

My 12-year old attends private school in Portland. We have chosen to allocate our household resources in this way because it best aligns with our beliefs.

Senate Bill 223 is nothing more than a blatant effort to give the State control over private schools.

One of the reasons why my child does not attend public school is because I don't want his education influenced by the Oregon Department of Education.

So requiring our schools to comply with ODE requirements which will undoubtedly change over the years is a violation of our right to a separation of the free exercise of religion.

The teachers and staff at my child's school have been teaching in person school since the fall. They have risen above the incredible challenges facing schools and teachers during this health crisis. Our school's autonomy and our school leader's ability to make fact based decisions without the state of Oregon getting involved is one of the big reasons why the kids at my child's school are getting a real education even during a pandemic.

If we are to respect diversity inclusion we must allow individuals to live according to their own beliefs as long as it does not harm others. It should be a goal to encourage interaction with people who think differently than us. Forcing private schools to isolate themselves if they do not wish to be subject to the very regulations they're seeking to avoid is not the Oregon way.

I would urge the committee to allow private schools to maintain their autonomy as well as their interaction with public school students and give Senate Bill 223 no further support.