

Subject: Please Read

Fri 2/20/2026 10:28 AM

Senate Education Committee:

My name is Kimberly McBey, and I live in Waterford, Vermont with my husband and our three young children. To understand where I stand on Act 73, it is important to understand my background.

I can only pray that this letter does not fall on deaf ears. Please read it with the understanding that your decisions regarding school choice in our district will significantly impact our children and our community.

I grew up in the Northeast Kingdom. I attended Lyndon Town School through fourth grade, Good Shepherd Catholic School for fifth through eighth grade, and graduated from St. Johnsbury Academy in 2006.

As a Lyndonville resident, my siblings and I were required to approach the Lyndonville School Board each year to request approval to attend the Academy. At the time, we believed there were greater opportunities available to us there compared to Lyndon Institute. Each year, we stood before the board to plead our case. Thankfully, we were granted approval every time, but it was never an easy process.

Having to make that request year after year created stress and uncertainty for our family. Despite that, it was worth it. All four of us benefited tremendously from the education and opportunities we received at the Academy.

My oldest brother was introduced to culinary arts and went on to become a chef. My second brother developed trade skills that later enabled him to successfully build his own home in Waterford. My sister pursued cosmetology and found her career path. Without the Academy, she may never have seen that potential in herself. I took advantage of internship opportunities available to me, which later grew into job security beyond high school.

I do not pretend to understand all the complexities and details of Act 73 that may soon significantly impact my community. However, I feel compelled to use my voice in this matter. If the elimination of school choice takes place, families like mine may lose the ability to pursue the educational path that best serves their children. All four of us are who we are today because of our education at the Academy.

School choice made a meaningful difference in my life. It provided opportunities that shaped who I am today. As a parent now raising three children in Waterford, I

care deeply about preserving families' ability to make decisions that reflect their children's needs, strengths, and goals.

Building our home in Waterford was not a matter of convenience. It was a deliberate decision made with the understanding that our children would one day attend the same high school we did — the same school their grandparents attended as well.

If Act 73 removes school choice, I fear what that would mean for our family. Driving past the Academy to attend school in Danville or Blue Mountain would not only increase daily commute times for our children, but it could also affect my job security. Logistically, it simply does not make geographical sense.

As a working mother, balancing schedules is already challenging. I keep my children active in extracurricular activities, and managing daily responsibilities requires careful coordination. Adding additional commute time would be detrimental to our family's routine and overall well-being.

If you decide to remove school choice, you are not just altering policy — you are significantly impacting children and families. Their education matters. The trades and programs offered at the Academy are already something we discuss with our children, who are 11, 9, and 5. We attend Academy basketball games. We drive by the school regularly and tell them, "That will be your high school someday."

That vision has been part of our family's plan for years. I respectfully ask that you consider families like mine as you make your decision.

*Kimberly McBey*