

Vouchers fail in the Texas legislature. Rural Republicans and Urban Democrats derailed the Texas voucher train—a lesson for Ohio

Dianne Ravitch's May 28 [blog](#) provides commentary on how the universal voucher legislation was defeated in Texas.

Ohio needs a similar plan.

[Texas: NO VOUCHERS IN TEXAS! ABBOTT VOWS TO CALL SPECIAL SESSION!](#)

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The Texas legislature refused to pass voucher legislation!

Governor Greg Abbott said that getting a voucher law was his #1 priority in this session of the legislature. Republicans have a supermajority in the legislature but rural Republicans and urban Democrats blocked the bill. He pressured every Republican to back his bill.

Once again, vouchers failed to pass!

In rural Texas, public schools are often the only school in town and the biggest employer. Public schools are the heart of the community. Parents, aunts, uncles, and cousins went to the public school. The teachers are well known and respected. Rural Republicans said no to vouchers.

The Pastors for Texas Children have worked diligently to stop vouchers in Texas. PTC issued this press release today:

No Vouchers In Texas!

The Texas House of Representatives has once again stopped a private school voucher program in Texas.

Rep. Ken King's public education funding bill, HB 100, was saddled in the waning days of the session by Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick with a one-hundred page Senate substitute calling for universal ESA vouchers. When the House refused to concur with the substitute, the bill was sent to conference committee where it died.

Although Gov. Greg Abbott made private school vouchers his #1 priority this legislative session, the House was crystal clear in their opposition to it. Three times throughout the session, they repudiated a voucher proposal.

First, the Herrero Amendment prohibiting tax money for private school vouchers passed the Texas House of Representatives during the budget debate on an 86-52 vote. Second, the House refused to grant the Public Education Committee permission to hold an impromptu meeting to push out Senate Bill 8 calling

for a universal voucher. The final straw was when the committee failed to garner the votes to pass out SB 8. The plan died in committee.

That's when the Senate, in a last-ditch effort, attached a comprehensive voucher program to HB 100 which would have provided much-needed funds for local public schools and well-deserved teacher pay increases.

Rep. King did not mince words: "Teacher pay raises held hostage to support an ESA plan. Teachers are punished over a political fight."

This session's rejection of vouchers is particularly powerful because Gov. Greg Abbott made the passage of a voucher policy an "emergency item" this legislative session, conducted a statewide campaign in anti-voucher House districts, and personally lobbied House members on the chamber floor to pass it.

"Vouchers are fundamentally unjust and inequitable," said the Rev. Charles Foster Johnson, Founder and Executive Director of Pastors for Texans Children. "It is wrong for public tax dollars to be diverted to subsidize the private education of affluent children. To pay for religious education is an especially egregious violation of both the public trust and of God's moral law of religious freedom."

"Gov. Abbott has tied up the entire legislature this session, at the cost of millions of tax dollars, for his own petty personal political agenda. Sadly, his stated intention is to continue calling special legislative sessions until he bullies the House into submission."

"There is only one way to deal with a bully: a firm, patient, courageous confrontation. Precisely what our morally oak-strong caucus of pro-public education rural Republican and urban Democratic House members can provide."

The Texas State Constitution, in Article 7, Section 1, calls for the suitable provision for "public free schools." There is no constitutional provision for public funding diverted to private schools.

Pastors for Texas Children is grateful that the Texas House of Representatives once again stood firm, as they have throughout the 30 year voucher debate in Texas, for the true conservative value of universal education for all Texas schoolchildren, provided and protected by the public.

Pastors for Texas Children mobilizes the faith community for public education ministry and advocacy. <http://www.pastorsfortexaschildren.com>

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