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For Immediate Release

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SUPREME COURT URGED TO CONSIDER CLEVELAND CASE
Friend of the Court brief Filed by CER

(Washington, DC 6/26/01) The Center for Education Reform (CER) has filed an *amicus* brief with the United States Supreme Court calling on the high court to review the decision of the Sixth Circuit Court in the Cleveland school choice case of Simmons-Harris v. Zelman, et. al. The Cleveland Scholarship program provides scholarships to low income families allowing them an alternative to their children's current failing schools. This is the fourth time CER has sponsored a friend of the court brief defending the Cleveland program.

The 17-page brief, supporting the petition of the state, is based on the fact that the lower courts chose not to look at the context in which this reform effort was adopted. Education reform efforts have been ongoing in Ohio since the mid-1970's. These reforms were designed to provide the parents and children of Cleveland a "thorough and efficient system of common schools."

"The lower courts failed to consider the whole picture and ignored the facts surrounding the creation of Cleveland program," remarked CER president Jeanne Allen. "The Cleveland Scholarship Program is part of an evolving 25-year program designed to bring the Cleveland Public Schools into compliance with a desegregation decree, and yet the Court of Appeals held that consideration of the complete education reform package is 'irrelevant' to its inquiry. We believe it is not only relevant, it is vital."

CER is urging the Court to accept the case for consideration. "The Cleveland Scholarship program has provided hope for families, options for parents, a future for children and created an impetus for positive change in the Cleveland public school system," concluded CER president Jeanne Allen.

Copies of the amicus brief will be available later today on-line at <http://www.edreform.com>

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The Center for Education Reform is a national, independent, non-profit advocacy organization providing support and guidance to individuals, community and civic groups, policymakers and others who are working to bring fundamental reforms to their schools. For further information, please call (202) 822-9000 or visit our website at <http://edreform.com>.