

Testimony against SB 1538

To the Senate Committee on Education and Workforce Development
Public Hearing February 6, 2014

Let us be clear on this: Charter schools are **PUBLIC charter schools**. Some school districts - ENTIRE school districts - (that is 100%, not 3%) - are solely made up of a public charter school. If traditional school boards are so confident that they know best, why are they afraid of public charter schools and want to limit their expansion? I believe this bill is aimed at traditionalists retaining a near monopoly on public education opportunity because the sponsors want to lock in the traditional educational model to keep public education under their thumb, or their friends' thumbs.

Traditional educational methods and systems are being challenged by innovative ideas that may not employ or come from sources approved by the bill's sponsors' friends. Parents see the current traditional education outcomes and are looking for options. Taxpayers observe the results and desire better return on investment. Industries need highly qualified applicants and want to work with schools to ensure future success.

Some people who are entrenched in the traditional educational model view these options as threats to their livelihood. They have a conflict of interest which contradicts the desires of parents and students across this state: superior public education options. This bill's sponsors feel the need to control the options available in order to maintain control of where and how dollars are invested in education.

Most public charter schools produce similar or superior results with less tax dollars. School boards and parents should welcome this type of option with open arms. Charter Schools are schools of choice. This bill is a step in the wrong direction. New technologies and understanding of community development show we need to step out of the 1950s. Brick and mortar schools are no longer the solution for 97% of the students in Oregon. Educational options lead to more student success in ways this bill's sponsors currently must be unable to imagine.

These are my opinions personally and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of any organization of which I am a member.

Thank you,
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