

Dear Chairman Dembrow, I strongly oppose SB 223. This bill is a significant threat to religious freedom and parental choice. It also undermines private education in Oregon by making it subject to oversight by the state. My child's educational needs are best served by our private Christian school. I chose to enroll my child in faith-based, private education. That was my choice as a parent. I tried public school for one year and we live in chapter 1 school district by the middle of the year my child had been shoved into a bookshelf by a boy out control, lied about to school officials she was accused of stealing gum out of her own locker, I had to have order of protection as school would not protect her bullies of at school who were Hispanic and treated her with the worse case of prejudices I have ever seen. So, I chose to send her back to a school who teaches respect, education comes first, and good Christian values that have been lost along the way.

SB 223 would essentially force private schools to register with the state or cut off student access to choir, sports, and other interscholastic programs. Our schools already prioritize student safety, but this bill goes too far.

It's unfair to punish our children by excluding them from enriching extracurricular activities that are currently offered to both public and private school students.

Our school is currently a member of OSAA, and my child participates in Volleyball, Basketball and Track. Why would you take this opportunity away from my child, especially after the isolation created due to the COVID-19 pandemic? Just because I choose to send her to a Christian private school.

SB 223 adds expenses to private schools and early childhood programs with little (if any) benefit to the schools or students served by them. The Legislature passed a law in 2019 to protect private school students, and SB 223 is unnecessary in light of that legislation. My child attends Salem Academy Christian Schools, and there's a reason that they don't attend public school. Faith is very important to my family, and we are looking for a different kind of education.

It shouldn't matter what type of school our children attend. I send my child to private school, and I also pay Oregon taxes that pay for Oregon's public education system. My children should have the same ability to participate in extracurricular activities as their public school peers.

Please don't use our students as leverage in political fights. I ask you to stand with our kids, us parents and school.