

Transferring Public Functions Into Private Hands Is Hostile To The Common Good

Privatization of public functions such as highways, public safety services (fire and police), prisons, and education leads to unequal treatment of citizens, particularly the poor.

The ultimate issue for debate in this privatization matter is: who will control. Will public functions and hence, the public good be controlled by the body politic or by an individual or a select group that is not accountable to the citizenry? The private sector is not accountable to the public and avoids transparency. Private control means that market forces prevail; hence, there are winners and losers. Poor folks typically are the losers as the private sector is granted control over public functions.

It is ironic that the poor have been “used” by the education privatizers to get their foot in the door in the education enterprise. Charter schools and vouchers were initiated by those advancing the rhetoric that the poor should have the opportunity to be rescued from low-performing school districts. Now, the education privatizers want tax funding for the private choice of all students.