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To: RepEmilysirota@gmail.com



I am a special education teacher in a Title I elementary school in Denver. This past school board election in Denver, I knocked on around 1,000 doors. I am very familiar with school board politics. I used to believe that school board races were about kids, and neighborhoods, and improving education. I was wrong.

The reality is that the education budget, while woefully underfunded, is a very large sum of money. Special interests have taken notice, and they have pounced. Their strategy is to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars in urban school board races like Denver to make sure that millions get spent on education "solutions" that enrich them. It's been a very effective strategy, and has caused great harm to students and teachers.

During the school board race, I can't tell you how many times I read expenditure reports and saw that the donations of hundreds of community members had been entirely offset by donations from a small number of wealthy and out of touch donors. The big donations, largely from wealthy caucasian donors who had no personal stake in the schools they purported to want to help, essentially nullified the outspoken voice of the community.

Representative Sirota's legislation doesn't fully solve this problem. Money still can, and will, flow to independent expenditures. Probably in greater volumes. That said, it sends a message. The school board belongs to the community. You can't buy a school board candidate and sway them to your side with big donations anymore. Having more money shouldn't give you a bigger megaphone than any other community member. This legislation ensures that it won't.

Independent expenditures are a real and complex problem that still needs to be solved, but this is a much needed step in the right direction. Please show our communities that their children are not for sale to big donors. Please set these limits to give them a voice again in who runs their schools.

Troy Hubbell
Hd9 resident

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone