



April 3, 2017

90942 S. Coleman Street  
Coburg, Oregon 97408  
Ph. 541-214-4837

House Education Committee,

My name is Janel McPherson. I am a 30 year resident of Coburg, a Charter School founder, and President of Coburg Community Charter School Board of Directors for the past 5 years. When our school was closed in 2010 by our local school district, local community members rallied to begin a Charter School in Coburg. In the community's view we couldn't bear that our little school, an historical hub of the community's vitality, would cease to exist. Our main goal was to continue to provide a school for the children of Coburg just as the community has had continuously for the last 145 years!

Proposed HB3313 addresses a need within our community as well as other Oregon Charter School communities for a means by which local neighborhood students within formerly recognized boundaries receive priority to attend their neighborhood Charter School rather than being bused away from their local neighborhood school of choice.

Another positive of this bill includes equity in the area of diversity within charter schools. One could say the present charter school law decreases the natural chances for diversity of school population in local neighborhoods by decreasing the chances for local students to attend a neighborhood charter school in localities where a former non-chartered public school existed prior to being closed. Removing this restriction increases the opportunity for charter schools to reflect the diversity of the student population from within their local neighborhoods.

Predictably, the result a school closure and the reopening of a charter school is quite often a gap in educational services for students in the local area of the school closure. It can also result in misunderstandings in the community with regard to the roles played by the district and the charter school. Conversion schools, charter schools that step in to fill the gap left by neighborhood school closure, are an important tool for small often rural areas seeking to provide a way to keep a school in their community. This proposed change would make it possible for these schools to serve their mission and their communities.

This bill makes a way for equity in small rural communities where often the residents have little sway over the decisions made on their behalf by larger districts and state funding entities. It makes all kinds of good sense to make decisions that promote and encourage vitality within these communities. Therefore, I ask you to consider this bill for approval.



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Janel McPherson". The signature is fluid and extends across the width of the page.

*Janel McPherson*  
President Coburg Community Charter School BOD