

A BRIEF HISTORY OF KCEA'S PRESENCE AT HARRISBURG

WHAT DOES THAT MEAN AND WHAT DOES THAT MEAN FOR AFFILIATING MINISTRIES?

It has often been stated by knowledgeable individuals that KCEA's work is valuable and of wide benefit even beyond the affiliating ministries. It has repeatedly been commented that KCEA's work in legal and legislative matters is unsurpassed. How does one quantify these assessments? The following information is not all-inclusive, but it gives practical insights into KCEA's presence.

NOT! It should not be thought that KCEA staff:

1. Works there or has appointments there on a daily basis.
2. Knows or is known to every Representative or Senator.
3. Has a relationship with all of the important staff members.
4. Knows "everything" about every issue of relevance to our movement.
5. Has a monopoly on accomplishing worthy work in government.

YES! By God's grace, it is fair to think that KCEA staff:

1. Utilizes a good understanding of how government actually works, how the legislature works, and how the departments of government work.
2. Has an ability to sense when a "bad" legislative issue or a "good" legislative issue has a meaningful chance of impacting affiliating ministries, and when they do not.
3. Works with leaders of other organizations as issues arise that impact more than just KCEA.
4. Taps the resources of the best attorneys with knowledge of the issues of concern to us.
5. Has created dozens of fact sheets and distributed many summaries to legislators and staffers.
6. Has produced many official statements as written testimony to committees and has presented live testimony in several and diverse public hearings.
7. Contacts key legislators and staff to communicate our concerns and to work toward good solutions.
8. Understands that some issues must be addressed by a few leaders, other issues are better addressed by local leaders statewide, and still other issues are best addressed by all citizens.
9. Has the skill to simplify and condense complex issues so that Christian leaders can understand them and uses print and electronic media to distribute information that others can utilize.
10. Applies the knowledge gained from its Harrisburg presence to aid ministries and ministry leaders as they seek valid information toward problem solving and administrative decisions.

KCEA HAS BEEN A MAJOR PLAYER IN "BIG" WINS ON THE HILL.

1. An effort to merge the religious and non-religious day schools all under the licensing power of the Department of Education was withdrawn.
2. An effort to "recodify" the School Code, which included a number of changes in language that would have negatively impacted religious schools, was withdrawn.

3. Act 178 of 1986 was written by Attorney William Bentley Ball and Ted Clater and it was enacted. This act removed religious schools from the regulatory power of the State Board of Education. We gained several important safeguards and statutory policies.
4. The EITC tax credit idea to allow funds to flow from businesses to scholarship organizations to enrolled day school students was enacted. The donating business gains a tax credit for donating. Later, we gained the PreK EITC, and later still we gained the OSTC program. Hundreds of millions of dollars in scholarship money is now available. Annually we push for this program to be expanded, and in most years we succeed.

KCEA HAS BEEN A MAJOR PLAYER IN “SMALL” WINS ON THE HILL.

1. We have fought and won when some legislators pushed bills or amendments that would:
 - a. Require that teachers at religious schools must be state certified and/or have degrees from a state-approved college.
 - b. Require the teaching of specific content, thus violate that blanket policy prohibition.
 - c. Require the giving of the state’s criterion reference (curriculum) tests to our students.
 - d. Require that high school graduation must be tied to the state’s system requirements.
 - e. Require that we must follow the state’s policies regarding appropriate discipline.
 - f. Require that schools advertise their achievement test scores even when the class was not involved in any state program.
 - g. Require that schools that allow students to participate in EITC must be accountable to government officials like public schools.
 - h. Require that fewer students would be transported to the school of their choice by modifying the bussing rules.
2. When the statute was changed to require the principal of all schools to act as the prosecutor in all cases involving truancy, we amended that statute to require our principals to officially warn parents and to subsequently report truancy to the District Superintendent for him/her to prosecute.
3. When the government schools enacted a provision to allow them to utilize distance education when a school building had to be closed, thus allowing the school to have an official day of school if they carefully enforced attendance, the law was amended to allow religious schools to do similar.

KCEA HAS ALSO EXPERIENCED SOME “DISAPPOINTMENTS” ON THE HILL.

1. KCEA invested significant time over several years in support of the *St. Elizabeth’s* court case as that case (correctly) argued that the state statute did not give authority to license religious child care in the same manner as secular and state-operated institutions – extensive – every facet. We created several official Friend of the Court briefs and mobilized leaders of 1000 churches and schools to co-sign our briefs. Sadly, the State Supreme Court concluded that they did not, as yet, see government intruding into religious freedoms; thus, the state could continue to license religious institutions.
2. Despite years of working to limit the child care regulations as applied to religious child care to true health and safety, they continue to have authority in religious liberty sensitive areas of curriculum and staff hiring.

3. Despite years of working to get the Legislature to place (a) K-3 and K-4 educational programs, (b) before/after school educational programs, and (c) vacation school educational programs into the School Code instead of their current listing in the Welfare Code, we have not succeeded.