

## Attack on public education ignores pertinent factors

I must respond to Mr. Dailey S. Berard's letter of Dec. 6, 1988 suggesting that private education is superior to public education. I am very tired of the same tirade attacking public education. This argument is based upon ignorance of many factors which affect education.

First, let me state that it is unfair to compare all of public education with all of private education. Mr. Berard's statement that "in every academic category tested, private schools are found to be far superior to public schools" is based upon data that, because of the population tested, cannot be realistically compared.

Private education maintains the right of exclusion. They may exclude any applicant who does not conform to the expectations set by the institution. Very few, if any, private schools educate students who are physically and/or mentally handicapped, victims of abject poverty, have little or no parental support, have severe emotional problems, or who are the victims of child abuse and child neglect. Public education deals with all of these problems.

Mr. Berard would have us believe that to address the aforementioned problems smacks of liberalism. I believe that his brand of conservatism is nothing more than a mask for bigotry and lack of compassion for those children who need our help and support.

Mr. Berard suggests that the voucher system is the panacea for all of the ills of education. The only sure result of a voucher system would be the total segregation of the school population both

racially and intellectually. Society would still be faced with the care of those who are not served by private education. Further, Mr. Berard suggests that those who do not utilize public education should not be forced to support public education. The speciousness of this argument is evident.

Only a very narrow mind can ignore the fact that all of society benefits from a good education for its citizens. Nothing breeds ignorance like poverty and nothing breeds poverty like ignorance. It is imperative that we break this vicious cycle if we are to address the problems of education in Louisiana.

Mr. Berard and others who think as he does need to be reminded that those who are not educated will ultimately become their responsibility through the welfare and prison systems of the state. It is far less expensive to provide education.

Finally, I would like to say that there are many public schools in our state who are providing education equal to and far superior to many private schools. Benjamin Franklin High School in New Orleans, Baton Rouge High School, Scotlandville High School, McKinley Middle, Istrouma Middle, and Northeast Elementary are but a few examples which come to mind. If we are going to deal with all the ills of education, we will need to start with the home and the community from which our students come.

12-15-88

Morning Advocate

Steve Ketcham  
2151 Hollydale Ave.  
Baton Rouge

# Negates freedom of choice

In his views expressed in this space on Dec. 15, Mr. Steve Ketcham accuses Mr. Dailey S. Berard of lack of compassion and bigotry for supporting private schools and the voucher system. But Mr. Ketcham, like all liberals (and conservatives too, I might add), does not understand individual rights.

In opposing a voucher system (because it would supposedly lead to intellectual and racial segregation), Mr. Ketcham is simply opposing freedom of choice. The all-knowing liberals want to mandate to us lowly parents where we must educate our children. (After all, children are "public property," a natural "resource," just cells in the grand old "collective," eh?)

Let us recall that every government law is enforced by the threat of the policeman's gun. Now Mr. Ketcham thinks that it is perfectly okay for people to be forced to pay for public school — even if they have no children — because "all of society benefits from a good education for its citizens." But this does not follow logically at all.

Merely because something may be good for me does not justify forcing me — at the point of the government's gun — to participate. Why, after all, don't we force people to eat more healthily, and ban cigarettes and alcohol? I suppose if Mr. Ketcham could think of a practical way to force people to make straight A's in school he would be all for it — after all, it would surely "benefit all of society."

The further argument is that if there are fewer educated citizens, then welfare will be called upon to take care of them later. But this is an argument against welfare, not against freedom of choice in education. If higher welfare burdens stand in the way of a voucher system, by all means let's get welfare out of the way.

For welfare itself is immoral: If your neighbor loses his job and house through some accident, does it give him the right to pull a gun on you and steal your food? No. And neither does the government have the right to steal money from me — forcibly, at the point of a gun — and give it to another. The government's job is to protect rights, not invade them.

There is only one fundamental right — the right to be left alone. For that imposes only negative or passive obligations on others. But any "positive right" — such as a right to a job, to an education or to welfare — must impose a positive obligation on others to provide me with these things. That is, supposedly in the name of freedom, one man's rights are satisfied by partially enslaving another. But there can be no "right" to enslave another — not for my good, not even for his own good.

12-21-88  
Morn. Adv.  
Baton Rouge, LA

N. Stephan Kinsella  
17104 Penn Blvd.  
Prairieville

Morning Advocate, Baton Rouge, LA  
12-21-88

# Best use for community money is educating present generation

Shades of Ayn Rand! A. Stephan Kinsella's views, printed in this column on Dec. 21 come across like the "me generation" in spades. His "one fundamental right" — to be left alone — leads to anarchy, to despots, to a society bereft of compassion, justice or the rights for which our forebearers fought the American Revolution and then established the Constitution.

I presume Mr. Kinsella financed his own education, paved his own street, dug his own well and hires his own bodyguard. He is fortunate to be so well financed.

The idea of community is that of cooperation,

of joining together for the betterment of all the members of the community, rich and poor alike.

This isn't always completely fair; some give more than others; others receive more than others. It has one advantage: We get to choose the ones who make the decisions, and if we don't like the way they decided, we can get rid of them.

Not everything is perfect; seldom in life is there perfection. Public education needs a lot of help; I happen to think that vouchers won't solve the problem, but that's debatable.

Welfare is a great problem. I'm not sure of the answers to the problems of welfare, but I am sure that we are, indeed, our brothers' keeper, despite Mr. Kinsella, who would just as soon see these people die of starvation.

There is one good outcome possible: If we take the money, the intelligence and the will power to educate the current generation of children, if we train them to take part in commerce and industry, if we have the will to find them homes and employment, we may have eased the burden of all of us, and secured a prosperous generation to follow ours.

12-28-88  
Morning Advocate

Richard R. Ryan  
1237 Perkins Rd., Apt. 2  
Baton Rouge,  
70806

N. STEPHAN KINSELLA  
17104 Penn Blvd.  
Prairieville, LA 70769

(504) 622-2148

January 4, 1989

Richard R. Ryan  
1237 Perkins Rd., Apt. 2  
Baton Rouge, LA 70806

Dear Mr. Ryan,

I would like to respond to your letter in the Dec. 28 *Morning Advocate*, in which you responded to my Dec. 21 letter concerning, among other things, a voucher system.

You claim that the right to be left alone will lead to anarchy. But I did not support anarchy, nor is it true that such *laissez-faire* capitalism will lead to anarchy. In my letter, I clearly stated "The government's job is to protect rights, not invade them." Thus it is clear that I was not advocating anarchy. So, only if anarchy is a necessary (or likely) result of a system of government which upholds individual rights does your comment have any merit. A state of anarchy, a despot, or "a society bereft of . . . justice or . . . rights" [your words] all would violate individual rights, and thus would not be tolerated by a proper government. This cannot be too difficult to see, even for a liberal.

There is no way you can point to history to support your position that an individual-rights-respecting society (which means: *laissez-faire* capitalism) would lead to anarchy or despotism. This is because such a society has never existed. America came closest roughly 100 years ago, but because of the lack of a philosophical base, it crumbled and resulted in your socialistic welfare-state.

When you stated that such a society would lead to lack of compassion, I disagree, for I do not have such a low opinion of human nature; nor does history support your view. In a country where the government is not stealing vast amounts of everyone's wealth and redistributing it, (1) people would have more to spend on charity, (2) would also feel more responsibility to do so since they would know that the government was not aiding the poor, and (3) not only would people have more money to give voluntarily, but that money would go much further, since the efficiency of private charities is much higher than that of public bureaucracies.

Now you seem to think it a strike against me that I — an ~~advocate~~ of rugged individualism — did not build my own roads, dig my own wells, and hire my own bodyguards. Well, of course I didn't, especially not in today's repressive economic atmosphere. When the government establishes a monopoly *by force* — such as roads and utilities, I have no choice; no market to turn to. The private companies whose services would have filled the road- and electricity-void never had a chance because of the government's interference. Don't blame me for not buying what the government has outlawed. But your comment about the bodyguard shows that you refuse to hear what I am saying. The function of government is to protect rights. This includes police (along with army and courts). So why would

everyone need private bodyguards? *I am not advocating anarchy.*

Your definition of community is vague and dangerous. The mere fact that we have some say-so in who is our jailer is not too consoling. Democracy is not such a great thing. Remember — and this is important — Adolf Hitler *was elected*. And this was *after Mein Kampf* was published and widely read in Germany, in which he explicitly showed his hostility towards the Jews and his willingness to sacrifice individuals for the good of the state. Plain democracy is simply a lynch mob. It does not matter to me if a thug kills me or if a majority votes to kill me. My rights have still been violated. In fact, the word "democracy" is not even mentioned in the *Declaration of Independence* nor in the *Constitution*. America is (was) a Republic, and this means that we (used to) respect individual rights. That is, there were certain fundamental, unalienable rights which *even a majority* could not vote away.

Actually, as I mentioned, I do not believe in public-funded education. What may be debatable is whether or not it should be compulsory, on the grounds that depriving a child of education may be equivalent to child-abuse to not give him at least some minimum education, and thus is a violation of his rights (to not be abused).

Also, I would most definitely *not* prefer to see the poor starve. I would prefer to create a free country in which almost all of the poor do not have to be poor; a country in which they have the opportunity to make their own livelihood. Where minimum wage laws, pro-labor-union legislation and tariffs do not force people out of work. Furthermore, I *would* give (and have given) to charity, if the person is destitute through no fault of his own.

However, my own charitable instincts do not give me a right to force you to give your money away to charity. It is fine for you to believe that you have a responsibility to feed every grubbing hand that comes your way; but do not shoulder your duties on me. You cannot justify it. Your assertion is bare, and it cannot be justified (just try — I would be interested to comment).

You claim that we are 'our brother's keeper.' But you know that this is soft language for what you are advocating. What you are saying is that B has a *right* to steal money from A, as long as B *needs it*. What this means is that you are declaring theft (and presumably, murder too) to be moral as long as there is *need* behind it. Certainly it is you who are advocating anarchy. Ah, you say, but you aren't saying theft is OK on the individual level — only the government can do it. But, Mr. Ryan, if theft is immoral, why does it suddenly become moral when the majority appoints some spokesmen with guns (the government) to do it?

I have attempted to address all of the points you raised in your letter. If you are honest with yourself, you will attempt to answer mine, for they do definitely conflict with your values. I do not expect you to be honest with yourself, however. For you were not in your letter. I was clearly not advocating anarchy, and simply because I do not want to steal from A and give to B does not mean I would "just as soon" see B starve. Moreover, you did not specifically answer any of my points. You simply tossed them aside, and tried to appeal to emotionalism.

Let me emphasize that I am not angry (not that it matters to you) with your

reply. I expected as much. I appreciate your concern with truth. But I truly believe (and I believe it can be proved, and has been) that pure capitalism (a system respecting individual rights) would lead to such good will among men, peace, and prosperity that I cannot help but be for it. However, if you have read Ayn Rand, and are still not convinced, you probably never can be. Just in case, let me recommend *Atlas Shrugged*, *The Virtue of Selfishness*, and *Capitalism: The Unknown Ideal*, all by Ayn Rand. Also, you might enjoy a short, delightful book called *Economics in One Lesson*, by Henry Hazlitt.

Sincerely yours,

N. StephAn Kinsella

N. STEPHAN KINSELLA  
17104 Penn Blvd.  
Prairieville, LA 70769

(504) 622-2148

Saturday, November 4, 1989

Honorable Buddy Roemer  
Governor  
State of Louisiana  
State Capitol  
Baton Rouge, LA 70804

Dear Governor Roemer:

I AM WRITING to respectfully offer my views concerning an educational voucher system. I am a second-year law student at LSU, and also a graduate student pursuing my master of science in electrical engineering, and for years I have had an interest in (mostly free-market) economics and philosophy. I have (privately) extensively studied ideas concerning politics, economics, ethics, law, individual rights and freedom, as a hobby and passion. (In fact, I wrote you a letter a few years ago, in 1987, concerning my views on Judge Robert Bork's rejection from the U.S. Supreme Court, and you wrote me a very nice response [Dec. 1, 1987], for which I was grateful.)

Because of my pro-freedom political/economic views, I favor a voucher system as a way to improve the diversity and quality of education, to decrease its costs, and to increase the choices available to taxpayers. I have been meaning to write to you for several months now, but I kept procrastinating. When I saw the recent articles in *The Morning Advocate*, I decided to sit down and write this letter.

I am not associated (yet) with the "Right to Learn Committee," which was recently featured in the *Advocate*. When I learned of their formation and existence, I was surprised, yet pleased, since it appears that some people are actually starting to look for new solutions to old problems. I was also very pleased by the article in this morning's *Advocate*, which explained that you had (possibly) backed off from your anti-voucher stand. I want to congratulate you and encourage you for taking a possibly dangerous, yet courageous, stand.

Although, in my view, much of the underlying structure, function and purpose of government is fundamentally flawed today, I honestly believe that implementing a (full, complete) voucher system in education could be one of the most important things you could realistically help accomplish, as governor of this state. Reform of the educational system is not the only reform that needs to be made, of course; but, of the many governmental reforms needed, it is one of the few that has a true chance of success.

In this letter, I would like to explain to you my economic and political reasons for supporting a (full-fledged) voucher system.<sup>1</sup>

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First, let me define what I mean by a "voucher system," since there seem to be competing views. A "voucher system" would simply be a means of governmental financing of education, under which each student would receive a tuition voucher, redeemable at any qualified school, public, private, or parochial; the voucher could be supplemented by the parent's own income, for more expensive schools which cost more than the voucher amount.

The way I look at the educational problems is to put them all in context. Given that the state (i.e., the government) wants to provide education (grades 1 to 12) to all its citizens, regardless of their financial status, we must first realize that this is nothing more than a welfare-transfer from richer to poorer. It appears, then, that the majority of taxpayers support this type of welfare benefit (free education for some). So let us suppose a society in which there is no publicly-funded education, in which we wish to start it. What would be the best way to do it? If the answer is "a voucher system," then it seems to me that we ought to try to move that way now, since we obviously took a wrong turn somewhere in our educational-history.

The proper question then, is, how do we accomplish "free" education for all? (Of course, it's not really "free," since taxpayers pay for it.) Our goal seems to be ensuring (good) education for all children. The government has a batch of education-earmarked money, so how does it best spend it to educate children? The most obvious way would be to pay a certain amount of cash (I am not certain what the actual per-student per-year amount the state spends is; for purposes of this letter, I will assume it is \$1500) directly to all parents, for them to spend on their children's education. However, we can't do this, since some parents—especially the poor—might not spend all of the money on their children's education. Thus cash payments will not *ensure* all children's education, which is one of our goals. Even if we have compulsory-attendance laws, it would be an extreme administrative hassle to make sure all parents spend all their voucher-cash on their children rather than on, say, movie tickets.

It seems to me that the next obvious choice would be a restricted type of money, which could be spent only at (qualified) schools. This is a voucher system. This would work better than the cash system approach, since, even though there is administrative red-tape costs here, as above, there will be less "cheating" by parents because their *temptation* to cheat has been removed. The check they have cannot be spent on milk, or cigarettes, or cars; it can be spent

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<sup>1</sup>I would like to include here some of the economic/political references which have helped me form my voucher-related views. First of all, the book *Economics in One Lesson*, by Henry Hazlitt, is a very common-sensical (and short) book which explains basic economic principles very well, although it doesn't explicitly mention a voucher system. For explicit explanations of an defenses of a voucher system, see *Law, Legislation and Liberty, Vol. III*, by Friedrich A. Hayek, p. 60 et seq.; "The Role of Government in Education," Ch. VI of *Capitalism and Freedom*, by Milton Friedman; "Sell the Schools," Ch. 10 of *The Machinery of Freedom*, by David Friedman; and "The Role of Government," by Randal G. Holcombe, in *Man, Economy, and Liberty: Essays in Honor of Murray N. Rothbard*, edited by Walter Block and Llewellyn H. Rockwell, Jr., p. 277 et seq.;



only on (qualified) education. There are many advantages to this system, especially compared to the bureaucratic educational mess we have today.

The first way we thought of to accomplish our goal of education (cash payments), will not work, so we came up with the second method (voucher checks). There may be a few other alternative ways, such as tuition tax-credits, etc., but these are similar to the voucher system. Now, if this second alternative was, like the first idea, unworkable, maybe we would have to come up with another, third idea. However, as I will argue below, the voucher system is *not* unworkable; rather, it will work beautifully. Thus, since a voucher system will work, there is simply *no need* to try to find a third way to accomplish our goal. In other words, if one looks at our present system of education, which institutionalizes uniformity and lack of innovation and diversity, encourages inefficiency, low quality teaching, red tape, and sticky-fingers, one should ask, "Why in the world did we let it get so complicated, when a simpler, cheaper, fairer method will work so much better!?"

Now let me turn to the actual advantages of a voucher system.

First of all, the state would not lose total control of educational content, because a voucher could be spent only on a *qualified* school. Much as the government certifies both public and private schools today, it could certify schools to make sure that the "core curriculum" would be taught; but beyond this, it would be up to the schools and their customers to decide what else would be taught.

Now if the voucher check was the same amount as the government had previously been spending (say, \$1500), then the quality of education would instantly rise for all. The reason is that families would have effectively more money to spend on education, and thus they could "purchase" better education. Why would parents have (effectively) more money? Because the current bureaucratic system and its red tape and sticky fingers siphons off a significant portion of the money that finally gets to the actual schools. I don't know the exact percentage, but it must be significant, since bureaucracies, like the one that administers and controls the public school system, are always large, slow, bulky, and inefficient. For example, suppose that, of the \$1500 the government spends per student per year, only \$1200 actually makes it to the schools. Then, with a voucher system, parents would instantly have (almost) \$300 extra dollars to spend on education. (I say "almost" since we would still have *some* bureaucracy and administrative costs.)

Alternatively, the state could let parents spend effectively the same amount as before, by paying checks of \$1200, and the state could itself save \$300 per student per year. And of course there could be some point in between which would save the state money and give parents extra (effective) money to spend on education. Thus, education would improve because (bureaucratic) overhead would be reduced, freeing more money for books, buses, and teachers.

Also, education would improve because of competition. This is such a well-known phenomenon that it is almost not necessary to argue it. Since schools would not have guaranteed funds anymore, but would instead depend upon patronage by parents spending their vouchers there, school managers would have

an incentive to "shape up or ship out." Managers would have an incentive to improve the efficiency of schooling, lowering its costs and raising its quality, because extra profits could be earned (and also because competitor-schools could take customers away). I don't know the technical details of what will be tried if this is implemented; only the free market's actual operation can answer this question.

Another way education would be improved would be through diversity. Now all schools are very much the same. However, under the free market, schools would be free to try new teaching methods and techniques. The more successful methods invented would be adopted by other, competitor schools, again raising the overall level of teaching.

Furthermore, speaking of diversity, some schools would *specialize*. One child may go to a general-education high school; another to an arts-oriented school; another to an engineering-oriented school. The benefit of diversity is itself a great benefit, since more students' and parents' desires could be met more fully. Also, specialized schools could be more economically efficient *because* of their diversity—the efficiencies associated with the division and specialization of labor would kick in.

By allowing this diversity, many problems will be removed. For example, today we have the perpetual debate of creationism vs. evolution; and which should be taught in public schools, etc. And of course, both groups have valid complaints, since their (taxpayers) money is being used to support ideas that the taxpayers disagree with, which is hardly fair. Well, under the voucher system, we would not really have "public" schools anymore. Even if the current public schools were still nominally owned by the state, they would be in direct competition with all the private schools, so that the ones that survive are, effectively, the same as a private school. What a parent sees, when looking at possible schools to spend his voucher upon, is a group of schools, offering various services and qualities. He doesn't care whether it's "public" or "private"; to him, they're all simply possible candidates for his money. Since there is obviously a demand in this country for both "creationist" and "evolutionist" type teaching, obviously a free-market in education would meet *both* demands. It wouldn't have to be "either-or" any more. A fundamentalist could send his child to school A, which taught creationism, and other parents could do the opposite. There need be no conflict. As long as each school taught the basic "core curriculum," and was thus a qualified school, the school could teach whatever else it wanted to.

Now some might object that a voucher system would foster inequalities in teaching levels and also increase segregation. However, the voucher system would not eliminate class distinctions in education, but would help to blur them and ameliorate them. For example, today, a child's parents income usually determines where he lives; which in turn determines where he goes to school. Quoting David Friedman,

Under the voucher plan a ghetto parent who was deeply concerned about his child's education might be able to scrap up a thousand dollars a year, or get a small scholarship, add that to the value of his voucher, and so send the child to a good private school. Under the present system he has

the choice of either paying \$5000 a year for a good private school or buying a \$200,000 house in a suburb with a good school system.

Today a small elite goes to private prep schools, middle-class children go to moderately good suburban schools, and the inner-city poor get schools that are often little more than custodial institutions.

. . . Low-income parents who felt that they were being short-changed in the schooling provided to their children would have the option of setting up their own schools, . . . or persuading someone to set up private schools for them and financing them with vouchers.

—*The Machinery of Freedom*, p. 59.

Thus the poor (as well as the rich and middle class) would be much better off under a voucher system. Although inequalities would decrease, since everyone would be better off, I think it is wrong to focus on inequalities. We don't want a poor, black child to get a merely *comparatively* good education; we want him to get a good education. The fact that the rich children are getting better educations does not alter the fact that the black child is now getting a very good education. Our goal should not be equality, but good education. Today, the rich already can afford good education; a voucher system will not help them nearly as much as it will help the poor (and middle class).

Another way to look at the education of the poor is: now the state is spending about \$1500 (or whatever the number is) per poor student per year. Certainly, a system which gave the money directly to the poor parents, for them to spend, whereby they could get more education for their money, more choice, higher quality, etc., would result in an education that is at least as good as the public system's was. In short, a voucher plan cannot hurt anyone, cannot lower anyone's level of education, since they now have even more money to spend on education; and because of the efficiency and diversity gains mentioned above, all children—especially the poor—would be *better* off.

Another benefit to the poor of a voucher system is the very important idea of *dignity*. Today, poor parents have virtually no choice as to their child's education; and since the education is usually of low quality, the parents have little incentive to have an interest in their child's education. But give the parents a check which they can take around, "shopping" for schools; and their interest in their child's education will increase. Schools will treat them with respect, since the parents' voucher-money is desired; poor people will be able to shop for schools, and make a considerate, intelligent decision—just as rich white people can today. This removes inequalities, it doesn't foster them.

Another complaint that may be raised about the voucher system is that it doesn't provide for transportation, books, meals, etc. But that cost is included now in whatever amount the state is currently spending per student. So even if all schools stayed as inefficient as they are now, the voucher check could cover food costs, etc. If, however, costs decrease as I expect they would, it would probably turn out that each voucher check is actually overly-generous; most schools could offer a very good education—with all the fringes, such as transportation, meals, etc.—for the amount of the voucher. And of course this would be a new form of competition: a school may offer to drive up to 20 miles or so away just to get a new student-customer; it may be worth it to that school.

The voucher system as proposed applies only to grades 1 to 12. But if a student had plans to go to college, I see no reason why he couldn't take the GED after 11th, or 10th, or even 7th grade, and go to college. And he ought to be able to keep using the vouchers, even for college, until he would have finished the 12th grade. This would give an opportunity to many poor students to get started in college, when they otherwise couldn't have. And it doesn't cost any more money to the state, since the state would have paid him a voucher till the 12th grade anyway.

One further value promoted by the voucher system is freedom of choice. Rather than an educational, bureaucratic board deciding who gets what type of education where, the parents can decide. Is not a society more desirable if the citizens are more free? Isn't it better when the people who are actually affected by a certain activity be the ones to decide what and where? Wouldn't the general quality of life as an American and Louisianian be improved by giving individuals more say-so as to how their lives should proceed?

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I hope you don't mind the length of this letter. As I am very concerned about education, and since this is a very, very important subject, and since you are obviously concerned with the problem yourself, I thought the length and detail was warranted.

Thank you for taking the time to read and consider my thoughts. Needless to say, I would be more than happy to discuss any of them further.

Best personal regards.

Sincerely yours,

Stephan Kinsella



**BUDDY ROEMER**  
GOVERNOR

# State of Louisiana

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

**Baton Rouge**

70804-9004

POST OFFICE BOX 94004  
(504) 342-7015

November 6, 1989

Mr. Stephan Kinsella  
17104 Penn Blvd.  
Prairieville, LA 70769

Dear Mr. Kinsella:

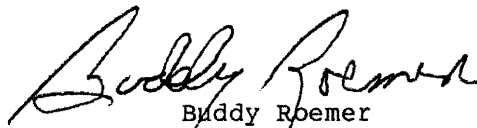
Thank you for your recent correspondence concerning your proposal for an educational voucher system.

Please be assured that I appreciate your sharing this information with me. As Governor, I have the responsibility for the welfare of all our citizens, and it is important for me to be aware of the needs, desires and suggestions of all Louisianians.

By copy of this letter, I have taken the liberty of forwarding your correspondence to the appropriate member of my administration for further review and consideration.

Thank you, again, for your ideas and interest.

Sincerely,



Buddy Roemer  
Governor

BR:dma

c: Stephanie Desselle, Assistant Chief of Staff

N. STEPHAN KINSELLA  
17104 Penn Blvd.  
Prairieville, LA 70769  
(504) 622-2148

Tuesday, November 7, 1989

Fanny Godwin  
Right to Learn Committee  
c/o LABI  
P.O. Box 80258  
Baton Rouge, LA 70898

Dear Ms. Godwin,

I WAS EXTREMELY pleased to learn of the formation of your committee. As a pro-free-market and pro-individual rights advocate, I have supported the voucher system for years. I am a second-year law student at LSU, and also a graduate student pursuing my master of science in electrical engineering, and over the past few years I have developed an intense interest in economics and political philosophy (which is one of the reasons I switched to law from engineering).

I am writing to tell you of my interest in your committee, and to offer my encouragement. Because I am a student, I cannot help you financially, but I would appreciate knowing if there are any other ways I can help or possibly become involved; please send me information. Additionally, I have included a copy of a letter I recently sent to Governor Roemer; I thought that the members of the committee would be interested in seeing it.

I would like to make one comment concerning the name of your committee. As an advocate of individual rights and the free market, I am very wary of the misuse in today's society of the term "rights." In my opinion, there is no such thing as a state-guaranteed right to a job, to welfare—or to education. Such pseudo-rights only dilute the true rights men possess (life, liberty, property). I do not believe, ideally, in government-funded education. However, if the government is, nevertheless, going to subsidize education, it should do so in the most sensible, efficient and non-interventionist manner—which happens to be the voucher system. I wonder if, in the long-run, the concept of a "right to learn" is implicitly supportive of the same type of ideas (i.e., pseudo-rights, which need to be "protected" by a bigger and bigger government bureaucracy) which have led to the educational mess we have today.

In closing, let me reiterate that I am very happy to hear of your formation and purposes. I am optimistic as to your prospects for success, and I am willing to help out and become involved in this project. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely yours,

Stephan Kinsella

N. STEPHAN KINSELLA  
17104 Penn Blvd.  
Prairieville, LA 70769

(504) 622-2148

Wednesday, December 13, 1989

Fanny Godwin  
Right to Learn Committee  
c/o LABI  
P.O. Box 80258  
Baton Rouge, LA 70898

Dear Ms. Godwin,

NOT SENT

I WOULD LIKE TO thank you for spending some time with me today, and for treating me to lunch. I enjoyed the conversation, and I am very excited about the Right to Learn Committee, and I am eager to finish reading the brochures and materials you gave me.

I hope I did not offend you by expressing my extreme pro-liberty views; as you see, I am passionate and usually open about my views. Although I do lack somewhat in 'tact,' I am not short on honesty, conviction, and, I believe, on common-sense and logic (and, yes, even righteousness). I do agree with you that I should not express my own, non-voucher-related libertarian or personal views in such a way as to imply that the Committee shares those views. In my Jackson interview, I was very careful to disclaim the Committee's agreement with the more controversial things I said—such as my comments about evolution, and about the propriety of state funding of education.

As an ad hoc type of organization, different supporters of the Committee favor the Voucher System for different reasons. My own reason is that it will be cheaper, and more effective, and also because it furthers public appreciation of the merits of economic freedom. And one of the biggest reasons I am pro-voucher is because it reduces, albeit only a little, direct bureaucratic control over individuals' private lives. I support the Voucher System because such a system will move the state a little closer towards my ideal state—the libertarian, minimalist state. I am very happy to have a common goal with you and the others to work toward.

Again, thank you for your time and for lunch. I'll get back to you soon, after I've finished the materials you gave me. And please feel free to contact me at any time. Until then, have a happy holiday season!

Sincerely yours,

Stephan Kinsella

N. STEPHAN KINSELLA  
17104 Penn Blvd.  
Prairieville, LA 70769

(504) 622-2148

Thursday, December 14, 1989

Fanny Godwin, Project Coordinator  
The Right to Learn Committee  
P.O. Box 80782  
Baton Rouge, LA 70898-0782

Dear Ms. Godwin,

I WOULD LIKE TO thank you for spending some time with me last Wednesday, and for treating me to lunch. I am very excited about the Right to Learn Committee, and I am eager to finish reading the brochures and materials you gave me. I am happy to have a common goal with you and the others to work toward.

Again, thank you for your time and for lunch. I'll get back to you soon, after I've finished the materials you gave me. And please feel free to contact me at any time. Until then, have a happy holiday season!

Sincerely yours,

Stephan Kinsella