

Submitter: Gabriel Kjos
On Behalf Of: Lewis and Clark Montessori Charter School
Committee: Senate Committee On Education
Measure: SB767

To the esteemed members of the committee:

While I understand that there are factors beyond the control of the committee which has placed this issue before you, I would urge caution when drafting language on a bill that would impact more than current or future situations that you are trying to prevent. While the language in the bill is important - I would urge you to place limits that reflect language for public charter schools not already established within the state of Oregon. Or restricts this bill to public charter schools which are less than ten years in existence. The main reason is that public charter schools like ours, the Lewis and Clark Montessori Charter school, serves a large number of families from various socio-economic backgrounds. Those families and the students who have come to call our school home - would be vastly impacted by this bill and its current language. The reason is that the school has been forced to move due to our current school district, Gresham-Barlow, needing more space for their own schools. Public charter schools are already dealing with financial and regulatory setbacks which makes it harder for them to exist within the state. Long-established schools like ours should be exempt from this bill due to the fact that it could impact our existence. We are currently under contract to move to a building that is within a few hundred feet of our charter school district. The reason is that there is simply not enough space within the Gresham-Barlow school district to house us. That would not be considered fair. Our board made a decision to move the school to a reasonable place where we could serve an even greater number of children, and in an area that is more racially diverse. This diversity is needed because BIPOC children are not often gifted with education at the level that is offered at Lewis and Clark Montessori. Please consider these impacts in your deliberation.

With respect,
Gabriel Kjos