



May 15, 2025

The Honorable Roger Wicker
U.S. Senate
425 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Cindy Hyde-Smith
U.S. Senate
528 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Trent Kelly
U.S. House of Representatives
2243 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Bennie Thompson
U.S. House of Representatives
2466 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Michael Guest
U.S. House of Representatives
450 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mike Ezell
U.S. House of Representatives
443 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mississippi Congressional Delegation,

On behalf of The Parents' Campaign, a network of more than 65,000 Mississippi parents, educators, and public school supporters, I write to urge your strong opposition to federal private school voucher legislation, originally dubbed the Educational Choice for Children Act (ECCA) and now known as Qualified Elementary and Secondary Education Scholarships. This legislation creates federal tax credit vouchers for private education, forcing universal private school vouchers into every state in the country. Notably, the Mississippi Legislature repeatedly has rejected broad voucher programs, due primarily to vehement opposition on the part of their constituents. Yet this federal legislation would supersede established state-level policies that have produced exceptional results by investing in and prioritizing public education.

Private school vouchers represent one of the greatest threats to the well-being of Mississippi children and to the quality of life for all citizens of our great state. Passage of this federal legislation would imperil the significant recent progress our state has made in our education outcomes and national rankings.

The measure proposes to empower private interests to pick and choose which children in Mississippi get to be educated with federal tax dollars and which should be denied. Imagine a world in which private schools and wealthy voucher backers wield the power of federal funds to decide who in our communities should be educated and who should not. This proposal violates the most essential tenets of our democracy: an equal opportunity for all.

The diversion of public tax dollars to private, unregulated, unaccountable entities to fund the education of our nation's children would create a system of haves and have-nots, with those not chosen left in under-resourced public schools, their very futures and life-chances in jeopardy.

The diversion of public funds to support private education is extremely unpopular among U.S. citizens nationwide, failing every single time the question has been put before voters – most recently in November when Colorado, Kentucky, and Nevada voted overwhelmingly against such proposals. It stands to reason that voters see such proposals as a wasteful, unproductive, and unjust use of taxpayer dollars: reams of research and the experience of states that have adopted such programs have shown that “school choice” programs yield no public good and do nothing to advance the principles and priorities of our country.

“Choice” measures are welfare for the wealthy. Overwhelmingly, vouchers and “school choice” tax credits benefit the wealthy and those whose children already were enrolled in private schools prior to passage of “choice” legislation. Rural, middle class, and working taxpayers are forced to pay for the private education choices of high-income families concentrated in suburbs and affluent pockets of the state.

“Choice” measures worsen academic outcomes. Studies of voucher programs in Indiana, Alabama, Ohio, Louisiana, and Wisconsin showed that voucher students who move from public to private schools experienced persistently lower achievement and learning loss. Some studies revealed learning loss that exceeded that experienced during the COVID pandemic. Recently, Mississippi’s public schools have drawn national acclaim for dramatically improved academic achievement, now ranking ninth in the nation for grade four reading scores, notoriety that has contributed to improved economic development in our state. It would be nonsensical to spend precious taxpayer dollars to diminish academic outcomes and jeopardize economic development and the general progress of our state.

“Choice” measures are budget busters. Most states that have passed choice measures have found that the cost far exceeds their estimations, blowing tremendous holes in government budgets while providing no public good. It is irresponsible to drive up our federal deficit for a program that provides no benefit to the majority of taxpayers.

“Choice” measures are immoral. These programs take resources away from our most vulnerable children and communities to benefit the wealthiest among us. There typically is no requirement to serve children with disabilities, and there are no regulations or protections for at-risk children or families.

Nearly 90 percent of Mississippi children are enrolled in our public schools, where communities unite to learn, celebrate, and cheer on their teams. Incentivizing the abandonment of these centers of local society in favor of fragmented, often ineffective, private academies will weaken our local communities and our state. We ask that you use your voice, your considerable influence, and your vote to defeat these ill-conceived federal tax credit vouchers for private education (Educational Choice for Children Act or Qualified Elementary and Secondary Scholarships).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nancy Loomer", written in a cursive style.

Nancy Loomer
Executive Director