

Testimony, March 16, 2011
Before the Oregon House Revenue Committee
In support of HB 3397,
NWCEO sponsored bill for charter school funding equity
By Charles Arthur
Founder and Board Chair
Arthur Academy Charter Schools

Good Morning.

My name is Charles Arthur. Thank you for listening to my testimony this morning. I have founded and operated six charter schools over the last 10 years in six different sponsoring school districts. We currently teach just over 1000 students everyday. I've been in teaching for over 40 years.

I'd like to testify that we have been very happy with our sponsoring districts and look forward to finding even more ways in which we can cooperate and work together on mutually beneficial projects. We've never envisioned that our schools would operate in isolation or in competition with other schools.

In the early years, from what I frequently heard from school districts, it was assumed that sponsoring a charter school at the elementary level would require extra time and resources by the districts in order to help manage the schools.

Over time, this has not proven to be the case. As both the schools and districts have become more efficient, our charter schools have become more self-sufficient. Our relationship with our sponsors now has become more a matter of a shared common mission.

We believe that oversight, over the years, has not proven to require 20% of the student funding. At this level of funding, our school districts retain close to \$150,000 each year, just for oversight. This would pay for two full time positions to oversee one school, which of course is not needed. It does not seem possible that all of these funds were used just for oversight. We believe that HB 3397 will correct this situation.