

"Thank you, mister chair. Good afternoon everybody. I appreciate the opportunity to share some thoughts today.

I am Ken Fredette, from Wallingford. I was a school board member for 20 years, and I am now a member of the steering committee of the Friends of Vermont Public Education; you can find us at savevtpubliced.org

I must point out that what is being considered by the Committee today flies in the face of the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, the opinion penned by Thomas Jefferson on separation of Church and State, and the Compelled Support and Common Benefit clauses of the Vermont Constitution.

Everybody here today is aware of Carson v. Makin, but I submit to all of you that it's time for somebody to stand up and say: "The US Supreme Court got this one wrong.", and Vermont is just the place to do that. Right now, right here, today.

Giving public dollars to a religious institution is in violation of Vermont's Compelled Support Clause, and giving public dollars to any institution that discriminates when accepting students or hiring staff is in violation of Vermont's Common Benefits Clause.

Do the right thing - just say no. Then it can go back to the courts for further discussions, which are clearly necessary.

Respectfully submitted,

Ken Fredette"