



August 9, 2023

Interim Finance Committee  
Assemblywoman Daniele Monroe-Moreno, Chair

Re: Opposition to Item F

Good morning Chair and honorable members of the Committee,

My name is Amanda Morgan, Executive Director of Educate Nevada Now, powered by The Rogers Foundation. Thank you for the opportunity to speak in opposition to Item F, which would redirect emergency Covid relief dollars for the Opportunity Scholarship voucher program (“OSP”).

First and foremost, this is far from an emergency and is in no way related to the Covid crisis. In fact, the expiration of the \$4.7 million temporary, one-time allocation to the OSP has been in law since 2021, and technically expired last school year. No one in the legislature did anything during the recent session to cut or otherwise cause the funds to expire. There was not even a bill introduced by voucher proponents to extend the sunset of this one-time allocation, only bills to grossly expand the program for wealthy families.

Second, students have *already* started the ‘23-’24 school year. The fact that voucher proponents themselves were seemingly unaware of the alleged lack of funds until recently speaks to the complete lack of accountability and transparency in this program.

Data provided to the Nevada Department of Education (“NDE”) by scholarship granting organizations (“SGO”) not only fail to illustrate who, if any, might lose scholarships, the figures do not even make sense internally. According to NDE’s most recent report, one SGO gave more funds than it received. Others could not even give away the donations they had. How much money has rolled over from previous years due to lack of interest in the program? How much is still left with these SGOs? We just do not have reliable answers.

This is separate and apart from all the other issues with the program, such as the lack of meaningful student outcome data, discrimination tactics, and the myriad of other problems seen throughout the country.

Our state is not short of legitimate needs. Emergency Covid relief dollars should not be spent on private school vouchers, especially through a program that so blatantly lacks the basic guardrails of accountability and transparency. Thank you for your time.