



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Statement of the American Civil Liberties Union of Wisconsin on Voucher Expansion Deal
Republican deal appears imminent and dangerous

MILWAUKEE—ACLU of Wisconsin Executive Director Chris Ahmuty today issued a statement in response to media reports that Republican legislators and Governor Walker have reached a deal in principle that would apparently expand the failed school voucher program statewide and increase the taxpayer funds wasted on voucher schools that discriminate and lack accountability. The Legislature's Joint Committee on Finance is likely to take up the deal as a motion to amend the proposed 2013-15 state budget.

"The ACLU of Wisconsin wants to warn Wisconsin taxpayers and parents that Republican legislators appear ready to cave into the voracious demands of school voucher interests at the expense of our public schools.

"Governor Walker's initial state budget proposal to expand the number and funding for private school voucher and charter schemes was so out of line that any deal to amend it was likely to leave expansion interests with more than enough to build a second system of taxpayer funded K-12 education across our state. That appears to be the case given reports of a pending deal.

"State funding for our public schools is already inadequate. We cannot afford a second flawed and unaccountable system.

"Who believes that voucher school interests won't be back at the public draught for more funds, including property taxes. The history of voucher expansion over the last twenty years proves that no limit, cap or condition is invulnerable.

"The U.S. Department of Justice agrees with the ACLU of Wisconsin and Disability Rights Wisconsin that the state cannot ignore violations of civil rights laws, including the Americans with Disabilities Act, in the private school voucher program. No deal can give away students' rights.

"The ACLU of Wisconsin urges Republican legislators to reject this deal which sets Wisconsin on a path that will harm the education of students statewide.

"The ACLU of Wisconsin urges Wisconsin parents to stand up for the Wisconsin way and defeat deals that harm our students and only serve special interests."

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