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OHIO CHOICE PROGRAMS STALLED

Voucher Opponents to Cleveland's Poor: "You Don't Have Choice!!"

(**August 24 1999**) In a move destined to hurt children who for two years have had the chance of a lifetime to attend a school of their choice, voucher opponents were granted an injunction against the Cleveland Scholarship program, which would have served 3,800 of Cleveland's poorest children beginning next week.

"This is yet another example of the education establishment's double standard. Those who have choice by virtue of their stature and wealth want to deny access to those who don't — all apparently on the pretense that public education will fail without the scholarship children," said CER president Jeanne Allen. "The sad truth is, the schools have already failed, and their defenders are turning a blind eye."

The state — and the Institute for Justice on behalf of parents — is appealing for an emergency stay to allow the program to continue.

Cleveland's choice program, which has been considered a success by local parents and by Harvard researchers, was reauthorized this winter by the Ohio legislature after the original program enacted in 1995 was found unconstitutional on a technicality.

Failing the court's approval of an emergency stay, the parents and families of the nearly 4,000 children will now have to scramble. Many will be forced back into failing public schools that the law permitted them to leave.

For up to date information on the route the courts now choose, please check in at the website of the Institute for Justice (www.ij.org) or at CER's www.edreform.com which has links to all the best information and sites on pending choice efforts.

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