



Parents for
Choice in Education

Press Contact:
Nancy Pomeroy
801.361.5284

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Nation's First Universal School Choice Bill Signed Into Law
Utah Governor Makes History

Salt Lake City, UT — February 12, 2007 — Today Utah Governor Jon Huntsman made history by signing the nation's first universal school choice bill into law. The legislation known locally as HB 148 was sponsored in the House by Rep. Stephen Urquhart (R) and in the Senate by Sen. Curt Bramble (R). The bill passed the Utah Senate last Friday by a vote of 19 -10 and was signed into law today according to Mike Mower, spokesman for the governor's office.

"It's been a long hard battle—but well worth the scars," said Elisa Peterson, executive director of Parents for Choice in Education (PCE). "This law gives all families — particularly those in the middle and low income brackets — the opportunity to get their children the best education possible for them. They're no longer denied choices that only wealthy families have. Plus, this leaves more money in the public education system while reducing class size."

The signing marked the end of an intense seven year emotional—and at times vitriolic—battle to bring school choice into education reform.

"The victory today proves that in the end freedom always trumps fear," said Robert C. Enlow, executive director and COO of the Milton and Rose D. Friedman Foundation. "Over the past six years, we have been honored to work with so many dedicated Utah legislators and local leaders. Their passion for educational freedom is what has made this possible."

"Pioneers built this state and now we're pioneering education reform," said Nancy Pomeroy, PCE communications director. "The tradition continues..."

Recent data and a study completed by Dr. Susan Aud, senior researcher, and professor teaching Quantitative Methods in Political Science Research in the School of Advanced International Studies at Johns Hopkins University, show that Utah's school choice program could save millions each year with a combined savings to the taxpayer of nearly 1.3 billion over 13 years.

About Parents for Choice in Education

www.choiceineducation.org

Parents for Choice in Education (PCE) is dedicated to the improvement of education in Utah through meaningful parental choice. We believe that publicly supported education is vital to the strength of our state and that real options should be made accessible and available to everyone regardless of income or geography. We believe in parents and their ability to make the best education choices for their children whether through public, charter, or private schools. We envision and work to achieve a vibrant education system, offered through diverse, competitive providers focusing on the child, not the system.

Since its founding in November 2000, PCE has taken the lead role in advocating for school choice reforms in Utah.

About the Milton and Rose D. Friedman Foundation

<http://www.friedmanfoundation.org>

The Milton and Rose D. Friedman Foundation, dubbed "the nation's leading voucher advocates" by the Wall Street Journal, is a non-profit organization established in 1996. The best way to improve the quality of education, they believe, is to enable all parents to have a truly free choice of the schools that their children attend. The Friedman Foundation works to build upon this vision clarify its meaning to the general public and amplify the national call for true education reform through school choice.

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