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*“There is not a single instance in history in which civil liberty was lost, and religious liberty preserved entire. If therefore we yield up our temporal property, we at the same time deliver the conscience into bondage.”*  
**John Witherspoon**

**State Legislatures Work to Expand Educational Options**

School choice opportunities continue to expand across the country as several state legislatures have passed measures which will create more educational options for parents and their children. In [South Carolina](#), Governor Henry McMaster signed into law a bill which establishes an education savings account (ESA) program that will provide \$6,000 scholarships that can be used for a variety of educational methods including tutoring, educational therapies, tuition, and curriculum. The program will initially be open to children whose families qualify for Medicaid and will expand after three years to all families with incomes under \$100,000. In [Oklahoma](#), the state legislature has approved a measure which allows tax credits for families who send their children to a private school or home school. However, the bill has not yet been sent to the governor’s desk as House Speaker Charles McCall “captured” the bill, using a parliamentary procedure which allows him to hold a bill which has passed in an effort to have a revote on the measure. In this instance, the house speaker is hoping to use the procedure to gain more funding for rural areas where there aren’t as many private school options. In [Indiana](#), the legislature included in its budget an expansion of the state’s [Choice Scholarship Program](#) which provides vouchers to eligible families to attend the private school of their choice. In a victory for Indiana house Republicans, the income eligibility ceiling will increase to 400% of the free or reduced lunch income eligibility level (up from 300%), which translates to an income level of approximately \$220,000 for a family of four. Supporters of this expansion believe this will enable approximately 96% of the state’s families to qualify for school choice.

Despite the popularity and bipartisan nature of the issue of school choice, opponents continue to work to stop the expansion of educational opportunities. In [Tennessee](#), the state legislature considered a measure to expand the state’s ESA program, which is currently available only in Memphis and Nashville, to Hamilton and Knox counties. However, negotiations between the state house and senate ended with expansion only for Hamilton County. In [North Carolina](#), Democrat Governor Roy Cooper declared a state of emergency in an effort to draw attention to the possibility that the state legislature would override his veto of a school choice bill. Titled “Choose Your School, Choose Your Future,” the bill expands the state’s [Opportunity Scholarship program](#) by eliminating any income requirement for participation, making the program available to every student in the state. The governor claimed the bill would simply give the rich more money for their children’s private education and financially harm public schools, and, therefore, he declared a state of “emergency for public education.” School choice proponent Corey DeAngelis responded, “The Left is losing control over the minds of other peoples’ children, and they can’t handle it. It’s obvious with hypocrite Gov. Roy Cooper’s state of emergency declaration that he issued it to cry about *all* N. C. families getting school choice.”

## **Florida Bans DEI Programs in Higher Education**

Public colleges and universities in Florida can no longer promote diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives after Republican Governor Ron DeSantis signed into law [S. 226](#), a bill that prohibits taxpayer dollars from advocating any DEI initiatives. The law also prohibits Florida public colleges and universities from basing curriculum on theories of inherent “systemic racism, sexism, oppression, and privilege” in the United States. “We are going to treat people as individuals,” said [DeSantis](#). “We’re not going to treat people as members of groups.” This law comes after [DeSantis committed](#) in January of this year to defund DEI programs in Florida public universities. Florida is not alone. Already, [over 30 states](#) have either introduced or passed bills restricting DEI initiatives at public colleges. Some Florida representatives have expressed concern over potential censorship. “Whenever people shield their children from the truth, a generation of ignorance is born,” said Rep. Dianne Hart (D-Tampa). But other representatives have warned of the dangers of DEI. “DEI’s intellectual fragility makes campuses less safe, less intelligent, and less free for the students,” said Rep. Alex Andrade (R-Pensacola), a sponsor of the bill. DeSantis had a clear answer to students who want to study gender ideology. “Go to Berkeley. . . . There’s nothing wrong with that,” DeSantis said. “We want to focus on the classical mission of what a university is supposed to be.”

## **NC Legislature Overrides Governor’s Veto of Bill to Protect Unborn Babies**

The Care for Women, Children, and Families Act has become law in North Carolina, after both chambers of the state legislature voted to override Governor Roy Cooper’s veto of the bill. The bill, which protects babies from being aborted after the 12th week of pregnancy, was originally vetoed by Governor Cooper on May 13th. He [cited](#) economic fallout as one of his reasons for vetoing the bill, believing that companies would decide not to locate in the state because of abortion restrictions. Previously, North Carolina law banned abortions after the twentieth week of pregnancy, but the new law could save up to 3,000 babies from abortions every year. In addition to banning abortions after 12 weeks, [the bill also](#) bans mail-order abortion pills, protects abortion survivors, protects against discriminatory abortion, protects women’s health and safety, limits elective and late-term abortions, and provides \$160 million to support children, families, and maternal health. A [Susan B. Anthony Pro Life America](#) foundation poll found that 62% of NC voters support abortion limits, with high percentages of voters supporting a 72-hour waiting period, parental consent for minors, and an ultrasound requirement. At 12 weeks of gestation, all major organs have formed, babies suck their thumbs, have right-hand/left-hand preference, have recognizable prominent facial features, and respond to touch.

## **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](#)

[ADF Video: Respect for Marriage Act: What Church and Ministry Leaders Should Know](#)

[AACS Executive Director Jeff Walton Weighs in on School Security after Tennessee Tragedy](#)

[If There’s “No Such Thing as Someone Else’s Child,” Who’s Responsible for Children’s Education?](#)