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I am here today to speak in favor of RI Bill S2787.

Public charter schools are undoubtedly siphoning away funding that goes toward traditional public schools. As a result, districts like Woonsocket now have two separate school systems funded by taxpayer money, including separate administrative and maintenance departments! This greatly limits the traditional public schools ability to provide services for their students, particularly special needs and MLL students.

It also limits the need to repair deteriorating infrastructure in several of the older school buildings. District administration is struggling to keep up with repairs, heating and cooling, leaky roofs, and myriad other structural deficiencies.

Staffing of public charter schools is also problematic. The conservative Thomas P. Fordham institute has found that charter school teachers “generally have lower longevity and higher turnover rates compared to traditional public school teachers, with studies indicating charter staff are often younger and less experienced. On average, charter teachers spend fewer years at their schools (3.6) vs. traditional public school teachers (8.1) in districts and often leave at higher rates.”

Another study done by David Stuit and Thomas Smith “[Explaining the gap in charter and traditional public school teacher turnover rates](#)” found that charter school teachers self-reported that working conditions were a key motivator in their decisions to “leave the profession or change schools”. Stuit and Smith point out that “Higher turnover in charters is frequently attributed to long working hours, lower pay compared to unionized districts, and lack of tenure, leading to higher burnout.”

Numerous peer-reviewed studies point to the fact that there is little or no difference between educational outcomes for students who attend traditional public schools or charter schools. William Jayne’s study “[A Meta-Analysis on the Effects and Contributions of Public, Public Charter, and Religious Schools on Student Outcomes](#)” found that “Students from public charter schools ... performed no better than their counterparts in other public schools.”

It makes little sense for the people of Rhode Island to allow their taxpayer dollars be taken away from the traditional public school system that provides services for ALL children in their district, including disabled, medically fragile, special education, MLLs, and others. Please support the passage of RI Bill S2787.

Thank you.

Han, E. S., & Keefe, J. (2020). The Impact of Charter School Competition on Student Achievement of Traditional Public Schools after 25 Years: Evidence from National District-level Panel Data. *Journal of School Choice*, 14(3), 429–467.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/15582159.2020.1746621>

Jeynes, W. H. (2012). A Meta-Analysis on the Effects and Contributions of Public, Public Charter, and Religious Schools on Student Outcomes. *Peabody Journal of Education*, 87(3), 305–335. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0161956X.2012.679542>

Stuit, David A. & Smith, Thomas M., 2012. "**Explaining the gap in charter and traditional public school teacher turnover rates**," *Economics of Education Review*, Elsevier, vol. 31(2), pages 268-279.