

## Verbal testimony in support of SB767-A given by Deb Evans April 24, 2023

Chair Neron and Members of the House Committee on Education,

My name is Deb Evans and I live in the Pinehurst School District 16 miles East of Ashland. I want to express my strong support of SB 767.

Last fall a group brought a proposal to our board for a non-virtual public charter school. Their proposal was to initially put a 1610 student John Adams Academy school somewhere in the Rogue Valley and were seeking an open-ended charter to put multiple K-12 schools where ever there might be demand, using Pinehurst School as the sponsoring district. Our district currently has a total of 30 kids K-12. We are not equipped to oversee a charter school of this size, never mind a charter that would NOT have been located in our district, and could have had schools spread across the state. Luckily our board turned down this proposal in February, with 3 members voting against and 2 members abstaining.

Our experience pointed out a serious flaw in a bill that was passed in 2015 which was designed to allow **virtual** charter schools to place testing facilities in other school districts simply with written notification. Unfortunately, the bill critically left out the word “virtual”.

I speak today in strong support of SB 767-A. The bill clearly states what is and is not allowed for virtual & non-virtual charter schools and school districts. It addresses the concerns that were voiced by 95% of all the people who testified in opposition to SB767 during the Senate public hearing, by grandfathering in existing nonvirtual charter schools who were in negotiations to locate their campuses right across their School District borders.

The bottom line is that this bill is absolutely needed to ensure that school boards across the state can maintain oversight of their own jurisdictions. It is not anti-charter; it merely says that to put a brick-and-mortar school outside of the sponsoring district’s boundary requires **written consent of the neighboring district**. This is particularly important because students enrolled in a charter school become students of the SPONSORING district, meaning, **without this bill**, any school district in the state could sponsor a public charter school that could build schools anywhere in the state taking away students from every one of those non-sponsoring districts.

Our experience raised red flags, but every school district in Oregon should welcome this bill as it simply ensures that local school boards can manage the whole of students in their districts without an unsolicited charter school, **sponsored by an entirely different district**, coming in from somewhere else. This is a no brainer, and I urge all members of this committee to send this bill to the House floor with a “Do Pass” recommendation.

Thank you.