

Dear Senator Boquist:

I wanted to inform you of a legislative issue that would eliminate our school.

There will be a legislative hearing Tuesday, March 12th at 1:00 p.m. in Salem to discuss SB 508--which will require a minimum number of 250 students enrolled less than full-time in charter schools that offer online classes. This wording, according to a Senator last week, was inserted through the influence of the Oregon Education Association--If this passes, it will mean doom for the West Lane Technical Learning Center charter high school in Elmira, *a school which serves students from your legislative district* --

West Lane Tech is a hybrid charter school, combining online classes serving up to 120 students from 14 different school districts mostly in Lane County and an auto/electric vehicle program which serves 50-65 students from Elmira and Crow High Schools. The school has been in operation for nine years and has received recognition from members of the Oregon Board of Education for combining online and technical opportunities for kids. We have three Highly Qualified Teachers.

I fear our school is caught in the cross hairs of a funding-student-parent choice conflict around large, for-profit, virtual online charter schools*. If you and the state are serious about its "40-40-20" goal, the elimination of three public, non-profit online charter schools (including Clackamas and Gresham-Barlow Web Academies) would be a serious blow to achieving that goal, by obliterating one option that serves mostly at-risk students who have fallen behind in earning high school graduation credits.

I, and our students, appreciate you taking time to reflect on this issue and your support. If the intent is to limit the influence of for-profit virtual schools, please insist on separating those entities from the non-profits who are not taking advantage of state school funding. Please feel free to call me at 541-935-2101 or email at kwoody@fernridge.k12.or.us <<mailto:kwoody@fernridge.k12.or.us>> if you desire further information.

Thanks for your help,
Ken Woody, Director