

# U.S. Rep. Grothman: Questions Education Secretary DeVos

Posted on Thursday, May 24, 2018

**>> WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)**

Contact: Timothy Svoboda, (202) 225-2476

(Washington, D.C.) – Congressman Glenn Grothman (R-Glenbeulah) this week questioned U.S. Department of Education (DoE) Secretary Betsy DeVos about the policies and priorities of the DoE in a Committee on Education and the Workforce Hearing. Grothman urged Secretary DeVos to invest more energy into helping individuals with disabilities by solving the Competitive Integrated Employment problem. Grothman also asked Secretary DeVos about her efforts to streamline the DoE.

Excerpts of Grothman's questioning

Congressman Grothman: "I want to ask you about the Workforce Innovation Act and rules/guidances that were promulgated under the Obama Administration and how it affected people with different abilities after they left high school and before they reached 25 and whether you have any plans to change the Obama-era situation, which is, as I see it, very harmful to people with different abilities that they cannot be recommended or advised to go to work centers, and, as I understand it, a lot of them stay sitting at home losing skills and social opportunity. Are you familiar with that situation?"

Secretary DeVos: "Are you speaking of the Competitive Integrated Employment issue?"

Grothman: "Correct"

DeVos: "This is a matter of great interest and concern to me, and it's one we are looking at closely. There are groups and individuals that have come from both sides

of this issue and have strong arguments on both sides. So it is a guidance piece that I am looking at closely and have not reached any kind of conclusion.”

Grothman: “Have you had the opportunity to tour any work centers either in this area or in the Michigan area?”

DeVos: “I have not.”

Grothman: “I always worry about people with different abilities, and I think if you tour some of these work centers, and I would tour two or three, it seems to me in WI that we have one in every county, next time you’re back in Michigan, I would ask you to spend one or two hours at a couple of these work centers, or what used to be called sheltered workshops. Look at the people who work there as well as the employers who work there, and think what happens when we take some people out of the game between age 22 and 25. We should do that for me? You won’t regret it. It’ll be an enjoyable experience.”

DeVos: “I would welcome that opportunity.”

GG: “I would like to thank you for taking a stand and trying to reduce the department’s budget by \$7.7 billion. And I’ll give you a question I asked at the prior hearing, and I don’t expect you to know the answer, but I want you to guess. Do you know how much the federal government of the current year’s budget the federal government is borrowing?”

DeVos: “I heard this figure the other day, but I’m sure you know. The current year’s budget- 15%.”

Grothman: “Over 20%, it’s 22%, and it’s so easy to not care about the next generation, and so many people in this building don’t care at all about the next generation or the grandchildren down the line. They just love to pose for pictures and say they want to spend more money now. So, I thank you for being one of the few people hanging around Washington who does care about their children and grandchildren and I appreciate you making a modest 10.8% cut. Do you know how that cut is going over in the Appropriations Committee?”

DeVos: “Well I know that many of the recommendations have not been adopted by the appropriators, but that doesn’t mean we should not attempt to do the right thing on behalf of taxpayers and stay focused on the core mission.”

Grothman: “And not only taxpayers, on our children and grandchildren, right?”

DeVos: “I have seven now.”

Grothman: “Congratulations. That’s wonderful, and I’m glad you want to protect them. As you are finding out, now that you’re in Washington, all sorts of elected officials are not that caring, as you are. But would you say then that there’s a disagreement between the Trump Administration and the Republican congress as to how much money we should be spending in the next year?”

DeVos: “Well I think I would encourage members of Congress to think in the big picture and broader term a lot more.”

Grothman: “Would you say if it’s accurate to say that the Trump Administration is looking out for the children and grandchildren, It’s about time the Republican Appropriations Committee got with the program?”

DeVos: “I think there are some lessons to be learned and I think we should be cognizant of the future and what the implications are for our kids and grandkids.”

Grothman: “Well don’t be afraid to set up an appointment with some of those appropriators and get them in shape. Thanks much.”