

Submitter: Shelly Smith  
On Behalf Of: Alliance Charter Academy  
Committee: House Committee On Education  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3444

March 9, 2025

The Honorable Members of the Oregon State Legislature  
State Capitol  
900 Court Street NE  
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Members of the Oregon Legislature,

I am writing on behalf of the students, families, and staff of Alliance Charter Academy in Oregon City to express our strong support for House Bill 3444, which seeks to address the longstanding funding disparities between charter schools and district-run public schools. As the Director of ACA, I believe this bill is essential in ensuring that all students have equitable access to the educational resources and opportunities they deserve.

Currently, charter schools like ours face significant financial challenges when compared to traditional public schools. While we are committed to providing a high-quality education in a flexible and innovative environment, the funding disparities limit our ability to fully support our students, pay our staff a market wage, and offer the range of services that are standard in district-run schools. Our students are not any less deserving of the same resources and opportunities, yet the current funding model continues to put us at a disadvantage. Our charter agreement requires that ACA students perform better on standardized tests as compared to the Oregon City School District, and we consistently achieve this.

Charter schools play an important role in Oregon's educational landscape by offering families an alternative to traditional public schools. Many families seek out charter schools as a 'last resort', having found that traditional public school is not working for their children. As a homeschooling support hybrid model, ACA leverages high parental involvement, which is the number one indicator of student success. By their very nature, unproductive charter schools are closed. Successful charter schools carry forward their missions. By addressing funding disparities through House Bill 3444, we can ensure that charter schools continue to thrive and contribute to the overall success of our public education system.

I urge you to support House Bill 3444 and take this crucial step toward a more equitable educational system for all students in Oregon. Thank you for your consideration, and for your continued work to improve education for every child in our state.

Sincerely,

Shelly Smith  
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