



SONDY POPE

STATE REPRESENTATIVE
80TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT



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REP. POPE: OVER 200 SCHOOL DISTRICTS LOSE ADDITIONAL AID TO PAY FOR VOUCHERS

MADISON – Representative Sondy Pope (D-Mt. Horeb) released a [memo](#) today showing the effect the statewide voucher program has on the funding of Wisconsin’s public schools. Laws passed by Republicans in the last session changed the way that incoming students in voucher programs are counted in their resident districts for purposes of general aid distribution. School vouchers are estimated to cost the state over \$800 million over the next decade.

“We are already seeing the negative effects that voucher expansion is having statewide. Over 200 districts across the state, which had no incoming choice pupils, would have received more money had it not been used to fund students attending unaccountable voucher schools,” said Rep. Pope. **“As the voucher cap increases we are more likely to see runaway costs to pay for this unnecessary competing school system that has not proven to be any more successful than public schools. These are costs that our children’s classrooms cannot afford.”**

This provision was an eleventh-hour amendment to a bill that was written to provide technical fixes to the Special Needs Scholarship Program. The amendment was non-germane, never given a public hearing and was rammed through on the last night of the legislative session.

“These inequities are the result of Republican leadership implementing a funding mechanism that they didn’t understand, to pay for an unaccountable, for-profit school system,” Rep. Pope said. **“When districts lose money to pay for voucher students, those dollars come out of the pockets of local property taxpayers. This is not acceptable to me or to the people of Wisconsin.”**

During election season and in their agenda, the Republicans claimed they would [“evaluate the school funding formula](#), looking to correct problems that may bring unfair distributions.”

“If Republicans seriously want to start correcting unfair distributions, perhaps they should begin by not forcing local public school districts to pick up the tab for students across the state to attend unaccountable voucher schools. Based on their recent history of robbing Peter to pay Paul, it’s very unlikely they will take any action that will actually benefit our neighborhood schools.”

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