



WISCONSIN STATE ASSEMBLY  
**Christine Sinicki**  
STATE REPRESENTATIVE

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Representative Jeremy Thiesfeldt  
16 West Capitol  
Senator Paul Farrow, Co-Chair  
323 South Capitol  
The Select Committees on the Common Core Standards  
Madison, Wisconsin

October 30<sup>th</sup>, 2013

Chairs Thiesfeldt and Farrow,

This letter is sent to you to tender my resignation from the Assembly Select Committee on Common Core Standards (SCCCS). While I respect my fellow Democrats' stamina in remaining on the Committee, I believe it is time for me to end an association with what is sadly a deeply biased hearing process, not an objective policy review.

It has become painfully clear that this committee and its activities are occurring at the behest of interested parties outside of this Legislature, and even this state. I believe that this SCCCS is primarily a roadshow, in conjunction with the Republican National Committee (RNC) and its [April 2013 resolution](#), to distract from that party's recent national failures. The general criticisms of the Common Core Standards here in Wisconsin echo the extreme statements coming out of the RNC, which is a campaign organization, and other Republican sources in Washington, D.C. and around the country.

This extremism about common standards, not to mention public education in general, seems to emanate from the Tea Party wing of the Republican Party. And in turn, they have attracted another extreme and very rich ally in the national John Birch Society (JBS), which is conveniently headquartered here in Wisconsin. Each of the SCCCS's informational hearings have featured speakers suggested to the SCCCS chairs by the JBS, and whose travel expenses from distant parts of the country have been paid for by the [American Opinion Foundation](#) (AOF), a proud arm of the Birch Society. [On Wisconsin Eye video](#) of the Eau Claire SCCCS hearing, these invited speakers from other states say, bizarrely, that they don't know who it was that called and invited them but that, upon arrival, they were handed expense checks issued by AOF (which they then show the committee members). In the meantime, actual Wisconsin educators who have attended the hearings on their own initiative have often been turned away from testifying due to the bulk of attention and time being reserved for invited speakers.

On top of the above, the last straw for me as a Milwaukee legislator has been the omission of Milwaukee Public Schools in the SCCCS's hearing schedule. MPS is the state's largest school district and its educators have already spent thousands of hours designing curricula for hundreds of different classrooms under the guidance of the Common Core Standards. These experienced staff should have had the chance to talk about their successful efforts with the CCS without having to drive hours away to do so.

I cannot in good conscience sit on a committee that has involved the most extreme national interest groups on education in planning and executing official Legislative hearings, all the while completely ignoring the voices of my district. At such time in the future that the Committees decide to start paying attention to the experiences of and often overwhelming support of Common Core standards of the actual teachers, administrators and people of Wisconsin, I would be glad to participate.

Thank you.

Christine Sinicki, State Representative



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20<sup>th</sup> Assembly District