

School Choice in Alabama —It's Past Time!

Eagle Forum has supported school choice for many years as we believe that parents should be in charge of where and how their children are educated. This can be in a public school, a secular private school, a religious school, or as many parents increasingly choose, a home education environment.

School choice is again going to be front and center in this year's legislative session. Eagle Forum will proudly support the PRICE bill. This stands for Parental Choice in Children's Education and expresses so well the purpose and provisions of the bill.

This bill, as proposed, will provide universal choice. After the first 3 year start up phase, this means that every K-12 student in Alabama will be eligible to be enrolled in the program. This will provide an Education Saving Account (ESA) for the child that the parents can use to pay for education related expenses, such as tuition, textbooks, fees, individual classes, tutoring services, extracurricular activities. This Act does not change or amend the Alabama Highschool Athletic Association constitution or by-laws.

The program will be administered by the Department of Revenue along with a 13 member Advisory Board. The money will go into an account and the parent will electronically authorize payments to their education providers identified in the software. If a parent wishes to use a provider not identified, he or she can contact the program office to arrange for the provider to be added. Such a payment plan will simplify transactions for parents, as well as for the program administrators and allow for auditing the program as needed.

The money allotted to the child's ESA account will be about 90% of the state's portion that is provided to local school districts on a per pupil basis. Currently, it is estimated that this will be in the neighborhood of \$7500 per year. All local and federal money for a school district will remain in the district to be spread among the remaining students.

Neither public nor non-public schools are required to participate in the choice program. It is wholly voluntary on the part of both schools and students.

If a parent does not use all of the amount allotted to the student's ESA in a calendar year, the remaining funds will be rolled over to the next year. No additional funds will be added to a student's ESA after graduation from high school. Any funds remaining in the account at that time may be used until age 21 for additional education expenses such as college, or technical schools. Any funds not used by that time will revert to the general ESA account with the DOR to be used by other students.

The Act specifically states that "Nothing in the act changes the current law on how nonpublic education (private, church, parochial, religious and home-based schools) are run or regulated, including accreditation and assessments (testing). The legal environment for non-public and home schools in Alabama has functioned well for years. PRICE will not change any of these current laws which enable maximum freedom from state intervention.

Please see the enclosed flyer.

Eagle Forum's 2023 Legislative Agenda

Leaders within Eagle Forum have been working for the past few months to develop an aggressive agenda for advancing its goals of protecting the family and children from the constant onslaught of the “woke” agenda of the progressive left.

Some of the areas where Eagle Forum plans legislative efforts include protections for children, education choice, and medical issues.

Eagle Forum will be proposing or supporting bills to provide for:

- Universal School Choice
- Manufacturers of cell phones required to activate porn filters on all new cell phones and Chromebooks for minors prior to sale.
- Disallow drag queen story hour performances at schools, libraries or other places where children are likely to be present.
- Preventing the use of obscene material in school books
- Ban the application of critical race theory and diversity, equity and inclusion in schools
- Protection of unborn children from marijuana by requiring women of child bearing age to have a pregnancy test prior to being dispensed medical marijuana.
- A ban on ESG scores from being used to direct investments of state funds.
- Reaffirming the rights of parents in the upbringing of their children.

Eagle Forum leaders and Action Groups will meet with legislators to provide information about these and other issues on which we take a position. See weekly email updates.

Troy University Closes Confucius Institute

We have written in the past about the dangers of having Chinese Communist Party sponsored and funded Confucius Institutes located on American college campuses. Originally there were two such Institutes in Alabama. One was located at Alabama A&M University in Huntsville and another at Troy University.

In a 2021 U. S. Senate Intelligence Committee hearing, FBI Director Christopher Wray confirmed that the FBI has observed that China uses “nontraditional collectors in the academic setting” to engage in espionage.

Subsequently, the federal government has taken steps to discourage some kinds of Chinese partnership agreements. This included federal regulations that have been enacted to restrict certain funding to colleges and universities which maintain Confucius Institutes.

The 2021 National Defense Authorization Act gave universities a

deadline of October 2023 to discontinue hosting Confucius Institutes on campuses.

Alabama A&M University did not wait for the deadline to be reached, but closed its Confucius Institute in 2021 after they received notification of a potential loss of eligibility for federal funds.

Now WSFA News in Montgomery has announced that the Confucius Institute at Troy University has closed its doors effective March 1, 2023. The Board of Trustees voted on Feb. 2, 2023 to discontinue the partnership with the Confucius Institute citing those federal regulations that will limit the availability of funding to institutions that maintain their agreements with Chinese partners.

According to the news report, the Confucius Institute at Troy opened in 2007 as a joint venture with educational partners in

China to provide language and cultural learning opportunities to citizens in Alabama. This sounds good until it is considered that they have also been engaged in espionage and propaganda as part of their activities. Troy University acknowledged their dependence on federal funding for some of their programs that made it in their best interest to close the Institute. They plan to continue to recruit Chinese students and to cooperate with Chinese universities that bring Chinese students to Troy for 2 years of study.

Alabama Student Eagles Vie for Slots to Attend Leadership Conference in D. C.

Due to limited capacity at the Leadership Conference facility, attendance at this years Student Eagle Conference will require students to compete for slots to attend the event June 6-11, 2023. Attendees will be chosen by April 10, 2023.

For more information, call or text Lori Herring at 334-301-4283.

We recall how wind power in Texas failed last year due to frozen wind turbines. This year 71 Scottish off shore wind turbines had to be hooked up to diesel generators due to the cold December weather. These generators then started leaking hydraulic oil into the countryside. A spokesman for the power company said, "During December, 60 turbines at Arecleoch and 11 at GlennApp were de-energized due to a cabling fault (due to cold temperatures). He indicated that diesel generators are often used to get the turbines back on line. Again, we see that alternative energy sources are being pushed ahead of their ability to replace fossil fuels.

Source; Finish the Race.com 2/7/23

According to E. Calvin Beisner at the Cornwall Institute, the observed science disproves the whole idea that "climate change" leads to increased extreme weather events. Up through 2013, over 95% of climate models predicted more warming than was actually observed—much more. After that, the magnitude of error grew with the latest generation of models. Sound science revises theories when observations contradict them. There is no better evidence of the failure of climate-alarmist modelers than observed science which shows that what the modelers do is based upon unsound science. Also, last year, global hurricanes, measured in terms of accumulated cyclone energy, were at their lowest strength levels in 42 years and the overall trend is down. This is true whether one focuses on the northern or southern hemisphere, or the North Atlantic Ocean.

Alabama Attorney General Steve Marshall has joined with 24 other attorneys general in a suit against the Department of Labor rule allowing Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) investments in retiree accounts.

The rule would allow 401(k) managers to direct their clients money to ESG investments that could undermine the protections outlined in prior law. This is an attempt to promote radical climate change agendas by moving investments to "woke" stocks rather than those that are higher performing stocks. This rule would make it easier for managers to invest funds based on their political agenda rather than what is most beneficial to their clients.

Another federal judge has upheld a law preventing Transgenders from participating in women's sports. West Virginia Federal Judge Joseph Goodwin upheld their law called the "Save Women's Sports Bill." He said that he did not want to get involved in defining the terms "girl" or "woman" as he believes the courts have no jurisdiction in creating such definitions, implying that if such distinctions are made, it is up to the states to make them. He did acknowledge there are intrinsic physical distinctions between males and females. It is expected that the ruling will be appealed. West Virginia joined other states in passing these protections for female athletes, including Alabama, Arkansas, South Carolina, and Mississippi

Source: Right Wing Insider, 1/9/23.

"If we knew what we were doing, it would not be called research, would it."

Albert Einstein

"What is right is not always popular. What is popular is not always right."

Albert Einstein

"Science can flourish only in an atmosphere of free speech."

Albert Einstein

"Science without religion is lame, religion without science is blind."

Albert Einstein

"We all know that light travels faster than sound. That's why certain people appear bright until you hear them speak."

Albert Einstein

"Creativity is intelligence having fun."

Albert Einstein

"The most beautiful experience we can have is the mysterious. It is the fundamental emotion that stands at the cradle of true art and true science."

Albert Einstein

"If you want your children to be intelligent, read them fairy tales. If you want them to be more intelligent, read them more fairy tales."

Albert Einstein

"Blind belief in authority is the greatest enemy of truth."

Albert Einstein

"If A is success in life, then A equals x plus y plus z. Work is x; y is play; and z is keeping your mouth shut."

Albert Einstein

What's Good About America?

The Bill of Rights

The United States Constitution remains the gold standard for our Constitutional Republic. Our system limits government from overreaching with authority. Thus, we balance the three branches of government, balance with two houses of Congress and we balance the Federal Government with the rights of the states.

No man influenced the process of the adoption of the Constitution as did James Madison. Madison and Thomas Jefferson had known strong support from Virginia Baptists, led by John Leland. But Leland expressed concern about the lack of a guarantee for religious freedom. Madison differed, saying that Virginia had passed Jefferson's legislation on religious freedom and Madison had reintroduced religious freedom legislation which passed in Virginia. Those efforts by Jefferson and Madison had been strongly supported by Leland and by Virginia Baptists.

But Leland insisted that the newly proposed Constitution explicitly state support for religious liberty. Although Leland had supported Madison in the past, Madison's reluctance on a constitutional guarantee of religious freedom caused Leland for a seat on Virginia's Constitution, to run against Madison vention to ratify the Con-



When the delegates met at cation meeting, John Leland than James Madison. Can you ment of the scenario where the composition of the US Consti-serve at the ratification of this

the Orange County Ratifi-actually had more votes imagine the embarrass- primary influence in the tution lost an election to same document?

Madison listened to Leland and agreed to add amend-ments that would guarantee the protection of rights. Leland then withdrew as a candidate for the Ratification allowing Madison to serve and to support what we now know as the Bill of Rights.

Leland supported Jeffersonian principles, explaining the biblical basis of limited government. At the same time, Leland was incensed at candidates who touted their spirituality as a reason for their election. John Leland wisely advised that Christian voters vote on principles and issues, not on perceived righteousness of the candidate. Leland warned *“Guard against those men who make a great noise about religion, in choosing representatives. It is electioneering. If they knew the nature and worth of religion, they would not debauch it to such shameful purposes. If pure religion is the criterion to denominate candidates, those who make a noise about it must be rejected; for their wrangle about it proves that they are void of it. Let honesty, talents and quick dispatch, characterize the men of your choice.”*

Demand for Electric Vehicles Shows

Epoch Times reported on March 2, 2023, that the demand for electric vehicles is falling. High costs, quality control issues, and supply-chain problems were cited as reasons. Several EV companies reported a declining interest for some of their latest vehicles. They also cited increased production costs for each product rising higher than expected causing pricing pressures. Reports of EV fires likely have not helped convince people to purchase EV's.

Manufacturers of EV's recalled over 12,000 electric trucks or almost 80% of all of those produced through September, after a faulty sensor in the front passenger seat was discovered according to *The Wall Street Journal*. They reported that tax credits are having little effect in encouraging EV purchases. It was hoped that federally funded incentives of up to \$7,500 per EV made in America would cause demand to jump, but restrictions on foreign-made parts have put a damper on sales.

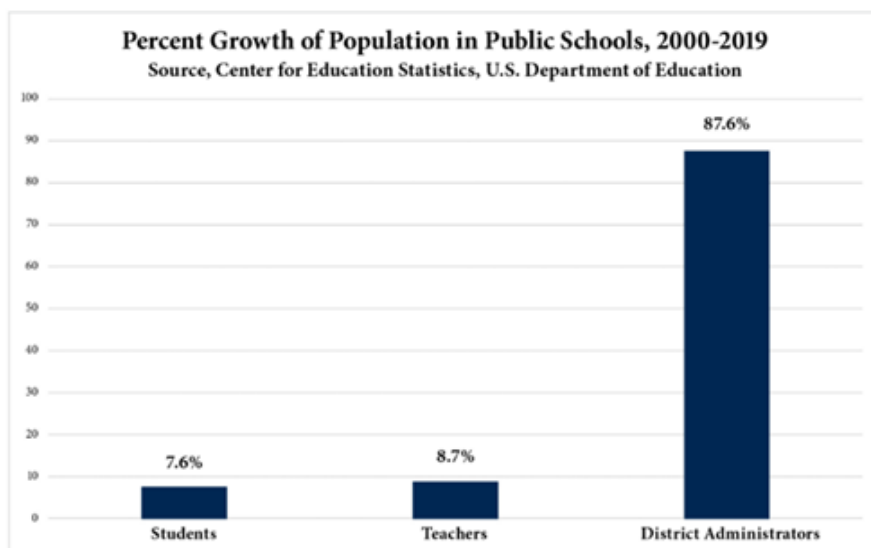
District Administration Growth 10x Greater Than Student, Teacher Growth

If you want to see the problem with American education, look at a chart illustrating the comparative growth in the number of students, teachers, and district administrators in our public schools in the period between 2000 and 2019. (See the chart below.) The number of district administrators grew by a whopping 87.6 percent during these years, far outstripping the growth in the number of students (7.6 percent) and teachers (8.7 percent).

The data from the Center for Education Statistics and the U.S. Department of Education was shared by Dr. Larry Arnn, president of Hillsdale College in the November, 2022 Imprimis publication.

According to Dr. Arnn in the Imprimis publication, “The roots of the system are in Washington, D.C., and the tendrils reach into every town and hamlet that has a public school. In every state, the result has been to remove authority and money away from the schools where the students learn. In every state, the authority and money drained from the schools have flowed toward the bureaucracy. “

“As the numbers show, the public education system works to the detriment of teachers and for the benefit of bureaucrats. The teachers unions themselves, some of the largest of the public employee unions, claim to be defending teachers and children. That cannot be more than half true, given that they are defending an administrative system that has grown by leaps and bounds while the number of teachers has grown very little.”



Dr.Arn continues to say, “The political battle over this issue is fraught with dishonesty. Any criticism of public education is immediately styled as a criticism of teachers. But as the numbers show, the public education system works to the detriment of teachers and for the benefit of bureaucrats.” We cannot say that all education bureaucrats are bad, but the explosion of education bureaucrats has grown at the expense of teachers. Most realize that a bureaucracy of “process rule makers” does not educate children so much as it pushes the latest education fad of the progressive movement.

Dr.Arn closes his article with the following: “ I have said and written many times that the political contest between parents and people who make an independent living, on the one hand, and the administrative state and all its mighty forces on the other, is the key political contest of our time. Today that seems truer than ever. The lines are clearly formed.”

Looking closer to home, the 1819 News posted an editorial by Justin Bogie on March 1, 2023 related to Superintendent Eric Mackey’s fiscal year 2024 K-12 budget request for an additional \$984 million. While a significantly smaller part of the budget, administrative costs are growing at a much faster pace than the K-12 funding. Total state and local funding to local school boards increased by 14%, but annual funding for the Alabama Department of Education’s Administrative Services Program increased by over 86% between 2018 and 2022. It is likely that local board administrative costs have also grown in line with Alabama state level administrative expenditures and with the national district administration costs addressed above.

World Health Organization Power Grab

The World Health Organization is a specialized agency of the United Nations responsible for international public health recommendations. Headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland, the WHO is attempting to get member nations to approve “amendments” to the WHO treaty that would significantly alter the organization and greatly expand its scope and authority. The amendments were first proposed by the Biden Administration, in May, 2022., but these were stopped due to public outcry. However, this was only a short set-back. The proposed amendments are being finalized again and are scheduled to be presented to member nations in April, 2023 at its headquarters in Switzerland.

James Roguski, a medical freedom journalist, has reported extensively on this power grab by the WHO. On his website, stopthewho.com, Roguski has written, “Everyone on earth must be made aware that the World Health Organization is attempting a global coup. In his extensive study of the issue he has listed 10 major reasons the amendments must be defeated. The amendments would do the following:

- Rather than an advisory organization, it would become a governing body whose proclamations would be legally binding on member countries;
- The WHO could issue edicts regarding anything it deems a “potential” threat to public health. This could be anything from a pandemic to climate change.
- The amendments seeks to remove wording that reads: “Respect for dignity, human rights and fundamental freedoms of people.”
- Gives WHO control over the allocation of public health products requiring developed nations to supply pandemic response products as directed.
- Gives WHO authority to require medical examinations, proof of treatments, proof of vaccines, and implement contact tracing and quarantines.
- Implement Global Health Certificates
- Would cost member nations unspecified but potentially enormous costs.
- Greatly expands the WHO’s capacity to censor what it considers to be “misinformation.”
- Creates an obligation on member nations to build, provide, and maintain International Health Regulation infrastructure at points of entry.

Most of all, this would be a major loss of sovereignty of member nations. Liberty Counsel President Matt Staver has said, “It’s hard to highlight which are the most dangerous of the amendments. But there are two key points ones: First, one amendment will give WHO unprecedented power over a ‘public health risk,’ but also over ‘all risks’ with a potential to impact public health.” A recent Liberty Counsel article said that President Biden’s administration has proposed these changes to give the U.N. agency global power. By calling these major changes “amendments” rather than a new treaty, they say they can bypass review and approval by a 2/3 vote of the U. S. Senate.

Republican Senators are pushing back against the amendments. Led by Senator Ron Johnson (R-Wis), a leader on the subject of medical freedom, seventeen senators have introduced the “No WHO Pandemic Preparedness Treaty Without Senate Approval Act” on February 15, 2023. The legislation comes as the WHO gears up to present the plan negotiated with the help of the U. S. Secretary of Health and Human Services, to all member nations.

Among the 17 sponsors of the bill are Senators Tommy Tuberville and Katie Britt of Alabama. We thank them for co-sponsoring the bill, but it appears that passage will be a hard stretch. It remains unclear if Biden will need Senate approval. The accord itself states that the accord will become effective and legally binding on member states “provisionally” as soon as it is signed and before any national legislative approvals. No other international treaty has such a provision. The Biden administration is calling this an executive amendment, saying that it does not need Senate approval.

Hopefully, enough of the 194 member states will refuse to vote for this infringement on their sovereignty.

Woke Curriculum Increases Classical Education

Fox News recently reported the following:

According to data from the U.S. Census Bureau, enrollment in colleges across the nation has decreased by roughly 13%. While many colleges struggle to draw students, many faith-based universities are seeing a boom in applications, championing the classical curriculum over woke ideologies.

Founder and CEO of the Classic Learning Test (CLT) Jeremy Tate outlined on “Fox & Friends Weekend” how classical education is giving many colleges across the U.S. an edge over others.

“If you’re watching this, and you graduated college in the sixties or seventies, then you probably took U.S. history or economics or Western civilization. But those days are long gone. Many colleges now have gone to kind of an al-la-carte model. But there’s a narrow band,” he said, “that schools like the University of Dallas, Franciscan, Benedictine, Hillsdale, and Grove City College that have maintained and sometimes double down on a traditional core curriculum.”

Tate explained that colleges and universities adopting woke ideologies and curricula has been an alarming trend contributing to the rise in application for those faith-based colleges which still utilize a core, classical curriculum.

Hillsdale College, for example, had recorded a 53% increase in applications as of April 2022.

“The story of American higher ed really for the past half century has been a story of one college after another really trashing any kind of a serious core curriculum,” he said.

Recently, the State University of New York (SUNY) system decided to require all new students to take courses related to social justice and diversity, equity, and inclusion beginning fall 2023.

Transgender Hormone Therapy May Raise Stroke, Heart Attacks

Here in Alabama, we still await the outcome of the court’s decision on the constitutionality of Alabama’s Vulnerable Child and Compassion Act, known as the VCAP act. The state Attorney General’s office is defending the act in federal court with the trial to be held this fall.

As more states follow Alabama’s lead in considering and passing legislation to ban transgender therapy and surgeries due to the adverse effects of such treatment on the overall health of patients as well as the societal implications, a new study indicates that such gender affirmation therapies are significantly more prone to suffer from stroke or heart attack. This is in addition to previously identified health concerns such as sterilization, weight gain, blood clots, high blood pressure and depression.

Researchers at Mercy Catholic Medical Center in Darby, Pennsylvania, now have reported that patients who had taken hormone replacements are nearly seven times more likely to suffer a stroke than those who never received the hormones.

Hormone treated patients were also found to be nearly 6 times more likely to suffer myocardial infarction, a type of heart attack. The study team of doctors said that patients should definitely realize that the treatments are not without risks. They didn’t assess such factors as to how risks were affected by factors such as the duration of the treatments, the patient’s age at which treatment started, or the type of hormone therapy used, which they said would better inform clinical decisions.

It is very evident that such treatments affect many areas of health. Many of those who reconsider their decision to transition find that their bodies and health have been irrevocably harmed.

Source: Epoch Times, February 27, 2023

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***Eagle Forum of Alabama
Education Foundation Newsletter***

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