

Oppose Sending Public Tax Dollars to Private Schools -- from Nebraska State Education Association's (NSEA) CAPITOL UPDATE – March 1, 2019

[LB670](#) is a tax credit scholarship bill introduced with priority by Sen. Lou Ann Linehan of Elkhorn, and cosponsored by Senators Albrecht, Halloran, and Kolterman. It would give a tax credit to individuals and businesses that contribute money to offset the cost of private school tuition for some students. Education policy experts call these scholarships “neovouchers.” A hearing on the bill is scheduled for Thursday, March 7 in the Revenue Committee. The NSEA opposes the bill.

LB670 is really expensive. The limit on the total amount of tax credits for 2020 is \$10 million and will increase each year thereafter. States with similar legislation have seen these caps (and the resulting losses in state revenue) balloon exponentially. These dollar-for-dollar tax cuts benefit corporations and the wealthy but shift the burden of funding critical programs and services to less affluent taxpayers. Supporters say the state will see a savings, but this has not been realized in other states.

LB670 does not help all children. Despite its stated intent, tax-subsidized scholarships do not promote equal educational opportunities. Unlike public schools, whose doors are open to all, private schools can (and do) discriminate based on religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, and other characteristics. LB670 does little to remove barriers to private education because scholarships may only cover a small percentage of tuition fees, and private schools are also not required to provide transportation, free or reduced lunches, or special education services. We do not believe taxpayers' hard-earned dollars should be used to support discriminatory policies and practices.

LB670 hurts public schools. Contrary to proponents' claims, dollars transferred to private school scholarships would otherwise be tax dollars for public schools. Nebraska already ranks 48th in the nation for state support of K-12 education. We need to be investing in our public schools—not diverting dollars to a system we've never previously funded.

ACTION NEEDED! This private school tax credit scheme is bad for Nebraska and is an attempt to drain funding from our public schools. Your help is needed to STOP this bill before it leaves the Revenue Committee. Please contact members of the Revenue Committee this week and tell them to oppose LB670!

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