

Bob Kaser
Castle Pines, Colorado

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Representatives and Senators

As a 30 year Douglas County resident, the father of a Special Education kid, and a past president of the District's Douglas County Educational Foundation, I offer the following comments:

This Bill is titled the "Quality Education and Budget Reduction Act." It is neither - and is simply another attempt to install vouchers.

Titling this Bill a "Budget Reduction Act" is woefully inaccurate. Yes, there will be a Budget Reduction, but at every local public / charter school in your District! Your Colorado Legislative Staff's - Fiscal Impact study indicates in 2017 (page 4), the parents of 14,200 children will be enticed by this Bill to remove them from public education. Using a Per Pupil Revenue (PPR) of \$7,000 each, times the 14,200 vouchers, will mean the local school Districts will lose \$99,400,000 in General Funds to operate and maintain their schools in just the first full year of this Bill.

Applying a key principle of economics; "economies of scale," and using Douglas County School District as an example; which has over 63,000 students, of which 500 were already accepted into their identical criteria Voucher program as in this Bill, the loss of PPR revenues totals \$3,500,000 (\$7,000 PPR X 500 Students). That \$3.5 million will come right off the top of the District's revenues and reduce the General Fund balance, since all of the expenses are already absorbed by the revenues of the remaining 62,500 students.

You have the luxury of a prior School Superintendent, Representative Wilson, on your committee. I believe he can understand 500 kids leaving a District this size, spread over 83 schools, averages 6 kids per school; not one teacher will be laid-off, not one classroom will be closed. The only thing that will leave Doug Co is \$3,500,000 in revenues by the implementation of this Bill. Doug Co School District already has an unmet capital needs shortfall of \$275 million, to which this Bill will only exacerbate.

Further, this bill is skewed to "normal" kids. There is no provision or mention of protections for Children with Disabilities by these private schools receiving tax dollars. The testimony in the Doug Co Voucher Court Case, confirmed their partner, Private Schools could and would discriminate against and/or reject kids with disabilities.

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Finally, this Bill, in my opinion, violates Article IX, Section 7 of the Colorado Constitution, which clearly directs that: (paraphrasing for time) The general assembly shall never make any appropriation, or pay from any public fund or moneys whatsoever, anything *in aid of* any church or sectarian society to help support or sustain any school, academy...

Thank you for this opportunity to provide comments. Please extinguish this Bill.

Reference

Colo. Const. Art. IX, Section 7 (2014), Section 7. AID TO PRIVATE SCHOOLS, CHURCHES, SECTARIAN PURPOSE, FORBIDDEN

“Neither the general assembly, nor any county, city, town, township, school district or other public corporation, shall ever make any appropriation, or pay from any public fund or moneys whatever, anything in aid of any church or sectarian society, or for any sectarian purpose, or to help support or sustain any school, academy, seminary, college, university or other literary or scientific institution, controlled by any church or sectarian denomination whatsoever; nor shall any grant or donation of land, money or other personal property, ever be made by the state, or any such public corporation to any church, or for any sectarian purpose.”