



October 16, 2025

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives

Dear Speaker Johnson,

We write on behalf of the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) and the American Association of Christian Schools (AACCS) to convey our strong support for the SOAR Act Improvements Act (H.R. 5181). We are grateful that the Oversight and Government Reform Committee has advanced this legislation, and we urge you to bring this legislation to the House floor as soon as possible.

For more than two decades, the Opportunity Scholarship Program has opened doors for thousands of children whose families would not otherwise have meaningful access to educational options. Over 12,000 students from families earning, on average, less than \$28,000 a year have used these scholarships to attend schools that meet their needs and reflect their values. The overwhelming majority of participating children come from households receiving SNAP or TANF benefits. These are precisely the students most vulnerable to being overlooked by the public systems that fail to serve them well.

Parents consistently report tremendous satisfaction with the program—upwards of 97 percent in recent years—and the outcomes speak for themselves. Graduation and postsecondary acceptance rates among scholarship recipients far exceed local averages. Yet despite its success, the program has not kept pace with demand. Stagnant funding and rising costs have forced many students out and left countless others on waiting lists.

H.R. 5181 takes long-overdue steps to revitalize the Opportunity Scholarship Program. By updating the accreditation list, the bill will dramatically expand the number of schools able to participate in the program. The current list was created almost 20 years ago and severely limits the range of schools that can apply. By expanding the accreditation list to include nationally recognized accreditors, Congress can add more schools and encourage the opening of new schools, thereby making more seats in the program available. Families can choose the school that best serves their children's needs when given a variety of options.

The bill also expands choice by rebalancing funding allocations to allow more high-quality private schools to participate and more families to access scholarships. The program's

federal share has lagged behind support for D.C. public and charter schools since its inception, leaving Opportunity Scholarships unable to meet current needs.

At a time when academic declines and widening achievement gaps demand urgent attention, preserving and expanding proven education options is not only prudent—it is essential. Families in D.C. deserve more than symbolic support; they deserve policies that prioritize students over systems and opportunity over geography.

ACSI and AACS represent thousands of Christian schools across the country, and we have seen firsthand the impact of educational choice on children's futures. We remain committed to partnering in efforts that uphold parental rights, support educational choice, and ensure that every child has the chance to flourish.

On behalf of the families who rely on this program, thank you for your support of school choice. We respectfully urge swift passage of H.R. 5181 and stand ready to support its advancement in any way we can.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "P. George Tryfiates". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "P" and a long, sweeping underline.

P. George Tryfiates
Vice President for Public Policy and Legal Affairs
Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI)

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Jamison Coppola". The signature is cursive, with a large initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

Jamison Coppola
Government Relations Director
American Association of Christian Schools (AACS)