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“Hold on, my friends, to the Constitution and to the Republic for which it stands. Miracles do not cluster, and what has happened once in 6,000 years, may not happen again. Hold on to the Constitution, because if the American Constitution should fail, there will be anarchy throughout the world.”
Daniel Webster

Deadline is Today for the Discounted Rate to the AACCS National Legislative Conference

[Register TODAY, August 8](#), for the AACCS National Legislative Conference and receive the special conference rate of \$209 on your hotel room and the discounted registration fee. The National Legislative Conference will take place in Washington, D.C., from September 8 to 10. The conference provides several opportunities that will enrich your understanding of essential political and cultural trends and will assist the DC Office’s efforts in our nation’s capital. The schedule will include 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 TODAY, AUGUST 8](#), to receive the [special discount on your hotel room](#) and the discounted registration fee. While registration will continue to be open after today, the discounted rate expires today. 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](#).

Surveys Show Growth of Private Schools and More Parents Seeking School Options

The CATO Center for Educational Freedom has released the results from a [survey](#) that show that enrollment in private schools continues to increase, but at a declining rate. Between the 2023-24 and 2024-25 school years, 40% of private schools reported an increase in enrollment, while 32% reported a decrease, and 28% reported no change. CATO first began to track private school enrollment when the COVID-19 pandemic caused schools to shut down across the country. During the COVID crisis, private school enrollment significantly dropped, but because private schools reopened faster than public schools and school choice opportunities expanded, enrollment in private schools began to see significant growth. Between the 2019-20 and 2020-21 school years (when schools were forced to close), 57% of private schools saw a decrease, and only 24% saw an increase in enrollment. However, the following year, the trend nearly reversed when 54% of schools saw increased enrollment, with only 16% seeing a decrease. In subsequent years, 55% (2022-23) and 46% (2023-24) of private schools saw an increase. The authors of the report note that while private schools are still experiencing growth, the rate of increase seems to have slowed. The authors conclude that “the pandemic seems less likely to be an explanation for growth, and non-COVID-19 factors seem more likely to be in play.” The survey included a question for the participating schools regarding the reasons for the enrollment increases. Reasons given for enrollment growth included “a values alignment between the school and parents (69%), a better academic experience (44%), religious alignment with parents (43%), political issues (32%), demographics (24%), affordability and financial reasons (18%), or competition with other schools (14%).” Interestingly, private schools in the South experienced the largest enrollment gains, followed by schools in the Midwest and then the West, while private schools in the Northeast experienced a slight decrease in enrollment.

Court Rules for Religious Liberty in Adoption Case

An Oregon mother with a biblical worldview is allowed to pursue adoption amidst ongoing litigation. Jessica Bates felt the call to adopt two children out of the Oregon foster system. Despite her eligibility for the program, she was denied an adoption license because of her biblical view of sexual orientation and gender identity. In response, Bates filed a [lawsuit](#) against the Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS) with the help of Alliance Defending Freedom. The ODHS required adoptive parents to sign a document stating they would affirm their child's hypothetical sexual orientation or sexual identity. These [affirmations](#) included hanging LGBT signs and flags in the home and taking the children to pride parades. Bates refused to comply because of her worldview; she would not lie to children about their sex. Still, she agreed to "happily love and accept any child" in her home. Bates and her defense argued that the ODHS's decision violated her First Amendment rights. Though a federal district court denied Bates's request for an injunction, the U.S. 9th Circuit Court of Appeals amended that decision. Bates was granted a preliminary injunction and an adoption license while her case travels through the district courts. The majority found that "Oregon's policy violates the First Amendment as applied to Bates." Judge Daniel Bess went on to explain that "Adoption is not a constitutional law dead zone." Mallory Sleight, Counsel at ADF, [believes](#) this case reveals that "freedom to one's religious beliefs applies within this field [adoption] as well." *Written by AACS intern Hayden Coates*

New Hampshire Passes Laws Protecting Minors from Harmful Transgender Procedures

New Hampshire Gov. Kelly Ayotte recently signed two bills into law that [protect children](#) from harmful medical procedures. The state already had a 2024 law that protected children from "genital gender reassignment surgeries." These two laws increase protections for children by prohibiting other dangerous so-called "gender transition" procedures. The first law, the [Vulnerable Child Compassion and Protection Act](#), protects children by preventing them from receiving puberty-blocking or opposite-sex hormone medications intended to alter a child's sex characteristics. The law makes an exception for children already on these drugs. Both the affected children and the attorney general can sue to enforce the law. The [second law](#) protects children by preventing them from undergoing breast surgeries intended to alter a child's primary sex characteristics in an attempt to mimic the opposite sex. The law can also be enforced by lawsuits from the affected children or the state Board of Medicine. Pro-LGBT advocates [called](#) the new laws "a big step backwards." However, Ayotte [said](#) the laws "represent a balanced, bipartisan effort to protect children" from the "lifelong consequences" these decisions can have. New Hampshire is one of 27 states that protect children from these procedures. It is also the first state in New England, a progressive area of the country, to ban the administering of these drugs and conducting these procedures for children.

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](#)

[OPM Says Federal Employees May Openly Practice Religious Faith](#)

[Leaders are Made, They Are Not Born - Testimonies from the AACS Youth Legislative Training Conference](#)

[School Choice: Non-profits in Blue States See Opportunity in Federal Tax Credit](#)