



## **KEEP PUBLIC FUNDS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS. OPPOSE SPENDING \$10 BILLION PER YEAR FOR A NATIONAL PRIVATE SCHOOL VOUCHER PROGRAM.**

The Educational Choice for Children Act (H.R. 833 and S.292 in the 119th Congress) would give away \$10 billion per year to fund private school vouchers. Vouchers divert critical funds from public schools to subsidize/pay for students, many who already attend private schools. Private schools cherry pick which students they want to admit, resulting in discrimination.

### **DO NOT UNDERMINE PUBLIC SCHOOLS, INCLUDING RURAL SCHOOLS.**

- Our families, communities and futures depend on the quality of public education we provide for our children.
- When we divert funding away from public schools, it weakens communities, making it hard to raise a family, have high quality jobs and start businesses.
- Schools are frequently the largest employer in rural communities; adults and children alike depend on their public schools for resources and economic growth.
- 20% of students in our country attend rural schools.

### **DO NOT IMPOSE VOUCHERS ON STATES.**

- If approved, Congress would override the will of the states. Even as some state legislatures have exercised the right to create voucher programs, other legislatures and voters have repeatedly rejected them.
- In the 2024 election, voters in Kentucky and Nebraska overwhelmingly rejected voucher proposals, including in 47 counties where they also voted for President-elect Trump by 70+ point margin.

### **DO NOT ALLOW WASTE AND ABUSE OF PUBLIC FUNDS.**

- There are very few guardrails on how voucher money could be spent, making it ripe for waste, fraud, and abuse.
- In states with similar programs, parents have used the funds to purchase pizza ovens, espresso machines, big screen TVs, foosball tables, paddleboards, golf equipment, Amazon gift cards, and tickets to Disney World and SeaWorld.

### **FAST FACTS**

- Public schools educate 90% of American children.
- In states with voucher programs, 70% of the students receiving vouchers are those already attending private schools
- Voters across the country have rejected voucher measures every time they've been on the ballot—seventeen times.
- Studies of the Louisiana, Indiana, and Ohio voucher programs have demonstrated that students who used vouchers perform worse academically than their public school peers

## **DO NOT PRIVILEGE PRIVATE SCHOOL VOUCHER DONATIONS OVER OTHER CHARITABLE GIVING.**

- Individuals and corporations would receive a dollar-for-dollar tax credit in exchange for giving money to an intermediary organization. People can also offload stocks to SGOs and evade paying tax on capital gains while also giving them a tax credit for the value of stock and their realized gains—to both benefit wealthy, sophisticated investors and funnel more money to private school vouchers.
- The proposal privileges contributions to private school voucher programs over donations to organizations helping people in our local communities (i.e. veterans organizations, homeless shelters, houses of worship, or food banks). Individuals who give money for vouchers get a dollar-for-dollar tax credit, whereas donations to charitable organizations, only garner a tax deduction.

## **DO NOT ENABLE TAXPAYER-FUNDED DISCRIMINATION.**

- Vouchers give a choice to private schools, rather than to parents and students. The private schools funded by this bill could be allowed to reject students with disabilities—or any other students those private schools wish to avoid, including based on their academic ability, race/ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or gender identity.
- Private schools funded by taxpayer dollars through this program would not be bound by many key provisions of federal civil rights laws.
- Families that do not sign appropriate “statements of faith” or that do not have family compositions that align with the schools’ preferences may also find their child rejected.

## **DO NOT TAKE IMPORTANT RIGHTS AWAY FROM STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES.**

- Families who choose to use these vouchers must relinquish their child’s rights under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, including a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment and due process rights.
- There are no requirements in the proposal for private voucher schools to account for students with disabilities. Because disability and behavior are often linked, students with disabilities who aren’t being appropriately served could be disciplined or excluded from schools and have no recourse or protections.

## **THE BIGGER PICTURE**

We cannot afford to fund a second, private system of education that picks and chooses who and how to educate.

Instead, ensure children receive a quality education that not only teaches them skills like reading, writing, and math, but also help them to reach their full potential and participate in the workforce.