

Submitter: Kelley Edenholm

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Education

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3444

Good morning, Chairperson and esteemed members of the Committee, My name is Kelley Edenholm, and I am here today as an advocate for public charter schools and the thousands of students who rely on them for high-quality education. I appreciate the opportunity to speak on this critical need for increased funding to support these schools and ensure that every child, regardless of zip code or background, has access to the resources they need to succeed.

Public charter schools serve a diverse student population. These schools provide innovative learning environments, personalized instruction, and unique education opportunities tailored to students' needs. Yet, despite their success, public charter schools often receive significantly less funding per student than traditional district schools. This funding gap limits their ability to provide essential services, including advanced coursework, special education resources, extracurricular activities, and modern facilities.

At Gresham Arthur Academy, we see firsthand the impact of this disparity. Teachers work tirelessly with limited resources, parents contribute as much as they can, and students demonstrate resilience every day. However, they should not have to overcome financial barriers to access the same quality of education available elsewhere.

Investing in charter schools is an investment in our future. When charter schools thrive, entire communities benefit – academic achievement rises, graduation rates improve, and more students are prepared for college and careers. We ask for equitable funding that allows charter schools to provide the same level of support and opportunity as traditional public schools.

I urge this committee to prioritize funding for charter school students and ensure they receive the resources they need to reach their full potential. Every child deserves an excellent education, and it is our responsibility to make that a reality.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Kelley Edenholm

Mother and Charter School Advocate