

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE PEOPLE OF UTAH

From Larry H. Miller

In recent weeks and months, we've all been bombarded with ads relative to education vouchers. As time has gone on, the intensity and claims of those opposing and promoting vouchers has grown to become a very divisive issue in our communities and state.

I always have, and still do, consider myself and my family strong supporters of education at all levels, both public and private. Even though I've had some fears of market repercussions for taking a public stand on this issue, I finally came to a point a couple of weeks ago that I felt I must at least get educated on the real issues since it was obvious I wasn't getting quality, accurate information from the ads being shown.

I learned a new term, one that I hadn't heard before. It was that the F.U.D. method was being used, by design, in the NEA sponsored opposition ads. The F.U.D. method is "Fear, Uncertainty, and Doubt." As I looked more closely at the opposition ads it became clear that the ads focused on fear, uncertainty and doubt in their messages. I say that because of phrases such as the following taken from the opposition ads:

1. **"Setting few if any standards for private voucher schools."** (House Bill 148 p. 4-5, lines 133-198)
2. **"No accountability for our tax dollars."** (House Bill 148 p. 4, lines 136-138) (p. 8, lines 348 & 349)
3. **"No requirement teachers have a credential."** (House Bill 148 p. 4, lines 154-158)
4. **"Referendum One has too many flaws and fails Utah families."** (classic use of F.U.D. method)

After reading and hearing the above many times, I decided to do something radical; I read the bill itself. It's only eight pages long and can be obtained on the internet at:

<http://le.utah.gov>

I have five children and twenty grandchildren. They've all grown up in Utah. In our family's experience we've used:

1. **Public Schools**
2. **Private Schools**
3. **Alternative Schools**
4. **Charter Schools**
5. **Home Schooling**

Each one of these types of schools has filled a need for one or more of our family at a certain time and under certain conditions with different individuals. We were grateful in each case to have options, to have choices. **That's what I see this whole voucher issue being about; having choices under differing circumstances. This bill will give many more families the opportunity to make choices for their own families.**

This issue isn't a quick fix for all of our future educational challenges, but perhaps it becomes one part of the solution. The fact is no one knows for certain at this point.

As a fellow citizen I ask you to vote on this issue but please don't cast your vote out of fear, uncertainty and doubt. Cast your vote from a position of knowledge and understanding.

**I have become convinced that
Referendum One is good for Utah
and its school children.**

Larry H. Miller