



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 24, 2025

TEXAS SENATE DEMOCRATS ON FINAL PASSAGE OF SENATE BILL 2

AUSTIN, TX – The Texas Senate Democratic Caucus released the following statement on the final passage of Senate Bill 2:

The Texas Senate Democratic Caucus stands united in strong opposition to Senate Bill 2, a deeply flawed voucher scheme that diverts billions of taxpayer dollars from Texas public schools and channels them into private hands—with no guarantee of better outcomes, no public accountability and no protections for the children who need the most support. These funds are coupons for wealthy families already sending their children to private schools while doing virtually nothing for the vast majority of Texas students.

With a \$24 billion budget surplus, Texas has a historic opportunity to put our children first by making the bold, long-overdue investments our public schools desperately need. Instead of seizing this moment to improve education for the 5.5 million students who rely on our neighborhood schools, however, some state leaders are prioritizing a costly voucher program that serves the few at the expense of the many.

When this bill was first considered in the Texas Senate and subsequently in the Texas House, Democrats offered numerous amendments to protect students with disabilities, uphold anti-discrimination standards for participating private schools, ensure fiscal accountability and basic transparency, prevent program cost overruns and limit eligibility to families who truly need assistance. These amendments were rejected summarily along partisan lines.

If this program truly were designed to support students with disabilities or those at risk, it would require participating private schools to meet the same standards as public schools and prohibit them from cherry-picking which students to accept. Instead, it opens the door to discrimination while using public funds to bolster private profits.

In rural Texas, where private schools are few and far between, vouchers offer no real options—only funding cuts to local schools that often are the heart of their communities and among their largest employers.

Furthermore, S.B. 2 makes future investments in public education—like reducing class sizes, raising teacher pay and improving student outcomes—far less feasible. School districts will continue to face difficult choices: cut essential programs, fire educators or burden homeowners with even higher property taxes. Essentially, S.B. 2 creates a two-tiered system in which public schools are left to do more with less while private entities profit from taxpayer money without public responsibility.

Finally, other states' voucher programs provide cautionary tales. Costs skyrocket, fraud occurs and public education is slashed, inevitably leading to higher taxes. Notably, none of these programs has been shown to improve student outcomes. Vouchers are bankrupting Arizona, and conservative voters in Nebraska recently repealed vouchers.

Let's be clear: S.B. 2 is not about "school choice." It's about public subsidization of private schools' choice. It is a step backward for Texas, jeopardizing the very system that supports the overwhelming majority of our children and abandoning our constitutional responsibility to provide every child with a quality public education.

Senate Democrats remain steadfast in our fight for fully funded public schools, support and respect for educators and a future in which every child has a fair opportunity to succeed.

###