

SENATOR APPEL FB POST ON COMMON CORE 5/20/2014

My friends ask why I am such a passionate defender of Common Core State Standards. Why am I willing to take a stand that seemingly flies in the face of what some people believe to be a problem? Why do I allow myself to be viciously attacked by bloggers hiding behind the cover of Internet pseudonyms?

The answers to these questions find basis in my fundamental beliefs; beliefs introduced to me through education and reinforced by familial values. First, I am a natural optimist. I believe in the good of people and their infinite capacity to grow and improve their lives. This principle convinces me that all children can learn and that quality education should not just be limited to those who have won the great lottery of being born into a family with means.

I am a firm believer in the historical foundations of our country. The preamble to the U.S. Constitution states, "We the People of the United States, in Order to Form a More Perfect Union..."; it does not state just, "We the People..". I am the son of a World War II veteran who gave four years of his young life in defense of the proposition that we are only strong when we are united and not when we are constantly concerned about what we have and what is good for us as individuals. The Constitution was ratified because it was universally acknowledged amongst the Founding Fathers that 13 independent states (states in the absolute sense of separate countries) would never be able to succeed; that only one united nation could live up to the potential of what these people had fought to establish. The Constitution created a structure under which individual states would willingly forgo limited individual power in favor of a stronger, representative governing authority. Time has proven the adage "we are stronger united than divided" to have been a phenomenally successful decision.

My life has not been that of a politician. I started my own business forty years ago and have been dedicated to family, hard work, and self sacrifice. This personal history taught me one great rule that career politicians often ignore. The difference between my personal philosophy and theirs is that once I evaluate an issue and make a careful decision upon its merits, I will not alter my position to make my political life easier or because it would further my political ambitions. I find that too many of our leaders are far too willing to flip-flop on ideas or principles because such ideas frighten or offend one small segment of the political spectrum, or because such ideas create a politically uncomfortable situation for themselves. This is intellectually dishonest and I will never pander to special interests by abandoning my fundamental beliefs.

Finally, the reason I support Common Core specifically is really quite simple. Louisiana is ranked 49th in educational outcomes in a country that was once the leader of the educational world, but is no more. I, and most of my legislative peers, have discounted the arguments put forth by various media personalities, special interest groups, political social climbers, and unions; those who have much to gain by promoting fear and distrust of Washington and for whom the success or failure of Louisiana's children is secondary to their political ideology or personal goals.

Louisiana was an early leader in the design and implementation of this set of standards, standards collectively devised by 45 states because the old way of educating America's children had clearly

failed our children. Is Common Core perfect? No. Did the rollout go perfectly? No. But, what other alternative is on the horizon. None!

I support Common Core because I am totally committed to the belief that all of our children can learn and deserve the right to a fair chance to achieve success in life. I believe that we are always stronger united than when we only concentrate upon the good of the individual. I believe that the politics of fear for political or financial benefit has no place in education, the legislative process, or in our society. Finally, I believe that there is every indication that we can make Common Core work very well for our children; when we do, Louisiana has a better than even odds of delivering upon our state's fundamental principles: Union, Justice, Confidence.

Our Nation is hurting right now. We are the victim of an ideological sickness that is an anathema to most citizens. However, we must not allow ourselves to become blinded to the current state of affairs of Louisiana's future generations. We have an opportunity to join the vast majority of our sister states in a unified effort, created by those states, to recapture America's educational supremacy. We must take full advantage of this opportunity and not allow our state to fall back into the cycle of ignorance and poverty.

- Sen. Conrad Appel

This is Sara's response:

Senator Appel,

As to your Facebook post below, I think that you fail to understand what our Constitution was meant to represent and protect. I have attached an explanation of that most basic premise, but I will tell you that more than anything else it was meant to limit the centralization of government, either through concentration of the federal or of the states in concerted effort. However, though your opinion and perspective are yours to have as an individual, you seem to fail to remember that you are a representative of your area and as Chairman, you represent all of us concerned and affected by whatever committee you oversee. Your actions as Chairman and also as Senator of your area do not reflect a commitment to uphold and support our state and U.S. Constitutions. You clearly disregard the concerns of parents and teachers in every way that matters but hide that fact by stating that you are supporting the less fortunate; as if the less fortunate lack the ability to improve their situation without the assistance of government. That seems to be the dangling carrot that works best on people when you take their freedoms so that is not unique to you. Regardless, your actions reflect an elite and dictatorial mentality and it does not align with much of what you state in your post.

Prime Example: How can you stick to a decision that was made by you when the Common Core was an abstract theory that even then had the clear potential for moving our country toward the EFFECTIVE nationalization of education though "voluntarily led" by elite governors working with elite academics? However since the time that you made your commitment to the Common Core theory, we have now experienced that theory in practice and it leaves much to be desired, to

say the least. A change of position in light of this is not "intellectual dishonesty" but prudent and wise, unless of course there are special interest/career/financial commitments that cannot be broken and that may well be the real reason for all of this seemingly "pig-headedness" by many elected officials. Otherwise, it is ignorant to fail to see the many challenges Common Core has posed and will continue to pose in practice on too many levels to keep this email brief.

Another Example: Do you think that it is proper for you to hold hostage HB1076 that undoubtedly protects the rights of our children from the actions of the state. A state that allows its agencies to blatantly disregard the constitutional protection of those rights and refused to pass anything but bills that add insult to injury by making every effort to reward those agencies with even more discretion and to thwart all efforts to the contrary? Do you think it is right for you to use your discretion and power as Chairman to make our children, political pawns until the move is made to pass your bills through the House favorably?

How do these actions align with what you state on your Facebook page and the fact that your perception of yourself there does not align with the perception created by your actions?

You seem to favor a centralized/unified position by states and that is very sad to hear because that actually eliminates any "choice" for everyone in everything where that is employed. In this case, it is Education. Your actions do not favor the successful elements of the historical foundations of our country and your actions actually serve to continue the destruction of that foundation and bring us closer to a totalitarian form of government, through the guise and dangling carrot of "opportunity" and "choice" for those less fortunate, when you know that the result will eventually be to make all of us less fortunate except elites which eventually get picked off or supplanted by more powerful elites.

There is a reason Karl Marx referred to "useful idiots" as a significant means to accomplish his end. And what history has shown us is that people should consider the fact that they do not hold a crystal ball and that power and influence are fleeting. So though a person may have power and influence, today, to protect and insulate themselves and their own children from the part that they are playing to dumb down America and destroy it, tomorrow all of that could be gone or taken by a bigger fish, who used that useful idiot's power and influence to increase his power and influence and then imprison/execute or if he is lucky, leave that useful idiot to stand in the bread lines with the masses waiting for the crumbs from the elite in power.

However, poetic justice would be when those bread line days finally do occur, that one of us, who were the Paul Reveres, gets to be the last person to receive the crumbs for the day, just in front of one of those useful idiots, who is left to eat nothing but the air of the Brave New USSA that he helped to create. Look it up, it always happens this way.

This is not about ideology but about stopping a path that has scary and tragic historical facts as its evidence, and that has NO place for NO reason here in America. Government has never and will never be the solution and is always the problem, when it comes to freedom.

I do pray that somewhere in that Capitol, there are men of conscience, who if they reflect upon all that is said by freedom-loving, American parents with no interest other than to protect their

children, they will hear, listen and do what is right and respectful of individual freedom, state sovereignty and limited federal government. Faith and adherence to that is the only path for a successful America in the future.

Something makes me hope that you can be one of those men. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Sara Wood (mother of four)

Mandeville, LA

Proud LA graduate of Alfred Bonnabel High School, University of New Orleans, Loyola University at New Orleans, School of Law, 100% Hispanic woman, double minority, first generation American raised by a single mother of low income, and I know with certainty that if I had been educated under this Common Core Initiative and tested under PARCC, my education credentials would be much less and therefore my life would be vastly different and very very likely not for the better. I only want what is best for my children and all children of Louisiana publicly educated and I know that this is the opposite.