

Committee Members:

I would like to address some concerns I have as a parent regarding the recent updates on the EdChoice program. I have three children and work full time. I have worked hard for everything I have and have never expected a hand out or charity from anyone. My kids have all had a great education because I have placed them in the school that I chose and they have been able to flourish as both students and members of society because of the wonderful school to which I have paid a hefty price to send them to. Placing them in the public school that they would be assigned to would be detrimental to both their academic and social lives. I have 2 of my 3 kids that need extra one on one attention and I know with the large class sizes and high rosters at the public school, they would not get that personalized attention that has helped them so much. I have also had the blessing of being able to have my children in Christian-centered academia and studies have shown that when children have faith as the center of their lives, they are happier, healthier and have high moral standards since the base of their beliefs is that we should all be good to each other. I want my kids to be able to continue to have this opportunity to thrive and grow in their education and as my oldest enters higher education, she should not feel penalized because she wants to continue the education she has earned with all the hard work and dedication she has put in. Without EdChoice, her and so many others like her will be unable to attain the highest potential of their intellect. These are hard-working students with years of dedication. She should not feel subjected to an under-achieving educational school system if she has the opportunity to be educated in a better learning environment that focuses on her as a person, a student and a unique individual capable of more than just showing up for class. EdChoice gives her and others like her a fantastic opportunity to choose the school she so desires so that if the public school is not meeting expectations, she can choose to learn in an environment that not only meets, but exceeds expectations. No parent wants a child to have to learn in an subpar and under-achieving environment, but taking away the opportunities that EdChoice can bring, takes away everyone's ability to choose the educational path they so desire. I have never looked for hand-outs. I am looking for the best opportunities for my children and their future. EdChoice makes an impossibility possible by helping her achieve the educational goals that I know she can meet and even exceed. By being in a better learning environment that focuses on the students, she is able to come out as a more productive member of society, ready for her next adventure. After all, isn't that the ultimate goal of our educational system? Unfortunately, many school systems are failing that area and ours is one. It seems unfair to force a child to attend this failing environment on the grounds that there is no other option than to pay the absorbent amount for their education. It is not the parent's nor the student's fault that a school system fails to meet the needs of the students or performs at a subpar level. Why then, would you ever penalize those very people that it effects the most? I urge to really think about the young people that are being effected by this lack of decision-making and the possible elimination of a wonderful program that has made so many great opportunities possible for so many deserving students. Please ask yourself why these students should have to pay the ultimate price? These are good kids with the world at their doorstep, but when you shut that door and lock it up, then the only way to go is back, and not forward. Is this really the path we want pour kids to take? Please keep EdChoice and allow our students to meet their goals. I am a taxpayer and I have the right to send my child to school of my choice without the penalization of paying more out of my pocket.

Thank you for your time, J. Sroka, concerned parent