

Good Afternoon Members of the Education Committee,
I'm writing to you out of concern regarding legislation H 7415 & H8131. I ask you to support H7414 and H 8131.

I am writing to share my views on what Charter Schools have done to the students in Pawtucket Public Schools. An increase in charter schools has left less and less resources for students in Pawtucket that decide to stay in our public schools. This has left us, both students and teachers, increasingly disadvantaged. We have sent millions of dollars to out of state charter corporations, which could instead be supporting Pawtucket's students within our own schools. This is especially critical, as we are currently facing a deficit of over 7 million dollars for next year. Currently, we are preparing to build a new high school. Charter school expansion will continue the trend of taking away many of our students, which will undoubtedly leave many of what will be our new classrooms empty and underutilized. I support a charter moratorium/cap reduction. I also support a commission to support a study of charter school funds in an effort to support our students and families enrolled in Pawtucket's Public Schools. Why wouldn't we want to demand that corporate charters adhere to the same standards as public schools do? Why have two sets of standards?

Charter schools lack accountability measures equivalent to those of public schools. Charters also take money from programs, activities, athletics and support services in public schools. Our students in public schools deserve the best we can offer them and don't deserve the challenge of their potential resources being taken for those that don't have the same standards of accountability. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Christopher Souza

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