

**NEBRASKA TAXPAYERS FOR FREEDOM ISSUE PAPER:
SOCIALIST DEMOCRATS SEEK TO DESTROY CHARTER SCHOOLS.**

BACKGROUND. Nebraskans desperately seeking school choice for their children and taxpayers disgusted with paying high property taxes to failing public schools view charter schools as a definite positive alternative. Parents and the public yearn for these alternative schools. Difficult as it is currently to pass state legislation to permit charter schools, Socialist Democrats in Congress seek to defund all charter schools, depriving millions of school children of deserved funding for this educational lifesaver. Charter schools are public schools. Instead of being governed by a local school board, nonprofits or charter management companies manage them. Many charter schools are wildly successful, quickly closing or eliminating the achievement gap between White and poor African American and Hispanic students.

THE ATTEMPT. **HR 4502** is pending in the House Appropriations Committee. This Democrat legislation would severely cut funding for the Charter Schools Program, which supports the expansion of credibly successful charter schools, from \$440 million to \$400 million. This money helps new charters open and assists successful charter schools to expand their operations. The bill would prohibit federal money awarded charters operated by for-profit companies. This clause will unjustly punish the 90% of charter schools that do not contract with a for-profit education management organization but do contract for IT, janitors, textbooks, food service, facilities, and furniture from for-profit companies.¹ All



charter schools rely on private businesses for things like school lunch, transportation, curriculum, school supplies, computers, desks, cleaning, and more. Public schools contract with these same businesses. Without contracting out, charter schools cannot offer the services to special needs students they must legally provide.² Charter schools could no longer bill for services or support, driving up the costs beyond what they can handle. Charter schools could no longer bill for services or support, driving up the costs beyond what they can handle.³ This clause is a mortal threat to charter schools, part of the Left larger war on “privatization.”⁴ Biden Sec. of Education Miguel Cardona vociferously has opposed the for-profits. Socialist Dems have fumed on Capitol Hill for years, especially since Pres. Trump actively supported charter schools, although the program still maintains tepid bipartisan support among those who understand that these funds help expand educational opportunities, especially for minority students stuck in failing public schools.⁵ The House Appropriations Comm., dominated by Dems, is poised to pass **HR 4502** with this clause, axing funds for a program supported by every president from Clinton, who began the program, to Trump. This committee action comes as the charter surge continues to add additional schools and students nationwide. Charter schools have a much lower rate of unionization than other public schools. Teacher unions are one of the largest and most influential special-interest groups serving in the Democrat coalition. Strong teacher unions wholeheartedly endorse this bill. The unions want no competition, only power and taxpayer money. Thus, Democrats feel torn between helping students, many of whom are minorities trapped in failing schools, and doing favors for their political benefactors.⁶ Dems want to drive charters out of business while parents are clamoring for more.⁷ Leading the rabid pack are Sens. Elizabeth Warren (Mass.) and Bernie Sanders (Vt.), who seek to defund charters entirely. The cuts planned despite an overall 40% increase in federal education funding to \$102.8 billion.

BIDEN HATES CHARTERS. On the 2020 campaign trail, Joe Biden vigorously opposed federal funds for for-profit charter schools. He promised to defund them, speaking to the leftist National Education Association. “No privately-funded charter school will receive a penny of federal money. None.” He wants to increase charter school federal regulations and give public school boards additional authority to block them and hamper their operations.⁸

THE RESPONSE. The National Alliance of Public Charter Schools responded that it was under assault by this education funding bill, which would cut funding for pupils from poor communities but also disabled students. Impacted

¹ Maureen Downey, Provision in federal spending bill jeopardizes charter school funding, [The Atlanta Journal-Constitution](#), July 21, 2021.

² House Democrats Call for Cutting Federal Funding for Charter Schools, by Katie Lobosco, CNN.

³ Massive Dem Bill is Meant to Destroy Charter Schools, by M. Dowling, July 22, 2021.

⁴ Charter Schools are Under Fire on Capitol Hill, July 20, 2021.

⁵ What the House Education Spending Bill Would do for Schools, by Andrew Ujifusa, July 15, 2021.

⁶ [Las Vegas Review-Journal](#), Democrats Cut Charter School Funding, Aug. 1, 2021.

⁷ Massive Dem Bill is Meant to Destroy Charter Schools, by M. Dowling, July 22, 2021.

⁸ Under Biden Administration, Charter Schools Face Threats at Multiple Levels, by Lance Izumi, Feb. 2, 2021.

are a majority of 3.3 million charter school students. “The goal of this legislation is to affirm Democratic Party allegiance to teacher unions, which have declared war on school choice generally and charter schools specifically,” said Dr. Terry Stoops, director of the Center for Effective Education at the John Locke Foundation. Republicans in the House are mounting an effort to defend charters. Conservative Reps. Patrick McHenry (N.C.) and Madison Cawthorn (N.C.) push an amendment that would eliminate the funding cut and the new regulations, but the Democrat slim majority in the House could doom the amendment, if the vote falls along strictly partisan lines.



TAKE ACTION NOW. Charters appeal to families badly served by local public schools. Charters demonstrate an impressive record of performance and achievement while spending less tax money per pupil. Charters could provide thousands of NE children, especially the disadvantaged, with superb alternative educational opportunities and means to gain high achievement. Notably, public charter schools have higher shares of black and Hispanic students than their non-charter counterparts, enrolling 27% black students and 26% Hispanic students, compared with 15% and 22% in the general public school system.⁹ Using the above

content, lobby your representative to vote NO on charter school defunding in the House Democrat Education Appropriation Bill, **HR 4502**, and email netaxpayers@gmail.com to join our NTF *Education Watch Project*.

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⁹ Dem Voters Don’t Want to Defund Charter Schools, by Charles Fein Lehman, Jan. 28, 2020.