

Betsy Devos – a disaster for homeschoolers?

Betsy DeVos and her husband, Dick DeVos Jr., are perhaps best known as big-time donors to Republican candidates and groups. Jeb Bush gave her the highest accolade he could from his point of view and that was Bush calling DeVos as a major contributor to the Republican Party. The Party? That's all?

Jeb Bush of Florida, where Ms. DeVos helped push legislation establishing tax credits for scholarships to private schools, called her an "outstanding pick," a "passionate [change agent](#) to press for a new education vision."

Change Agents are someone who are assigned or directed to intentionally change social attitudes, cultural values, thoughts, attitudes and morals of school children. **TARGET:** To change parental and church inspired morals, values and attitudes regarding life in general that is taught at home to destroy all **PARENTAL INFLUENCE**. Some teachers are change agents – trained to be change agents.

Not that DeVos is an excellent educator because she isn't and not that she has worked to improve education with something besides her billions because she is all about two things; the Republican Party and using her money to buy her way!

The closest she has come to actually being involved in education was in pushing policy which is school choice with vouchers. Conservative school choice activists hailed her as a disrupter, and as someone who would block what they see as federal intrusion of local schools all the while using public tax dollars to feed into private schools. That is taxation without representation.

American parents must understand that what is wrong with the public education system is the non-educators like DeVos and

legislators who know nothing about the education of children and are determined to control our children and their futures as “human capital”. The plan has been laid out for years and they have been even dumb enough to put their ideas and [plans on paper](#).

DeVos is used to using her money to get what she wants and what she thinks is right for others. In the 2016 election year for example, she and her husband gave \$2.7 million to Republican candidates.

Funneling citizens tax dollars into Charter School Management companies which include Muslim Gulen schools only to have them fail with the massive fraud, corruption, and no excuses education and the massive use of H1B and HB5 visa's is out of control. People like DeVos who believe they can buy their way following the “yellow brick road” to total private education and ruling the country through are children are selfish and self-centered.

This is why they are fighting so hard to gain control of home schoolers because they know they have no control there. Those parents are still putting their tax dollars into the till while paying extra for home school non-common core curriculums.

The DeVos campaign donation records have a very long trail. The part that bothers me is the most of those donations went to Senators who will be casting votes as to yes or no for her confirmation and are on the Senate education committee and subsequently on the Senate floor.

There have not been any campaign records presented that show the DeVos' contributed to the Trump campaign of which I am not surprised as they were strong Rubio contributors.

Betsy DeVos is not the first individual for whom issues of campaign donations and Cabinet appointments have mixed, but it is a very serious issue to consider. For example, U.S.

Secretary of Commerce Penny S. Pritzker has given money to Democratic Party candidates and causes for many years and was a campaign donation “bundler” for Barack Obama in 2008 and 2012. She became President Obama’s commerce secretary in 2013.

✖ Over the years the DeVos’ have donated to individuals at varying levels of government who are involved in the education of our children. I personally resent these individuals who believe their money is what is required or wanted to lay out our children’s futures. That is the parent’s rights to do and the whole goal the DeVos’ and their political friends have laid out and support is THEIR control of your children. How many times do we have to repeat Senator Lamar Alexander’s statement of controlling our children from “cradle to grave”, “sunrise to sunset” and away from their parents? The whole thing is to break the ideology and teaching of children by their parents. Parents are to no longer be part of the equation.

In 1997, Betsy DeVos wrote an op-ed for the newspaper Roll Call in which she defended “soft money” (campaign contributions to political parties that avoid legal limits on contributions to individual candidates).

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DeVos, who was chairwoman of the Michigan Republican Party at the time, (one of four terms) wrote that her family was the biggest contributor of soft money to the national Republican Party, and that “occasionally a wayward reporter will try to make the charge that we are giving this money to get something in return, or that we must be purchasing influence in some way.”

“I have decided, however, to stop taking offense at the

suggestion that we are buying influence. Now I simply concede the point. They are right. We do expect some things in return,” DeVos wrote in Roll Call. “We expect to foster a conservative governing philosophy consisting of limited government and respect for traditional American virtues. We expect a return on our investment; we expect a good and honest government. Furthermore, we expect the Republican Party to use the money to promote these policies, and yes, to win elections.”

Does it sound like sound reasoning to have the future of our children in this woman’s hands.

In 1974, the Federal Election Campaign Act was signed into law and among other things, the Act limited the amounts of money individuals, political action committees (PACs) and political parties could give to candidates in federal, i.e. House, Senate and presidential, elections.

Under the FEC Act, money given directly to candidates for federal elective offices is known as “hard money” and is strictly regulated. Money given directly to political parties for the purpose of supporting candidates for federal office is also regulated as “hard money.”

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“Soft money” contributions are supposed to be “nonfederal” contributions because they are supposed to be given to political parties for purposes other than supporting candidates for federal office. However, hard money contributions have no limits on the amounts of soft money that can be given by individuals to political parties. Moreover,

while labor unions and corporations are prohibited from giving money to candidates for federal office, they can give soft money to parties.

While soft money cannot be used by political parties to support federal candidates, it can be used for “party building” activities. These efforts have become extremely controversial because they are almost indistinguishable from party support for federal candidates. Example: a political party would have to use hard money contributions, which are limited and regulated, to pay for a television advertisement that explicitly encouraged voters to vote for a specific candidate. If the ad, however, simply showed a particular candidate and then encouraged voters to support that candidate’s party, soft money could be used to pay for it. Money games all around. I for one do not support the open end PAC’s for this very reason.

Betsy DeVos herself has given nearly \$2.7 million in political donations to 370 individuals and causes over the past 20 years through 819 total contributions, according to the National Institute on Money in State Politics. Just over \$2 million of that has gone to Republican candidates or causes, while a very, very small amount went to Democratic candidates or groups.

Michigan is one of the nation’s biggest school choice laboratories, especially with charter schools. The Detroit, Flint and Grand Rapids school districts have among the nation’s 10 largest shares of students in charters, and the state sends \$1 billion in education funding to charters annually. Of those schools, 80 percent are run by for-profit organizations, a far higher share than anywhere else in the nation.

This is a perfect example of our tax dollars being feed into commercial education management where we as parents have no control with their un-elected school boards.

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to Ruin, Through Education.”]

The DeVos’ are the most prominent name in Michigan state Republican politics, and have been the biggest financial and political backers of the effort.

But if Michigan is a center of school choice, it is also among the worst places to argue that choice has made schools better. As the state embraced and then expanded charters over the past two decades, its rank has fallen on national reading and math tests. Most charter schools perform below the state average.

And a federal review in 2015 found “an unreasonably high” percentage of charter schools on the list of the state’s lowest-performing schools. The number of charter schools on that list had doubled since 2010, after the passage of a law a group financed by Ms. DeVos pushed to expand the schools. The group blocked a provision in that law that would have prevented failing schools from expanding or replicating.

Ms. DeVos, 58, got into education advocacy primarily as a backer of vouchers and has served on the board of several organizations that have campaigned for them across the country.



A ballot initiative she led to establish vouchers in Michigan failed in 2000. The next year, she established the Great Lakes Education Project, which became an ardent proponent of charter school expansion, and has donated generously to candidates who have supported it.

The Michigan law pushed by Ms. DeVos to establish charter schools over 20 years ago allows an unusually large number of organizations to start such schools, **yet established little mechanism for oversight**. Even Republican supporters of charter schools say the law has allowed failing charter schools to

expand or replicate.

Last spring, the DeVos-backed group was the chief force behind the defeat of legislation that would have established standards for identifying and closing failing schools, both charter and public, in Detroit, where a flood of charter schools in the past decade has created what even charter school supporters call chaos.

If nothing else tells you what a DeVos leadership will do to our tax base, charter and voucher status with already very lenient legislation, nothing else will.

- 1 – [DeVos Finance Figures](#)
- 2 – [Steering Public Funds from Public Schools](#)
- 3 – [The Risk of Betsy DeVos](#)