

An Action Resolution regarding: Charter Schools in Ohio

Proposed by: The League of Women Voters of Hudson

Supports the LWVOhio Position and Principles on Charter Schools (See Attachment A 2017-19 LWVO Positions & Priorities) that "LWV Ohio recognizes first and foremost that it is a paramount duty of the state to provide for education and that charter schools, which are established as public schools and funded by the public, must be accountable to the public.

Background: Audits of Charter Schools across the state have found them to be widely deficient in delivering quality education that meets state standards in terms of outcomes, as well as with their accountability in terms of attendance and grade performance records on which funding is dependent; there serious deficiencies in fiscal responsibility, meeting sunshine law requirements and issues related to tuition funding and transportation derived from local districts, often depriving local common school districts of needed fiscal resources; and finally, because charter schools are under the jurisdiction of the State Board of Education, local districts and citizens have no way of holding charter schools accountable.

Urgency:

Given the identified ongoing defects in Ohio's charter school system and the current proposed legislative and administrative remedies to the present situation that are in conflict with the LWVOhio position and principles regarding Charter Schools, timely action by LWVO is needed to actively engage in both the administrative budgetary process and the legislative-regulatory processes at the state level to achieve a more responsive and responsible system of community/charter schools.

Whereas, LWV Ohio position on Charter Schools specifies that the purpose of charter schools is to serve needs not met by the public common schools and to offer innovative instructional methods, thus serving as a complement to not a competitor of the traditional public common schools;

Whereas, the State has not required that Charter Schools meet these principles and standards, even though HB 2 tried to address some of the deficiencies, state law has not been adequately specified or enforced and lobbying by special interests has weakened current attempts to remedy deficiencies thus disadvantaging the students they claim to serve and squandering the public resources diverted to their stewardship; and

Therefore, be it resolved that the League of Women Voters of Ohio meeting in Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio in State Convention on May 5-7, 2017, urges the General Assembly to support its position that the state must, as a paramount duty, provide for a uniform, efficient, safe, secure and high quality school system accountable to the public, and thus to incorporate management, accountability, transparency, conflict of interest, facilities and funding principles applicable to the traditional public common schools into law and regulatory provisions that apply to Ohio Community/Charter Schools. Charter/community schools and their sponsors must be held to the standards set out in HB2.