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“Nil desperandum—Never Despair. That is a motto for you and me. All are not dead; and where there is a spark of patriotic fire, we will rekindle it.”
Samuel Adams

President Biden Projects Liberal Social Agenda in State of the Union

During the [State of the Union address](#) on Tuesday, President Biden addressed the war in Ukraine and then continued to advance his agenda for “building a better America.” Despite the fact that the [Build Back Better plan failed](#) to garner the votes needed to pass Congress last December, he claimed that his plan is now needed to combat the high inflation and build back the economy from the effects of the pandemic. One of the main components of his plan included providing universal preschool and expanding child care subsidies. Citing a statistic that purports that families in major cities pay up to \$14,000 for child care per child, he proclaimed that “working families shouldn’t have to pay more than 7% of their income for care of young children.” He claimed that not only would his plan “cut the cost in half for most families,” it would also help women get back to work. Further, he mentioned the inclusion of universal pre-K for 3- and 4-year-olds in his plan, an issue that has had bipartisan support despite numerous reports that preschool does not provide the lasting benefits that are so often claimed. In a [response](#) to the call for universal pre-K, educational policy expert Jonathan Butcher (Institute for Family, Community, and Opportunity) pointed out that “in multiple long-term studies, researchers did not find lasting improvements in academic and behavioral outcomes for participating children who attended a government pre-K program.” Mr. Butcher noted further issues that would arise with a universal pre-K program such as increased regulations for providers which would likely crowd out smaller, family child care providers and, thus, leave parents with fewer options. President Biden also used his address to call on Congress to pass the [Equality Act](#), charging that the “onslaught of state laws targeting transgender Americans and their families is wrong.” If enacted into law, the Equality Act would add “sexual orientation” and “gender identity” to the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and thus threaten the religious liberty of any individual or organization who disagrees with the LGBT ideology. The President also called for the protection of “a woman’s right to choose,” charging that the “constitutional right affirmed in *Roe v. Wade* . . . is under attack as never before.” However, as the Senate just recently failed to pass a bill which would have legalized abortion (see article below), it is unlikely that this part of the President’s agenda will move forward.

Iowa Governor Kim Reynolds gave the [Republican response](#) to the President’s address, and pointed to policies of the administration which have caused the high inflation and energy crisis in America and have also contributed to the international turmoil playing out in Ukraine. She then discussed the policies of Republican governors and lawmakers and how their response to the pandemic yielded more positive outcomes in their states. She also emphasized Republicans’ approach to reopening schools, lifting mask mandates, and respecting parents’ role in educational decisions, highlighting an issue which has become very important to families. She stated, “Republicans believe that parents matter. It was true before the pandemic and has never been more important to say out loud: Parents Matter. They have a right to know, and to have a say in, what their kids are being taught.”

President Biden Nominates Ketanji Brown Jackson for Supreme Court Justice

This week, President Biden [nominated](#) Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson to replace retiring Justice Stephen Breyer to the United States Supreme Court. President Biden has [championed](#) Judge Jackson as a “proven consensus builder” capable of filling the role of Justice Breyer, who was widely regarded as the most moderate of the liberal justices. However, Judge Jackson’s record has already received criticism among Senate Republicans, 46 of whom previously voted against her confirmation to the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals in 2021. The Senate [plans](#) to move quickly on her confirmation, with Senate Judiciary Chairman Dick Durbin (IL) aiming to get her confirmed by April 8. Judge Jackson has already started the process of meeting with senators to garner their support and answer questions, but many Republicans remain wary. Republicans Susan Collins (ME), Lisa Murkowski (AK), and Lindsey Graham (SC) previously voted to confirm Judge Jackson to the D.C. Circuit, but their support is not guaranteed this time around. Senator Graham has indicated that he would not support her confirmation, stating that her nomination is a concession to “the radical Left.” Conservative legal minds are also [opposing](#) her nomination, citing her record of liberal activism and her endorsements from leftist groups such as the Human Rights Campaign and Planned Parenthood. While Senate Democrats have enough votes to confirm Judge Jackson if they remain united, most Senate Republicans are expected to oppose the confirmation of a radical judge to a lifetime position on the nation’s highest court.

Senate Defeats Abortion Bill

On Monday, the [Senate voted](#) 48-46 against an abortion bill that would have eliminated all state and local laws protecting the life of unborn babies. The bill, misleadingly called the Women’s Health Protection Act, was led by Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (NY), who [referred](#) to abortion as a “sacred” right. Senate Republicans joined together in opposing the bill, securing even the votes of [moderate Republicans](#) Susan Collins (ME) and Lisa Murkowski (AK), who are pro-choice but thought the bill was too extreme. Democrat Senator Joe Manchin (WV) also [opposed](#) the legislation, and several other senators were absent or abstained from voting. March for Life President Jeanne Mancini [condemned](#) the Women’s Health Protection Act as “the most radical abortion bill in United States history.” The bill would eliminate laws protecting the unborn, including informed consent laws, federal laws that prevent taxpayer funding of abortion, and laws prohibiting abortion after a certain gestational age. The bill would also remove conscience protections for health care workers who refuse to participate in abortions and would carve out the [Religious Freedom Restoration Act](#) (RFRA), a law passed with broad bipartisan support under President Clinton in 1993 that requires the government to balance religious liberty with government interests. If it had passed, the bill would have been the first successful carveout of RFRA from federal law, opening the door for other legislation to disregard the religious liberties and conscience rights of Americans. The bill is widely considered a messaging opportunity for Democrats ahead of the Supreme Court’s pending decision in a case that could overturn *Roe v. Wade* later this term.

In Case You Missed It:

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

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

[Promise to America’s Children](#)

[New Poll Shows Overwhelming Support for School Choice](#)

[Heritage Foundation Releases Election Integrity Scorecard](#)

