

I strongly urge you to vote against Senate Bill 223.

Senate Bill 223 will greatly limit our ability to choose the best education for our children. Private schools perform better than public schools in educating the youth of Oregon. Oregon public schools currently rank 40th in the nation. The Oregon Department of Education (ODE) has proven themselves inadequate to build and lead a successful educational system. If private schools were subject to the same governing body as public schools, they would suffer the same fate. Privately run schools are a great asset to Oregon, safeguarding families from suffering the same abysmal education found in its public schools.

Private schools should be run by people who represent their students' families' core values. The private school our family supports is run by a School Board that consists of members elected by the families who attend the school. These board members know our families, our situations, our beliefs, and our values. This allows for making decisions and policies that directly align with our goals and values, as opposed to trying to appease the mass populace, as would be the case under ODE control.

Private schools have flourished during this COVID pandemic when compared to public schools. We worked very hard to find ways to continue education in an efficient and safe manner, while public schools have performed very poorly during this time. The reason for the vast difference in success lies largely in the fact that we are not subjected to the heavy hand of government bureaucracy to the same extent. We were able to make decisions that were best for our specific, small community. If we were under the same jurisdiction as public schools, we would have suffered their same fate.

Senate Bill 223 will lead to an infringement on our religious freedoms. One of the main reasons we choose private schools is to have our children learn in an environment that supports our religious beliefs and helps encourage spiritual growth.

If our school was forced to adhere to policies set by the Oregon Department of Education, we would soon lose our right to choose an educational system that supports our beliefs and values.

I sincerely thank you for considering my viewpoint.