

**KODIAK LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION OFFICE**

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WRITTEN TESTIMONY

NAME: Kathy Simpler
REPRESENTING: Self
BILL#/ SUBJECT: SJR 9
COMMITTEE & Senate Judiciary
HEARING DATE: SJUD 3/15/13

My name is Kathy Simpler and I'm opposed
to Senate Joint Resolution 9. I am a parent
who believes strongly in public education. Public
dollars should not be diverted away from
public schools to pay for unaccountable
private schools. Voucher schools can hire teachers
that are not certified or qualified. Voucher
schools are allowed to be discriminatory in
their enrollment practice and may refuse
admission to special needs students. Voucher
schools are not held accountable to the public
or held to the same educational standards
as public schools.

It is for these reasons that I am
opposed to Senate Joint Resolution 9.

LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION OFFICE

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NAME:

Kathleen Young

For SJR9

REPRESENTING:

Self

BILL# or SUBJECT:

SJR9COMMITTEE AND
HEARING DATE:STUD 3/15/13

Pls allow Alaskans to vote on SJR9. Let us
Choose! Let the money go to the student.

Private schools receive public funding in
Pell grants already. It works for college students,
it can work for pre-12 students in public
schools.

When I had my children in PACE^{Conspicuous} I was
offered curriculum from BYU & the Calvert
Institute, a Methodist school, but when I
chose to use the curriculum at Holy Name
Catholic school, the Craig School Board balked.
In essence, the School board discriminated against
my curriculum choice based on my religion.
Really, how I practice my religion is no
business of the state, and that's the separation
that should be observed. The state mandated
one religious curriculum over another in my
case.

Canada allows the money to follow the
student even to private schools. We should do the
same.

Good afternoon, *Sen. Coghill + Committee members —*

For the record, my name is Valerie Brooks. I am a long time Alaskan educator, currently a public school reading specialist in Ketchikan. These comments in opposition to SJR9 are my own.

The Intent of SJR9, also known as the voucher bill, is to allow public funds to be dedicated to religious and private schools. The conversation alludes to parental choice as to how their tax dollars are spent, but that is not the issue here. The issue is public money.

If the base student allocation for Alaskan students is not increased during this legislative session, it will be the fourth year of flat and inadequate funding for Alaska's public schools. The price tag on everything increases yearly, and state funding for public education does not keep pace. We need to catch up and keep up.

We can't do that if money for public education is siphoned off and presented to unregulated private and religious institutions. To claim that this blatant use of public funds for private school will somehow enhance parent choice is disingenuous.

The choice for parents and students in the state already includes public charter schools, alternative schools, private schools, ^{online, neighborhood} and public schools - families are free to determine which of these is the best fit for their children.

Please do not adversely impact the public school students I instruct every day by reducing the already insufficient amount of funding dedicated to their education by the state of Alaska. Private school parents may choose their children's educational direction, but when that choice negatively impacts the choices my public school students will have access to by limiting funds for public education, I cry foul.

It has been implemented down south unsuccessfully.
This ~~voucher~~ bill is ill-advised. I respectfully submit that your time in Juneau could be better utilized focusing on dedicating state funds to ensure that public education in Alaska is adequately and equitably funded *so as to provide services for all students + negate the need claimed for private providers to do so.*
Therefore, as a public educator, I urge you to halt consideration of SJR9, and to increase funding for public education in Alaska's public schools.

Thank you.

Valerie Brooks