

3/13/2021

Sen. Michael Dembrow:

I strongly oppose SB 223. This bill is a significant threat to religious freedom and parental choice. It also undermines private education in Oregon by making it subject to oversight by the state. My children attend Salem Academy Christian Schools, because faith based education is important to my family.

SB 223 would essentially force private schools to register with the state or cut off student access to choir, sports, and other interscholastic programs. Our schools already prioritize student safety, but this goes too far. It is unfair to punish our children by excluding them from enriching extracurricular activities that are currently offered to both public and private students.

SB 223 adds expenses to private schools and early childhood programs with little (if any) benefit to the schools or students served by them. The Legislature passed a law in 2019 to protect private school students, and SB 223 is unnecessary in light of that legislation. It should not matter what type of school our children attend. I send my child to private school, and I pay Oregon taxes that pay for Oregon's public education system. My children should have the same ability to participate in extracurricular activities as their public school peers.

Please do not use our students as leverage in political fights. I ask you to stand with parents, like me, and vote 'NO' on SB 223. It is unnecessary and will only harm our children.

Sincerely,

Isaac Rodriguez  
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