

Limiting charter school options and flexibility with the restrictions proposed in **SB767 violates ORS 338.015 in at least six ways, creates undue burden on current charter schools, and it declares an emergency without factual or lawful basis.** I have noticed that testimonies in support of this bill are mostly relying on copied and pasted boilerplate verbiage, which demonstrates a lack of critical thoughtfulness and logical reasoning other than to support a poorly conceived bill in hopes of preventing a current proposal they dislike in Southern Oregon. This mob mentality does nothing to **consider how the bill affects the entire state.** A bill of this gravity should 1) support the existing goals and laws of charter school creation, and 2) benefit all aspects of charter school consideration throughout the state—not just what a handful of supporters are pushing from one area because they fear a currently proposed charter school. Our chief concern should always be for the benefit of education quality and choice, accessibility to all Oregon students who want to participate, and respect for diversity of charter school innovation and models, as described in ORS 338.015.

Specifically, passing SB767 is a bad idea because it:

- **Limits choices of learning opportunities.** ORS 338.015 (2) states that legislative intent for public charter schools is to “increase choices of learning opportunities for students,” among other goals, but this bill will hamstring the entire state’s flexibility in locating charter schools where district boundaries don’t always correlate with where a school can be exactly located. Some location decisions depend on availability of real estate and lease options, proximity of supporting student demographics, and/or limitations of city/district boundaries that don’t always match up with the best options for students or buildings. Charter schools, typically starting small and running on extremely tight budgets, need that flexibility to operate effectively without the unnecessary restrictions and complexities that this bill adds to an already rigorous approval and operating process. For this reason, this bill effectively decreases “choices of learning opportunities for students” and therefore **violates the existing law’s documented goals.** The arduous requirements and limitations added will make it more difficult to locate and establish charter schools in our state and therefore restrict families’ choices and competitive innovation and quality derived from diverse educational models.
- **Encourages Oregonians to seek non-public education choices, which weakens our public schools, unfairly discriminates against those who cannot afford private school, and violates the innovation, small learning environments, and flexibility standards established by ORS 338.015.** By making the charter school application, approval, and operating processes more difficult and by restricting schools’ option to locate outside district boundaries, Oregon effectively reduces the number of charter schools that will be approved and succeed. Unfortunately for Oregon, with fewer public school choices, more families will opt to homeschool or enroll in private schools, further

eroding the quality of students, educators, and options for everyone. **This especially hurts disadvantaged students who need quality education in smaller settings** more than ever and who cannot access it without public charter schools. Without competitive educational choices, Oregon education continues to stagnate in “Encourage[ing] the use of different and innovative learning methods” (ORS 338.015 [5]), and in effect fails to “Provide opportunities in small learning environments for flexibility and innovation....” (ORS 338.015 [6]). By inhibiting creation of more schools, the bill further opposes the goal to “Create new professional opportunities for teachers” (ORS 338.015 [7]).

- **Adds undue burden and complexity to current public charter schools in Oregon** as it threatens funding withdrawal immediately if a school fails to comply to its false emergency (SB767, section 2), by demanding schools “submit a proposal within 14 days” or “cease operation,” among other demands. **The Hillsboro City View Charter School situation is a perfect example of why this emergency bill doesn’t make sense in real-world, charter school operation.** Requiring maintenance of a school’s in-district, physical location restricts and ultimately decreases reasonable choices for lower-budget options upon which these small schools rely.
- **Creates a fabricated, false, emergency without evidence or basis in the law.** SB767 states in its summary, “Declares emergency, effective on passage,” and concludes with the statement that “...an emergency is declared to exist....” However, no emergency evidence or facts substantiate this claim, nor does the bill provide any explanation or basis in law to declare said emergency. Further, **declaring that the bill is “necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health and safety” without providing evidence of said emergency or specified threat, or without stating any facts to justify an emergency, simply is false.** Because this bill does not constitute an emergency in actuality, its origin and intent are therefore highly suspicious. That the bill in and of itself declares an emergency is reckless and dangerous to the already weary educational community exhausted with government-declared emergencies that have proven to hinder the education of students statewide for the past three years. It indicates an irresponsible overreach by a legislative power to rush its passage without proper evaluation or public knowledge, and with a high probability of bias and/or malicious intent. This bill also would heighten the risk of inevitable and costly lawsuits.

Ultimately, because the bill curtails the establishment, diversity, and reasonable maintenance of charter school options, **SB767 desecrates the goals and legislative intent stated by ORS 338.015**, including the main objectives “where research and development of new learning opportunities are actively pursued” and “advancing a renewed commitment by this state to the mission, goals and diversity of public education.”

Please do not approve SB767.