



**The Washington Flyer
December 5, 2025**

"The liberty enjoyed by the people of these states of worshipping Almighty God, agreeable to their consciences, is not only among the choicest of their blessings, but also of their rights."
George Washington

Challenges to School Choice in Tennessee and Missouri

School choice programs in Missouri and Tennessee are facing legal challenges from public education advocates. In [Missouri](#), the state teachers union has filed a lawsuit against the state's tax credit scholarship program. The MOScholars program was established in 2021, and this year, the legislature approved a \$50 million expansion to substantially grow the program to make scholarships available for thousands of families on a waitlist. The Missouri National Education Association filed suit in an attempt to stop the increase in funding. Three families who have benefited from the provisions in the program are intervening in the case. The families are being represented by [EdChoice Legal Advocates](#) (EdLA), the legal arm of EdChoice which was established to defend school choice programs in court. A [hearing](#) for the case took place last week, with the opposition focused on eligibility requirements for students and how the funds are being used. It is worth noting that tax credit scholarship programs have consistently been [upheld as constitutional](#) because they provide tax credits for donations to nonprofits and the educational scholarships themselves come from private contributions—not public funds. A decision on the Missouri case could come before the end of the year. In [Tennessee](#), a lawsuit has been filed by the Metro Nashville Public Schools Administrator, along with some public school parents, challenging the constitutionality of the established education savings account (ESA) program. Since the program was established last February, approximately 20,000 families, out of about 43,000 applications, have received vouchers to help with educational expenses. The lawsuit points to a clause in the constitution which reads "The General Assembly shall provide for the maintenance, support and eligibility standards of a system of free public schools." EdLA is representing two families who are participating in the program and [intervening in the case](#). The families testify that without the financial help from the program, they would not be able to afford Christian education for their children.

AACS Attends White House Higher Education Roundtable

AACS staff have joined two higher education roundtables this month with Secretary McMahon at the White House. The first [roundtable](#) was focused on reforming administrative bloat and low-value programs at institutions of higher education. Education Secretary Linda McMahon [spoke](#) about the [reform measures](#) passed in the One Big Beautiful Bill Act and how they aim to help students. Specifically, she highlighted the new limits on federal student loan caps for graduate programs. In addition, she lauded the earnings test that programs must pass to be eligible for federal student loans. "Not every major needs to be an economic powerhouse," McMahon said, "but no major should routinely impoverish the students who pursue it." After the meeting, AACS Government Relations Director Jamison Coppola had the opportunity to speak briefly with McMahon and discuss the work of Christian colleges and universities that prepare students to live virtuous lives in service to God. Coppola attended another White House education roundtable this Wednesday that focused on removing bias from higher education and returning to free inquiry and truth seeking. "Christian colleges and universities

are uniquely positioned to engage students with the truth,” Coppola said. “We were pleased to represent their great work with an administration focused on the reformation of higher education.”

Religious Group to Apply for Religious Charter School Status

A Jewish organization has notified the Oklahoma Statewide Charter School Board that it will be applying for authorization to start a religious charter school in the state. This will be the [second attempt](#) to establish a religious charter school in Oklahoma. A Catholic school gained approval by the state’s charter school board, but the state supreme court ruled that a religious charter school was unconstitutional according to the state constitution because public funds would be directly funding religious education. The case was heard before the U.S. Supreme Court which issued a split 4-4 decision last May, leaving in place the ruling from the state supreme court. Justice Amy Coney Barrett recused herself from the case, possibly because of her close ties to Notre Dame’s law school which played a large role in supporting the school. The National Ben Gamla Jewish Charter School Foundation [plans to apply](#) for charter school status by the end of the year but is not expecting to be granted approval. They are preparing for to be rejected, in which case they will file an appeal with a federal court on the grounds that a rejection violates a clause of the U.S. Constitution. Eric Baxter, senior counsel for the Becket Fund, [stated in an interview](#) that “we would represent Ben Gamla challenging that decision in the federal courts in Oklahoma.” The last case was tried in the state courts, so proponents are hoping that a hearing in federal courts would lend a different outcome that would allow a religious charter school to operate.

Transgender Procedures for Minors Considered Abuse

The State Department has announced it will [update](#) its list of human rights violations to include the chemical castration and mutilation of children. Each year, the Department releases its [Country Reports on Human Rights Practices](#). The Trump administration has prioritized scaling back Biden administration priorities. For instance, the Department has removed LGBT “rights” as one of its considerations. Instead, the Department has included the chemical castration and mutilation of children as a violation. Public opinion is starting to turn against these procedures, and many [doctors](#) have expressed support for laws that limit the procedures for children. Other violations to be tracked in future human rights reports include state-funded abortion, free speech and religious liberty infringements, and euthanasia coercion. “This new directive restores the appropriate focus on the established rights of religious freedom and free speech, and clearly takes a position against harm to the most vulnerable,” [said](#) Laura Hanford, a visiting fellow at the Heritage Foundation. The Department will send a record to Congress of the violations that occur in member states of the United Nations. “In recent years, new destructive ideologies have given safe harbor to human rights violations,” [said](#) Tommy Pigott, a spokesman for the Department. “The Trump administration will not allow these human rights violations, such as the mutilation of children . . . to go into unchecked. We are saying enough is enough.”

In Case You Missed It:

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

[Practical Legal Help for Christian Schools: ADF Ministry Alliance](#)

[Prayers and Proclamations Throughout American History](#)

[Christian AI vs. Secular AI: Can AI Truly Be Christian?](#)