

July 3, 2010

## **PURE Supports Amendment #2 on HR4899 of July 1**

Dear Senator Durbin:

We at Parents United for Responsible Education (PURE) were very disappointed to read your letter to Senator Inouye opposing Cong. Obey's proposal to use funds previously committed to the Race to the Top and other so-called reform programs in order to save teacher jobs.



We understand that you support funding jobs for teachers. However, we strongly disagree with your opposition to paying for this initiative with funds previously allocated for Race To the Top (RTTT) strategies, teacher pay-for-performance programs, and charter school expansion.

You call these programs “vital,” “bold,” and “critical reform efforts.” We believe that they are unproven, reckless, wasteful experiments which put our most vulnerable children at risk. We would like to see all the funding for these programs cut unless and until they have developed a true track record of success rather than simply a modestly effective public relations campaign.

We have seen the damage of Arne Duncan's RTTT-style initiatives here in Chicago, which

- destroyed neighborhood schools, weakening already challenged communities,
- ramped up the misuse of biased and uninformative standardized tests,
- expanded the numbers of students who are pushed out of schools,
- increased the marginalization of parents in their own children's education,
- privatized public education, a fundamental civil right which should be open, accessible, and accountable to the public, and
- ultimately wasted billions of precious education dollars that could have been spent actually improving the schools we have using proven methods such as holistic reform, lower class sizes, teacher empowerment, and increased parent involvement.

We see the Obey amendment as a win-win situation. It will help save tens of thousands of teaching jobs at a time when the economic recovery is in serious danger of stalling. In addition, it will help put the brakes on a dangerous rush to close and privatize more schools and increase the focus on standardized testing.

Please save our teachers, our public schools, and our children's future! Support Congressman Obey's amendment.

Thank you.

Julie Woestehoff

### **Parents United for Responsible Education**

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