

Submitter: Azrael Godels  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: House Committee On Education  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3444  
House Committee On Education  
Oregon State Senate  
900 Court St. NE  
Salem, Oregon 97301

Dear Chair Neron, Vice-Chairs Dobson and McIntire, and members of the Committee:

As an Oregon public charter school student, I am writing today in support of House Bill 3444. HB 3444 will fix a deep injustice currently happening in Oregon schools: that Oregon public charter school students are effectively funded at 48 cents on the dollar compared to district students. Students at Ridgeline Montessori Charter School are public school students, and it's past time to fund our education fairly.

Each student here at Ridgeline Montessori Public Charter School has a story about why this school has made a positive difference in their life. Many started out in traditional public schools, but couldn't receive the education they deserved, often due to learning challenges that required specialized attention beyond what a public school classroom could provide, or physical, developmental, or mental health challenges that public schools simply couldn't, or wouldn't, accommodate.

I have not been at this school for very long, and I don't really need a lot of the services, but I know that Ridgeline getting a budget cut would remove a lot of resources for people who need them. I have friends who've gone to this school since kindergarten, and I have friends who need the extra help that this school wouldn't be able to provide without funding, without enough money. And I, a suburban living student in lower middle class, am very grateful for the education I am receiving free of cost. And I'm sure that many other people think this too. We are in the eighth grade, some of us haven't matured enough to realize that not everything is handed to us. Not enough to be grateful we are getting the education we get. But now, my whole eighth grade class is writing about this because they've been informed. I think that these schools mean a lot to a lot of people and have a place in many people's hearts.

Unfortunately, because of Oregon's current school funding model, public charter schools are significantly underfunded. This directly impacts me as a student. Many buildings are old and in need of upgrades, students can't access transportation services, food security programs are limited, and schools lack essential school

supplies and mental health resources. By passing HB 3444, you can fix this ongoing disparity and provide fair funding for public charter school students who deeply need it.

Please vote yes on HB 3444.

Sincerely,  
Azrael