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"Liberty must at all hazards be supported. We have a right to it, derived from our Maker. But if we had not, our fathers have earned and bought it for us, at the expense of their ease, their estates, their pleasure, and their blood."
John Adams

Register Today for the AACCS National Legislative Conference

Registration is now open for the National Legislative Conference. Held in Washington, D.C., from September 8 to 10, the conference provides opportunities for you to support our efforts on your behalf in our nation's capital. The conference includes a congressional briefing by members of Congress, a legislative briefing by AACCS Washington staff, a briefing by policy experts at the White House, and a special banquet at the Museum of the Bible. There will also be time for you to meet with your members of Congress and connect with other educators and leaders in higher education.

Register by August 8 to receive the special conference rate of \$209 on your hotel room and the discounted registration fee. Our hotel is convenient to both the National Airport and the Metro, and registration includes the banquet on Tuesday and breakfast on Tuesday and Wednesday. For more information, please reach out to our Washington staff or visit our website [here](#).

Update: Trump Administration Releases Education Grant Funding

The Trump administration has announced that it will [release education grant funding](#) that had been withheld while the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) reviewed the programs that received the funding. The OMB had [announced](#) at the end of June that \$6.8 billion in funding would not be released as scheduled because of an "ongoing programmatic review" of the programs. The programs affected included Title I-C for migrant education, Title II-A for professional development, Title III-A for English-learning services, Title IV-A for academic enrichment, and Title IV-B for before- and after-school programs. On July 18, the Department of Education [announced](#) that the Title IV-B funds would be released [with the requirement](#) that states receiving the funds certify that they are following specific anti-discrimination laws. Last weekend the OMB announced the rest of the grant money would also be released. The announcement came as Education Secretary McMahon was attending the National Governors Association meeting. When asked by Colorado Gov. Jared Polis how communication might be improved to avoid the "chaos and uncertainty" around future funding, she pointed to the transition as part of the reason for the delay in funding. However, she also [explained](#) that the funding freeze was because the OMB "took some time to really review the title funding to look at all the programs." She added, "They were well satisfied. So, now, those funds are going to be going out."

As AACCS previously [reported](#), the funding for Title II-A (professional development) includes a provision that [allows for equitable services](#) for private schools. Many Christian schools have been able to utilize the funding for conferences and professional development for their teachers. The release of these grant funds should enable local educational agencies to distribute funding for equitable services in this area.

Free Speech and Religious Liberty Victory for New York Photographer

A New York district court settled with a Christian photographer earlier this month, allowing her to run her business according to her beliefs. Emilee Carpenter, a wedding photographer, brings her faith to work. However, New York [laws](#) made it nearly impossible for Carpenter to run her business in line with her beliefs. Faced with the decision to violate the law or violate her faith, she filed a [lawsuit](#) against the state of New York. Carpenter believes marriage is between one woman and one man and only photographs and celebrates the same. New York anti-discrimination laws required that Carpenter provide photography services to same-sex couples and prohibited her from expressing her beliefs on her website. If she violated these laws, she could have faced \$10,000 in fines, the shutdown of her business, or jail time. Carpenter's defense argued that the New York laws violated the First Amendment by restricting free speech, religious exercise, association, and press freedoms. In the U.S. Supreme Court Case, [303 Creative v. Elenis](#), wedding website designer Lorie Smith challenged Colorado's Anti-Discrimination Act. The Court ruled that Colorado cannot force an individual to convey messages contrary to his religious beliefs. This ruling led the 2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals to reevaluate Emilee Carpenter's case. The 2nd Circuit [found](#) that New York's anti-discrimination laws conflicted with the free speech principles established in *303 Creative v. Elenis*. Brian Neihart, counsel at Alliance Defending Freedom, summarized Carpenter's win, saying, "New Yorkers can now enjoy the freedom to create and express themselves." *Written by AACS intern Hayden Coates*

Poll Shows Americans Are Becoming More Pro-Life

A new national [poll](#) shows that fewer people support legal abortion in the United States. The Associated Press and NORC Center for Public Affairs Research conducted a survey of 1,437 adults and found that 36% of respondents now believe abortion should be illegal in all or most cases. This stance is up from 29% in June 2024. Americans' declining support for abortion was seen in different situations, including where someone simply does not want to be pregnant. Just 50% of respondents supported legal abortion in that scenario, down from about 60% earlier this year. This shift marks the strongest pro-life shift recorded since the *Dobbs v. Jackson* decision in 2022. A separate Gallup [poll](#) released in June also found that 43% of Americans now identify as "pro-life," and now only 51% of Americans call themselves "pro-choice." Last year, those numbers were 41% and 54%. In June, 70% of Americans supported legal abortion in all or most cases; that number has since dropped to 64%. Support remains strong at 80% for abortion access in cases involving rape, incest, life endangerment, or severe fetal abnormalities. Michael New of the Witherspoon Institute noted the change, [saying](#), "Public backlash toward Dobbs is fading." He pointed to recent pro-life [wins](#) in 2024 as a sign of momentum. *Written by AACS intern Hudson Knight*

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](#)

[Free Speech Victory for School Choice Advocate in Federal Case](#)

[A Moral Awakening: The Rise of the Social Conservative Movement](#)

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