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“Although no sculptured marble should rise to their memory, nor engraved stone bear record of their deeds, yet will their remembrance be as lasting as the land they honored.”
Daniel Webster

AACS Hosts Lobbying Days to Protect Freedom of Christian Schools

This spring, the American Association of Christian Schools hosted its annual AACS Lobbying Days to introduce AACS to new Members of Congress, establish relationships with congressional offices, educate congressional staffers, explain the mission and current legislative priorities of AACS, and reinforce the daily work and initiatives of the AACS Legislative Office. The AACS State and Regional Legislative Directors traveled to Washington, D.C., to represent AACS ministries. Together they made over one hundred personal contacts on Capitol Hill. As they are constituents from their respective states and regions, their meetings with the congressional offices are especially effective. The transitory nature of many staffers and politicians in D.C. makes these lobbying visits a crucial part of the outreach efforts of the AACS Legislative Office. This year’s Lobbying Days included a focus on maintaining protections for Christian schools in ESEA reauthorization, protecting Christian preschools by opposing efforts to expand publicly funded preschool, and protecting the religious liberty of our Christian schools through the Marriage and Religious Freedom Act (MARFA). The relevance of these issues and the importance of the lobbying visits cannot be understated in light of the recent attacks on religious liberty across the country. God gave our leaders many profitable meetings. We have continued to receive positive feedback about their visits and are grateful to these men who have cheerfully given their valuable time and efforts to educate Members about our concerns.

Louisiana Governor Issues Religious Freedom Executive Order

After a state senate committee in Louisiana voted down a religious freedom bill, Governor Bobby Jindal issued an Executive Order that would protect the religious freedom of businesses that decline to service same-sex weddings because of a religious conviction that marriage is between one man and one woman. The statehouse committee had claimed concerns that the passage of such a bill would create the same backlash that was seen in Indiana after Indiana Governor Pence signed a religious freedom bill into law. However, Governor Jindal has been firm in his stance on protecting the religious freedom of those who believe in natural marriage, [stating](#), “In Louisiana, the state should not be able to take adverse action against a person for their belief in traditional marriage.” He further explained, “We don’t support discrimination in Louisiana and we do support religious liberty. These two values can be upheld at the same time.” The Executive Order [refers](#) to the federal Religious Freedom Restoration Act and Louisiana’s Preservation of Religious Freedom Act, both of which prohibit the government from “imposing a substantial burden” on a person because of his deeply held religious beliefs.

Federal Court Rules Against Religious Liberty

Last week, the U.S. 7th Circuit Court of Appeals ruled 2-1 to deny the University of Notre Dame a preliminary injunction that would have temporarily exempted the university from a provision in the Affordable Care Act that requires contraceptives to be made available to students and staff through the school’s insurance providers.

In the ongoing case, *University of Notre Dame v. Burwell*, the Catholic university contends that although the provision does not require the school to provide contraceptives directly, the regulation results in the university becoming a conduit through which contraceptives are provided, thus violating Catholic doctrine. Judge Richard Posner, a judge on the panel who opposed the injunction, stated, “Although Notre Dame is the final arbiter of its religious beliefs, it is for the courts to determine whether the law actually forces Notre Dame to act in a way that would violate those beliefs.” The provision has also been challenged by more than a dozen other schools and religious nonprofits that believe that under no circumstances should they be forced to provide contraceptives.

ACTION ALERT: Please be in prayer for AACS efforts to protect religious liberty. Next week, AACS president, Keith Wiebe, will take part in a press conference highlighting the real dangers to private religious educational institutions should the Supreme Court determine constitutional protection for homosexual marriage.

In Case You Missed It:

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

[Thousands of Scorers Take On the Common Core](#)

[Federal Court Overturns AR Law Banning Abortions at 12 Weeks](#)

[Ireland Approves Gay Marriage](#)

[Arne Duncan Wants to Create Public Boarding Schools](#)

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