

## **Talking Points Opposing The Educational Choice for Children Act (ECCA) Being Included in the Senate Reconciliation Bill**

The Educational Choice for Children Act in the House Reconciliation Bill would provide \$5 billion annually in tax credits to fund private and religious K-12 schools. The bill would do this by establishing a new dollar-for-dollar tax credit for individuals and corporations who make charitable contributions to organizations that give vouchers to students to attend private K-12 schools. This would be a credit off your tax bill, not a deduction you have to itemize.

The Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy estimates that this \$5 billion program could actually cost as much as \$7 billion annually because stock can be donated as well as money. Stockholders can avoid paying capital gains and still get the full current value of their stock.

- Voucher programs are not viable options for many low-income students who cannot pay full private school tuition even with a voucher, or for rural students with no private schools available nearby. Voucher programs were rejected by voters in three states last fall, Colorado, Kentucky and Nebraska.
- Families earning up to three times the median income in their area would be eligible for vouchers from ECCA. It is not targeted at low income students.
- Current state voucher programs overwhelmingly support parents who are *already* sending their children to private school. ECCA will, in effect, redirect federal funding away from important government services toward high income families.
- Studies show that when vouchers become available, private schools raise their tuition.
- Private schools have very little public accountability. They have almost complete autonomy with regard to who they admit, what they teach, and what accommodations they make for students with disabilities. School choice ultimately means the private schools choose who to admit.
- Seventy-three percent of private schools are religious schools. This bill diverts federal funds that could be used for public education, defense, Medicaid, or any other purpose to religious schools with no prohibition on using the money for religious instruction.
- We strongly believe in the separation of church and state. We don't want our taxes or any federal funds financing private and religious school education. We don't want the Reconciliation Bill to divert what should be federal tax revenue to religious elementary and secondary schools whether they are Christian, Jewish, Muslim, or any other faith. We support public school education.

**I ask that ECCA not be included in the Senate Reconciliation Bill.**