My name is Jenna Hays, a resident of the Pinehurst School District and President of Classical Quest for Education.

This legislation imposes an odd alternative sponsorship option if you want to place a facility in a neighboring district. All those school districts need to do is say "no" with little accountability. The basis of that is so fascinating because that's like saying that the district owns all the students.

If a district won't agree to sponsor, there is an appeal option to the state board, but it's not a viable option for most schools as the State Board has not sponsored many schools and has not done so in quite a while as far as I know.

I'd like to respectfully push back on the argument that somehow small districts will be harmed unless this legislation exists. In this instance, I believe that Pinehurst SD is being used as a tool by larger districts to pursue anti-charter legislation. It is in fact the opposite in that we believe the proposal before PSD that is in full compliance with existing OR law, would create a financial sustainability model that has never been available to a historically vulnerable rural district, with or without a charter school. It is clearly a money issue.

Right now even without this legislation, school districts have essentially a strangle hold on in-person charter schools. They have a pattern of charging up to 20% of a charter school's revenue (depending on the grade level) just for the "privilege" of operating. While that fee is issued by many districts to pay for services, in-person schools must still pay for their own buildings which, for a full-service school like ours, generally costs another 15% of our student revenue. District schools get their facilities funded without having do dip into their student revenues.

One study showed that with all the extra revenues districts get – charters operate at 40-45% disadvantage. Oregon families choosing charter schools get up to 40% less funding that other Oregonians for their education. That is unconscionable!   It is kind of like a pay-to-play fee. School district exacts 20% off the top off every child's education, and they in turn give permission to operate.

This legislation seems to just chip away at more rights from charters. This is supposedly a fix to a problem that doesn't and has never existed in Oregon. There has never been a proliferation of schools in non-sponsoring districts. The conditions that led to this emergency bill were that a brand-new education (and business) model

has been introduced to Oregon that is not in need of the typical district services. That has disrupted the status quo charter-district relationship because no district wants to go without the 20% that has become normal.

For districts whose charter policies won't allow for flexibility on the %, the charter group must seek a compatible district and context to be able to exist, let alone flourish. That's what happened here. Instead of increasing the limitations already on charters, I believe that the law as well as district charter policies should make space for it to be done differently, as in our case, without exacting the 20% fee.

What about a creative solution: Offering districts some oversight provisions if a charter is to open within their district so that they have some say, but not total say or without any accountability?

When I read the intent of the charter school law, it assumes that charters would be different and that they'd innovate various aspects of education. This has been done in our instance, and yet it has been met with tremendous pushback. What really surprises me is that Oregon's constitution requires that education income be distributed proportionally throughout the state, and requires equal protection under the law. I cannot see how treating any child's education as 20% or 40% less valuable than another's is proportional or equitable.

That disparity is what drives the demand for increased flexibility for charters