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“Nearly all men can stand adversity, but if you want to test a man’s character, give him power.”
Abraham Lincoln

President Trump Stands for Children and Life in the State of the Union

On Tuesday, President Trump delivered a powerful [State of the Union address](#) in which he highlighted the greatness of America while also laying out his policy agenda. In describing America’s greatness, he recognized WWII veterans, prisoners who have reformed their lives, a child who is helping others while battling cancer, astronaut Buzz Armstrong, and a WWII veteran and the holocaust survivor the veteran soldier helped save. The President also noted the accomplishments of his administration including economic gains, prison reform, and decreased federal regulations. In laying out his policy goals, he focused on national security and fighting illegal immigration and crime, health care reform, and legislation which would aid children and families, such as fighting childhood cancer and providing paid family leave to parents with newborns. He reiterated his support for educational options, stating, “To help support working parents, the time has come to pass School Choice for Americans’ children.” Conservatives especially praised the President’s strong vocal support for the pro-life cause and his condemnation of the recently passed New York abortion law and the similar legislation which was introduced in Virginia. His words were the strongest pro-life statement that a President has made in a State of the Union address. He emphasized, “There could be no greater contrast to the beautiful image of a mother holding her infant child than the chilling displays our nation saw in recent days. Lawmakers in New York cheered with delight upon the passage of legislation that would allow a baby to be ripped from the mother’s womb moments from birth. These are living, feeling, beautiful babies who will never get the chance to share their love and their dreams with the world. And then, we had the case of the Governor of Virginia where he stated he would execute a baby after birth.” The President then called on Congress “to defend the dignity of every person” by passing legislation which would “prohibit the late-term abortion of children who can feel pain in the mother’s womb.” He continued, “Let us work together to build a culture that cherishes innocent life. And let us reaffirm a fundamental truth: All children—born and unborn—are made in the holy image of God.”

Polls Show Support for School Choice Is on the Rise

Two-thirds of Americans believe parents have a right to send their children to the school that best fits each child’s need, according to a [2019 national study](#) by the American Federation for Children (AFC) and Beck Research. In its fifth annual poll, AFC [found](#) that 67% of voters support school choice, a 4% gain from last year’s poll. Compared to 2018, support also increased for all seven proposed school choice options, including education savings accounts (78%), special needs scholarships (86%), and scholarship tax credits (68%). Other key takeaways from the poll are high support across demographics, preference for private schools over public schools, and sacrifices parents would make in exchange for educational options. High rates of minorities, especially Latinos, support school choice, along with a majority of Republicans, Independents, and Democrats. Significantly, although 58% of participants send their children to public schools, 29% would choose religious

schools if they had that option. Clearly, parents want more options for their children, and nearly 60% of parents are willing to sacrifice for school choice. Sixty-two percent of parents would stop eating out at restaurants or drinking coffee for a year, 49% would drive 25 miles each way to school, 46% would move ten miles away, and 41% would change their jobs. Backed by this polling, AFC President John Schilling implored legislators to “listen to these voters” and pass meaningful school choice legislation.

Florida Governor Moves to Abolish Common Core

In Florida, a state already on the frontlines of education choice and reform, newly elected Governor Ron DeSantis recently announced an [end to Common Core](#) standards. In an executive order issued last Thursday, Governor DeSantis stated that he had “heard parents from across the state loud and clear and they all agree that it’s time to finally end Common Core.” Like a majority of states, Florida adopted Common Core standards when the Obama administration offered a Race to the Top incentive that brought \$700 million in federal funds to Florida in 2010. In 2014, Florida revised Common Core under its new name, Florida Standards, but much of the content remained the same. Back in December, DeSantis announced a new [team](#) of prominent education leaders and school choice advocates who would be established to help dismantle the Common Core behemoth. Leading the reform efforts is Education Chief Richard Corcoran, who has a year to implement [DeSantis’s goals](#) to “streamline standardized testing, make civics a priority in schools and increase the literacy rate.” While many laud Governor DeSantis for taking meaningful steps toward fulfilling a primary campaign promise, some have [pointed out](#) that the governor will have to do more than “streamline some of the testing” to truly rid Florida’s education system of Common Core standards.

In Case You Missed It:

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

[The Moral Rot of the Left’s Abortion Agenda](#)

[University of Iowa Can’t Keep Student Group from Requiring Leaders to Follow Religious Beliefs](#)

[Oklahoma Senator Introduces Bill to Criminalize Abortion as First-Degree Murder](#)