



March 13, 2025

Testimony Submitted for House Hearing on HB3444

Thank you for meeting with us today. I am Kay King, a former educator and through time I have become a strong supporter of school choice. We talk a lot about equality in Oregon. HB 3444 is a most important step for equalizing the choices for all students in Oregon. Charter School students should not be punished because their charter schools having less money to work with than regular public schools when their academic outcomes are better.

As you well know, Oregon public schools are failing our children. We have all seen the very low test scores for Oregon students compared to the national averages and yet Oregon Public schools receive some of the highest money in the nation per ADM.

That is why we should now be focusing on and financially supporting educational methods that produce results. And that is why charter schools are popping up all over the state. The ability to read, write and do math should be our goal for every child. Every child deserves that and so many students are not able to read by 8<sup>th</sup> grade. We can't allow this to continue. Charter schools are accomplishing that.

Siuslaw Valley Charter School has been working so hard since 2022 to offer a new school of choice in Florence on the Oregon Coast. Financially as we have built our

budget based on the 80% offered by our district per student, we have struggled to make the numbers work. This is especially difficult for a new start-up. Oregon's public charter schools can only access 80% of State School Grant funds, and we have no access to the number of other revenue streams that districts receive. This dynamic has created a huge disparity in funding. A recent report by ECONorthwest found that Oregon public charter schools receive less than half the funding of their district counterparts. Over the last ten years, charter school enrollment has gone up, but funding relative to enrollment has decreased. Having the dedicated money per child from the state would make a huge difference to us. It would allow us to focus on educating the children and not having to worry about every unforeseen expense. That's what a good business does, plans for the unforeseen and it should be no different for a good school. 95% of the ADM money set aside for each student should follow the student. It makes good sense.

Oregon has a duty to provide the best education that we can for our upcoming young citizens. Charter Schools are making a strong argument for school choice because we are producing better prepared students. But we need your help financially to give us the funds per child that they are allowed.

I urge you to work very hard to pass HB 3444. The Children of Oregon charter schools are counting on you. Educating Students should be everyone's priority. I think it's your moral and ethical responsibility to see that it happens. This should be a non-partisan issue. Doing what's best for all Oregon students! Thank you.

Thank you

Kay King, President of the Board

Siuslaw Valley Charter School

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