

March 30, 2023

Dear Senators of the Senate Education Committee:

I am honored to speak with you today on behalf of Oregon's public-school children and families. The pandemic created many challenges for our children, their families and our educators, and I experienced, first hand, some of what they were going through. Overseeing two of my grandchildren's virtual studies, it became apparent to me just how difficult remote learning can be. One of the greatest benefits that took place during this time, however, was the light it shed on how valuable our teachers are and how important a personal connection is.

As the schools reopened, a number of families chose to have their children continue with virtual learning. Some of them saw the benefit it gave to their families' schedules, especially when their older children could be home to tend to their younger siblings. You can probably see where I am going with this conversation. It is one thing for our public schools to offer online curriculum for students who thrive in this setting but truly another when private companies take advantage of virtual learning in hopes of profiting from it. Do they really have our children's best interest at heart? Studies have shown they do not. We continue to see many of our children and families seeking to find mental and emotional stability, and our public schools need all the help they can get to support them. For-profit virtual learning has not proven effective in promoting the best educational methods possible for our children.

Senate Bill 1066 will assure that all for-profit virtual schools are held accountable by the State of Oregon in assuring that our public-school children are the ones who will profit from receiving the best education they deserve. Please think of them and support SB 1066.

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