



AB 1506 (McCarty): Re-Establish Charter Schools Cap

Bill Summary:

- **AB 1506 re-establishes a meaningful cap on charter schools permitted to operate in the state of California.**
- **The charter school cap authorized by a school district or county office of education would be established as follows:**
 1. **If more than 10% of the students are attending a charter school, the cap will be set at the number of charter schools operating January 1, 2020. The school district or county office of education may only authorize one charter school after one charter school closes in the same school district or county office of education.**
 2. **If less than 10% of the students are attending charter schools, the cap will be set at 10% of the average daily attendance.**
- **When a charter school closes in a school district or county office of education, priority for new petitions must be given to an entity that is not currently operating another charter school.**
- **Prohibits establishment of new non-classroom-based charter schools.**

Key Message: Placing a cap on the number of charter schools allowed to operate in California will bring the state in line with the intent of the original charter school law, which was to authorize charters upon agreement of the local educators, parents and community. The unregulated growth of charters has led to numerous examples of waste, fraud and abuse that have negatively impacted students over the last two decades. Too often, charter school expansion has meant diverting money out of California's neighborhood public schools to fund privately-managed charter schools with little oversight or regulation. The cap would allow local school districts to control the educational opportunities and supports within their communities to best meet the needs of their students.

Talking Points:

- **Public education is the cornerstone of our democracy.** All students, regardless of their ZIP code, deserve a quality public education. The lack of accountability and transparency has led to a significant number of cases of waste, fraud and abuse that has diverted funding and resources away from neighborhood public schools. One study shows that confirmed fraud and waste in California charter schools has reached more than \$149 million. Another study shows that nearly 450 charter schools have opened in places that already had enough classroom space for all students.
- **Removing California's charter school cap was a mistake.** California's original 1992 charter school law included a cap of 100 charter schools statewide and no more than 10 charter schools per school district. Since the cap was removed in 1998, the number of charter schools operating

in California has skyrocketed to more than 1,300. The 1998 law changes also allowed private corporations to manage these non-profit charter schools. With very little accountability and transparency measures in place, corporate special interests and billionaires have been allowed to impose their school privatization agenda on local communities and make profits off our kids. A cap must be reinstated for the sake of all students.

- **Charter law has not kept pace with growth.** Current charter school regulations do not provide sufficient oversight to ensure all charter schools remain financially and academically sound. Right now, private charter school operators can acquire buildings and property at the expense of taxpayers and then keep the buildings as their private property, even when they are no longer being used as schools. Studies show that \$2.5 billion in taxpayer money has been misspent on charter school facilities that were not needed or delivered a low-quality education to students.
- **Our focus must be on improving public education for all students, not on expansion of corporate charter school chains.** California currently has nearly twice as many charter schools as any other state in the nation. Laws governing oversight have not kept pace with the unregulated growth of the charter industry. Networks of California's charter schools are putting profits before kids by prioritizing growth opportunities over educational opportunities for all students. Neighborhood public school students are bearing the cost for the unchecked expansion of privately-managed charter schools and it must stop.
- **Privatization of a public good is not in alignment with California values.** The teachers' strikes in Los Angeles and Oakland received state and national attention. Those settlements included provisions to establish a charter school moratorium. Educators, parents, students and community members are galvanizing to reclaim public education and a system of schools that is open to all students and accountable to the community they serve. Enough is enough.