

Dear members of the Senate Education Committee,

I would like to express my **opposition** to HB 1540. To use public funds for private education is contradictory by its nature. It is also hypocritical to deny improvements to public education experience (within the same legislative session) because of the cost, while simultaneously proposing to spend tens of millions of dollars on education elsewhere

This bill effectively redirects funds to private entities with little to no oversight. It is unfair for my tax dollars to support institutions that can selectively deny enrollment. It is my concern that private institutions will raise tuition to match the subsidy given to families by this action, or that dollars in this fund will be used fraudulently under the guise of “educational expenses”.

Labelling the bill as “school choice” is misleading - the choice of how to educate your child already exists. Public education is a gift for all citizens, paid for by the citizens. Parents have made the choice not to take this gift for reasons of their own and the right to make that choice is protected by the constitution. There is a cost to that decision, but it doesn't mean they are treated unfairly. Even as they pay their property taxes, which helps pay for public education, the benefits they stand to gain from the fund far outweighs how much they contribute to public education. It is frustrating to hear so much about parents “paying their own way” as an excuse not to increase assistance to public schools – does that sentiment not apply here too?

Public education has been unfairly attacked with claims of indoctrination and the subtext of this bill further undermines it. I urge you to visit public schools firsthand to understand the real challenges educators face due to misguided legislation like this. The notion of widespread indoctrination is a fabrication—please see the reality for yourselves.

Scott Jezusko