [concern](#), noting that an expanded government role in early education will not only threaten the autonomy of existing private and faith-based preschools but will also decrease options for parents and infringe on parental rights if universal preschool becomes a requirement. The current Preschool Development Grant competition is administered by both the Departments of Education and Health and Human Services, and is the fourth round of early education Race to the Top competitions sponsored by the Obama Administration. States have till October 14, 2014, to submit an application for the funds.

Taxpayers Are Funding Abortion Coverage for Millions of Americans

This week the Government Accountability Office released a [report](#) showing that tax dollars are covering abortions, a claim pro-life advocates have been making since before the passage of Affordable Care Act. Some

will remember that immediately following Representative Joe Wilson's "You lie!" [outburst](#), that President Obama [promised](#), "Under our plan, no federal dollars will be used to fund abortions, and federal conscience laws will remain in place." Additionally, in last minute Senate dealings, long time pro-life Democrat Senator Ben Nelson was convinced to become the 60th vote needed for passage of the ACA based on the promise that abortion subsidies wouldn't be included in the bill. The GAO report now shows these promises to be false. Until now, it has been very difficult to verify which plans offered under the government exchanges include abortion due to a provision in Obamacare that allows insurers in the federal exchange to withhold this information until after an enrollee has already chosen and enrolled in one of the plans. The GAO report shows that over [1,000 plans](#) include abortion coverage and some states offer only plans that include abortion coverage. The bottom line is that federal taxpayer funded subsidies are footing the bill for abortion in all fifty states whether or not the state has plans that cover abortion services. Pro-life groups are encouraging the Senate to pass the No Taxpayer Funding of Abortion Act (HR 7), which has already passed in the House.

In Case You Missed It:

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

[How Bobby Jindal's 7-Year-Old Son Outsmarted Common Core](#)

[The Wrong Kind of Christian?](#)

[Militant Atheists Sound Retreat; Give Up on Forcing IRS to Censor Sermons](#)

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