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*“These are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will,
in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country;
but he that stands by it now, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman.”*
~ *Thomas Paine*

Budget Reconciliation Bill Includes Funding for Universal Pre-K, Free Community College

The budget reconciliation bill, which is being considered right now in Congress alongside the infrastructure bill, includes two items which have not garnered much public attention but will serve to advance the education priorities of the Biden administration: universal pre-K and free community college. Providing universal preschool is part of the Biden administration’s [agenda to ensure equity and end disparities in education](#) and would also fulfill a [campaign promise](#) of President Biden. According to the [White House plan](#) for advancing educational equity, “President Biden’s plan would establish a national partnership with states to offer free, high-quality, accessible, and inclusive preschool for all three- and four-year-olds.” However, according to a report in *Politico*, legislators are still trying to [determine](#) “how many more seats in pre-K classes will be needed to make such a pre-K program ‘universal’ in scope.” According to the [National Institute for Early Education Research](#), 5 million more seats in pre-K schools would have to become available across the nation in order to provide for universal pre-K, and such a program would require \$91 billion. It is also unclear whether a universal pre-K program would build on the current Head Start program, which was created in 1965 and exists to provide low-income families access to early education opportunities. Furthermore, as pointed out in a [report](#) by Rachel Grezler and Dr. Lindsey Burke of the Heritage Foundation, a government-funded universal pre-K program would infringe on parental rights by increasing the government’s role in families and their choices for their children.

The budget reconciliation bill also includes funding for two free years of community college, another promise President Biden made during his campaign. In May, the White House released its infrastructure plan which included two years of free community college; to achieve this, the President requested [\\$109 billion](#) in his plan to improve infrastructure. However, since negotiations are still taking place in the Senate over aspects of the budget reconciliation bill, the details for the actual amount of community college funding provided for in the bill are still unclear. On Wednesday, Minority Leader Mitch McConnell expressed the need for assurances regarding the spending provisions in the bills before Republicans could move forward. He [stated](#), “When it comes to floor consideration, we cannot and will not start planting individual trees before we have bipartisan consensus on the shape of the forest.” While the Senate is considering the budget reconciliation bill and a separate infrastructure bill, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi has said that the House will only consider both bills together.

House Democrats Pass Bill That Erases Hyde Amendment, Supports Abortion Funding

Democrats in the House of Representatives voted last week to approve an appropriations bill that [did not include the Hyde Amendment](#), a measure which prohibits federal funds from covering abortions. The Hyde Amendment has been included in appropriations bills since 1976. The last time an appropriations bill did not include the Hyde Amendment was in 1993 when Democrats controlled the House, but at that time several pro-

life Democrats intervened to ensure the measure was included in final passage. This year, however, the Democrats not only approved the exclusion of the Hyde Amendment, they also voted against a “motion to recommit,” offered by the Republicans, which would have ensured the Hyde Amendment was included in the bill. The initial bill passed 219-208 last week on a party-line vote, and the motion to recommit failed 217-208, also on a party-line vote. House Republicans, recognizing the threat to the Hyde Amendment, have been championing [H.R. 18](#), the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act, through an initiative they have called “Eighteen Days for HR 18.” On each legislative day between June 22 and the August recess, House Republicans have highlighted the importance of supporting the Hyde Amendment to protect life through floor speeches and social media posts and have asked Congress to take up H.R. 18 which would make the Hyde Amendment a permanent law. A 2020 [report](#) released by the Charlotte Lozier Institute examined the impact of the Hyde Amendment and estimated that 2,400,000 lives have been saved since its first passage in 1976.

Federal Court Upholds Religious Liberty at the University of Iowa

The U.S. 8th Circuit Court of Appeals has upheld a ruling in favor of InterVarsity Christian Fellowship and against the University of Iowa’s discrimination against the religious group. The decision came after a lower court had also ruled in favor of InterVarsity’s religious rights on campus. The University of Iowa had unconstitutionally deregistered InterVarsity and other religious groups, charging the groups were discriminatory because they did not allow gay students into leadership roles. However, as noted by the appeals court, the university allows some groups to maintain racial requirements while also exempting other groups from the policy which prohibits sex discrimination. Ironically, by targeting a few religious groups on campus and allowing other groups to discriminate in their membership process and leadership positions, the university itself was guilty of discrimination. The appeals court [said](#) after the ruling, “We are hard-pressed to find a clearer example of viewpoint discrimination.” The clear targeting of groups that hold to a certain religious perspective shows how hostile universities have become to students who hold orthodox Christian beliefs on issues such as sexuality. Daniel Blomberg, senior counsel at Becket who represented InterVarsity in the case, [commented](#), “The good news is that [Iowa has] been held accountable, and school officials nationwide are on notice. We are optimistic that in the future, colleges will pursue policies of accommodation, not discrimination, when it comes to religious exercise on campus.” (*Written by AACCS summer intern Zach Jewell*)

In Case You Missed It:

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

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

[Promise to America’s Children](#)

[Let’s Celebrate the Best Year in Decades for the Preborn’s Right to Life](#)

[228 GOP Lawmakers Submit Amicus Brief Urging the Supreme Court Overturn *Roe v. Wade*](#)