



July 13, 2021

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chairwoman, House Appropriations
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education, and Related Agencies
2358B Rayburn Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Cole
Ranking Member, House Appropriations
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education, and Related Agencies
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman DeLauro and Ranking Member Cole:

I am writing to bring to your attention serious, and perhaps unintended, consequences related to language in the FY 2022 Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill. This language is in addition to a cut to the Charter Schools Program (CSP) of \$40 million, at a time when more parents than ever are seeking educational options, including charter schools, for their children in the wake of a worldwide pandemic. The President's FY 22 budget requested \$440 million for the CSP; this bill falls well short of that mark, even as the Committee increases overall education funding by 40 percent.

Section 314 of the bill, as released on July 11, reads as follows:

None of the funds made available by this Act or any other Act may be awarded to a charter school that contracts with a for-profit entity to operate, oversee or manage the activities of the school.

The intent appears to be to single out one group of public schools—charter schools—and threaten them with the loss of ALL their federal funds if they contract with private companies for services. The language is so vague that merely contracting for food services or back-office payroll support could put their Title I, IDEA and school meals funding at risk.

The impact could be the closure of public schools that lack financial resources and would have a disproportionate impact on schools serving a high percentage of students with disabilities and economically disadvantaged students. In rural areas, for example, there are often limited options for providing services for students with disabilities, and schools will contract for physical and occupational therapy and other services from private providers.

Some states mandate the use of private providers, such as PowerSchool for managing student enrollment. Will such mandates lead to schools being cut off from critical funding?

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From ride services to school meals, to school improvement, virtual platforms and classroom management, charter schools and district schools rely on private companies to support their students. Singling out charter schools for disparate treatment is simply wrong.

We would appreciate any additional clarity that would help us understand the intent of this language. As drafted, it would have a potentially devastating impact on public schools across the country. We hope it is not the intent of the subcommittee to cut off public school students from federal funding that is intended to support public schools.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nina G. Rees". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Nina" being the most prominent.

Nina Rees

President and CEO