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*"The religion then of every man must be left to the conviction and conscience of every man;
and it is the right of every man to exercise it as these may dictate."*
James Madison

Supreme Court Rules to Uphold Tennessee Law Protecting Minors from Harmful Medical Procedures

The U.S. Supreme Court [ruled](#) on Wednesday to uphold a Tennessee law that protects minor children from harmful medical procedures described in Orwellian terms as "gender affirming care" or "transgender treatments." The case, *United States v. Skrmetti*, involves a Tennessee law (SB 1) that prohibits the prescription of puberty blockers and cross-sex hormones for children under the age of 18. The law was passed in 2023 and immediately challenged by transsexual advocates on the grounds it was discriminatory and violated the rights of parents to make medical decisions for their children. The U.S. 6th Circuit Court of Appeals upheld the law as constitutional, prompting the Biden administration to advocate for the case to advance to the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court heard oral arguments in the case last December, with U.S. Solicitor General Elizabeth Prelogar, part of the Biden administration, arguing that the law discriminates based on sex and violates the Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment. In February, the Trump administration [sent a letter](#) to the court stating that the government no longer held the position that the law was unconstitutional but also encouraged the court to decide on the issue. The ruling was a 6-3 decision, with Chief Justice John Roberts writing the majority opinion, joined by Justices Clarence Thomas, Brett Kavanaugh, Amy Coney Barrett, and Neil Gorsuch; Justice Samuel Alito joined large parts of the majority opinion. A dissenting opinion was offered by Justices Elena Kagan, Sonya Sotomayor, and Ketanji Jackson Brown.

In the majority [opinion](#), Roberts wrote, "This case carries with it the weight of fierce scientific and policy debates about the safety, efficacy, and propriety of medical treatments in an evolving field." The decision concluded that the Tennessee law does not violate the Equal Protection Clause and also stated that the court would "leave questions regarding its policy to the people, their elected representatives, and the democratic process." The decision also rejected the argument that the law presented a case of sex discrimination as the law did not single out a particular sex but rather referred to minors in general when outlining the barriers to the harmful medical procedures. Barrett wrote a concurring opinion in which she pushed back against the claim that the transgender status is a suspect class that has faced legal discrimination, explaining that "transgender individuals do not share the 'obvious, immutable, or distinguishing characteristics' of 'a discrete group.'" Tennessee Attorney General Jonathan Skrmetti [praised](#) the court's decision, stating, "I commend the Tennessee legislature and Governor Lee for their courage in passing this legislation and supporting our litigation despite withering opposition from the Biden administration, LGBT special interest groups, social justice activists, the American Medical Association, the American Bar Association, and even Hollywood." He also emphasized that "this victory transcends politics. It's about real Tennessee kids facing real struggles. Families across our state and our nation deserve solutions based on science, not ideology." Twenty-five other states have similar laws to SB 1, and this ruling will likely strengthen their intent and efforts to protect children from these harmful medical procedures.

New Poll Shows Strong Support for School Choice from Both Republicans and Democrats

A recent [poll](#) shows that school choice is not solely a Republican issue but is a bipartisan priority, reinforcing Sen. Ted Cruz's (TX) [claim](#) that school choice is the civil rights issue of this century. Concerns over educational freedom continue to grow as parents recognize the importance of education in shaping their children's future. According to the poll, conducted earlier this month, half of parents with K-12 children have either moved or considered moving their children to a school more closely aligned with their values. Additionally, 87% of Republicans and 79% of Democrats believe parents should have the right to choose where their children attend school. Beyond support for general school choice, 73% of voters support providing federal tax credits to individuals and businesses that contribute to non-profit scholarship funds. These scholarships would help families cover tuition and other school-related costs. Despite bipartisan support, school choice still faces strong opposition. Paule Schulte, Vice President of the Nebraska State Education Association, questioned the impact on public education, [asking](#), "How are we going to continue to support our [public] schools . . . when they are transferring \$5 billion a year to support families in private schools?" However, Cruz [noted](#) that public schools in Florida and Ohio have improved because of the competition created by school choice policies. Lawmakers continue to work on legislation that would expand access to school choice. In a time of political division, school choice may be an issue that can unite both sides of the aisle. *Written by AACS intern Hayden Coates*

Religious Liberty Commission Holds First Hearing

President Trump's newly formed Religious Liberty Commission held its first hearing earlier this week at the Museum of the Bible in Washington, D.C. The Commission was established to examine the foundations of religious liberty, develop strategies to preserve them, and raise national awareness through a report to the president. Commissioners and panelists met to discuss the vital role of religion and morality in the U.S., tracing the history and future of religious freedom. Many of the panelists quoted John Adams, who stated, "Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people." Establishing the United States' foundation as a moral country inseparable from religion, the panelists reviewed the trajectory of religious freedom through U.S. courts. Recent decades have seen efforts to remove religion from public spaces. The witnesses [concluded](#) that the Founding Generation did not intend for religion to be "scrubbed from the public square." Professor Barbara Elliott emphasized the positive influence of faith-based organizations throughout U.S. history. Professor Stephanie Barclay [clarified](#) the First Amendment, stating the founders sought "to found a republic where conscience would be protected, not punished." She argued that the Free Exercise and Establishment Clauses work together. Speakers closed with a unified call to uplift rather than extinguish expressions of faith. Erwin Chemerinsky, Dean of Berkeley Law, was [very troubled](#) that the commission is "an extremely conservative group, using government to advance religion." In contrast, U.S. Attorney General Pam Bondi spoke at the hearing, [promising](#) that "this president and this administration are fully committed to restoring and defending religious liberty for all Americans." The commission will host additional hearings throughout the country over the next year. *Written by AACS intern Hayden Coates*

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](#)

[Faith in Trump's White House: An Open Door to Evangelicals](#)

[Somewhere the Rainbow is Over](#)

[Supreme Court Protects Pro-Life Christians from Funding Abortions](#)

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