

Glenda Washington
4311 Longleaf Court
Bowie, MD 20716

March 6, 2023

Greetings,

My name is Glenda Washington. I am a resident of Maryland and a retired educator. I am testifying today in favor of SB0646 and am urging you to vote in favor of the bill.

As a lifelong educator and a resident of Maryland, I have firsthand knowledge of the educational system and the urgent need for additional choices for our families. While Maryland still lags behind many other states on its support for charter schools, charter schools are a welcoming opportunity for Maryland's families. Charter schools in Maryland currently provide a free option for over 24,000 children. Charter schools provide flexibility for many educators. Charter schools allow families to remain in their LEA thereby keeping the per student funding within the district versus sending their scholars to private schools resulting in loss of funding for their school district.

With that being said, charter schools in Maryland don't receive capital funding and so much of the monies that should be spent directly on students' education must needfully go towards facilities and the associated costs. Charter school operators are solely responsible for facilities and their associated costs. SB0646 would provide the opportunity for public charter school students, teachers, and families to have the same facility experience as their other public school peers who are attending 21st Century Schools, updated buildings, and state of the art learning facilities. Families who opt for charter schools tend to choose a program versus a place. However, the lack of funding for charter school facilities is incredibly unfair to those children.

The passage of SB0646 charter schools, like other public schools, can get the necessary funding to ensure their students are not only attending schools that serve students' academic interests but also schools that are structurally and aesthetically up to par and suitable for 21st Century students. The monies charter schools will save as a result of SB0646 can then be used to directly impact the in-class learning charter school students experience.

If SB0646 passes, each's allocation/reimbursement per student would be no more than \$2000. This is not a lot of money. The funds are available and will not impact the funds already given to regular public schools. The funds, through the passage of SB0646, would come from the State's General Fund and not the LEA capital funding or per pupil funding allocation for LEAs. If every charter school in Maryland decided to max out their reimbursement under SB0646, this miniscule amount would be approximately \$48 million annually.

In closing, the passage of SB0646 will only help students and will harm no one. I am in favor of SB0646 and I urge you to vote in favor of SB0646. Thank you for the opportunity to have my voice heard.

Sincerely,
Glenda Washington, Ed.D.