

Rep. Pope: Voucher lobby misleads taxpayers on negative effects to public schools

Posted on Tuesday, Jan 28, 2020

>> **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.](#)**

MADISON, Wis. – Representative Sondy Pope (D-Mt. Horeb), the ranking member on the Assembly Committee on Education spoke out on the negative effects to public schools due to Wisconsin's four voucher programs, and misleading information purported by the voucher lobby. A recent [memo](#), released by the non-partisan Legislative Fiscal Bureau shows that vouchers caused \$145 million in aid reduction to public schools. \$95 million of that aid reduction comes from the Racine and Wisconsin programs, up nearly 30% from the previous year. The Wisconsin program cap expands 1% each year, until 2026-27 when it is lifted completely.

“The most troubling figure is the growth of aid reductions from the Racine and Wisconsin programs. It deeply disturbs me to think about what that figure will look like when the cap is lifted or 20-30 years down the line,” Rep. Pope said. “What we are seeing here is the slow usurpation of our public school funds by the voucher lobby and their operators, all at the cost to Wisconsin taxpayers.”

The conservative Wisconsin Institute for Law and Liberty recently released a report claiming that a 20% expansion of these programs would be a \$3.2 billion economic benefit to the state. The “study” was not academically peer-reviewed and uses little to no quantitative research or scientific methods.

“Any college or high school student who turned in a research paper where they used themselves as a reference twice would receive a failing grade. We cannot allow policy decisions regarding public schools to be subjected to conjecture and junk science,” said Rep. Pope. “It’s time that Wisconsin

invest more in our public schools, where over 90% of parents *choose* to send their children, so every student is given the opportunities they deserve.”