

Families of Students with Disabilities Call on Sen. Johnson to Pull His Amendment Legalizing Discrimination

Written by Democratic Party of Wisconsin, Harry Hartfield
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MADISON - On the anniversary of the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), families across the state called on Senator Johnson to pull his amendment allowing private schools to discriminate against students with disabilities.

In classic Washington fashion, Johnson buried an amendment in an appropriations bill that would prevent the DOJ from investigating private schools that receive vouchers but are not ADA compliant.

The amendment would allow taxpayer funded schools to discriminate against students with disabilities. While families of students with disabilities have lined up against the bill, it's supported by the multi-millionaires financing Sen. Johnson's campaign.

Parents of students with disabilities have come forward to urge Senator Johnson to withdraw the amendment. Here are just a few:

Kevin Fech, parent from Milwaukee

"My child has autism, but that doesn't define who he is, and it shouldn't define where he can go to school. Senator Johnson's amendment means more closed doors and lost opportunities for my son and thousands of students with disabilities. There are so many challenges for students with disabilities, and our elected officials should be making it easier for them, not harder."

AnnaMarie Moffit, parent from Madison

"I have a son with a significant disability. Because of his level of need, I have been told by private schools that they would not accept him into their program. His situation is no different than the thousands of other students who have been denied access and services due to the severity of their disability. Rolling back the ADA would only make things worse, as well as unsafe, for kids like him. For too long we looked for ways to push students with disabilities out

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of our schools. The ADA was meant to end that. It ensures the federal government protects students with disabilities and offers them the free high-quality education they deserve.”

Donna Puhalski, parent and advocate from Madison

“The ADA was a promise that a student’s physical disability would not prevent them from succeeding in the classroom. Senator Johnson’s amendment goes back on that promise. It is a slap in the face to families of students with disabilities who want the same options available to all families. Wisconsin taxpayers should not be forced to pay for schools that discriminate against students. The truth is, Senator Johnson knew this was a bad bill for students with disabilities that’s why he tried to hide it from Wisconsinites.”