

STOP D.C. VOUCHERS NEWS RELEASE

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www.stopdcvouchers.org

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D.C. Democracy Activists Denounce Voucher Plan for D.C. Urge Community and Congress To Oppose Voucher Legislation Where Vote Scheduled This Week in the U.S. House and U.S. Senate

Washington, DC-- Leaders of the diverse movement for full self governance and voting rights for D.C. today in a joint letter denounced the voucher plan in Congress and urged Congressional members in the House and the Senate to vote against legislation to institute the proposal.

Anise Jenkins, president of the activist group Stand Up! for Democracy in D.C. Coalition, stated "We fully support and praise congressional leaders in the U.S. Senate and the U.S. House of Representatives who are standing up for D.C.'s right to make its own education policy according to the will of the residents of D.C. and the principals of self governance and full democracy. The voucher plan being pushed by ideologues in Congress exemplifies an abrogation of local decision and policy making."

"We stand on the brink of a watershed moment in the history of public education. Congressional leadership must step up to the plate and discharge its duty to protect the most vulnerable by fighting for public education, not abandoning public education in favor of a voucher white elephant. When 2,000 students leave my children's school system for vouchers, \$20 million will walk away with them. 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" said Melody Webb, a D.C.P.S. parent speaking on behalf of Stop D.C. Vouchers and the Leave D.C. Alone D.C. Democracy campaign.

"As residents and organizations that work on behalf of full democracy for Washington, D.C., we fight for the rights of the most disenfranchised citizens of this country, on a platform of full voting representation in the U.S. House and U.S. Senate, as well as full self governance for Washington, D.C.. We now want to express our outraged opposition to the congressional plan under consideration to institute a taxpayer-funded, private school voucher program for Washington, D.C.," stated Michele Tingling Clemmons, a D.C. Public Schools parent speaking on behalf of D.C. Statehood Green Party and the Gray Panthers of Metropolitan Washington

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.

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