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November 8, 2023

U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the NEA's 3 million members and the 50 million students they teach and support in public schools, we urge you to vote NO on the FY2024 Financial Services and General Government Appropriations bill. Votes on this issue may be included in NEA's Report Card for the 118th Congress.

We are particularly troubled by the provision in the bill to expand the D.C. voucher program, which impacts fewer than 2,000 private-school students, by cutting nearly \$9 million a year from the public schools that educate 50,000 students.

It is not lost on NEA members that the nation's only federally funded voucher program operates in a city that lacks federal representation, denying D.C. residents the opportunity to have a say on a critical issue affecting their children. Pouring resources into this failed voucher program at the expense of public-school students is especially galling given the 28% cut to overall education funding and 80% cut to Title I in the Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill. These draconian reductions would inflict the greatest harm on the most vulnerable.

Expanding the D.C. voucher program is an ideological choice that has nothing to do with ensuring that all students have the opportunity for an education that inspires their natural curiosity, imagination, and desire to learn. Numerous studies, including a [Department of Education report](#), have found no significant impact on either reading or mathematics achievement for students who participated in the voucher program. Furthermore, participation in the program did not increase parents' satisfaction with the school or parental involvement.

Whether these programs are called vouchers, education savings accounts (ESAs), or tuition tax credits (TTCs), the impact is the same: **They rob the public schools that educate 9 out of 10 students of scarce funding and resources.** Private schools are not accountable to the public, can deprive students of religious freedom, and often fail to protect civil rights. Taxpayer dollars should go only to public schools open to all students, not private schools that can choose their students based on economic status, academic achievement, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or other factors.

Education resources must go where they can do the greatest good: the public schools that educate most students in our nation and its capital. We ask you to vote NO on the FY2024 Financial Services and General Government Appropriations bill.

Sincerely,

Marc Egan  
Director of Government Relations  
National Education Association