



CHRIS LARSON

STATE SENATOR

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CONTACT: Senator Chris Larson
608.266.7505

Rushed Voucher Bill Passes GOP-led Senate

MADISON – Last week, the Senate Committee on Education rushed through a bill regarding unaccountable voucher schools (Senate Bill 293). Even though the hearing on the bill was scheduled with barely 24 hours’ notice, the committee also scheduled a vote on the bill the same day. Now, less than a week later, this bill was rapidly jammed through the full Senate. Senator Chris Larson issued the following statement regarding GOP lawmakers’ hasty passage of Senate Bill 293:

“It’s like we are arranging the deck chairs on the Titanic as we continue to vote on minor technical changes to a program that, for over 25 years, has failed to achieve what it initially promised. At the end of the day, Senate Bill 293 is about making life easier for for-profit voucher schools, rather than ensuring that all of our children receive a quality education.

“As the ranking Democratic member on the Senate Education Committee, I appreciate that those in control of the State Legislature have finally listened to Democrats and concerned community members by implementing background checks. However, this legislation still does not go far enough to protect the over \$500 million in tax money that is being poured into these businesses that continue to skirt accountability.

“In an effort to increase transparency within the voucher program, I offered an amendment today that would have ensured our neighbors know exactly how much of their hard-earned tax dollars are going to the unaccountable voucher program, as well as an amendment to stop the irresponsible, rapid expansion of this failed program.

“I am disappointed that the GOP-controlled Senate rejected common sense and rushed through another bill that fails to do enough to ensure true accountability within a growing, unaccountable system.”

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WISCONSIN STATE CAPITOL
P.O. BOX 7882 • MADISON, WISCONSIN 53707-7882
(608) 266-7505 • (800) 361-5487 • FAX: (608) 282-3547
SEN.LARSON@LEGIS.WI.GOV • SENATORCHRISLARSON.COM