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*"The advancement and diffusion of knowledge is the only guardian of true liberty."
James Madison*

NEXT WEEK—March for Life: The 52nd [March for Life](#) will take place in Washington, D.C., on Friday, January 24. The theme for the 2025 March for Life is "[Life: Why We March](#)," pointing to the basic and profound truth that "every human life—including the unborn and their mothers—is beautiful, has unique dignity, and worthy of protection." [Click here](#) for more information on participating in the March for Life.

COMING SOON: National School Choice Week

The [National School Choice Week \(NSCW\)](#) will take place from January 26 to February 1, 2025. This year marks the [15th year](#) of celebrating NSCW; and since 2011, NSCW has seen 235,000 events and over 3,800 proclamations recognizing the benefits of school choice to children and families. For materials and ideas to plan an event for your school during NSCW 2025, please [click here](#).

Judge Blocks Biden's Title IX Rule from Taking Effect Nationwide

On Thursday, a federal district court in Kentucky ruled against President Biden's controversial Title IX final rule, [blocking](#), in all states, one of the administration's signature regulations. The final rule had been issued by the Department of Education in April 2024, dramatically expanding what constitutes sex discrimination under Title IX to include "sex stereotypes, sex characteristics, pregnancy or related conditions, sexual orientation, and gender identity." The rule was immediately challenged by multiple states, resulting in the rule being blocked from taking effect in 26 states. With this latest ruling, the Title IX final rule is now blocked nationwide.

Judge Danny Reeves [ruled](#) that the final rule was an "attempt to bypass the legislative process and completely transform Title IX." Reeves considered three controversial provisions of the final rule: first, the expanded list of protected characteristics, including sexual orientation and gender identity; second, the low standard of "de minimis harm" to determine if an institution discriminated against a student based on gender identity; and third, a redefinition of sexual harassment that broadened the term and included conduct that is "subjectively" offensive. Citing the Supreme Court's recent decision in *Loper Bright Enterprises v. Raimondo*, the court found that the final rule exceeded statutory authority. Reeves writes that "the entire point of Title IX is to prevent discrimination based on sex—throwing gender identity into the mix eviscerates the statute and renders it largely meaningless." The court also found that the final rule "suffers significant constitutional infirmities," including violating the First Amendment and the Constitution's Spending Clause. Last, the court found the final rule to be "arbitrary and capricious," allowing for sex-based separation in some activities, but not others. Alliance Defending Freedom president Kristen Waggoner [praised](#) the ruling, stating, "The Biden administration's radical attempt to redefine sex not only tossed fairness, safety, and privacy for female students out the window, it also threatened free speech and parental rights. With this ruling, the federal court in Kentucky rejected the entire Biden rule and the administration's illegal actions."

Maine Religious Schools Challenge Religious Discrimination in School Choice Program

Last week, the U.S. 1st Circuit Court of Appeals heard oral arguments in a religious liberty case that began in the aftermath of the Supreme Court's decision in *Carson v. Makin* (2022). In this case, the high court ruled that Maine cannot prohibit religious schools from participating in its town tuition program, a type of school choice program. However, the Maine legislature openly declared its intent to defy the Supreme Court ruling and [amended](#) its Human Rights Act to prohibit "discriminatory" schools from participating in the town tuition program. As a result, the state bars schools from participating in the program if they uphold a biblical sexual ethic. Two faith-based schools have since [challenged the law](#) in two separate lawsuits. Bangor Christian Schools (BCS) charges the law violates the religious liberty of the school, and St. Dominic Academy charges the law hurts the families who choose a religious education for their children. During the oral arguments, Christopher Taub, Maine's chief deputy attorney general, argued that religious schools seek an unfair advantage, [claiming](#) religious schools want "to be treated more favorably than other schools." However, attorneys for the religious schools argued that the state itself is discriminatory. "The state of Maine says we have a better ideology, and we require you to believe what we believe," [said](#) Jeremy Dys, a senior counsel at First Liberty Institute. The three-judge panel seemed open to the religious schools' arguments. Judge William Kayatta, an Obama-appointed judge, referenced the Carson case. He [said](#) that the effect of the state's nondiscrimination law "seems to be almost equivalent" to what the Supreme Court prohibited. "We hope the court puts an end to Maine's tactics," said Dys, "which are odious to our Constitution."

Rep. Tim Walberg Selected as Next Chair of Ed and Workforce Committee

Rep. Tim Walberg will chair the House Education and the Workforce Committee in the 119th Congress. Walberg represents the 5th district of Michigan and has served in the House for eight terms. He graduated [from Moody Bible Institute](#) in 1973 with a degree in Christian Education before becoming a pastor and then state representative. Walberg has been a member of the House Education and Workforce Committee for 16 years. He previously ran to lead the committee in 2022 but lost to Rep. Virginia Foxx (NC) after she received a two-year extension. This year, Foxx declined to seek the position, opening the door for other contenders. Walberg faced off against Rep. Burgess Owens (UT) and ultimately gained the support of the House Republican Steering Committee to win the top spot on the Education and Workforce Committee. After the vote, Foxx congratulated Walberg and called him "a lifelong fighter for education and literacy." According to his congressional [page](#), Walberg is a staunch supporter of parental rights and school choice, and he has [indicated](#) he is open to working on downsizing the Department of Education. One of his main priorities will be to continue the oversight of anti-Semitism happening on college campuses. Walberg also prioritizes workforce readiness. "We have significant work ahead of us, from enshrining protections for parents to continuing to protect Jewish students on college campuses to rights providing more opportunity and flexibility to American workers," Walberg [said](#). "Freedom, opportunity, and fairness will guide our work as we deliver results for America."

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](#)

[NEW! AACS Today Podcast: New Year, New Congress, New States?](#)

[Jamison Coppola Radio Interview on School Shooting at Abundant Life Christian School](#)

[Nominate your Christian School Teacher for 2025 Teacher of the Year](#)

[DOGE vs. the Department of Education](#)

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