

# CRITICAL MOMENTS IN CCCU HISTORY

Over the last 10 years, the CCCU has engaged in extensive advocacy work, submitting approximately 100 amicus briefs and writing 400+ comment letters on key issues impacting Christian higher education. This timeline highlights a few important examples.

**SEPTEMBER 2014:** Shirley Hoogstra becomes the seventh president of the CCCU.

**MAY 2016:** In a win for religious liberty, the Supreme Court ruling on *Zubik v. Burwell* allows institutions to offer health insurance that is compatible with their tenets of faith. The CCCU filed amicus briefs in three cases consolidated under *Zubik v. Burwell*, challenging the Affordable Care Act's contraceptive and abortifacient mandate which required institutions to provide coverage for these services regardless of religious objections.

**JUNE 2017:** After the CCCU filed an amicus brief in *Trinity Lutheran Church of Columbia v. Comer*, the Supreme Court rules in favor of Trinity Lutheran. This Missouri church applied for a state grant to improve the playground of its public daycare facility, and the grant was denied due to its religious affiliation. The Court's ruling reinforced the principle that faith-based organizations cannot be excluded from otherwise available public benefits because of their faith.

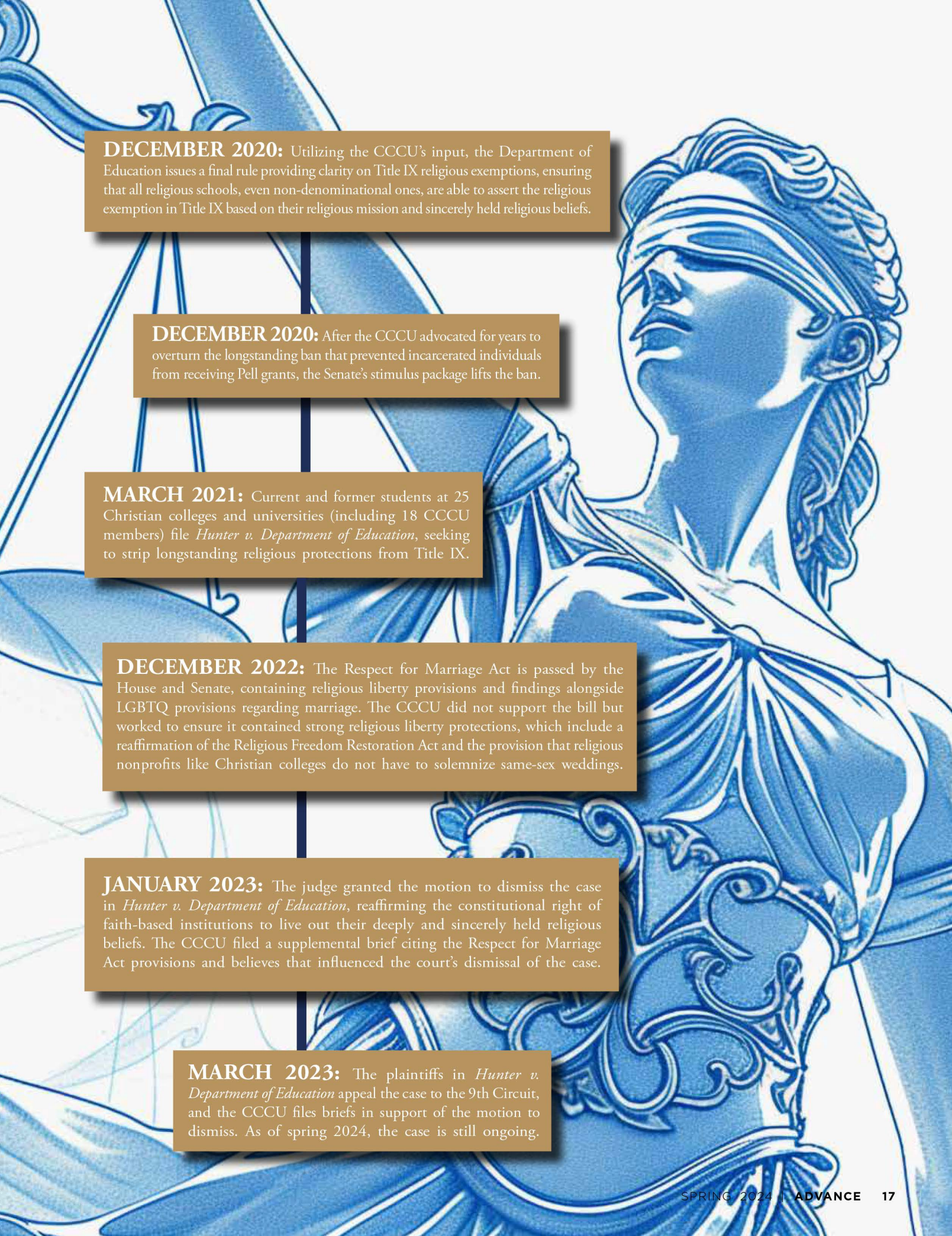
**MAY 2019:** The Equality Act is passed again in the House of Representatives. The CCCU opposed this bill, which would amend the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to provide sweeping prohibitions against discrimination on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity without incorporating essential religious liberty protections.

**NOVEMBER 2019:** Following the CCCU's engagement in negotiated rulemaking, the Department of Education issues a final rule that prohibits accrediting agencies from considering an institution's faith-based policies or practices as a negative factor.

**DECEMBER 2019:** Fairness for All is introduced as an alternative to the Equality Act. The CCCU supported Fairness for All because it modeled including religious liberty language in legislation that also adds LGBTQ language in civil rights law.

**DECEMBER 2019:** After more than a year of advocacy efforts by the CCCU and other religious and nonprofit organizations, Congress retroactively repeals the "parking tax," which required churches and nonprofits to pay a 21% tax on parking and transit benefits made available to employees.

**JULY 2020:** The Supreme Court rules in favor of Our Lady of Guadalupe School in *Our Lady of Guadalupe School v. Morrissey-Berru*, reaffirming the ministerial exception. The CCCU filed an amicus brief in the case, which called into question the right of the Catholic school to select its own teachers.



**DECEMBER 2020:** Utilizing the CCCU's input, the Department of Education issues a final rule providing clarity on Title IX religious exemptions, ensuring that all religious schools, even non-denominational ones, are able to assert the religious exemption in Title IX based on their religious mission and sincerely held religious beliefs.

**DECEMBER 2020:** After the CCCU advocated for years to overturn the longstanding ban that prevented incarcerated individuals from receiving Pell grants, the Senate's stimulus package lifts the ban.

**MARCH 2021:** Current and former students at 25 Christian colleges and universities (including 18 CCCU members) file *Hunter v. Department of Education*, seeking to strip longstanding religious protections from Title IX.

**DECEMBER 2022:** The Respect for Marriage Act is passed by the House and Senate, containing religious liberty provisions and findings alongside LGBTQ provisions regarding marriage. The CCCU did not support the bill but worked to ensure it contained strong religious liberty protections, which include a reaffirmation of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act and the provision that religious nonprofits like Christian colleges do not have to solemnize same-sex weddings.

**JANUARY 2023:** The judge granted the motion to dismiss the case in *Hunter v. Department of Education*, reaffirming the constitutional right of faith-based institutions to live out their deeply and sincerely held religious beliefs. The CCCU filed a supplemental brief citing the Respect for Marriage Act provisions and believes that influenced the court's dismissal of the case.

**MARCH 2023:** The plaintiffs in *Hunter v. Department of Education* appeal the case to the 9th Circuit, and the CCCU files briefs in support of the motion to dismiss. As of spring 2024, the case is still ongoing.