



Position Paper on Government Subsidies for Home Education

Here at Christian Liberty, we are seeing what we consider to be a dangerous trend in the home school community. Each year, more home school families are accepting state reimbursement for the cost of certain textbooks and fees, or listing these costs as deductions on their yearly tax forms.

The danger is this: as a growing number of home school families participate in these reimbursement/tax deduction programs, state tax dollars are being used to subsidize an important part of home schooling expenses. When the number of participating home school families reaches a sizable proportion, the state will be in a position legally to step in and begin regulating home schooling. For the past several decades, both federal and state courts have ruled repeatedly that whatever the state subsidizes, it has the right to regulate.

But the danger does not stop here. As more participating home school families enroll in the various private and religious home school programs, these institutions and ministries, in the eyes of the state, will be seen as accepting state tax dollars for their curricula and services. Not only home schoolers, then, but educational ministries like Christian Liberty could come under state control.

During the past thirty years, the home school community has fought and won many legal battles in the fifty states to make home schooling legal, and largely unregulated. As a result, home schoolers have become too well organized for the state educators to make inroads through the legislature.

However, having run into strong resistance in the legislative arena, they have shifted their maneuvering to the financial arena. Knowing that many families are having difficulty making ends meet, and knowing how most Americans are used to the idea of government subsidies and deductions, state educators have hit upon a very practical way to take eventual control over home education and—through tax vouchers and tuition tax credits—gradual control over private and religious day schools as well.

It's time for us to read the fine print in these subsidy programs and to realize the potential danger involved: Jesus said: "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's." The education of our children belongs to God. In our effort to cut costs, we cannot risk placing control of their education in the hands of the state.

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