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Don't Blame DPS For The State's Continuous Failures

DETROIT– In his first inaugural address, Thomas Jefferson said *“we are all Federalists, we are all Republicans.”* It is important for some who make the laws under the banner of party affiliation, to remember your specific origination. According to Jefferson:

“Rightful liberty is unobstructed action, according to our will within limits drawn around us by the equal rights of others. I do not add ‘within the limits of the law’ because law is often but the tyrant’s will, and always so when it violates the rights of the individual.”

For those who believe that the current legislation coming forth from the Michigan House of Representatives, now awaiting the Governor’s signature, is the answer to the problems facing the Detroit Public Schools, guess what? You’re wrong!

This is what is known in the community as CYA (cover your assets), with a smile. This legislation, forced fed down the throats of members of the Detroit delegation, and against the bipartisan Senate Bill 710, is lumpy enough to choke an elephant and is more poisonous than the Flint River. It is a clear failure on the part of government to do its job, in representing all its people, and to protect those constitutionally it is duty-bound to serve. Detroit deserves better.

This so called fix is not a fix at all. The state of Michigan messed up the Detroit school system. It messed up the system by imposing emergency managers against the will of the people, giving them unlimited powers. It messed up the district by adopting contracts with no local input, cutting teacher salaries and health care benefits, with no specific consideration, and creating a deficit when the district had a hundred million dollar surplus when the state first took over. Now this same state government wants Detroiters to believe that non-certified teachers, a financial package known from the very beginning to be inadequate, no certified authority to bring order to out of control school placement within our neighborhoods, by anyone who seeks to open a school, while punishing teachers for exercising their first amendment rights, is the way to go. Let us also remember that a so called elected school board will not have the final power to terminate its appointed superintendent without the permission of the Boss.

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In other words, The State. a financial review board, mandated by the state, will still provide oversight for the financial operations of the DPS. These Detroit-only measures strike in the face of democracy, liberty, and justice for all.

This level of citizen disrespect and moral abuse must be called out for what it is - discrimination, separate and unequal, and reflecting an *Impure Michigan*. It takes us backwards into the future. As we acknowledge all of those who have worked the past 18 months to address education in Detroit, please do not lay claim to this travesty. While it is one step away from bankruptcy, these decisions themselves are indeed bankrupt. The reasoning behind them is corrupt. The outcome will continue to disrupt the equal opportunity and educational quality for our children. This right-winged extremist legislative body may have won this battle but the war to win educational equity and to enhance the collective quality in education for the future of our children is still being fought. Jefferson was indeed correct when he said that "*law is often but the tyrants will, always so when it violates the rights of the individual.*" I fervently believe, as the old African proverb reminds us, "*WE MUST EDUCATE OUR CHILDREN WHO ARE THE VANGUARD OF THE FUTURE.*"

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