

Charter School/School Choice Expansion Bill on the Move - Please Take Action!

[HF 2754](#) (IRSPA and ISEA – Opposed) - Despite bipartisan opposition, a bill to expand and enhance for-profit charter schools, was approved by the House on Thursday on a vote of 53-34. This bill now heads to the Senate for consideration.

Please contact your district Senator and tell them to vote NO on this bill.

This bill contains 14 divisions that further deregulate already lax rules for the founding group/for-profit charter school model. Here are some of the very worst parts.

Division I adds the University of Northern Iowa (UNI) as a charter school authorizer; currently, the only authorizer of the for-profit model is the State Board of Education.

Division II calls for Teacher Salary Supplement (TSS) dollars to follow the charter school student instead of staying with the public school district of residence to help districts meet the minimum salary requirements of teachers. TSS dollars have already been included in budgeting for the upcoming school year and for-profit charter schools are exempt from minimum salary requirements for educators.

Division III has been amended to require all public schools to allow students from non-public and charter schools to participate in **any** extracurricular activity offered by the public school that the non-public or charter school does not. Without providing additional resources to public schools for their participation. This is an unfunded mandate on public schools. Nonpublic and for-profit charters are free from most regulation and oversight.

Division V adds charter schools to the list of employers, thereby making their employees eligible for IPERS benefits.

Division VI allows charter schools to create a revolving loan fund framework under the Iowa Finance Authority (IFA). Nationally, one in four for-profit charter schools closes in the first five years. IFA would be responsible for paying back any loans should the charter school dissolve.

Division XIII is another new addition to the bill and would further deregulate homeschooling in Iowa. It would allow homeschool instructors to teach an unlimited number of unrelated students (currently capped at four). It also allows homeschool instructors to charge “tuition” and fees with no limits or parameters to the amount or

nature of the fees. Finally, this definition would allow parents and/or homeschool instructors to issue the equivalent of a diploma that is to be accepted by state and local entities, just like an actual high school diploma or qualified equivalent, without evidence of what course of study was completed or the rigor of such courses. Homeschool stops being homeschool when someone unrelated can provide instruction to an unlimited number of unrelated students and charge unlimited tuition and fees for it.

Iowa has plenty of school choice options. Expansion of those options should not come at the expense of our public schools or the safety of Iowa children.

Please contact your district Senator and urge them to vote no on HF 2754.