

## **CHARTER SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY AND FUNDING REFORM (S.300 and H. 1131)**

*S.300, The Charter School Accountability Act* (Sen. Barrios) and *H. 1131 An Act to Provide Parity for Local Public School Tuition Payments for Commonwealth Charter Schools* (Rep. Blumer) balance the needs of charter schools with those of district public schools.

### **Why support these bills:**

They will resolve the growing tension between charter and district schools by:

- Giving communities greater involvement in reviewing and commenting on charter proposals.
- Providing fairer funding for charter schools and reducing the drain on public school districts.
- Restoring the intent of the Ed Reform Act by ensuring that innovations are central to the charter initiative.

### **What these bills do:**

Provide *parity in funding* to reflect the costs local districts must pay for the students who participate in inter-district choice programs.

Encourage a *fair, balanced and democratic process* for the approval and renewal of charter schools by one, giving school boards of the sending district(s) 30 days to offer meaningful comment on charter proposals, and two, balance membership on the Board of Education by extending current restrictions on public school employees to charter school employees.

Ensure that *all public school students benefit from educational innovations*. Under the current structure two hundred million dollars is spent annually on charter schools with little or no innovational benefits to sending districts.

Establish a *vigorous charter application process that will improve students' success* and reduce the chances that students are displaced and public funds wasted by the closure of a charter school.

Improve *financial accountability* of charters by requiring their financial statements and bidding process match those now required of district schools.

### **What these bills don't do:**

These bills *will not close any charter schools*; rather they will increase the chances of success through an application process that engages communities in a meaningful discussion about the educational contributions of a proposed school.

These bills *do not deny any new charters*. The current system of the Board of Education granting up to 72 commonwealth and 48 Horace Mann charters remains intact.

These bills *do not reduce funding for charter schools*. H 1131 balances the cost between local districts and the state by setting a maximum tuition for local districts similar to the per student cost of inter-district choice and allocating additional tuition from state funds.

Reforms are needed to ease the growing tensions between charter and district schools. On behalf of all children, S. 300 and H. 1131 deserve our support.