



**Rebuttal to Scott McDonald's email entitled "The PRICE Act Con-Job | Call-to-Action!" (Sent 5.1.23)**

Scott's words are pasted from his alert email and shown in black. Eagle Forum's rebuttal is in red.

**1. There is currently unlimited school choice in Alabama**

It's a myth that we have "unlimited" options in AL. While we do appreciate the school options that we do have, they are extremely limited. Alabama has only about 11 charter schools, and eight serve the Montgomery and Birmingham areas. The rest of the state is left out of charter school options. The Alabama Accountability Act (AAA), a tax credit scholarship program, is prioritized for students who are zoned for a failing school or who are low-income. AAA funds can only be used for tuition and fees at brick-and-mortar private schools.

Alabama students are trapped by their zip codes. 96% of children in failing schools are students of color, and 67% of students in failing schools live in poverty. PRICE would provide options for ALL families to direct education dollars to the non-public school or education program best suited to their family values and educational needs. PRICE WOULD provide unlimited school choice in AL!

**2. The PRICE Act places ZERO VALUE on Moms (moms & dads can't charge a dime for their time).**

The PRICE Act was explicitly written to empower parents! PRICE stands for *Parental rights in Children's Education*. The state collects taxes to educate children.

Currently, those funds can only be used in government schools. In many public schools, woke agendas, transgender ideologies, comprehensive sex ed, revisionist history, and communistic philosophy have infiltrated all grades beginning as early as kindergarten. In 2022 fewer than half of Alabama students were proficient in all 3 subjects tested (English language arts, math, science). There is a nationwide groundswell of parents wanting options. PRICE allows parents to take those education dollars to the non-public school/program of their choice that aligns with THEIR values and will enable them to customize the best education for their children, whether it be through a private school, online school, homeschool, private tutors or a combination of these.

**3. The PRICE Act is pure socialism, and in this case, "WELFARE FOR THE WEALTHY. Taxes are collected to educate children. PRICE allows parents to decide how to best use those funds for their children's education.**

Most parents can't afford for their children to be educated any other way than the government system. They are stuck. PRICE benefits low-income students the most because they can leave their failing or unsafe public school. PRICE provides equal choice opportunity for all students who want/need options.

#### 4. Proponents of the PRICE Act want to SHUT DOWN PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

Hardly! Historical [data show](#) that only 1-3% of eligible students participate in choice. That percentage is for ALL private school choice options combined! (Educational savings accounts (ESA), vouchers, tax credit scholarships). ESA's historical take-up rates are barely 2% of eligible students even after full implementation. That will hardly shut down the public system. Yet, that tiny fraction is enough to improve public school academic achievement. [31 of 33 empirical studies](#) find that introducing choice improves educational outcomes. We have tried to improve education from the inside for decades, yet we have not made any noticeable progress. PRICE is the vehicle that will induce the proper incentives via competition for public schools to improve. The studies confirm this.

A homeschooled family with a single working parent pays approximately \$2,400 into the Education Trust Fund annually. A family with 2 children could collect \$14,000 in subsidies under the PRICE Act. That is a \$11,200 handout! So stop saying, "It's their money." That is a lie. ESA are not "subsidies"; they redirect education dollars controlled by the parent. **Educational savings accounts are not "subsidies". They are a redirection of education dollars controlled by the parent.**

5. The PRICE Act does not allow a homeschooling parent to collect not even a single dime for their time teaching their children. This is an absolute insult to parents. **The PRICE program is offered to all families, whether public, private, or homeschooling. If they want to take advantage, they can, but no one is forced to apply for the PRICE program.**

6. Presumably if a family didn't spend all of their ill-gotten gains the left-over money would pay for college tuition. That's the thing the socialist Bernie Sanders has campaigned on for years. The only difference is, he admitted that it is socialism. **Allowing funds to roll over is an essential incentive for parents to spend ESA funds wisely. In the public system, those funds do not go as far. In AL (estimated 2024-25SY), the cost to educate a student is \$13,549 (fed, state, and local funds combined). With PRICE, the cost is only \$6,900 (only the state portion), AND the public school keeps the federal and local dollars even though the student is no longer there!**

7. The average cost for private schools is around \$15,000 per child per year. **That number is not correct. [\\$7,669 is the average tuition](#) for all K-12 private schools in Alabama.** Given the same \$14,000 for a two-child family, they would still have to come up with For a parent of 2 private, K-12 students, the PRICE Act would need to come up with an additional \$16,000 to cover tuition. Low-income families can't come close to that much; only wealthy families can create that kind of money. Consequently, the PRICE Act is nothing but a subsidy for the wealthy. **PRICE ESA amount is \$6,900/year/student. (90% of the average private school tuition). These funds will significantly help most people wanting to use a private school option. PRICE isn't about leaving lower-income**

families behind and doling out favors to those who already have every advantage—it's about empowering parents to hold schools accountable.

8. But the most overtly dishonest claim made by proponents of the PRICE Act is that "it won't hurt public schools." For this mental gymnastic, they claim that only a small percentage of parents will take advantage of the subsidy handout. While privately admitting among themselves that the ultimate goal is to shut down public schools.

Again, this is a myth. We have decades of [data from school choice programs](#), and the participation rates are meager. Most parents are satisfied with their government-run schools. However, some parents do not appreciate their children being exposed to woke agendas, transgender ideologies, comprehensive sex ed, revisionist history, and communistic philosophy. Some parents are grieving over their children being bullied, and some are frustrated by curricula and poor academic outcomes. The dishonesty in all of this is beyond the pale. PRICE empowers parents to use education funds that best suit their children. IT'S TIME ALABAMA FUND STUDENTS, NOT INSTITUTIONS.