

Vouchers

ISSUE:

S-1872, sponsored by Sen. Lesniak (D-20) and Sen. Kean (R-21), would create a publicly funded voucher program in New Jersey under the guise of “opportunity scholarships.” The program would divert \$360 million from the state treasury to subsidize private and parochial school tuition by giving dollar-for-dollar tax credits to corporations contributing to “scholarship funds.”

TALKING POINTS:

- **Gov. Christie has already cut \$1.3 billion from public education.** S-1872 would take another \$360 million out of the state treasury for an unproven voucher “scholarship” program.
- **Up to 25% of its voucher money (\$90 million) is earmarked for students already attending private and religious schools.** And if any of the 75% earmarked for public school students goes unused, it would be available to existing private school students.
- **There is NO accountability.** The bill only requires private schools to administer a bare-bones test to voucher students – unlike public schools that must meet rigorous state and federal testing requirements. This is totally at odds with Gov. Christie’s calls for greater accountability for public schools.
- **S-1872 is bad policy and should be OPPOSED.** It would strip 360 million in tax dollars from public schools already facing \$1.3 BILLION in budget cuts, and give that money to unaccountable private and religious schools, while doing nothing to help improve New Jersey schools in need of assistance and support.

TO DO:

Please call, fax, e-mail or visit your legislators. Tell them that taxpayer-funded vouchers to subsidize private school tuition are bad public policy. Urge them to focus restoring the funding that Gov. Christie has cut from our public schools before giving \$360 million to private schools.