



Advocating for Life, Faith, and Freedom in the Public Square

April 2025 Newsletter

Helping to advocate for the Christian minority in the nation of Syria who are facing severe persecution since the fall of Assad

Vice President JD Vance expressed grave concerns over reports of targeted violence against Christians and other minority groups in Syria, following the fall of the Assad regime and the implementation of the country's new constitutional declaration. He described the situation as potentially "a horrific massacre" and stressed the need for urgent action. In a recent interview with Fox News, Vice President Vance stated that the US administration is working to determine the true extent of the violence, questioning whether it constitutes isolated incidents or a broader campaign of mass persecution. "It looks really bad, and we're trying to figure out exactly how bad it is—whether this is something limited to what we see on social media or if we're dealing with mass genocide," he explained. When the Iraq War started in March 2003, there were 2 million Christians in the nation of Iraq. After years of conflict and Muslim persecution against the Christians, the population has dwindled to a mere 120,000, according to the U.S. State Department. In March, **OCA President Chris Long conducted a meeting with U.S. Senator Bernie Moreno, his staff, and Chaldean Christian leader Joseph Kassab** who has been in contact with Syriac Christians on the ground in hiding in fear for their lives. The purpose of the meeting was to bring attention to the persecuted minority in the nation of Syria and to seek a diplomatic remedy to safeguard the remaining Christians in Syria. It is helpful that the Trump Administration via Vice President Vance, who served in the Gulf War, understands the seriousness of the situation for the Christian minority. Please join us in praying for this ancient Christian community and for their protection.



LifeRead Volunteer Reading Tutors are now in four schools, and we are continuing to grow. Have you considered being a volunteer reading tutor in your community? With the current education crisis in Ohio and across the country, fostering literacy is the need of the hour. The National Report Card which came out in February has stirred discussion on the national level about just how bad the national education crisis is at this time. Only 30 percent of fourth graders are reading proficient. Only 29 percent of eighth grade students are reading proficient. In Ohio, 32 percent of fourth graders are reading proficient, and only 32 percent of eighth graders in Ohio are reading proficient. The education crisis is a flashing red light telling us that an urgent remedy is needed to help Ohio school children who have fallen behind in reading comprehension due to the COVID shutdown.

Assessments conducted earlier this year indicate that some students are two and three years behind in their grade reading levels. We cannot fail this generation. We must provide them with the tools they need to get caught up on their education progress or be in danger of pushing these students through a failing educational system, the effects of which will linger with them for years to come. LifeRead Volunteer Reading Tutoring is a project of the Ohio Christian Alliance Educational Fund. We will be working around the state of Ohio with schools and churches to advance literacy with better learning skills. To learn more, visit the website www.LifeRead.org. If you would like to be a reading tutor, you can sign up by completing the form on the LifeRead website. We will be using the Bible as part of our reading tutoring materials. As the Scriptures declare in Psalm 119:130, "The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple."

Statehouse Legislative Update – 136th G.A. – REPORT

Senate Bill 1 was signed into law by Governor DeWine - Ohio Christian Alliance wants to thank all the sponsors of this legislation.

S.B. 1 Prohibits diversity, equity, and inclusion, intellectual diversity, and other concepts.

Policy requires state institutions of higher education to adopt and enforce a policy requiring the institution to: Prohibit all of the following: Any orientation or training course regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI); The continuation of existing or establishment of new DEI offices or departments; Using DEI in job descriptions; Contracting with consultants or third parties whose role is to promote admissions, hiring, or promotion on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression; The establishment of any new institutional scholarships that use DEI and, if DEI requirements cannot be eliminated from an existing institutional scholarship, prohibits accepting additional funds to operate those scholarships. Affirm and declare a primary function to the pursuit of knowledge.

S.B. 34 Historical educational displays – Senator Terry Johnson, sponsor

The bill enacts the “Historical Educational Displays Act” to require each public school. (school district, community school, STEM school, and college-preparatory boarding school) to select to display in each of its classrooms at least one of the following historical educational documents:

1. The Mayflower Compact.
2. The Declaration of Independence.
3. The mottoes of the United States and Ohio.
4. The Ten Commandments.
5. The Magna Carta.

S.B. 19 Academic Intervention Services - Proponent Testimony

I would like to thank Chairman Brenner, Vice Chair Blessing, Ranking Member Ingram, and members of the Senate Education Committee for hearing our testimony today in support of S.B. 19. Education decline in Ohio and across the country is the crisis of our times. President Trump is right to reset the table and the narrative of how we go about public education and its funding, including expansion of school choice and focusing on children who are behind in reading, math, and science due to the COVID shutdown. The scores are so bad in reading, math, and science in Ohio alone that a major tutoring and remedial studies program is needed in all of Ohio's 88 county school districts to help the students who have fallen behind. (Excerpt from OCA President Chris Long testimony in the Senate Education Committee in support of S.B. 19)

S.B. 56 Revise medical and adult-use marijuana laws; levy marijuana taxes - S.B. 86 Regulate and tax intoxicating hemp, drinkable cannabinoid product.

OCA supports the restrictions on intoxicating marijuana products and their harmful ingested byproducts such as candies that put our children at risk. Regulate and tax intoxicating hemp, drinkable cannabinoid product. S.B. 56 and S.B. 86 are on the move, and will give you further updates.



David Thomas
District 65 | R

Here is some of the legislation that is moving in the Ohio General Assembly to bring Ohio homeowners real estate tax relief.

- Expanded homestead exemption for the elderly, disabled, and veterans
 - Tax deferment for the elderly to stay in their homes
 - Elimination of replacement levies H.B. 28 Has passed the Ohio House
 - HB 186 was introduced by Rep. Hoops and Rep. Thomas this week.
- The bill attacks the spikes in unvoted Property Tax Increases we have seen due to the 20 Mill Floor School Funding policy. This bill lowers those spikes to inflation and flattens out unbudgeted increases in revenue.

- Legislation that will make simple (make plain) levy ballot language

It was hoped that this real estate tax relief legislation would be passed in the budget, but it will now be passed separately. If this proposed legislation that includes expanded homestead exemption, tax deferment for the elderly, and the 20 mill floor reform that flattens inflationary spikes is passed, it will have a positive effect on reducing Ohio real estate tax. We are urging the legislature to do what it can, as many Ohioans are feeling the effects of the dramatic increase in real estate taxes. Many House members are aware of the problem and are pushing leadership to move this legislation. Special thanks to State Rep. Dave Thomas of District 65 who is working on this problem to bring Ohio homeowners relief.

ANNOUNCING THE OCA FREEDOM AND LIFE AWARDS



Attorney General Dave Yost
Freedom Award



Rep. Melanie Miller
Life Award

The Ohio Christian Alliance Board and Advisors are pleased to present at the OCA Spring Freedom Banquet Attorney General Dave Yost with the OCA Freedom Award for his work in defense of religious liberty while serving as Ohio's 51st State Attorney General.

The Ohio Christian Alliance Board and Advisors are also pleased to present State Rep. Melanie Miller with the OCA Life Award for her excellent work on the Never Alone Act H.B. 236 that assures that Ohioans will never again be locked away alone without an advocate during a public health emergency, and for her directorship of the Ashland Pregnancy Services Center that encourages women contemplating abortion to

choose life by keeping their babies or by choosing adoption as a viable life option.

Thank you for your continued support of the Ohio Christian Alliance. We continue to be your voice in Washington and at the Ohio Statehouse, advocating for life, faith, and freedom. Please join us in praying for President Trump and his administration as he continues to fight for the American people. **May the Lord bless you and your family this Easter season. John 14:6 "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man cometh unto the Father but by me."**

Blessings,

Chris Long

President Ohio Christian Alliance

Ron Koehler, Esq., Secretary

Alfred Davis, Treasurer

Wendy Sergent, OCA Board Member

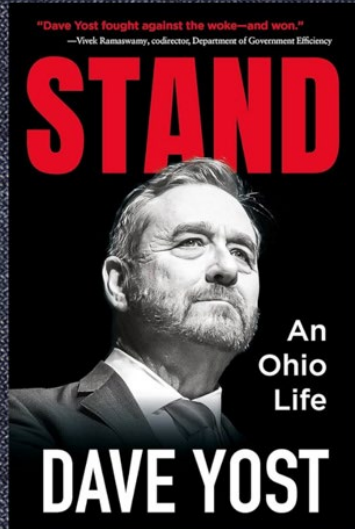
Brian Lowdermilk, OCA Board Member



Freedom Banquet Thursday May 22nd

Reception
6:00 p.m.

Table of 10 \$800
Single ticket \$80
To register visit
www.ohioca.org



Dinner Program
7:00 p.m.

Program
Sponsorships
Available

The Galaxy - 201 Park Centre Drive - Wadsworth Ohio



Bob Burney



Nate Harmon



Chris Long



Ken Blackwell

LifeRead

Volunteer Tutoring Initiative
Mobilizing volunteers to tackle Ohio's literacy challenge for
students and adults

Thursday, May 22, 2025

Reception 6:00 p.m. Dinner 7:00 p.m.

The Galaxy – Wadsworth OH

201 Park Centre Drive – Wadsworth OH – Off Rt. 224 at Rt. 94

Table of 10 \$800

Program Sponsorships

Single ticket \$80

\$1,500 \$2,500 \$5,000 \$10,000

Proceeds benefit the mission of the Ohio Christian Alliance

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