



Testimony in Opposition to LD 604, “[An Act To Promote Accountability in Maine's Charter Schools](#)”

Senator Daughtry, Representative Brennan, and the distinguished members of the Committee on Education, my name is Nick Murray and I serve as policy analyst for Maine Policy Institute, a nonpartisan, non-profit organization that advocates for individual liberty and economic freedom in Maine. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in opposition to LD 604.

Charter schools are public schools. The Maine Charter School Commission (MCSC) is well-equipped to oversee those schools and manage the charter program within the relatively narrow bounds Maine law provides. The commission, nor school leaders, need more restrictions and regulation by the Legislature.

Please ponder the thoughtful testimony of MCSC and heed their warnings. I have no doubt that the intent of this bill is fairness, but this goes much beyond fairness. LD 604 puts charters on a much lower footing than traditional schools.

LD 604 would separate charter school funding from state General Purpose Aid, funds earmarked for public schooling, and would require the Commissioner of Education’s approval to expand facilities or locations, asserting unnecessary additional state controls over these schools.

Charter schools, and the parents, teachers, and staff whom they serve, have been subject to extraordinarily onerous policy passed out of this committee in the last two years. There is no need to impose more hurdles on these people.

Please stop these continued, misguided attempts to “save” public schools by hurting other Maine public schools. If parents and students like their charter, that's all we should need to see to affirm their choice. I’ve said it before in testimony to this committee. Look to parents. Look to families. They will tell you what works.

Please deem LD 604 “Ought Not to Pass” and spare Maine charter schools, and the families they serve, from further needless and destructive regulation. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Nick Murray
Maine Policy Institute

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