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On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Education

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2583

Virtual charter students deserve fair access to the same resources as every other public school student. The Student Success Act was designed to support students who need it most, yet virtual charter students—many of whom are neurodivergent or require unique learning accommodations—are unfairly excluded. HB 2583 is about fairness and equity, ensuring that all students, regardless of where they learn, have equal access to Student Investment Account (SIA) funds.

As an online high school counselor, I see firsthand the vital role that virtual charter schools play in supporting students who may struggle in traditional brick-and-mortar settings. Our school provides flexible learning environments, individualized support, and accommodations that allow neurodivergent students to thrive. Many of our students come to us because they need a setting where they can learn at their own pace, access a format that meets their mental health needs and academic supports, and engage in education without the barriers that a traditional school environment may pose.

Despite serving a diverse and often high-need student population, virtual charter schools are denied access to SIA funds that could help us expand critical mental health services, increase staff to support individualized learning plans, and provide resources that ensure every student can succeed. The exclusion of virtual charter students from these funds sends a message that their needs matter less.

HB 2583 corrects this inequity by ensuring that all public school students, including those in virtual charter schools, receive the resources and support they deserve. Every student—no matter where or how they learn—should have access to the tools they need to succeed. Fairness in education means recognizing and addressing the needs of all students, and passing HB 2583 is a necessary step toward that goal.