

March 27, 2023

The Honorable Brad Buckley  
Texas House of Representatives  
P.O. Box 2910  
Austin, Texas 78768-2910

Dear Chairman Buckley and Members of House Committee on Public Education:

On behalf of the 22 education organizations in Texas that signed this letter, we ask members of the House Public Education Committee to vote against HB 2890. This bill would limit the authority of the State Board of Education (SBOE) to make decisions that are in the best interest of students in Texas.

HB 2890 will change the voting requirements for the SBOE veto of a new charter application from a simple majority to a two-thirds super-majority of all members.

Members of the SBOE are elected by and accountable to voters in the same way as legislators, statewide officials, city council members, and county commissioners. Each of these elected bodies makes key decisions with a simple majority vote. Likewise, a simple majority vote is appropriate to ensure that the majority of Texas voters are represented in decisions made by the SBOE. The requirement for a super-majority vote could exclude the interest of those communities that are most affected by the proposed new charter schools.

The SBOE uses its veto authority judiciously and carefully with a record of only 15 vetoes of new charter applications recommended by the commissioner since the legislature gave it that authority ten years ago – that's only 29% of all charter applications. Each vote to veto a charter application has been bipartisan. Concerns about a charter application that may trigger a veto are usually related to program, budget, or staffing deficiencies that raise questions about whether the applicant is adequately prepared to serve students.

In many cases, applicants that were vetoed go on to improve their applications, reapply in a subsequent year, and are approved by the board.

The SBOE spends significant time on the approval process carefully reviewing each new application, giving charter applicants ample opportunity to address the board and answer questions. SBOE members can participate in 3 – 4 full days of TEA interviews with the applicants recommended by the commissioner.

In addition, the SBOE conducts public hearings allowing all stakeholders to voice their concerns on charter applications and holds detailed discussions with applicants before voting – giving them time to clarify issues and respond to questions from board members.

We ask that the Public Education Committee consider the SBOE’s thoughtful and inclusive process that treats each charter applicant fairly and respectfully and vote against HB 2890.

Thank you.



Association of Texas Professional Educators (ATPE) | Coalition for Education Funding | Every Texan  
Fast Growth School Coalition (FGSC) | Go Public | IDRA (Intercultural Development Research Association)  
Pastors for Texas Children | Raise Your Hand Texas | Texas American Federation of Teachers (Texas AFT)  
Texas Association of Community Schools (TACS) | Texas Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents (TALAS)  
Texas Association of Midsize Schools (TAMS) | Texas Association of Rural Schools (TARS)  
Texas Association of School Administrators (TASA) | Texas Association of School Boards (TASB)  
Texas Classroom Teachers Association (TCTA) | Texas Council of Administrators of Special Education (TCASE)  
Texas Elementary Principals and Supervisors Association (TEPSA) | Texas Rural Education Association (TREA)  
Texas School Alliance (TSA) | Texas State Teachers Association (TSTA) | Texas Urban Council of Superintendents (TUC)