

Submitter: Emily Knobelspiesse  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: House Committee On Education  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3444

House Committee On Education  
Oregon State Senate  
900 Court St. NE  
Salem, Oregon 97301

Dear Chair Neron, Vice-Chairs Dobson and McIntire, and members of the Committee:

As an Oregon public charter school student, I am writing today in support of House Bill 3444. HB 3444 will fix a deep injustice currently happening in Oregon schools: that Oregon public charter school students are effectively funded at 48 cents on the dollar compared to district students. Students at Ridgeline Montessori Charter School are public school students, and it's past time to fund our education fairly.

Each student here at Ridgeline Montessori Public Charter School has a story about why this school has made a positive difference in their life. Many started out in traditional public schools, but couldn't receive the education they deserved, often due to learning challenges that required specialized attention beyond what a public school classroom could provide, or physical, developmental, or mental health challenges that public schools simply couldn't, or wouldn't, accommodate.

The reason why my charter school is important to me is because I have grown up here for basically all of my school years, and have learned and grown up through every class. I entered the school at the age of five years old, and I will be leaving it at age fourteen. When joining kindergarten, I made lifelong friends that I am still friends with to this day. I grew up with the same people through every class, and met new friends while still keeping the old. I love Ridgeline because it is accepting of my learning style, and understanding of my differences. I go to class with all different types of people, and have grown up with a lot of them. My favorite classes are English Language Arts, Social world, and creative writing. I struggle with math and science, but I still like my math and science teachers Julie and Carrie.

Unfortunately, because of Oregon's current school funding model, public charter schools are significantly underfunded. This directly impacts me as a student. Many buildings are old and in need of upgrades, students can't access transportation services, food security programs are limited, and schools lack essential school supplies and mental health resources. By passing HB 3444, you can fix this ongoing disparity and provide fair funding for public charter school students who deeply need

it.

Please vote yes on HB 3444.