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On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Education

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3444

Charter schools serve a vital role in our educational system by offering families choices that best fit the unique needs of their children. These schools are often at the forefront of innovation, individualized learning, and community engagement. However, despite their success in providing high-quality education, charter schools have historically been underfunded compared to traditional district schools. Allocating 95% of the State School Fund to charter schools ensures that these institutions are adequately supported and can continue to thrive. This funding will allow charter schools to invest in quality curriculum, attract skilled educators, and provide the best possible learning environments for their students.

Equally important is ensuring that public charter schools receive federal, state, and local funding on the same basis as non-chartered public schools. It is essential that all public schools—regardless of their structure—are funded equitably and fairly. When charter schools are excluded from certain funding streams or receive less per-student funding, they face significant challenges in providing the same level of services and opportunities that traditional public schools can offer. Equal access to funding will allow charter schools to compete on an even playing field, ensuring that all students, whether they attend a charter or district school, have access to the resources and support they need to succeed.

Finally, the recognition of transportation costs incurred by charter schools as equivalent to district school transportation costs is a vital part of this proposal. Many charter schools serve students from across large geographic areas, and transportation can be one of the most significant financial challenges they face. The current system, which does not fully account for these transportation costs, places an unfair burden on charter schools. By treating transportation costs equitably, we can ensure that charter schools have the financial resources to provide safe, reliable transportation to their students, enabling them to fully participate in the educational opportunities offered by the school.

In conclusion, I strongly support the increased funding for charter schools and the recognition of transportation costs equity. These measures will help ensure that all students—regardless of whether they attend a charter school or a district school—have access to the high-quality education they deserve.