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March 11, 2009 5:07 PM

White House Says Obama Will Not Allow D.C. School Vouchers To Expire

Posted by Michelle Levi | 4

White House Press Secretary Robert Gibbs insinuated today that President Obama will reverse a provision in the omnibus spending bill to terminate school vouchers for underprivileged students in Washington, D.C.

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(CBS)

The president signed the \$410 billion dollar omnibus spending bill for fiscal year 2009 this afternoon. It includes a provision that lets funding for the city's school voucher program to expire at the end of the 2010 school year. The program allows about 1,700 mostly low-income and minority students to attend private schools as an alternative to the struggling D.C. public school system.

"It wouldn't make sense to disrupt the education of those that are in that system," Gibbs said in discussing the president's thinking. "And I think we'll work with Congress to ensure that a disruption like that doesn't take place."

Asked if President Obama plans to restore the program's funding in his full budget, which is currently being drafted, Gibbs said, "whether it's in the budget or in the -- the appropriations process," the administration will work to make sure "that disruption doesn't take place."

Gibbs also said that the voucher program, which benefits students attending his daughter's private school, is not a long term solution to the problem of subpar city schools.

"The president doesn't believe that vouchers are a long-term answer to our educational problems and the challenges that face our public school system, where the vast majority of -- of students are educated in this country," he said.

The Senate voted 50 to 39 Tuesday to reject a Republican-sponsored amendment to the spending bill which would have extended the voucher program beyond the 2009-2010 school year.

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The actual total per pupil spending in DC this year on k-12 education is \$26,555, while the average tuition at the voucher schools was \$5,928 last year. For the official source links and calculations of these figures, see:
<http://www.cato-at-liberty.org/2009/03/06/vouchers-vs-the-district-with-more-money-than-god/>

The voucher students perform at least as well as public school students and their parents are significantly happier, according to the official Dept. of Ed. report published last year. So the private school choice program is more than four times as efficient as the DC public schools.

Posted by [AndrewJCoulson](#) at 7:36 AM : Mar 12, 2009
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We would like vouchers in all cities across the country, all or none.

Posted by [whowon](#) at 4:46 AM : Mar 12, 2009
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Saturn05 is obviously not informed on the subject...it's not about the schools, it's about the kids....poor kids who were forced to go to poor schools are given a chance at a better education...an education that their families could otherwise not afford...an education that, at \$7500 per student, is about \$7,000 cheaper than a D.C. public school education.

A better education at half the price....

Who (besides Saturn05) could argue with this logic? It's all taxpayer money that's being spent....don't we want our tax dollars

spent wisely?

Posted by boosterprez1 at 4:58 PM : Mar 11, 2009
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If these schools want to be private or selective, then pay for it yourself. Vouchers and charter schools need to be eliminated if taxpayer money is being spent. Why don't we just allow segregated schools again?

Posted by saturn05 at 4:18 PM : Mar 11, 2009
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