



SONDY POPE

STATE REPRESENTATIVE
80TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT



For Immediate Release
January 18, 2017

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REP. POPE: BETSY DeVOS UNQUALIFIED AND OUT OF TOUCH

MADISON – Representative Sondy Pope (D-Mt. Horeb) responded to the confirmation hearing for United States Secretary of Education Nominee - Betsy DeVos. DeVos is a billionaire from Michigan, who has donated millions to Republican candidates and causes, and is an outspoken supporter of expanding voucher schools. During the hearing, she demonstrated a lack of basic knowledge and understanding of K12 education.

“Mrs. DeVos is clearly unqualified to serve as Secretary of Education,” said Rep. Pope. “Several times during the hearing she was unable to have a rudimentary discussion about many of the important issues facing our education system because she is that inexperienced and that out of touch.”

DeVos strongly supports a voucher school system, but will not support equal accountability standards for those schools receiving taxpayer dollars. When asked whether proficiency or growth was a better measure of student progress, she repeatedly failed to provide a coherent answer. When asked about civil rights protections for disabled students, DeVos deferred to the states, when these protections are in fact federal law. When asked about guns in schools, she ridiculously cited grizzly bears as a legitimate reason.

“These confirmation hearings are akin to job interviews. Any individual displaying this level of incompetence and inexperience, would never be hired by a local school district or business,” Rep. Pope said. “I am deeply concerned that she is being considered for such an important position.”

DeVos has never attended a public school, nor has she sent any of her children to one. In addition, she has never served or been involved in public education in any capacity. She has served as the Chair of the American Federation for Children until 2016 when she was nominated by President-Elect Donald Trump. She clearly does not understand education issues and her nomination presents an irrefutable conflict of interest.

“DeVos directed the American Federation for Children, who have donated millions to Republican candidates in Wisconsin, to expand the voucher program that could cost Wisconsin taxpayers around \$1 billion over the next decade,” Rep. Pope said. “Assuming her confirmation holds, it is frightening to think about the potential damage she will cause to community public schools in Wisconsin and across the country.”

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