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Senator Campbell Files Taxpayer Savings Grant Bill

SB 1575 Greatly Expands School Choice in Texas

Austin - State Senator Donna Campbell filed legislation Friday to bring real education reform to Texas through the use of Taxpayer Savings Grants. The Taxpayer Savings Grant and School Choice Act, or SB 1575, will provide parents with tuition reimbursements of roughly \$5000, or less if it covers the full cost of tuition, should they choose to transfer their child from a public school to a private school.

"No student should be trapped in a school that isn't meeting their educational needs," Sen. Campbell said. "Taxpayer Savings Grants give parents the opportunity to select the best school for their child while saving the state billions of dollars that can be reinvested in public schools or other priorities. This is a win for everyone, especially the students who are the future of Texas."

"I am proud to stand for students, parents, and taxpayers as a joint author for SB 1575," added State Senator Ken Paxton (R - McKinney). "It's another way to provide our students with additional educational opportunities."

Researchers estimate that Taxpayer Savings Grants will save Texas taxpayers more than \$20 billion in the first ten years based on participation rates in other school choice programs across the country. It will also help keep our state's workforce competitive, a fact that has earned the support of Governor Perry.

"Expanding school choice in Texas will empower parents to make decisions in the best interest of their children, and provide an incentive to keep all Texas schools competitive," Gov. Perry said. "I applaud these lawmakers for championing legislation that will benefit our students and our schools as well as the employers and industries that depend on our highly competitive workforce."

The savings grant is equal to the actual tuition at the private school or 60% of the state average per-student maintenance and operations expenditure, whichever is less. In 2009-2010, 60% of the operating expenditure came to \$5143. The State of Texas would save the other 40% or approximately \$3429 for each student who chooses to take the grant.

If all the savings are reinvested in public education, it would increase per pupil spending by \$473. The Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts will administer the program.

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