

9-5-1974

Correspondence, John C. Stennis, September 5-27, 1974

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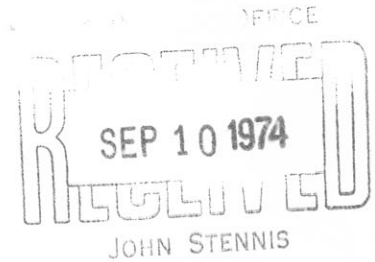
IMPROVE ATTENDANCE CENTER

MARION COUNTY SCHOOLS

ROUTE 1, BOX 109

COLUMBIA, MISSISSIPPI 39429

September 5, 1974



Senator John C. Stennis
Washington, D. C.

Dear Senator Stennis:

The people of Improve and Bunker Hill Communities and concerned leaders and citizens of Marion County have signed a petition requesting the return of grades seven through twelve to our neighborhood school. Until 1970 Improve School served the needs of students in grades one through twelve. Having our children bused 17 miles to Marion County High School, and some as far as 49 miles away from their homes, has brought distress to all concerned and has prompted the drawing up and signing of this petition.

Our petition was signed by 2,179 interested citizens of Marion County. This included 335 black citizens which is 99% of the black adult population of Improve Community. Total white citizens signing the petition were 1,737. Signers of the petition included many religious leaders of both races, the circuit clerk, the tax assessor, two former superintendents of education, 84 private school parents, 15 families paying tuition to other public schools, as well as all supervisors of Marion County.

On September 2, 1974, the Marion County School Board voted three to two against the request of this petition. No reasons were given why it was not accepted.

Improve School has 345 elementary school children in grades one through six. This community sends 300 students to Marion County High School. The longest route is 32 miles to Improve. From Improve to Marion County is an additional 17 miles making these children ride 49 miles one way. We bus across the Columbia School District.

Our school area is not against integration. We are against the long bus ride to Marion County! We are for neighborhood schools. This situation causes students and personnel to have a working day approximately one hour longer than the other two schools in the county. During the winter months children arrive on campus before daylight.

Our community is one of togetherness. Without our school we have lost what we've fought to build and end with nothing.

We need your help and influence in this most important matter.

Respectfully,

Mrs. [REDACTED]
(Mrs.) [REDACTED] 1
Improve Attendance Center

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED], President
Improve P. T. A.

Mrs. [REDACTED]
(Mrs.) [REDACTED], Vice Pres.
Improve P. T. A.

JOHN C. STENNIS, MISS., CHAIRMAN

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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

September 27, 1974

Mrs. [REDACTED], Principal
Mr. [REDACTED], President of the PTA
Mrs. [REDACTED], Vice President of the PTA
Improve Attendance Center
Routel, Box [REDACTED]
Columbia, Mississippi 39429

Dear Friends:

Thank you for your recent letter regarding the difficulties the children of our State face because of the school situation. Certainly the education of our young people is of vital importance.

I do not know of anyone who has worked harder or longer than I have in trying to insure that our children receive the highest quality education possible with the least inconvenience to their parents. Unfortunately, some school districts have been forced by the federal courts to institute plans which take into account neither the quality of the education nor the welfare of the children despite my strong objections. Therefore, I am continuing to work diligently to secure a more reasonable attitude from federal officials and to help to revise these irresponsible plans.

With warm regards, I am

Your friend,

JOHN C. STENNIS
United States Senator

JCS:hs