Christian Homeschoolers Need to Know Where Ted Cruz Stands

Over the course of the Republican presidential campaign, all of the candidates have faced some unfounded attacks, but some of the biggest whoppers have been directed at U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz (R-Texas).

The latest that's been lobbed his way, however, isn't coming from the Left. It's coming from the Right, from a group he has been actively courting since the very beginning of his campaign.

The attack, which popped up just before the Iowa Caucus, and gained traction throughout the week, goes something like this: Due to his ties to Goldman-Sachs, through his wife, Heidi, he is secretly engaged in an effort to advance Agenda 21 through a bill that would place homeschool families under the jurisdiction of the federal government. According to the "rumor," Cruz is doing this all right under everyone's noses with a bill that has been lauded as a major victory for homeschoolers.

It's unclear where the attack originated because it appears to have popped up on multiple websites at the same time, but it offers just enough factual information to muddy the false information. So, to help set the record straight, here are the facts:

- Cruz is an original co-sponsor of the Enhancing Educational Opportunities for all Students Act ().
- The bill does three things, each independent of the others.
- First, it gives states the option to allow Title I federal funding for K-12 education to "follow the student," for low-income students, even to accredited

private schools.

- Second, it allows homeschool parents to use Coverdell Education Savings Accounts for qualified expenses related to educating their children at home.
- And, finally, it allows all parents to use “529” programs to pay for elementary and secondary education expenses.
- The Home School Legal Defense Association supports the proposed legislation.

As you can see above, only the part pertaining to the Coverdell ESAs has anything to do with homeschool families. It does so by defining—only for the purpose of ESA qualification—homeschool as private schooling. Several states already do this, but not all of them.

The Coverdell ESA is an investment tool for parents to save money for their children’s education expenses (i.e., tuition, books and supplies). Unlike taxpayer-funded voucher programs, they are personal savings accounts similar to Roth IRAs.

After-tax money is placed into an account at the bank of the parents’ choice. Over time, it is allowed to collect tax-free interest. Withdrawals can be made, tax-free, for eligible education expenses.