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*“The Bible contains the most profound philosophy, the most perfect morality, and the most refined policy that ever was conceived upon earth.”*

*John Adams*

**Senate Considers Respect for Marriage Act to Legalize Gay Marriage**

The U.S. Senate is considering the [Respect for Marriage Act](#) to codify same-sex marriage in federal law. Supporters of the bill claim that it is necessary after Justice Clarence Thomas wrote in a concurring opinion in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization* that the Supreme Court should revisit cases that used the faulty legal reasoning of *Roe v. Wade* to justify legalizing same-sex marriage. If enacted, the bill would require the federal government to accept any state’s definition of marriage as valid and force states that protect marriage as between a man and woman to recognize other states’ marriage laws. The bill is a devastating capitulation to the progressive left on one of the most fundamental issues of our time, eroding the standard of marriage and undermining religious liberty and the family in the process, even carving out the Religious Freedom Restoration Act from applying to the law. According to reports, five Republican senators have already indicated their likely support for the bill; a recent [bipartisan effort](#) by Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) and Susan Collins (R-ME) is designed to solicit at least 10 Republicans in order to overcome a filibuster. The AACCS recently joined a [coalition letter](#) sent to Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (KY) and individual Republican senators denouncing the bill as “an attack on millions of Americans, particularly people of faith, who believe marriage is between one man and one woman and that legitimate distinctions exist between men and women concerning family formation that should be recognized in the law.” *Please take a moment to review the links in this article and make your voice heard by [contacting your senators’ offices](#) and urging them to reject this bill today.*

**Court Rules Tennessee School Choice Program Can Proceed this Fall**

A judicial panel in Tennessee [ruled](#) last week that the state’s newly created school choice program could proceed this fall. The school choice program was created in 2019 for low-income students in the Metro Nashville and Shelby County school districts and allows for scholarships of \$7,300 to be used for a variety of educational expenses, including tutoring, textbooks, and tuition. The program faced an immediate court challenge that resulted in a ruling last May by the Tennessee Supreme Court that upheld the constitutionality of the educational savings account program, and an additional ruling by a three-judge panel in July that ruled the program could proceed this fall. This latest judicial opinion comes after a four-hour hearing in which the Nashville and Shelby County governments again attempted to block the start of the program. However, in a 13-page opinion, the judicial panel explained that they were “unpersuaded that the harm the Plaintiffs believe to be imminent is sufficiently irreparable or certain so as to justify blocking the implementation.” Brian Kelsey, attorney for the Liberty Justice Center who represented the parents fighting for the program, [called](#) the ruling a “resounding victory for thousands of families. After fighting for over two years to gain access to better education opportunities, Tennessee children in failing school districts will finally be able to attend the school that best fits their needs.”

## **Indiana Passes Law to Stop Abortion Clinics after *Dobbs* Decision**

In the wake of the Supreme Court's decision in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* to overturn *Roe v. Wade*, states continue to pass legislation to protect the lives of the unborn. In Indiana, Governor Eric Holcomb recently [signed](#) a bill into law that bans abortion in almost all cases, making the state the first to pass a pro-life law since the Court's *Dobbs* decision. The bill passed with wide margins in the state house and senate, even with some Republicans and all Democrats voting against the bill. The [law](#) includes exception for rape, incest, the life of the mother, and when the unborn baby "is diagnosed with a lethal fetal anomaly." The exceptions for rape and incest, however, are allowed only within the first 10 weeks of pregnancy, and the severe medical condition exception for unborn babies is capped at 20 weeks. Pregnant mothers who seek abortions cannot be charged under the bill, but doctors can be charged with feticide and have their medical licenses revoked. While some pro-life advocates wanted fewer exceptions on the law to protect more unborn lives from the brutality of abortion, Governor Holcomb praised the bill, stating, "Following the overturning of *Roe*, I stated clearly that I would be willing to support legislation that made progress in protecting life. In my view, [the bill] accomplishes this goal." Indiana joins fourteen other states that have banned abortion or enacted laws such as the heartbeat bill that restrict abortions to within the first two months of pregnancy. Other states have passed laws that have since been contested in court, amounting to just over half of American states passing laws to protect the lives of unborn children.

## **Experts Say Religious Practice Not Actually Dying in America**

A [new study](#) from Baylor University's Institute for Studies of Religion shows that contrary to common understandings, many Americans who do not claim a religious identity still practice religion in various ways. The study, titled, "[Are Religious 'Nones' Really Not Religious?: Revisiting Glenn, Three Decades Later](#)," found that this group of "religious nones," or those who call themselves not religious, still practice and express religious belief such as prayer, attending services, and belief in God. Although more Americans today than in previous decades do not claim a religious affiliation, the report suggests that this does not necessarily mean that Americans are less religious. The authors find that based on their behaviors, "Americans are becoming more religious, and religious institutions are thriving." The authors point to several factors that explain that confluent situation in which Americans do not claim religious identity but still practice religion. They admit that once-dominant Christian denominations "are indeed in free fall and have been for decades," but note that an increase in new Christian denominations and the influx of foreign religions has filled in the gap left by mainline Protestants. Further, these minority religious Americans may not fit squarely into the categories of surveys gauging religiosity, leading them to be classified among non-religious Americans. The authors reason that this shift in demographics explains why those identifying as "religious nones" have doubled from 2007 to 2021 to 30% of the population while the number of atheists has not increased. While the study indicates that religious belief is still widespread, it also shows how Christian faith continues to diminish in American life.

## **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](#)

[Promise to America's Children](#)

[The History and Meaning Behind Separation of Church and State](#)