



**The Washington Flyer**  
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*"My concern is not whether God is on our side; my greatest concern is to be on God's side, for God is always right."*  
**Abraham Lincoln**

### **AACS Submits Public Comments on Family Engagement**

The AACS Legislative Office submitted public comments this week to the U.S. Departments of Education (ED) and Health and Human Services (HHS) regarding their draft policy statement for family engagement in early education. This is the third policy statement drafted by the Early Learning Interagency Policy Board (IPD), a committee formed by the Departments specifically to create policy statements regarding the coordination across publicly funded early learning programs. The IPD has previously released policy statements regarding expulsion/suspension policies in early education and the inclusion of children with disabilities in early childhood settings. Throughout the recent draft statement on family engagement, the IPD recognizes that "families are a child's first and most important teachers, advocates, and nurturers" and states that the purpose of this policy statement is to provide recommendations on "systematically engaging families in their children's development, learning, and wellness, across early childhood and elementary education settings." In the public comments, the AACS agreed with the recognition of the importance of family in the lives of young children, specifically emphasizing that "parents have the primary responsibility, rights, and privilege of providing the best education, love, and support that every young child needs." The AACS further noted that "our schools operate on the philosophy that they exist to assist parents in their God-given responsibility to train and educate their children." The AACS then offered caution, "While intentions may be noble, expanded government services almost universally lead to lower levels of individual responsibility and commitment. While we appreciate the recognition of the vital role of families in a child's development, we are gravely concerned at an increased role of the government in determining what is best for each child.... We agree with the Departments that a statement on family engagement is necessary to provide guidance for the programs that currently exist to provide assistance to those families who seek such help. However, with the renewed efforts from federal and state governments to increase early education opportunities for children, it is vital that such a statement convey in the strongest of terms that the primary role, rights, responsibility, and privilege of providing care and education to young children lies with the parents. Any additional programs should be offered only as opportunities to help the parents, maintaining the strength of the family unit which is indeed the foundation of our free society."

### **House Votes to Defund Planned Parenthood and Derail Obamacare**

On Wednesday, the [House voted](#) 240-181 to pass the Senate-amended version of H.R. 3762, the Restoring American's Healthcare Freedom Reconciliation Act. This bill was passed by the Senate in December, and now heads to the President's desk. The bill will eliminate the mandate which requires companies with over 50 employees to provide health insurance and all individuals to purchase it, along with other key portions of the health care act, and would also eliminate taxpayer funding of Planned Parenthood. While the House has voted

several times to repeal Obamacare, this is the first time a bill has passed both chambers and will be sent to the President's desk. The White House has indicated that the President will veto the bill, so the House has planned a vote for the last week of January to override the veto. Both the House and the Senate need a 2/3 vote to override the veto.

**Action Item:** Early whip counts indicate that there are not enough votes to override the President's veto. Consider taking time to call or write your Representative and Senators if you believe they should vote to override the President's veto of this important piece of legislation.

### **AL Chief Justice Moore Takes Stand for Marriage**

Alabama Chief Justice Roy Moore [issued](#) an administrative order on Wednesday instructing probate judges not to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples as such action would be in violation of the Alabama Marriage Protection Act and Sanctity of Marriage Amendment. Moore noted that the Supreme Court's *Obergefell* decision last summer (which many concluded had legalized same-sex marriage nationwide) had led to some probate judges issuing licenses to same-sex couples, some issuing licenses only to couples of opposite gender, and some just ceasing to issue all licenses. "This disparity," he explained, "affects the administration of justice in this state." Citing a recent opinion by the 8th Circuit Court which states that the *Obergefell* decision did not "directly invalidate marriage laws under its jurisdiction" (which includes Alabama and six other states), Moore stated that the marriage laws in Alabama will remain in effect until the state supreme court rules on how the federal Supreme Court decision will affect the laws in the state.

### **In Case You Missed It:**

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

[Over-regulations Backfires on Voucher Supporters](#)

[Bill Gates Continues Financial Backing for Common Core](#)

[Powerful Homosexual Group Threatens Christian Colleges](#)

[Make Plans to Attend the March for Life - January 22, 2016](#)

[Coming Up -- National School Choice Week, January 24-30, 2016](#)

Jamison Coppola: Legislative Director  
Maureen Van Den Berg: Policy Analyst  
Legislative Office, 119 C Street SE, Washington, D.C. 20003  
Phone: 202.547.2991 Fax: 202.547.2992