



DONNA CAMPBELL, M.D.
TEXAS STATE SENATOR
DISTRICT 25

June 16, 2016

Dear Mayor Adler and Austin City Council Members,

I am writing to express my concerns and the concerns I've heard from constituents about a proposed ordinance that would limit and restrict the expansion of open-enrollment public charter schools throughout Austin. Not only would this ordinance have a devastating impact on the educational opportunities available to economically disadvantaged families and children, it could be a detriment to the future workforce of the city.

Open-enrollment public charter schools in Texas already receive on average \$1,000 less per student than traditional independent school districts. In the case of Austin, the deficit is even greater. Despite funding limitations, open-enrollment public charter schools are very popular with parents - there is currently a statewide waiting list of over 110,000 students - and they must meet greater accountability measures than traditional public schools.

Additionally, public charter schools receive no state aid for facilities, cannot hold bond elections, and may not enter into Land Development Agreements under the Texas Local Government Code, prohibiting them from negotiating with the city and putting them at a disadvantage with ISDs. Relying on fiscal responsibility, public charter schools stretch the funds they receive for both instructional and facility costs. It would be a mistake to tie their hands any further with unnecessary regulations that would only drive dollars from the classroom.

I encourage you to help, not hinder, charter schools in Austin. They provide an invaluable service to parents and children, and many students thrive thanks to their unique educational model. Please vote against this ordinance or at least support the requested amendment from charter school stakeholders regarding impervious cover. I beg you to think about the children and the future workforce you are impacting before you vote.

Thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions please feel free to contact my office.

Sincerely,

Senator Donna Campbell, M.D.
Texas Senate District 25