



## Letter to the Editor: Say no to cuts in education

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To the Times:

(Recently) state Education Secretary Gerald L. Zahorchak made the following comment: "The best way to recover from the recession and weather future downturns is through continued investment in our students, who are our future workforce ... the governor understands this, but some lawmakers apparently do not."

As a parent of a 5-year-old about to enter into the public-school system and a professional working in the field of education, I whole-heartedly agree with Secretary Zahorchak's statement. This is especially true given this global economy where we are forced to compete with other countries. Our young people are being cheated out of the quality education they need to be successful workers, citizens and parents.

So what do we do about this? Well, President Barack Obama offered a partial solution. He committed hundreds of millions of dollars to education as a part of the economic-stimulus package. This funding was intended to increase dollars going to school districts across the country to assist in improving our educational system. Sounds like a good investment in our future, right?

Not in Pennsylvania! Instead, in their proposed budget our state Senate, in its infinite wisdom, decided to propose to use these dollars as backfill and decrease the amount of funding coming from state revenue for education. Yet, the provision for public education is clearly the responsibility of the state as documented in the state's constitution.

What will result from this? What usually results from the same investment of input, the same output — over-crowded, under-funded schools where children are not given the same resources and equal opportunity for success, where meeting adequate yearly progress remains out of reach, and where communities lose businesses (and potential revenue and jobs) because they are not producing a highly educated workforce.

To add insult to injury, the Senate also proposed a 29 percent decrease for adult education. Let's think about that for a minute. Let's not educate our parents, who are making the difficult decision for the future of their family to go back to school and improve their marketability in the workforce, thus increasing local, state and federal tax revenue. Instead allow them to flounder in a poor economy and competitive workforce that now requires more than a high school diploma to be successful.

As a taxpayer, homeowner, mother and professional in the education field I feel compelled to ask our state senators, what are you thinking? And to your constituents who put you in office, is this the job you asked them to do?

To our state representatives, I hope you will make a better decision and stop Senate Bill 850 in its tracks. To my neighbors in Delaware County, I hope you will speak up and implore your representative to oppose this budget. Call, write letters, do what we tell our children to do every day ... just say no to cuts in education!

By Stephanie Korber

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