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“God assumed from the beginning that the wise of the world would view Christians as fools...and He has not been disappointed....If I have brought any message today, it is this: Have the courage to have your wisdom regarded as stupidity. Be fools for Christ. And have the courage to suffer the contempt of the sophisticated world.”

Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia

School Choice Measures Advancing in the States

On the heels of a very successful school choice week in January, the state legislatures in Oklahoma and Virginia are working towards providing more choice options in their states. In [Oklahoma](#), the House Common Education Committee passed 9-8 a bill that would create an education savings account (ESA) program that would allow anywhere from 30% to 90% of the allotted amount of per-student funding to go to parents, depending on the income level of the family and any special needs of the students. The money could be used for private school tuition, home school curricula, and tutoring, but could not be used for technology or transportation. The bill has the support of the Governor Mary Fallin but is opposed by public school boards and administrators who are concerned about funds being taken away from the public schools. In [Virginia](#), the House of Delegates last week passed a bill 53-46 that will expand choice options for students with disabilities by allowing them to take a portion of the public school funds allotted per student and use them towards private school tuition and textbooks. The bill was originally intended to establish a broader ESA program; but due to strong opposition by the teachers' union, the Virginia Education Association, legislators created a narrow program instead. ESAs are quickly becoming the program of choice for states endeavoring to create options for parents and students. The programs are generally created to allow a portion of the public school funding allocated for each student to be placed into an account for each participating family. The parents can then access the funding for their child through use of a debit card, and the funds can be used towards a variety of services including private school tuition, textbooks, tutoring, online classes, and in some cases, educational technology. Unused funds can often be rolled over into a college fund for the child. Currently, five states have implemented ESAs and are finding this type of program to be very popular with families and also [successful in raising](#) the academic achievement of students.

Congress Subpoenas Company Buying Aborted Baby Body Parts from Planned Parenthood

The Select Investigative Panel on Infant Lives plans to [begin issuing subpoenas](#) next week to several of the institutions involved in the practice of buying aborted baby body parts from Planned Parenthood abortion clinics. Chairman Marsha Blackburn has announced that subpoenas will be issued to Stem Express, Southwestern Women's Options, and the University of New Mexico. These subpoenas are a result of the unwillingness of these three institutions to provide valuable information related to the issue to the Committee after over 30 requests. Troy Newman, President of Operation Rescue, stated, “It will be interesting to see what happens next. The subpoenas will set up a showdown between the rule of law and those who routinely act outside it. Will there be compliance with the subpoenas or will these members of the Abortion Cartel continue to behave as if they are above the law? We hope there is compliance, but the Committee must be prepared for the same arrogant defiance we have seen so often in the past.”

Wisconsin Legislature Defunds Planned Parenthood

The Wisconsin state legislature has passed legislation that would effectively [defund Planned Parenthood](#) in the state by stripping the abortion giant of \$8 million of state funds. Governor Scott Walker is expected to sign a bill that passed the State Assembly last week and has already passed the State Senate that would cut approximately \$4.5 million from going to Planned Parenthood by allowing the organization to receive Medicaid funds only for “drugs’ actual acquisition costs and a dispensing fee.” An additional bill passed earlier which moved \$3.5 million away from Planned Parenthood towards other women’s health centers that do not perform abortions. The Wisconsin Right to Life has used Planned Parenthood’s own words from a former court case to charge that abortion makes up the “vast majority” of the services provided by Planned Parenthood centers in the state. State Senator Duey Stroebel offered strong support for the measures, stating, “I support women’s health care. I think everybody else here does. What we don’t support is a taxpayer subsidy for a private abortion provider. That’s what this bill is about.”

In Case You Missed It:

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

[No Deference Is Called for on Judicial Nominees](#)

[Louisiana Attorney General Drops Common Core Lawsuit](#)

[Texas Marriage Battle Renewed in Religious Liberty Debate](#)

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