

Submitter: Katrina Lakey
On Behalf Of: HB3444
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 a parent of an Oregon public charter school student, I am writing to express my strong support for House Bill 3444. This bill seeks to correct a significant funding disparity that unfairly impacts public charter school students in Oregon. Currently, these students receive only 48 cents on the dollar compared to their district school counterparts. This inequity must be addressed—public charter school students are public school students and deserve fair funding.

Every public charter school parent has a story about why their child needed an alternative to the traditional district system. Many of us started in public schools only to find that they couldn't meet our children's unique learning needs—whether due to learning differences, developmental or physical challenges, or mental health concerns. Public charter schools provide critical opportunities for students who may not thrive in a one-size-fits-all educational model.

For my 7-year-old daughter, Arco Iris Spanish Immersion School in Beaverton has been a game-changer. This tuition-free public charter school has given her the opportunity to grow academically and socially in ways a traditional setting could not. The school's bilingual education, strong academic curriculum, and emphasis on creativity, music, and the natural world have supported her in ways that extend far beyond the classroom. The dedicated teachers, engaged parents, and committed volunteers make this school a truly special place. However, I have seen firsthand how the lack of adequate funding limits resources, staffing, and opportunities for students who deserve the same level of support as their peers in district schools.

Because of Oregon's outdated funding model, public charter schools are struggling to provide essential services. Many operate in aging buildings that need upgrades, lack transportation services, have limited access to food security programs, and cannot afford necessary school supplies or mental health resources. This is not just unfair—it actively hinders students' ability to thrive.

By passing HB 3444, you have the power to fix this disparity and ensure that all public school students—regardless of whether they attend a district or charter school—receive the funding they need to succeed.

I urge you to vote YES on HB 3444 and give Oregon's public charter school students the fair funding they deserve.

Sincerely,
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