

For Immediate Release

November 13, 2017

Contacts:

Maggie Garrett garrett@au.org, 202-898-2140

Sasha Pudelski spudelski@aasa.org, 703-774-6933

**The National Coalition for Public Education Statement
on Voucher Amendments to the Senate Tax Bill**

Today, two private school voucher amendments were offered to the "Tax Cuts and Jobs Act." The first, by Senator Hatch (Amendment #4), would provide tax incentives to parents who educate their children in private religious schools by enabling them to receive a tax deduction on the cost of tuition. This would apply to parents regardless of their wealth or need for a new tax deduction. The second, by Senator Scott (Amendment #3), would create a federal tuition tax credit program for individuals and corporations.

In response, the co-chairs of the National Coalition for Public Education (NCPE) issued the following statement:

"We are strongly opposed to both the Hatch Amendment and the Scott Amendment because they both create private school voucher programs. Congress should focus on supporting and funding our public schools, which accept and serve all students, not creating new ways to finance private school vouchers, which serve a few selected students. These amendments are just another example of attempts to bolster private schools at the expense of our public schools.

The Scott Amendment forgoes tax dollars in order to fund private schools. This is a voucher. Vouchers, however, do not work. Repeated studies of voucher programs across the country show that vouchers do not result in better test scores for students.

The Hatch Amendment would provide a tax deduction only for tuition at private religious schools. This special preference and benefit for religious education not only undermines public schools, but also violates the U.S. Constitution and basic principles of religious freedom. Furthermore, it will likely benefit wealthy families that can already afford and are already sending their child to a private school.

Congress would better serve our students by funding our public schools, where 90 percent of children are educated, rather than forgoing revenue to help wealthy families send their children to private schools."