

STOP D.C. VOUCHERS NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

www.stopdcvouchers.org

September 2, 2003

Contact: Melody Webb

Melodywebb@lobbyline.com,

(202)554-8519, (202)276-9253, cell

Local D.C. Parent-led Group Launches 'Call Congress Campaign' to Stop D.C. Vouchers in U.S. House, U.S. Senate

Washington, DC- Stop D.C. Vouchers today launched their 'Call Congress Now! Campaign' to mobilize local D.C. residents and supporters from across the country to stop an unpopular congressional plan to institute school vouchers for 2,000 children in D.C. The legislation for D.C. vouchers is scheduled for a vote on the floor of the House this week.

Headed by D.C.P.S. parent and graduate Melody Webb, Stop D.C. Vouchers has been working since the Spring to thwart vouchers for D.C.. Webb, an attorney and public education reformer, stated "the time is now for public education supporters like no other time to step forward and be counted, raising their voices in protest against this first step toward the destruction of public education in America as we know it. Today D.C., tomorrow - the rest of the urban minority public school districts around the country. We stand on the brink of a watershed moment in the history of public education. Public school parents and supporters must act now! If this voucher bill is passed, it will be the first time that federal money will be used for a voucher scheme, and it will become the justification for federal funding of private schools across the country."

The D.C. voucher proposal was tabled before the summer recess of Congress and is expected to come up for a vote in the House of Representatives on September 4th. The Senate version of the bill failed to leave the Senate Appropriations committee. The voucher plan, which passed Rep. Tom Davis' (R- Va.) Government Reform committee by a margin of only one vote, has been presented in the Senate as a 'rider' attached to the D.C. Appropriations bill, a popular vehicle for Congress to get passed their own legislative proposals that are unpopular with D.C. residents. Included with the voucher plan in the Appropriations bill are several other objectionable amendments that are opposed by D.C. elected officials and residents.

Voucher opponents are urged to call select members of the U.S. House of Representatives and the United States Senate in an effort to prevent a voucher plan.

#####