

To The Senate Committee on Education,

Thank you for taking the time to read my testimony in opposition of Senate Bill 223. I am a resident of Canby, an alumni of North Clackamas Christian School and also a parent of 4 young children who may at some point in the future attend a private school.

I oppose this bill for the following reasons:

1. It is an infringement of my 1st amendment right to religious freedom. A private school in Oregon should have the freedom to teach their students the curriculum they choose-Catholic, Mormon, Christian, Adventist, Christian Science, etc. There should be no government involvement in a private schools decision or evaluation of their curriculum.
2. It is an infringement of my 14th amendment right to liberty. As a citizen of the USA, this gives me the right to school choice for my children and the right to choose private school education. According to SB223 private schools would be held to the same requirements as public without any funding or support and would be controlled by ODE, rather than have autonomy to govern their schools as they see fit.
3. SB 223 is a waste of taxpayer money, if it passes, it would create a new layer of bureaucracy in a time when the budget is stretched thin.
4. According to SB 223 section 3.3 pg 2, section 5.1 pg 3, and section 5.4 page 3 the ODE will require compliance with their criteria, has the right to revoke or deny private schools' registration, and can require any reports or information from private schools. This is overreaching on the part of the government (ODE) and places a great deal of private school business in their hands.
5. Many schools are fully accredited by independent accreditation organizations such as the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) and Cognia. Many are members of Oregon Federation of Independent Schools (OFIS) and OSAA. Accreditation requires reporting, requirements and protocols, as well as on-site examination. When schools are accredited, it is redundant to ask them to prove themselves again in another government process. Additionally SB223 would effectively expel any school from the OSAA who does not "volunteer" to register under SB223. SB223 is therefore not voluntary but rather a form of government bullying and a tactic to ostracize those who do not comply with the so called voluntary registry.
6. This is not a benefit to private schools but an infringement on their rights and the rights of all Oregonians. It is a waste of taxpayer dollars and overreaching to push government control into private schools.

Thank you for reading my testimony and for considering my opposition against SB 223. Your support would be greatly appreciated.