



Support HB768 Amend IL State Charter School Commission

HB768 amends the Charter Schools Law of the IL School Code to remove the Charter Commission's authority to approve a charter school proposal over the wishes of a local school board. This bill would ensure that if a charter school is rejected by a local school board the state Commission cannot over-rule this decision.

Why is this important?

- **Support local control:** This unelected Commission allows for the expansion of charter schools throughout Chicago and Illinois over the wishes of local school boards. The Commission can override local decisions and approve charter schools that a local school board has rejected.
- **Charters fail to improve outcomes for students:** Research shows that charters are not out-performing traditional schools and are doing about the same, at best.
- **Charters heighten funding problems:** The state should focus on solving the inadequacy of funding for local school districts instead of draining resources from local districts that have rejected charters they don't need. Schools that are approved by the Commission get increased funding over local district amounts and this is then deducted from a school district's budget (<https://goo.gl/mpDMda>)
- **Charters reduce accountability and transparency:** When charter schools are approved via the Commission, they are not under a local district's control and do not have to be accountable to the local district. Charters don't have to disclose their budgets, financing and position files for staff to the public.

A record of overriding community concerns:

- In 2013 the Commission approved two Concept Charter Schools which the CPS board had rejected - this charter school network is now under Federal investigation.
- Woodland District 50 filed suit after the commission renewed a charter for Prairie Crossing Charter School (PCCS), which draws funding from the Woodland and Fremont districts. PCCS has only 1.8% of its students considered "at risk" (low income, limited English skills or special needs) compared to the local district's 31%.
- The local, elected school board in Waukegan rejected a LEARN Charter School Proposal. The appointed Commission overrode this elected school board decision and approved the proposal despite community opposition and school board denial.