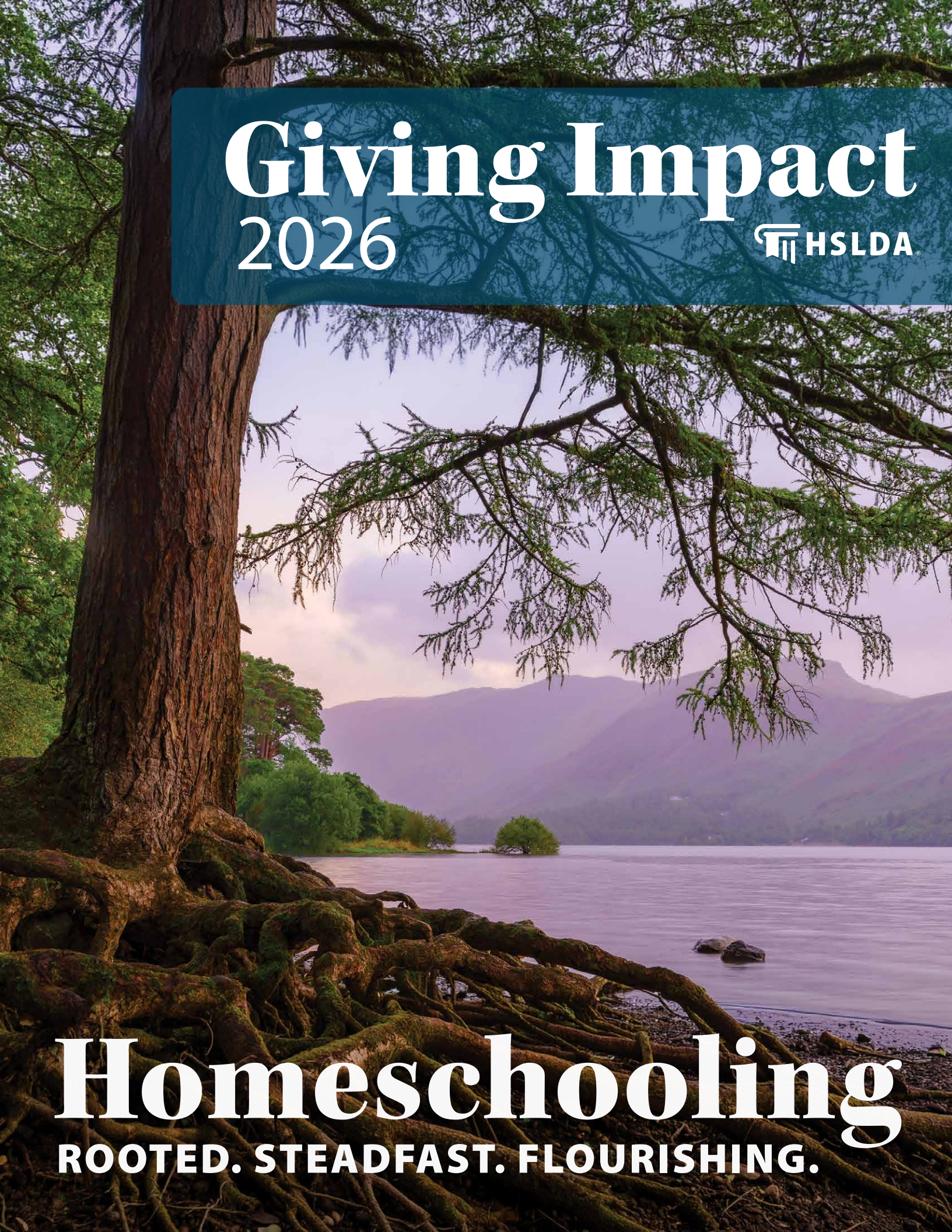




Giving Impact 2026

 HSLDA[®]

Homeschooling

ROOTED. STEADFAST. FLOURISHING.

From the President

When Home School Legal Defense Association began in 1983, homeschooling was still an upstart educational choice slowly gathering steam. Two homeschooling dads saw the need for a legal outfit dedicated to helping homeschool families navigate the turbulent waters of acceptance.

Mike Smith lived in California and took calls from families west of the Mississippi. Mike Farris lived in the D.C. area and took calls for the rest of the country.

We started as a membership organization, and we started small. In 1984 we only had 437 members. As homeschooling grew, so did our membership. Today we have over 90,000 member families.

These families are vital to the work we do—they are our early warning system. When a member lets us know a school district has adopted a new “policy” contrary to law, we can assist all the families in that district, and remind officials that they too must follow the law.

But times change for institutions, as well as movements. As the storm clouds gather in the post-Covid landscape, we have increasingly come to depend on the generosity of donors.

Freedom fund donors help us keep our membership dues low and expand our advocacy work as new legislative, regulatory, and cultural challenges emerge. And Compassion donors have allowed us to distribute millions of dollars in grants to homeschooling families who find themselves in need of a little extra help.

BELOW: HSLDA's membership numbers after one year (c. 1984)

At HSLDA, we are Advocates for Homeschooling. And we are looking to the future, strengthening the work we do to meet the challenges of our times.

I recently described our work borrowing from Micah 6:8. Our legal and policy work is how we seek justice. And our Compassion work is how we love mercy. “Justice,” I said, “opens the door. Mercy walks through it.”

The verse ends by charging us to walk humbly before our God. Whether you are a Freedom Fund donor or Compassion donor, we are humbled to walk with you as we seek to preserve and advance homeschool freedom.




James R. Mason
President

ALABAMA	6	✓	PENNSYLVANIA	7
ARKANSAS	1		TENNESSEE	4
✓ CALIFORNIA	74		SOUTH CAROLINA	1
COLORADO	2		VIRGINIA	8
CONNECTICUT	4		WASHINGTON	56
FLORIDA	9	✓	TEXAS	73
GEORGIA	2		WISCONSIN	2
KENTUCKY	1			
✓ KANSAS	12			
ILLINOIS	8			
INDIANA	5			
✓ IOWA	4			
MAINE	3			
✓ MARYLAND	10			
MASS.	3			
✓ MICHIGAN	34			
MISSOURI	3			
NEBRASKA	1			
NEVADA	8			
NEW HAMPSHIRE	1			
NEW YORK	6			
NEW MEXICO	11			
NEW JERSEY	1			
NORTH CAROLINA	6			
MINNESOTA	7			
✓ OHIO	38			
OKLAHOMA	7			
OREGON	19			

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“*Philippians 1:3-5 perfectly communicates my heart when I think of you and the blessing you have been to our family. You are an answer to our prayers! Thank you for loving and serving us in this way!*

— **Jamie D,**
Compassion Curriculum Grant recipient

Photo courtesy of the family

Fundraising Commitment

We commit to carefully steward the funds you entrust to us. Your gifts will be used prayerfully and effectively to maximize the impact of every dollar and make it possible for more kids to flourish through homeschooling than ever before.



Our team works hard to keep administrative costs low and ensure that the majority of your gifts to our Freedom and Compassion funds go toward:

- Protecting and advancing homeschool freedom
- Encouraging and equipping homeschooling families
- Supporting the homeschooling community for this generation and the next

Partnering with you to accomplish these goals is a privilege and an honor!



Vision

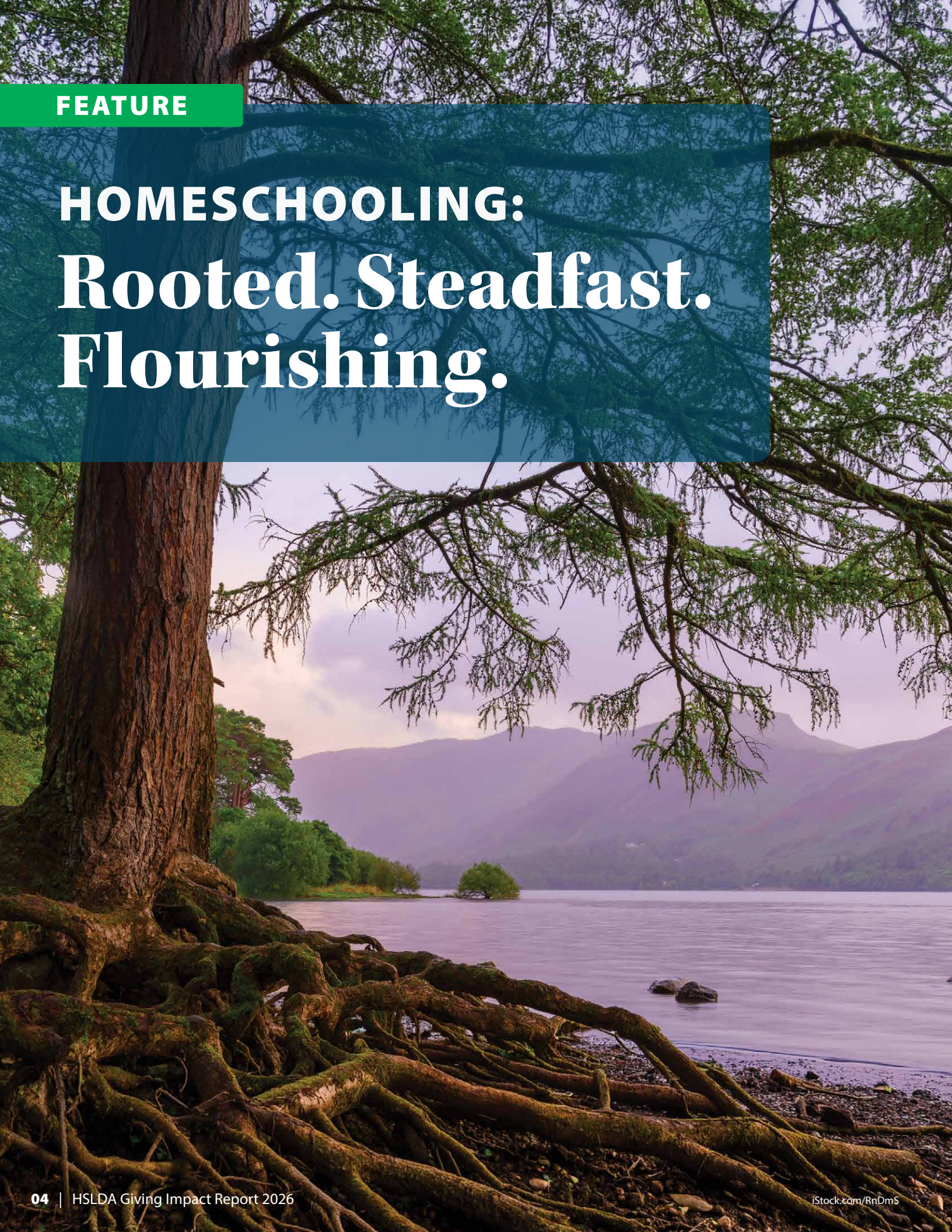
Families, communities, and society strengthened because homeschooling flourishes.



Mission

We champion the God-given right of parents to raise, educate, and nurture their children. Grounded in faith and the founding principles of liberty, we stand with families when their freedom is challenged—in courts, legislatures, or the public square—and when they need help, hope, and support in difficult times.

With courage, commitment, and compassion, we protect families, equip leaders, and preserve and advance the legacy of homeschool freedom for generations to come.



FEATURE

HOMESCHOOLING: Rooted. Steadfast. Flourishing.

In the stormiest season we've faced in a generation, your generosity kept the tree of freedom and compassion standing.

By Justin Bullock, Director of Development

By almost any measure, this past fiscal year brought the stormiest season lovers of homeschool freedom have faced in a generation. It opened with a dangerous bill hanging over Illinois and closed with a committee vote in Connecticut that advanced the most restrictive homeschool bill in decades.

In between, we saw bills pushing state-mandated “wellness checks,” testing requirements, and curriculum control. We tracked hundreds of bills, as measures treating homeschooling families like suspects surfaced in state after state.

And yet.

Read through the pages of this report, and you will find again and again some things the storm cannot explain. More families homeschooling than ever before. More generosity than in any other year of HSLDA's history. More children learning, healing, and flourishing at home. More neighbors showing up in hearing rooms.

This growth calls to mind the imagery evoked by the psalmist. “Blessed is the man,” the first Psalm begins, whose “delight is in the law of the LORD...He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.” (KJV)

A tree with shallow roots does not survive a storm. But when it is planted in the right place and its roots grow deep and strong, it remains standing.

This year's Giving Impact Report is the story of a tree—the tree of homeschool freedom and compassion—in a year of storms. And it is also the story of the people who tend it.

That's where you come in.

DEEP ROOTS

This year, Americans celebrate 250 years since we declared independence from Britain. “Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness” is not just a slogan, but a vision of human dignity that has shaped our nation from the beginning. And it's at the heart of homeschool freedom.

At its core, homeschooling reflects the distinctly American conviction that children are not creatures of the state, and that parents—not government—are primarily responsible for their upbringing. The role of government is to secure that liberty.

But the roots go deeper. In Deuteronomy 6, God instructs parents to teach their children diligently in all kinds of situations: when they're at home, when they're on the road, when they're going to sleep, and when they're waking up. It's a picture of the formation of a child embedded in daily rhythms.

In this ancient text we see again that children are not creatures of the state, but beloved persons to be educated by their parents. They are unique. Bearing dignity from the beginning.

That conviction is why HSLDA exists, and it binds together everything we do. The prophet Micah put it in a single verse, “He hath shewed thee, O man, what

“ At its core, homeschooling reflects the distinctly American conviction that children are not creatures of the state, and that parents—not government—are primarily responsible for their upbringing.

is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?” (KJV)

We strive for justice in our Freedom work, where we stand in courtrooms and committee rooms to defend a family’s right to direct their child’s formation through homeschooling.

We love mercy in our Compassion work, where we supply the provision for homeschooling that dignity demands, so no family has to choose between responding to a crisis and their children’s education.

And in all of this we seek to walk humbly by coming alongside families and depending on God for every outcome.

One tree. One verse. One mission.

ONE VERSE, ONE MISSION

MICAH 6:8

“To do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God.” One verse holds all of HSLDA’s work and all of yours in service to the homeschool community.

DO JUSTLY	FREEDOM. Legal and legislative advocacy that secures the conditions of dignity—a family’s right to direct their children’s formation.
LOVE MERCY	COMPASSION. Grants that supply the provision dignity demands, so hardship never has to end a child’s education at home.
WALK HUMBLY	THE POSTURE. How both are rightly done—alongside families and in dependence on God for every outcome.

A TRUNK THAT DOES NOT BOW

Storms test the fidelity of a tree trunk, and ours was tested this past year.

When Connecticut began weighing sweeping new restrictions, 2,150 people filled the Legislative Office Building for a single forum. When the bill finally came, which would require clearance from the state’s child-welfare agency before a family could homeschool, families testified in a public hearing that lasted nearly 19 hours.

When Hawaii proposed marching homeschooled students into public schools for state testing, families filled the capitol and the committee set the bill aside.

And when Illinois tried to make a missed paperwork deadline a crime, thousands of homeschool parents flooded the statehouse, and by the time the session gavelled out, the bill was dead. (Full story on page 12.)

And the statehouse was not the only front. Families brought HSLDA more than 15,000 legal cases and inquiries—among them 2,112 contacts from public school officials, 919 discrimination cases, and 679 involving CPS investigators.

Behind each of those numbers is the story of a family that did not stand alone.



Forty-three years ago, HSLDA was founded to stand alongside homeschool families in exactly these moments. What began as a fringe idea became a movement, and that movement has grown into an institution that is durable in the face of opposition. Steadfast and immovable.

BRANCHES STILL SPREADING

At HSLDA's 40th anniversary a few years ago, President Jim Mason made reference to another tree—the one in Jesus' parable. The kingdom of God, Jesus said, is like a grain of mustard seed. It's the smallest of all the seeds on earth, yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes larger than all the garden plants and puts out large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade.

Homeschooling began as that kind of seed—a small number of families who were doubted and threatened with prosecution. Today the branches stretch wider than ever. Millions of children now learn at home. And in the years since the COVID-19 pandemic, families streaming out of conventional schools have found rest under homeschooling's branches.

Here is the branch you may not see, because you are a part of it: This was the most generous year in HSLDA's history. (See page 26 for our financials.) Every gift nourished the tree so that our branches reached further—another family defended at no extra charge, another statehouse visited, and another grant delivered in a season of crisis.

HSLDA co-founder Michael Farris said it plainly: Giving is an essential form of advocacy. In legislative battles, victory goes to the side with the most participation—the side that shows up. Donors are not spectators to this work. You are advocates of homeschool freedom, standing alongside HSLDA and alongside every homeschooling family. When you give, you show up.

And there is a dignity in that giving, which our culture rarely names. The world imagines charity



“*Every gift nourished the tree so that our branches reached further—another family defended at no extra charge, another statehouse visited, and another grant delivered in a season of crisis.*”

flowing one way—from the strong down to the struggling. But in Scripture we see that it flows both directions. Generosity is the image of a generous God at work in you.

When you give, you are not a rescuer stooping toward the rescued. You are a neighbor taking your place in the communal body—bound to the families you help in mutual dignity, as you are both co-laborers in one work. And the roles are not fixed. “I look forward to one day being able to bless someone else financially, as you all have,” one grant recipient told us.

Today's receiver is tomorrow's giver. The branches keep spreading because the life and love keep flowing in both directions.



iStock.com/Mikola249

FRUIT IN SEASON

A tree is known by its fruit, and the fruit of homeschooling is abundant.

You can see it in the Reum household, where ten children turn a sunny day into a science lesson at the creek, and where, after miscarriages, a frightening COVID hospitalization, and a toddler's skull surgery, a Compassion Grant helped the family keep learning together through it all. (Their story begins on page 18.)

You can see it in a boy named Charles, whose parents received a Compassion Grant this year. Charles has nonverbal autism. He also loves to read. "Charles has helped everyone to take great joy in all of our successes, small or big," his mother told us. "Seeing the kids bear fruit both academically and spiritually is a joy we cherish dearly."

Bear fruit. She reached for the Psalmist's own words, intuitively.

Look closely at those stories and you will see what a Compassion Grant really is. When hardship strips away everything the world counts as worthwhile and dignified—an income, a home, health—a grant is a singular instance where we as the homeschool

community honor a worth and dignity that was never dependent on any of those things.

That is why the bravest act in many of these stories is the request itself when homeschool families reach out for help. This humble request is not an admission of defeat, but an act of courage and love for their children. Compassion Grants do not act on a family. Compassion Grants free the family to act in love.

This is what your generosity produced this year: Curriculum Grants for 824 financially struggling families—among them 389 navigating disabilities or learning challenges, 211 widowed and single parents, 87 military families, and 30 bilingual grantees. In all, 2,413 homeschool children were served by Curriculum Grants. In addition, your generous giving produced Disaster Relief Grants for 37 families, financial aid toward HSLDA membership for 769 families. Fruit in season.

And freedom bears its own fruit on these branches. When a college told a young woman to leave because she was homeschooled, when a top-tier Navy recruit was stalled by confusion over his diploma, and when a public university denied a family the dual-credit access state law promised them, your support allowed us to intervene.

And we corrected more than paperwork. A homeschool diploma is the record of a person's formation, and to dismiss it is to dismiss her. Each of

“When hardship strips away everything the world counts as worthwhile and dignified—an income, a home, health—a grant is a singular instance where we as the homeschool community honor a worth and dignity that was never dependent on any of those things.”

those cases ended with a young person free to pursue the calling their education prepared them for.

And where good laws passed this year—protecting homeschool diplomas from discrimination, trusting families instead of monitoring them—dignity was written into statute, so the next graduate doesn't face discrimination.

Additionally, freedom donations provided grants for 19 state and local groups that together serve more than 4,000 homeschool families.

SEEDS FOR GENERATIONS TO COME

The last work of a tree, every season, is seed.

This year, homeschool graduates stepped into colleges, trades, and military service—not as products rolling off a line, but as persons stepping into personal callings that will carry on the community of giving and receiving that defines the homeschooling movement.

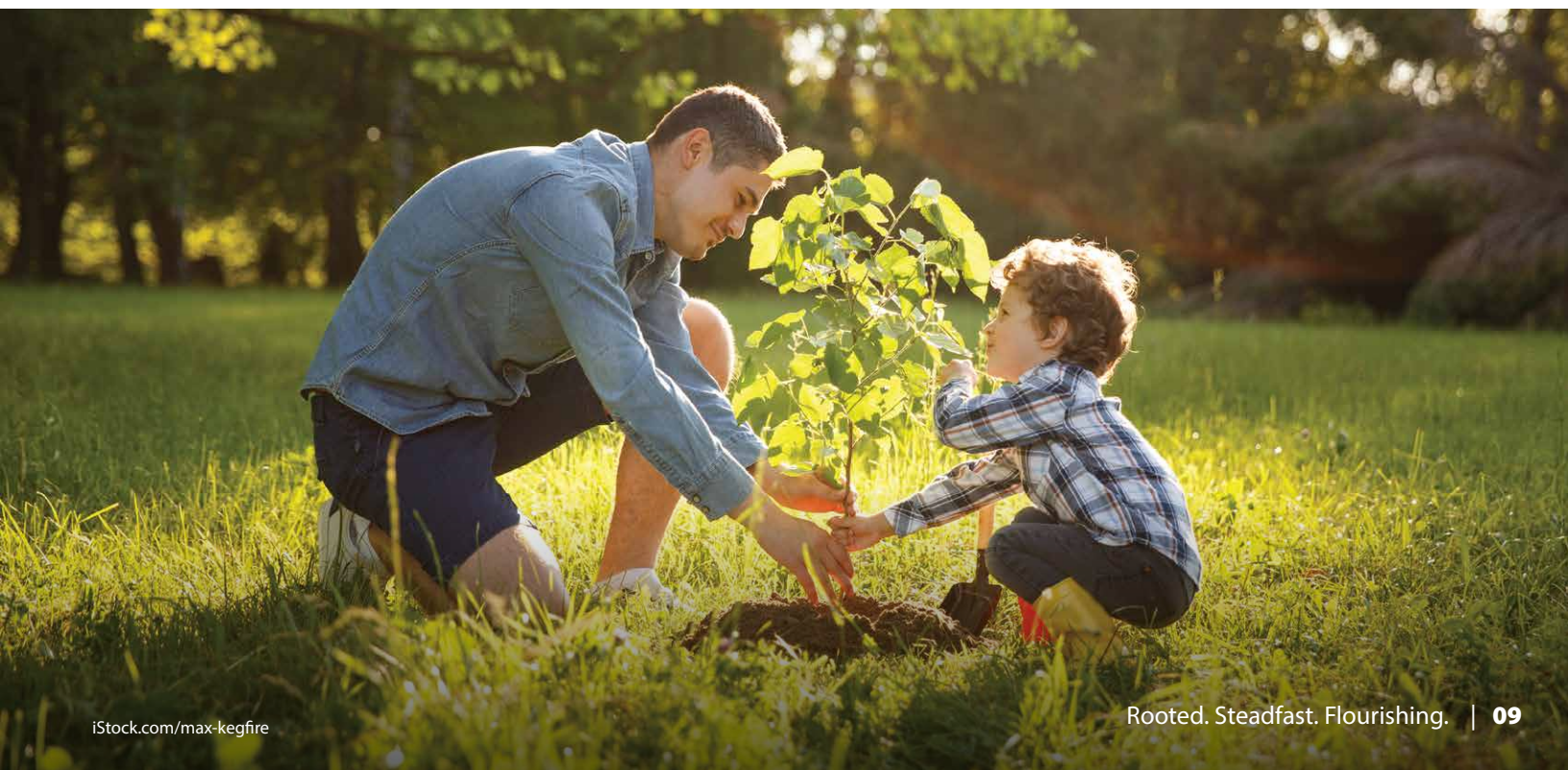
Erica Reum echoed so many homeschooling parents when she said she wants to give her children “a launching pad where they can go into the world and soar, and let Jesus' light shine through them.”

That is what a seed is for. Every child formed in wisdom and virtue at home is a seed of the America the founders hoped for—a free people capable of self-government. But recall that before the Declaration named a single right, it named the source of them all: our Creator.

Human dignity is the seed from which the whole American experiment grew, and it is still at the root of the question the founders would recognize: Are parents or the state responsible for raising children? And a deeper question: Is a child a person to be formed in love, or a unit to be managed?

After 250 years, we must continue to stand for the answer. The principles at the roots of this country and the homeschool community deserve not only to be remembered and celebrated, but to be renewed and defended for today's families and for generations to come.

Thank you for tending this tree with us through the stormiest year in a generation, and into the bright years ahead. Every gift honored a dignity the storm could not touch. Planted by rivers of water. Bearing fruit in season. Its leaf shall not wither. 🌿



HSLDA Attorney Amy Buchmeyer with Dave Splonskowski (Left) and David and Lorraine Lostroh (Right) from NCHEA work to oppose L.B. 1224 in Nebraska.



OUR LEGAL WORK

Protecting & Empowering

Working in the courts and legislatures, we continue to remove obstacles and make homeschooling possible for more and more families. Watching trends across the national homeschooling movement, as we've done for over 40 years, allows us to creatively meet the changing needs of homeschooling families and groups.

Parents considering homeschooling can find inviting, accessible information on our website and social media channels. Our attorneys provide one-on-one, personalized legal advice to our member families. Educational specialists create rich resources to assist parents in providing vibrant learning environments for their children. And because we believe no one should have to homeschool alone, we come alongside leaders and groups to support their efforts to create flourishing homeschool communities.

We are able to homeschool our children with peace of mind, knowing that we have HSLDA to protect us and protect our God-given mission. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts for fighting this good fight for us.

**—F family,
Freedom Donors**

IMPACT FOR MEMBERS

Data is from April 1, 2025–March 31, 2026



90,791

total number of
member families



19,467

new or rejoining
member families



15,485 legal
contacts



7,697

general legal
questions



2,112

public school
official contacts



919

discrimination
cases



468

questions about
legislation



227

international
contacts

LEGISLATIVE WORK

Data is from January 1, 2026–May 31, 2026



2,360+

bills reviewed by
our team



522

bills tracked for
homeschool impact



15

testimonies
provided in 11
states



35

campaigns
across 20 states



5,107

advocates took
action on campaigns



255

legislative
contacts made



179

legislative
emails sent

It Starts with a Neighbor

What a year of long hearings, packed rotundas, and neighbors who showed up taught us about keeping freedom.

© HSLDA / TJ Schmidt

Hundreds of homeschooling families filled the Hawaii State Capitol on the morning of February 17, 2026, to stand against a bill that would have required every homeschooled student to take standardized tests in person at their local public school. House Bill 2376 would have stripped away the assessment options families rely on and treated homeschooling families as suspects in need of monitoring.

HSLDA's Will Estrada had boarded a plane on short notice—a 13-hour journey to Honolulu—to stand with them. Nearly 200 parents and children testified, and the bill was shelved by day's end.

But as Will tells it, the victory did not begin in the hearing room. It began much earlier—with one homeschooling family who knew their legislator. A neighbor. A relationship built long before any bill was filed. A conversation that opened a door no lobbyist could.

Grassroots advocacy starts with your neighbor.

THE SIDE THAT SHOWS UP

HSLDA co-founder Michael Farris, who has watched these battles for 43 years, summarizes them with a single rule: In a legislature, victory goes to the side with the most participation. If more people show up, that side wins.

This year, the other side showed up. The nation's leading newspaper called for more regulation of homeschooling. Law professors renewed their arguments that parental freedom is a danger to be managed. And lawmakers listened.

Over the legislative season, HSLDA reviewed more than 2,360 bills and tracked 522 of them, as hostile measures surfaced in more than a dozen states—proposing everything from state-mandated “health and wellness checks” with school officials, to curriculum control, to clearance from a child-welfare agency before a family could homeschool.



ABOVE: Will Estrada with Lora Burbage (second from right) from CHO and the Higashi family at the Hawaii State Capitol.

Your support is what puts an attorney on a red-eye to Honolulu, keeps watch on legislation in all 50 states, and stands behind a state organization when its members flood a capitol. Every room described in this story has your fingerprints on it.

But grief was quickly conscripted into a policy campaign aimed at homeschooling itself. Connecticut's Office of the Child Advocate released a report in May recommending sweeping new oversight of families who withdraw children from school, and legislators responded by convening an informational forum in June.

An estimated 2,150 people filled the Legislative Office Building—the largest attendance that anyone could remember—and when the session’s education bill passed without adopting the recommendations, Connecticut homeschool families won the first round.

The second round came in the early part of 2026. House Bill 5468 was introduced in March, with state-mandated annual notices of intent, government data collection on homeschooling families, new oversight at withdrawal, and a shocking requirement that families obtain clearance from the Connecticut Department of Children and Families before they could homeschool.

The public hearing the following week lasted nearly 19 hours. Hundreds of parents, students, and educators testified and more than 3,000 written testimonies poured in. HSLDA Local Counsel Ralph Rodriguez finally reached the microphone at 4:45 a.m. to testify against the bill.

One week later, the Education Committee advanced the bill by six votes.

The US Supreme Court named the principle at stake almost 50 years ago: “The statist notion that governmental power should supersede parental authority in all cases because some parents abuse and neglect children is repugnant to American tradition.” Connecticut families spent this year defending that tradition—with a courage this movement will not forget.

CONCORD: THE SPLIT SCREEN

Here is the strange Providence of this year: The very week Hartford held its 19-hour hearing, New Hampshire’s House passed a bill moving in exactly the opposite direction, making notification optional and removing mandatory portfolios and evaluations for homeschooling families. (House Bill 1268 went on to become law after the fiscal year closed.)

Two New England capitols. One week. Two visions of the family—one that begins with suspicion, and

CONNECTICUT BILL AT A GLANCE:

EARLY 2025: Waterbury tragedy comes to light. Calls for legislative action.

MAY 5, 2025: Report recommends sweeping withdrawal oversight. Thousands attend an informational forum.

JUNE 2025: Education bill passes without recommended changes to homeschool law. Session ends.

MARCH 5, 2026: H.B. 5468 introduced with withdrawal oversight and other changes.

MARCH 11, 2026: Hearing runs nearly 19 hours with hundreds of testimonies, including HSLDA attorney Ralph Rodriguez.

MARCH 18, 2026: House Education Committee advances the bill.

APRIL-MAY, 2026: House and Senate pass the bill and it’s signed into law.

JULY 15, 2026: HSLDA announces filing of Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) complaint over new law with US Department of Education.

one that begins with trust. New Hampshire is proof that the direction of freedom is a choice, and that neighbors who show up can choose it.

THE LEDGER

By the time the last gavels fell in fiscal year 2026, hostile bills had been defeated in a dozen states—Hawaii’s testing mandate; withdrawal restrictions in West Virginia; measures in Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota,

Mississippi, New York, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Vermont, Washington, and Wyoming.

And the homeschooling movement did not merely play defense: Good bills became law in Iowa—cutting paperwork, expanding opportunities, and protecting homeschool diplomas—and in Idaho, Louisiana, Tennessee, and New Hampshire.

Two losses did cut deep. Connecticut’s H.B. 5468 you have just read about. And a bill in Nebraska to force a family under an active child-welfare investigation to wait up to 14 days before withdrawing a child to homeschool. No finding of wrongdoing is required. We mobilized against this bill, but it became law in April.

This is a reminder that the presumption of innocence must be defended everywhere, every year.

WASHINGTON DC: A DOOR OPENS

The year’s most encouraging scenes came from Washington, DC, where a federal bill to ensure homeschool graduates’ diplomas are honored by federal entities is working its way through Congress with bipartisan support. The Home School Graduation Recognition Act passed the Senate Education Committee in February and the House of Representatives in March.

Homeschool freedom is not a red or blue value. It’s an American value.

THE HORIZON AND THE CHARGE

The next season will be harder. In New Jersey, multiple bills remained pending as the fiscal year closed—annual state-mandated “health and wellness” meetings with school officials, curriculum mandates reaching into the content of family instruction, and registration and recordkeeping regimes. Similar proposals will return elsewhere.

But if this fiscal year proved anything, it is this: The tree holds because the roots hold and because people keep showing up to tend it. The family in Honolulu who knew their legislator. The 2,150 in

Hartford. The thousands in Springfield. The 5,107 who took action when a campaign alert reached their inbox. The attorney at the microphone before dawn. And you.

Because generosity is advocacy, every gift to the Freedom Fund put you in those rooms.

“Be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.”

(1 Corinthians 15:58)

It was not in vain this year. And it will not be in vain in the next. 🙏

AS WE GO TO PRINT

After the fiscal year closed, Connecticut H.B. 5468 passed the House and Senate and was signed into law on May 26. Connecticut is now the only state in the nation to require a background check of every parent before they may withdraw their child(ren) from public school to homeschool, and this is the first significant rollback of homeschool freedom in the modern movement.

However, the story does not end there. HSLDA has filed a federal complaint with the US Department of Education under FERPA challenging the law on privacy grounds. We are also actively evaluating constitutional challenges and standing with Connecticut families as the fight moves to new ground. Learn more here: hsllda.org/ctupdates

Freedom lost can be regained, but only by a movement that keeps showing up. We will.



OUR GRANT WORK

Bringing Compassion & Hope

Your heart for families struggling to homeschool through difficult circumstances enables us to provide essential support to hundreds of families.

Here's how we help:

- **Compassion Curriculum Grants** for single parents, widow(er)s, military families, families homeschooling kids with special needs, and other low-income families.
- **Compassion Disaster Relief Grants** for homeschooling families whose curriculum, home, or livelihood has been damaged or destroyed by a natural disaster or other catastrophe.
- **HSLDA Financial Aid** for families who need membership but can't afford it.

“Because of your giving, real needs are being met and burdens are being lightened. Please know how deeply appreciated you are. Your generosity is making an impact far beyond what you can see, and it is a true blessing to many families.

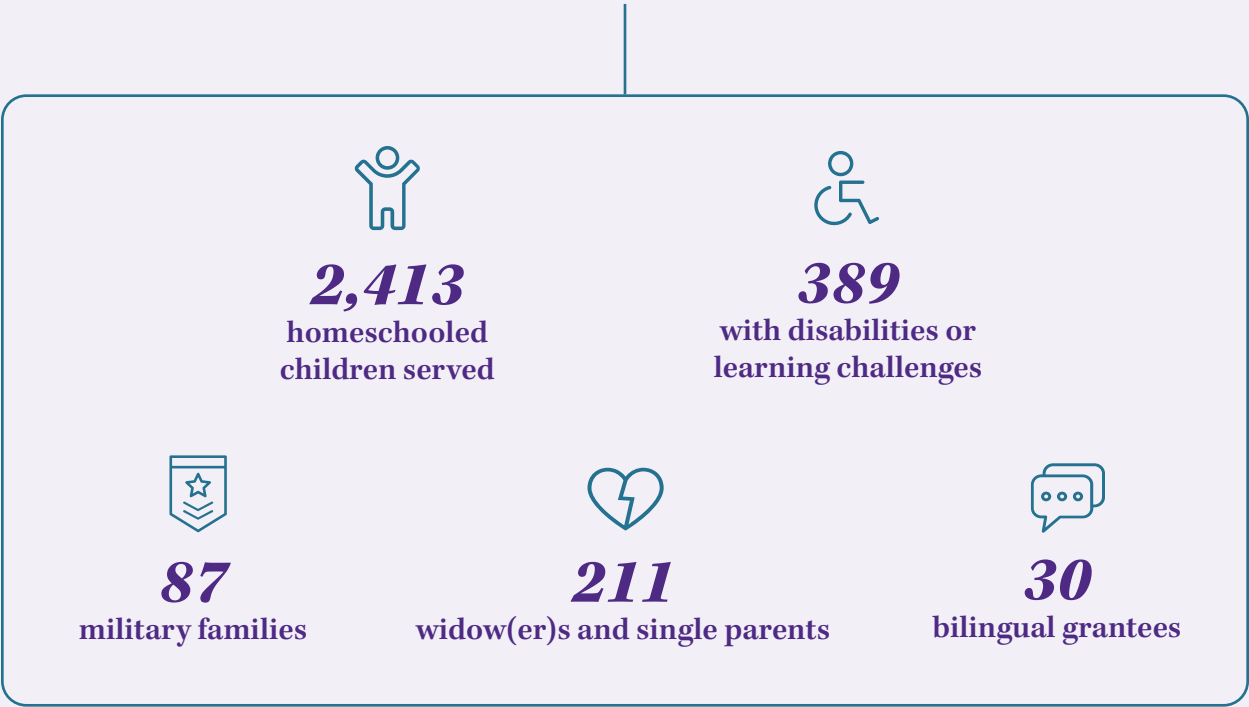
—April,
Compassion Curriculum Grant recipient

COMPASSION GRANT NUMBERS

Data is from April 1, 2025–March 31, 2026

Your help encourages and enables hundreds of families to continue homeschooling through devastating circumstances.

824 financially struggling families received Curriculum Grants



families received Disaster Relief Grants

37



families received financial aid for HSLDA membership, which served 2,027 homeschool children

769

Bearing One Another's Burdens

Five years of storms tested the Reum family. Because of you, they were not alone.

On a sunny day at the Reum house, a science lesson is liable to get up and walk out the door.

“We might grab a science lesson and head to the woods or the creek,” Erica Reum says of homeschooling in her household. “These are memories that I will forever cherish.”

Erica and her husband Jeff have been homeschooling for 13 years, and their home holds the motion, laughter, and learning of ten bright, lively children, the oldest of whom graduated this spring.

“Our kids are able to dive into their interests and passions,” Erica says, “and we have the freedom to discover new things together.”

Their oldest son joined a robotics team and traveled for competitions. Their oldest daughter baked, wrote a book, and taught art to her younger siblings. The middle children built LEGO robotics projects and explored coding workshops.

PLANTED

“We started homeschooling because we felt God wanted us to,” Erica says. “We work together as a team, and this brings a closeness I don’t think would exist if we were all going different directions each day.”

It did not begin so confidently. “My family and friends told me that if I homeschooled my kids, all kinds of negative things would happen,” she



says. “My kids would be weird. I was going to fail them. I couldn’t teach them, because I didn’t have a teaching degree.

“It was very hard, and I struggled with all of the negativity,” she continues. “Even though my husband completely supported the decision to homeschool, I felt alone.”

Hold on to that last word: alone.

THE STORMS

A tree planted by water with deep roots stands firm in the storms and the rain, and for the Reums, the storms and the rain came.

Over a stretch of five years, the family endured two miscarriages, multiple moves, and a child with serious GI issues who needed ongoing hospital care. But homeschooling let them keep everyone together, no matter what each day brought.

Then COVID-19 swept through the family in 2021 and both parents became severely ill. “Jeff couldn’t work for several weeks,” Erica recalls. “And after two weeks of debilitating symptoms, I ended up in the hospital for four days.” Barely able to breathe, she wondered whether she would survive. She needed oxygen for a month, and six weeks to recover.

Even there, their roots held. “I felt God’s closeness so strongly,” Erica says. “He was with us every step

of the way.” She was still in her hospital bed when she and Jeff learned they were then expecting their ninth child—a girl they would name Juliana, who would soon face a storm of her own.

THE KNOT

Life found its cheerful, busy rhythm again. Then one ordinary homeschool day, with Juliana on her lap, Erica noticed a growing knot on the back of her 2-year-old’s head. Tests confirmed a frightening diagnosis: craniosynostosis, a dangerous condition in which the plates of a child’s skull fuse too early, putting pressure on the growing brain.

Though not yet 3, little Juliana needed major surgery to carefully break her skull and piece it back together with dissolvable plates so her brain could grow safely. Through every anxious hour of the operation and every small victory of recovery, the family’s closeness and faith in God carried them.

Jeff, Erica, and all the children celebrated each tiny step of Juliana’s healing. Look at her today and you will see her big smile long before you notice the post-surgery tufts of hair growing back in.

THE BRAVEST ACT

Storms like these carry a cost that never shows up in a diagnosis: the quiet, desperate arithmetic of

a single-income family with ten children, hospital seasons behind them, and a new school year coming.

“Some moms in my homeschool co-op told me about HSLDA years ago,” Erica says, “but our finances were so tight, we couldn’t afford to join at that time.” The Reums finally became members in 2023, shortly after recovering from COVID-19. Then Erica read a story about a family helped by a Compassion Grant and realized help might be available. “It was definitely God’s timing,” she says.

So she asked for help, and Erica realized that she and her family were not alone.

“The Curriculum Grant we received helped us get through the hard times,” she says. “To not have to worry about the money needed for our curriculum and where it was going to come from took a burden off our shoulders. You and the donors were there to help us get through this difficult season. It meant a lot to us.”

ROOM TO BREATHE

Without the grant, the Reums would have found a way to persist. But your gift did more than meet a financial need. By recognizing the dignity of the Reum family in your generous giving, you lifted a weight from Erica’s heart. You gave her room to breathe, to heal, and to teach her children with joy.

Scripture calls this bearing one another’s burdens and says that in doing so, we fulfill the law of Christ. That is what you did. You took a family’s burden onto your shoulders and provided for them a season of healing. This is what it looks like to love mercy.

Erica said the hardest part of beginning to homeschool was feeling alone. Thirteen years later, in the hardest season of her family’s life, that word never appeared. Because of you, the Reums walked through the storm accompanied by the God who was with them every step of the way, and by a community of joyful givers who made His mercy tangible.



ABOVE: Erica and Juliana (post surgery).

“

© HSLDA / Noah Lawrence

By recognizing the dignity of the Reum family in your generous giving, you lifted a weight from Erica's heart.



ABOVE: Erica and Jeff with Juliana.

FRUIT, AND THE NEXT SEED

Today the Reum household is lively and loud again in all the best ways—robotics and baking, coding and read-alouds, a little girl with a big smile keeping up with nine siblings. And the family's first seed has been planted with their oldest child's graduation.

“We love our children,” Erica says, “and we want to give them a launching pad where they can go into the world and soar and let Jesus' light shine through them.”

Ten children learning at a table their parents refused to let a crisis empty. A mother teaching with joy. A branch of the tree you helped hold steady through the storm bearing rich fruit in season. 🌱



ABOVE: Juliana with her older sister.



Meet the Reum family and learn more about their story here:



hslda.org/ReumGIR

GOD HEARS YOUR Prayer

I hope to encourage you today with something the Lord has been reminding me of this past year: He hears the prayers of His children.

Last year, God called my dear Elizabeth home. As a strong woman of faith in God, she understood the importance and power of prayer. I miss her bold, courageous petitions and overflowing thanks she regularly offered up to the Lord in her prayers. Over the years, God miraculously answered many of them, and by her example, she has inspired me to pray more fervently and with greater boldness.

This includes praying for you, our faithful friends. I've been blessed to pray for many of you personally, and time and again, you have shared how He has answered prayers in ways that have strengthened your faith and reminded you of His goodness.

The same holds true for our Compassion Grant families who often write to share how God has answered their prayers through you.

And the legislative battles we've experienced this past year? We are grateful for how God has granted us victories, yet even when the answers don't come in the way or timing we expect, God is always faithful, always present, and always at work.

Whatever you're carrying today, don't lose heart. Keep bringing it before the Lord. He delights in hearing from His children, and He is faithful to provide the wisdom, strength, peace, and grace we need for each day. Sometimes His answer is exactly what we hoped for, sometimes it's different than we imagined—but it is always given with perfect love and wisdom.

I'm praying that you'll be encouraged as you continue to seek Him. May you experience His nearness, trust His timing, and find joy in seeing His faithfulness unfold.

*Trust in him
at all times; ye
people, pour
out your heart
before him: God
is a refuge for
us. (KJV)*

PSALM 62:8



A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink.

J. Michael Smith
President Emeritus



OUR MEDIA PRESENCE

Telling the Story of Homeschooling

We seek to tell true, good, and beautiful stories of homeschooling so that more people everywhere can understand homeschooling and cherish homeschool freedom. And we make the how and why of homeschooling—along with the latest research and data—easily available to parents, the public, and the press.

“My sincere thank you to all that donated to my son’s education. Without the help from God and HSLDA this would not be a possibility for my family.

—Atiya K,
Compassion Curriculum Grant recipient

SOCIAL AND DIGITAL MEDIA

Data is from April 1, 2025–March 31, 2026

We use email and social media to provide families with engaging and informative content.

257,619

subscribers received HSLDA's Weekly Update email

224,666

followers on Facebook



12.9 million views



19,817 new followers



647 posts



195,520 content interactions

51,515

followers on Instagram



1.4 million views



5,897 new followers



850 posts



36,557 content interactions



2,266

registered for 5 member-exclusive webinars

Tackling common homeschooling questions and challenges with a live audience.



2.4 million

video views across YouTube, Vimeo, Facebook, and Instagram

**PROVIDING RESOURCES 24/7
AT HSLDA.ORG**

1.9 million

HSLDA website visitors

1.1 million

received help through our legal information pages

154,270

gained confidence through our pages on how to start homeschooling or how to teach their kids



IN THE PRESS

We monitor homeschooling in the news, answer media questions, and publish timely responses to issues affecting homeschooling families.

HSLDA IN THE HEADLINES

1,138

Headlines

645 publishers

+65 Substacks and blogs



Washington Examiner
Outlet readership: 35 million +



Hartford Courant
Outlet readership: 71,800



The Federalist
Outlet readership: 13 million

Photo courtesy of the family



OUR STEWARDSHIP

Showing Where Your Gifts Go

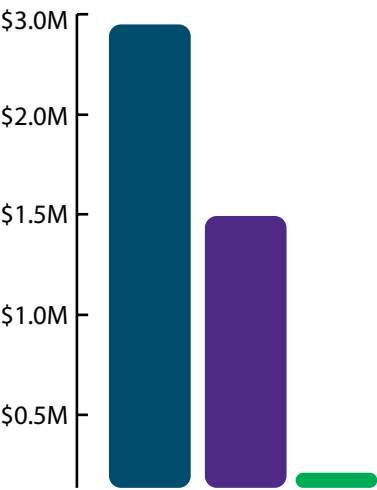
We are committed to clarity, transparency, and responsible stewardship of the funds that you entrust to us. Your heart to strengthen homeschooling families and preserve homeschool freedom provides tangible, life-changing support to moms, dads, and kids every day.

I would like to say thank you to the donors for the grant. It is a blessing to our family! Homeschooling is important to us, and it helped our family during a time of change and uncertainty as we began full-time ministry as a family.

—Laura M,
Compassion Curriculum Grant recipient

Financial Information

April 2025—March 2026

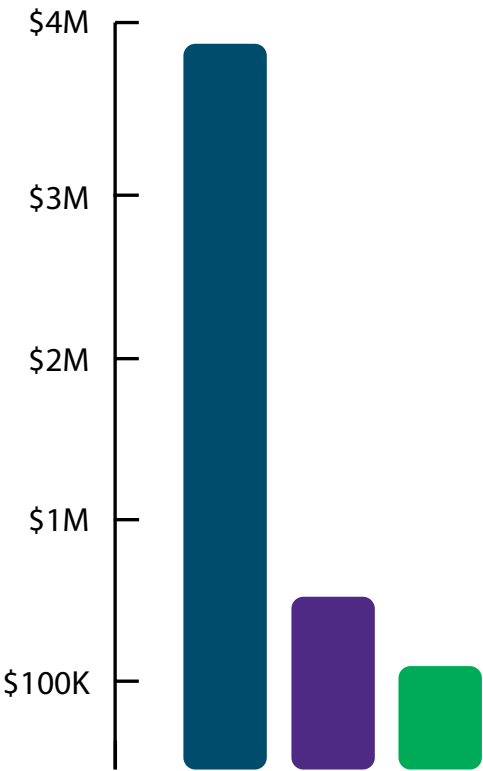


INCOME

Private gifts and grants to Freedom	\$2,903,338*
Private gifts and grants to Compassion	\$1,449,293
Other income	\$20,331
Total Income	\$4,372,962

EXPENSES

Freedom Distributions	\$2,166,624
Compassion Distributions	\$967,914
Administrative service costs	\$554,575
Ministry service costs†	\$146,802
Total Expenses	\$3,835,915
Support Expenses	
Fundraising and development	\$530,234
Management and general	\$189,782
Total Support Expenses	\$720,016
Total Expenses	\$4,555,931‡

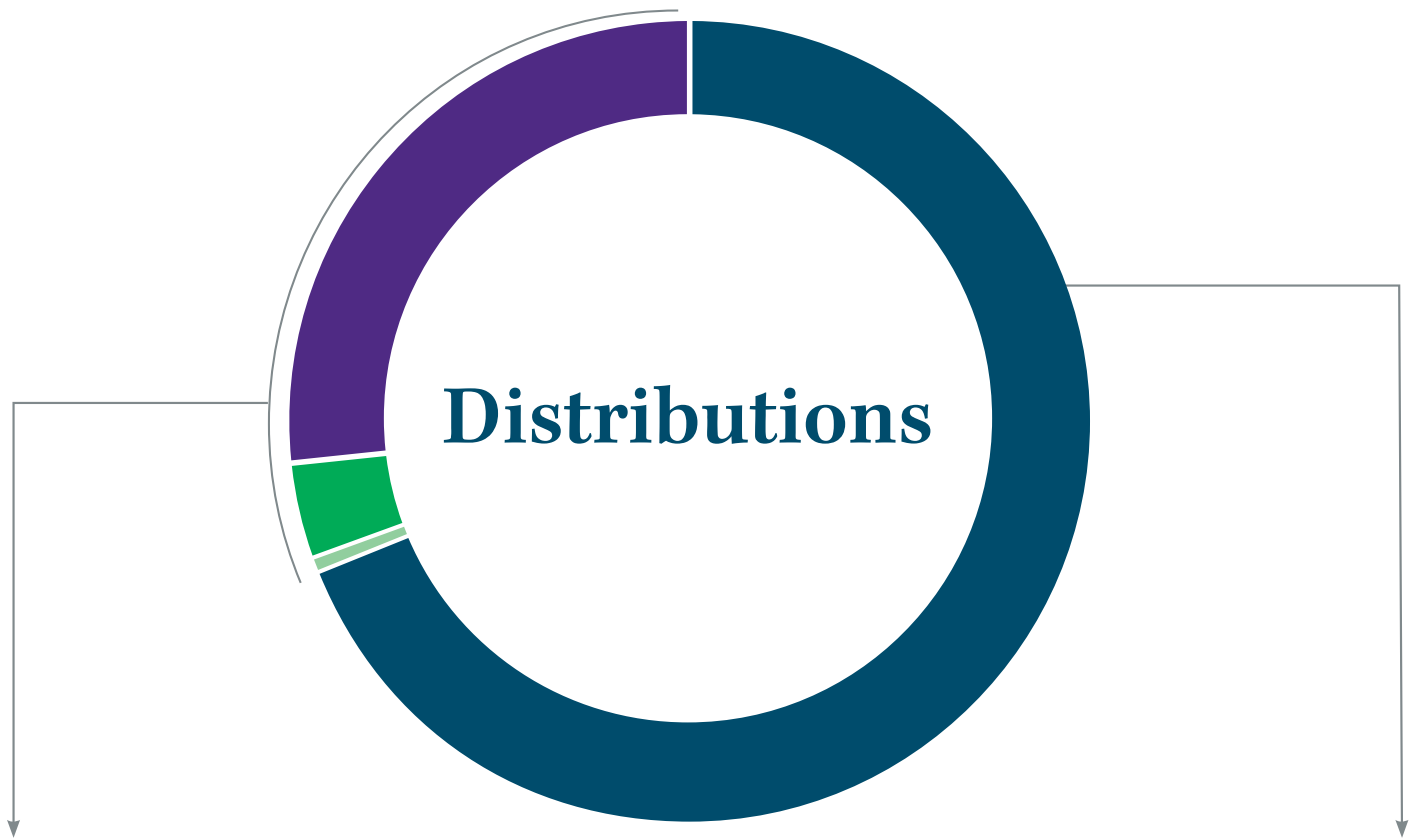


*Most significant fundraising for Freedom Fund in the history of HSLDA.

‡Spending for FY26 exceeded income and was funded by reserve revenues from prior years.

† Compassionate care, prayer, and resources for homeschooling families in need (excluding staff time for program service costs, e.g. grant administration).

Supplemental information from audited financial statements adjusted for joint costs.



COMPASSION

● General Grants Military and low-income families in need Widow(er)s and single-parent families Disaster relief and other emergency grants	
	\$642,969
	\$163,495
	\$27,050
● Membership Financial Aid[†]	\$117,000
● Outreach to Groups[‡]	\$17,400
Total Compassion Distributions	\$967,914

FREEDOM

● Legal Advocacy and Freedom Work	\$2,166,624
Total Freedom Distributions	\$2,166,624

[†] Provides a one-year HSLDA membership to a family who can't afford it.

[‡] Outreach is an extension of HSLDA's mission through building relationships and providing resources to ethnically diverse and underserved homeschool communities.

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PO Box 5000 | Purcellville, VA 20134 | 540-441-4545 | hslida.org

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