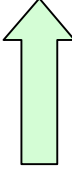
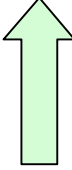
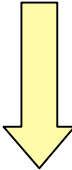
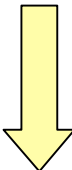
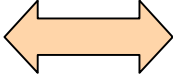
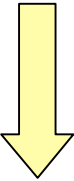
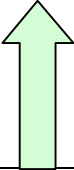
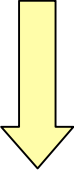
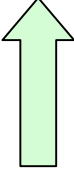




## STATE REFORM ROUND-UP

May 21, 2009

STATE <i>Session timeline</i>	ACTION	REFORM METER
<b>ARIZONA</b> <i>Special session convenes May 21</i>	The Governor is brewing up a plan that could keep approximately 450 foster or disabled students in their school of choice since the Arizona Supreme Court ruled the publicly funded scholarships they received were unconstitutional earlier in March. Governor Brewer called a special session this week to establish a tax-credit program that would help parents pay for their children's education outside of the conventional system that had already let them down once before. Arizonans: <a href="#">get active today</a> and let your lawmakers know that you support educational options.	
<b>FLORIDA</b> <i>Adjourned awaiting executive action</i>	Earlier this month Florida's corporate tax-credit (Step Up for Students Program) got a boost thanks to a bi-partisan effort in the state House. Governor Crist has only a few days left to act before the bill automatically becomes law. The change allows insurance companies to contribute to the program and it should also make it less onerous for families to apply for the scholarships.	
<b>WASHINGTON, DC</b> <i>Budget proposal expected to go to Congress by mid-June; OSP program under attack</i>	In his 2010 budget, DC Mayor Adrian Fenty proposed to slash charter school facility funding and sought to rob charters of their independence from the DC school system. The City Council managed to restore 70% of the funding and eliminated other harmful provisions. Now it's to the Mayor and then Congress for the final OK. Meanwhile, the Opportunity Scholarship Program will not survive next year unless Congress or the City acts to save it. Lots of Congressional action going on. Voices from all over America are needed to save choice in the nation's capital. <a href="#">Contact Congress Today!</a>	
<b>INDIANA</b> <i>Special session, budget expires June 30</i>	Charter schools are on the chopping block in the Hoosier State as lawmakers head into a special session to pass the state's budget. They figure imposing a cap on charters and restricting virtuals will solve their budget woes. Governor Daniels doesn't seem to think so and has warned lawmakers that a moratorium could kick Indiana out of the running for \$270 million in federal stimulus funding. It is vitally important that lawmakers in Indiana <a href="#">hear from you</a> today to reject funding cuts and a moratorium.	

<p><b>MAINE</b> <i>June 17</i></p>	<p>With new support coming from state leaders, Maine could finally have a charter law, but negotiations are turning out a weak law. The Education Committee sent the bill to the Senate floor with an "ought not to pass" recommendation. If the Pine Tree State wants to be in the running for federal grants in 2010 it should seriously consider working to improve upon and pass a strong charter bill. Speak up Maine! <a href="#">Tell your elected officials</a> you support bringing educational options to your state today.</p>	
<p><b>MASSACHUSETTS</b> <i>Year-round session</i></p>	<p>The Senate Ways and Means Committee has recommended changes which will hurt charter school funding. State Senator Hart (Boston) has proposed an amendment that would restore the current formula for charters. The pro-charter amendment has already won approval in the House, and has no additional cost to taxpayers or the state budget. Lawmakers need to <a href="#">hear from you</a> today to restore the charter funding formula.</p>	
<p><b>MISSOURI</b> <i>May 30</i></p>	<p>The legislature passed technical improvements in the law that allows existing charters to offer virtual instruction and strengthens the authorizing process to provide quality oversight. The proposal is awaiting Governor Nixon's signature.</p>	
<p><b>OHIO</b> <i>Year-round session</i></p>	<p>Ohio's community schools serve nearly 100,000 students, but Governor Strickland and allies are again working to stop charter schools in the Buckeye State. The Governor's proposed budget cuts charter funding by another 20 percent (fully 50 percent less than conventional public schools) and virtual schools by 70 percent. In its April 28 version of the budget, the Ohio House eliminated Strickland's probation of education management companies but added more anti-charter provisions. The Senate is reviewing now and a heated conference session is expected between the anti-charter House and pro-charter Senate. <a href="#">Voice your support today!</a></p>	
<p><b>TENNESSEE</b> <i>Late May</i></p>	<p>A bill that would expand access to charters beyond students in failing schools encountered caustic opposition by leaders of the House Education Committee, one of whom accused charter operators of "pimping little babies" upon receiving letters from constituents. While the committee adjourned without voting on the measure the bill's sponsor in the House has vowed to fight for a vote and has support from the Speaker to do so. While modest, its passage would be an improvement. <a href="#">Contact your legislature</a> today!</p>	
<p><b>TEXAS</b> <i>June 1</i></p>	<p>Proposals to lift the charter cap are pending, which is critical to a state with a waiting list of nearly 17,000 students. An early proposal included facilities for high-performing charters to expand as well. The legislation should move to conference committee this week and a strong debate is expected to restore the bill's initial intent. <a href="#">Voice your support</a> to lift the charter cap in Texas!</p>	