

LONE STAR PROJECT

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Cuellar Campaign Misleads Voters and Hides Position on Vouchers

Campaign denies support for vouchers, yet Henry Cuellar championed them in Texas

In a response to The Washington Times, the Henry Cuellar campaign chose to mislead voters regarding their candidate's long support of private school vouchers. The exact excerpt from The Washington Times is as follows:

“His (Cuellar’s) campaign also took issue with the claim that he supports school choice -- he does support allowing a student from a failing public school to transfer to another public school, but not vouchers for private schools.”

(Source: The Washington Times, 1-18-06)

Surely, Henry Cuellar knows that a simple fact check reveals that, as a State Legislator, Cuellar championed the use of taxpayer funds for private school vouchers. In fact, Cuellar's support for vouchers has been widely and consistently reported since 1995. Even The Washington Times, who ran the quote on January 18, 2006, had earlier reported that Cuellar supports vouchers, writing "I think this will be good for minority children," said Mr. Cuellar. "How can they argue against it?" *(Source: The Washington Times, April 13, 1997)*

Fact Check – Henry Cuellar’s support for taxpayer funded public school vouchers

- As a Texas Legislator, Cuellar voted to allow **taxpayer funded vouchers** to be used for tuition at **private schools**. *(Record vote on Wilson amendment to HB318, TX House Journal, May 6, 1997)*
- As a Texas Legislator, Cuellar authored legislation to allow private, **for profit**, companies to manage individual public schools and public school districts *(HB 1402 by Cuellar, filed in the TX House in 1995)*
- “Rep. **Henry Cuellar**, D-Laredo, authored the school choice bill and has been an outspoken advocate of vouchers... **‘I see this as**

a victory,' he said. 'It's the closest we've ever been' to approving vouchers." (Source: San Antonio Express-News, May 7, 1997)

- **"My prediction is that 1999 will be the year of the vouchers," Cuellar said. (Source: The Houston Chronicle, May 7, 1997)**
- **Cuellar's proposal says a student at a low-performing public school may use tax dollars pegged for his or her education to attend a private school.... "Contrary to what people say, people want to be given a choice." Cuellar said. (Source: San Antonio Express-News, April 22, 1998)**
- **"Members of the state board of the League of United Latin American Citizens met this past weekend for their last meeting of the year and endorsed a proposal presented by Rep. Henry Cuellar, D-Laredo....Those students who are rejected by another public school district should have the option of receiving a private school voucher worth up to \$ 5,000, Cuellar said." (Source: Fort Worth Star-Telegram, December 10, 1997)**

Conclusion: Henry Cuellar has been among the most ardent supporters of using tax funds to cover the cost of vouchers for private schools. The Cuellar Campaign's decision to mislead voters about his support for school vouchers, along with his continued support for Tom DeLay and the Republican Leadership, are ongoing examples of how Cuellar's actions in Austin and Washington betray his constituents and disrespect those whose trust and vote he seeks.

Sources:

"State Rep. Henry Cuellar, D- Laredo, plans to reintroduce a bill on a limited voucher program that was barely defeated in the Texas House last year. Cuellar's proposal says a student at a low-performing public school may use tax dollars pegged for his or her education to attend a private school." (Source: San Antonio Express-News, April 22, 1998)

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