



Texas State Senator
The Texas State Capitol
Austin, Texas 78701

Dear Senator,

I am writing on behalf of the Coalition for Public Schools, which includes more than 40 organizations representing over three-million Texans. As a result of consistent, diligent efforts we have been able to defeat public school vouchers in Texas each legislative session for over 20 years.

There are currently three bills in the Texas Senate with language that we believe constitutes a voucher:

SB 1455 (Taylor) – This bill allows for the shifting of taxpayer funds away from a public school to a private online vendor by removing the requirement that students must have previously attended a public school and by removing the cap on the number of online courses that may be taken.

SB 947 (Campbell) – This bill removes the requirement that students of those serving in the military must have previously attended a public school in order enroll in online virtual courses.

SB 380 (Hall) – This bill removes the cap on the number of online courses that may be taken by a student.

We believe these bills unnecessarily shift taxpayer funds away from public schools to private virtual vendors through the Texas virtual schools network. While we are not opposed to the use of online courses through a blended learning approach, recent research from the National Education Policy Center (<https://nepc.colorado.edu/publication/virtual-schools-annual-2015>) shows that virtual schools consistently lag far behind public schools in performance. Additionally, a heavy reliance on virtual schools allows many of the vendor-providers of these courses to avoid much of the accountability that is currently required of traditional public schools. We urge your opposition to SB 1455, SB 947, and SB 380 for these reasons.

Please feel free to contact me directly if you have any questions.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Charles Luke".

Charles Luke, Ed.D.
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