

Members of the Senate Education Committee,

I am writing to express my grave concerns about Senate Bill 437 and ask that you DO NOT pass this legislation.

Senate Bill 437 which would give Education Savings Accounts to "qualified" children, is a bill that should have never made it to the Ways and Means Committee. It is a terrible idea that will further weaken our public schools. This basically falls in line with Betsy DeVos' ideas for the elimination of our public schools by funding corporate privatization of education through "charter" schools, vouchers, etc.... As we have seen in many states, charter schools have been an abysmal failure which have led to further inequities and the segregation of our children.

FOLLOW the MONEY...

Who supports this idea? Kathryn Hickok and Steve Buckstein who are employed by the Cascade Policy Institute (CPI). According to the Center for Media and Democracy (CMD), CPI is an Oregon-based think tank and member of the State Policy Network (SPN). From CMD:

The State Policy Network (SPN) has franchised, funded, and fostered a growing number of "mini Heritage Foundations" at the state level since the early 1990s.[1] SPN is a web of right-wing "think tanks" in every state across the country. It is an \$83 million right-wing empire as of the 2011 funding documents from SPN itself and each of its state "think tank" members. Although SPN's member organizations claim to be nonpartisan and independent, the Center for Media and Democracy's in-depth investigation, "EXPOSED: The State Policy Network -- The Powerful Right-Wing Network Helping to Hijack State Politics and Government," reveals that SPN and its member think tanks are major drivers of the right-wing, American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC)-backed corporate agenda in state houses nationwide, with deep ties to the Koch brothers and the national right-wing network of funders.

SB437 is sponsored by Republican Ted Ferrioli. Let him know that Oregon citizens will not tolerate ALEC legislation or its perpetrators. His duty is to the people of this state, not to the Koch billionaires.

Sincerely,

Catherine Carroll