

**TRACY CRAMER**  
State Representative  
House District 22



OREGON HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

February 14, 2024

RE: Support for HB 4161

Chair Neron, Vice-Chair Hudson, members of the House Committee on Education,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 4161, the Better Public Education Act.

The bill contains three different components and I want to focus on one: the increase of the cap on enrollment in virtual public charter school.

As you are aware, current Oregon law limits enrollment in a virtual public charter school to 3% of a public-school district's total student enrollment. The Better Public Education Act would increase that 3% cap to 6% of district's total enrollment.

In the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, thousands of Oregon public school students have found a home in a virtual education setting. While there are nearly 600,000 students enrolled in public schools in Oregon, and for the vast majority of them a traditional classroom setting is how they learn best. For some Oregon students, a traditional classroom setting isn't optimal. These students have unique learning needs that are best addressed in an online environment.

According to data from the Oregon Department of Education, there are currently 35 public school districts in Oregon that are either at the 3% cap for enrollment in a virtual public charter school or even exceeding that level. The demand for virtual learning has only grown and increasing the cap on enrollment will accommodate those students and families who depend on virtual public charter schools to meet their student's needs.

I'm a witness to the positive impact that a virtual public charter school has had in my district. Frontier Charter Academy is a virtual public charter school that is a part of the Gervais School District. Frontier has provided a quality public education to thousands of its students over the years, and I've heard and personally know many of the success stories that the school has produced. Last year I had the honor of attending their graduation ceremony and I look forward to doing so again this year.

Virtual public charter schools strengthen our public education system, and I am pleased to support the badly needed cap increase within House Bill 4161 the Better Public Education Act.

Respectfully submitted into the House record,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tracy Cramer".

Representative Tracy Cramer  
House District 22