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On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Education
Measure: SB1066

Millions of our taxpayer dollars go to virtual for profit providers contracted with online charters every year and there is no accountability for the performance of these entities, not even close to what is required of local brick and mortar public schools.

The 2017 audit by then SOS Dennis Richardson found that these programs were not living up to the promises they made and were in fact failing many students. Many of these entities fail to provide the required services for students with disabilities and English learners. Additionally, some online charters have been found to participate in fraudulent practices such as falsifying attendance data, residency requirements for attendance, and licensure of teachers, among other things. They often use algorithm based learning and there is limited interaction between an actual human teacher and the students.

Many have very low graduation rates, some as low as 33% here in Oregon. This is much, much lower than the state's average graduation rate, which was around 81% last year. This is an unacceptable expenditure of tax dollars.

Student's data privacy is another issue with these online entities. We must ensure that student data is protected. Without oversight there is no guarantee that that is happening. These online for-profit schools operate with the main goal being profit. Mining data has become very profitable and we can't rely on all actors to be good actors when oversight is lacking.

Please pass SB 1066 and please include in any study done by this task force a comparison of online, for profit charter schools to district run online programs, which have much higher graduation rates and keep public funds in public schools with public accountability.

Thank you for your time.