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On Behalf Of: Lewis and Clark Charter Montessori School  
Committee: Senate Committee On Education  
Measure: SB767

While the intention of this bill is understandable, the impact is more far-reaching and complex. If charter schools are expected to stay within the boundaries of their sponsoring district, then that sponsoring district should have some responsibility for ensuring the school has a facility in which to operate. As it stands, districts regularly shift building usage from year to year, forcing charters to relocate repeatedly - each time disrupting learning and community-building that is essential for a healthy learning environment. If sponsoring districts do not share in the responsibility of finding a suitable space for their charters to operate, those charters should have the option to find space outside of the district boundaries as needed to continue operations. If the state wishes to change this, it should apply solely to new charters and/or include a requirement for sponsoring districts to aid in securing facilities within their boundaries for existing charters whose facilities they have reclaimed for district use. Districts benefit directly from having these charter schools in their district, in the form of additional funding for enrollment, while providing much less in direct services to the schools themselves. In fact, charters have to fundraise to fill the gap created by the funding that districts retain for their sponsorship (20% if I recall). The least they can do is ensure these schools have a facility in which to operate, OR not get in their way of finding one when the district itself is creating the need.