



**The Washington Flyer**  
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*“The struggle of today, is not altogether for today—it is for a vast future also. With a reliance on Providence, all the more firm and earnest, let us proceed in the great task which events have devolved upon us.”*  
**Abraham Lincoln**

**Applications for AACCS Youth Legislative Training Conference Due MONDAY, MARCH 31**

Student applications for this year’s [AACCS Youth Legislative Training Conference](#) (YLTC) are **due to state offices on Monday, March 31!** This one-of-a-kind conference gives high school students the opportunity to learn more about the political process through a biblical worldview in Washington, D.C. The 2025 conference is scheduled Monday–Friday, July 7–11. For more information, including the steps for the application process, please visit the [AACCS website](#) or contact your state association office.

**Who’s Afraid of School Choice?**

EdChoice recently released a report, [Who’s Afraid of School Choice](#), that examines the rhetoric used to oppose school choice programs. The results in the report show that the intensity of the opposition to school choice programs is consistently strong, regardless of the scope or size of the program. In other words, a smaller program received the same “apocalyptic predictions” that a larger program received, regardless of the funding level or number of students the program would reach. Authored by Jason Bedrick of the Heritage Foundation and Ed Tarnowski from EdChoice, the study examined the arguments against the new school choice programs in eight states: Alabama, Arkansas, Iowa, Louisiana, Nebraska, Oklahoma, South Carolina, and Utah. These states were ranked according to the level of funding and number of eligible students in the programs. Once the states were ranked, the public statements against the programs were examined to determine if there was a difference between the arguments against smaller programs and those against larger programs. The authors looked at over 3,000 comments, ultimately focusing on 183 that were scored according to “rhetorical intensity, from mild concern to apocalyptic predictions.” The findings showed that even the smallest programs that serve a small population would receive the same doomsday warnings that universal programs received. For example, an Alabama legislator claimed that a choice program, which serves less than 2% of the state’s students, would “decapitate public education.” A South Carolina legislator claimed that an even smaller program in his state was the “first step to the death of public education.” The authors concluded, “Opponents of education choice recycle the same false prophesies of doom without regard to the evidence or the scope of the proposals before them.” Ed Tarnowski [points out](#), “Policymakers should focus on bold, universal programs that expand access to educational opportunities for all families. Instead of being swayed by fearmongering, they can rely on decades of data—and the tools in this report—to counter myths with facts.”

**Religious Liberty Victory for the Herzog Foundation**

In a [win for religious liberty](#), a district court has ruled that the [Herzog Foundation](#), a Christian nonprofit dedicated to helping Christian schools, is free from the burdensome regulations of the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (PWFA). The PWFA was passed in 2022 to ensure pregnant women do not experience workplace discrimination due to their “pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions.” The language of the law does not include abortion, and the sponsors of the law stated specifically that the law was intended to help pregnant

women, and in no way support abortion. Despite the clear statements against the inclusion of abortion in the PWFA, the Biden administration proposed regulations for the PWFA that named abortion as a medical condition related to pregnancy, thus, mandating employers to make accommodations for female employees seeking abortion. Several organizations pushed back, including the AACS, through public comments and pointed out that not only did the proposed regulation exceed the intent of the law, but it also threatened the religious liberty of faith-based organizations that believed that abortion is wrong. However, the final regulations were published in 2024 with no change. The Herzog Foundation filed suit against the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), the agency responsible for the rule. “No employer should be forced to violate their deeply held beliefs at the whims of a federal agency,” stated Elizabeth Roberts, Communications Director for the Herzog Foundation. “The EEOC’s attempt to strong-arm Christian organizations into accommodating abortion-related requests is a blatant attack on religious freedom.” Specifically, the Herzog Foundation pointed to the First Amendment and the Religious Freedom Restoration Act in arguing that the PWFA regulation threatens their free exercise of religion. Last week, Judge Roseann A. Ketchmark issued a [preliminary injunction](#) against the PWFA regulation, ruling that the EEOC could not enforce the PWFA regulation against the Herzog Foundation in a way that would cause it to violate deeply held religious beliefs. The judge pointed to the protections in the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, explaining that the PWFA regulations posed a substantial threat to the religious exercise of the Herzog Foundation. Attorney Katie Mitra, with the firm Graves Garrett Greim representing the Herzog Foundation, praised the decision: “The court’s ruling is a victory for the Herzog Foundation and for religious liberty writ large.”

### **Congress Reintroduces Legislation to Allow More Parental Choice in Child Care Block Grants**

Rep. Riley Moore (R-WV) and Sen. Jim Banks (R-IN) have reintroduced the [Respect Parents’ Childcare Choice Act](#), a bill that would give parents greater freedom to make the best child care choices for their children. The bill would reform the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act. As the AACS has previously reported, this program provides block grants to states for child care. The states can deliver the money directly to child care providers. However, those providers become direct recipients of federal financial assistance, a status most religious providers avoid. States also have the option to deliver the money through certificates to parents to use at the child care center of their choice. States overwhelmingly prefer to use certificates: 44 of the 54 states and territories deliver the funds exclusively through certificates. However, a Biden administration rule will force all states to deliver some portion of the money through direct grants. The AACS has secured legislation in a previous funding bill to defund that requirement. The Respecting Parents’ Childcare Choice Act offers another solution—requiring all states to deliver the money exclusively through certificates. The bill also reduces burdensome regulations so relatives can qualify as eligible caregivers. “For decades, conservatives have rallied around being pro-life, but far too often, the policy framework that came with it lacked strong, substantive ideas to reduce the burden on American families,” [said](#) Moore. “Being pro-life means being pro-family, and with this legislation, we’re empowering families to choose what works best for them.”

### **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](#)

[Conservatives Urge Trump to Bypass Blue States, Empower Local Schools and Parents with School Choice](#)

[Trump to Cut Funding for Planned Parenthood](#)

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