The Honorable Mikie Sherrill
Office of the Governor of New Jersey
PO Box 001
Trenton, NJ 08625-0001

October 29, 2026

Dear Governor Sherrill,

The League of Women Voters of New Jersey strongly encourages you not to opt-in to the federal private school voucher program. The NJ State Constitution mandates that the state provide a thorough and efficient public education to all students. Public education is a cornerstone of democracy and supports the development of succeeding generations of informed citizens.

Opting into this program would harm New Jersey public schools in the following manner:

- Portions of Title 1 monies would be redirected to fund private and religious schools. There is a very limited pot of money that is being stretched to support the needs of public school students. Many public schools already have programs and staffing in place, contingent on the receipt of federal funds.
- Opting in lets federal tax dollars fund discrimination against children. If New Jersey were to opt in, then federal tax dollars could flow to private and religious schools and other providers that frequently discriminate against students based on disability, academic challenges, LGBTQ status, or religion. The legislation expressly forbids states from adding protections of their own.
- Public schools must provide transparency in how public funds are used. Private schools are not held publicly accountable.
- Opting in to federal vouchers fuels the growth of schools without rules. As private school voucher programs have expanded, the Education Law Center's Public Funds Public Schools project has compiled research documenting fraud, misspending, and weak oversight in these programs.
- Opting in adds to an unsustainable federal deficit. Treasury projects that by 2030 the program could cost $26 billion a year in lost federal revenue. That is more than Title I or IDEA, the largest federal programs supporting public schools.
- The way this legislation is structured will potentially drain donations from other charities American families depend on. Large, respected charities like St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, and smaller and local New Jersey organizations that fund suicide prevention

and mental health centers and domestic violence shelters, will now compete with a program that offers a dollar-for-dollar tax credit instead of a deduction. In an affordability crisis, donors will potentially prioritize giving that returns their entire contribution.

In this season when funding of public schools is already so heavily challenged, we need to very carefully inspect actions that impact funding. This unprecedented federal voucher program is part of the federal administration's continuous assault on public education, and only stands to divert public money that should be used to fund public education.

The League of Women Voters of New Jersey urges you to reject the federal voucher program. Thank you for your ongoing support of public education.

Sincerely,

Dr. Rozella G. Clyde, Co-Chair
Deborah Lee, Co-Chair
Education Committee, League of Women Voters of New Jersey