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## **Senator Campbell Reprimands Austin City Council for Charter School Vote**

AUSTIN, TX - On Thursday, the City of Austin passed an ordinance that enacts onerous regulations on public charter schools, negatively impacting area school children and effectively ending the ability of these schools to grow and expand in the city. The ordinance saddles open-enrollment public charter schools with city zoning requirements that have never previously applied to a public charter school and are clearly designed to prevent their expansion.

"There's a trend by the Austin City Council right now to regulate anything out of business that is successful, popular, and thriving without government help. Having already restricted the freedom of Austinites to participate in ridesharing and short-term rentals, the city is now targeting school children who bypass traditional public schools," Senator Campbell stated. "To take this vote in the dead of summer when parents, teachers, and students aren't around to protest makes this particular act even more cowardly."

The Legislature created public charter schools to deliver a unique, customized, and flexible education for children who may not have their needs met in traditional public schools. Public charter schools receive no taxpayer dollars for facilities, cannot hold bond elections, and may not enter into Land Development Agreements with cities, putting them at a disadvantage with ISDs. On average, they also receive \$1000 less per student from the state. Despite these restrictions, they are extremely popular, with a statewide waiting list of over 110,000 students.

"Charter schools are successful, popular, and efficient precisely because they follow a nontraditional model that does not rely on expensive facilities and large campuses. Forcing them to act like and meet the zoning requirements of traditional ISDs is like forcing food trailers to provide and pay for banquet halls," Senator Campbell said.

"This ordinance is an assault on families from traditionally underserved communities who rely on charter schools. The City of Austin is not only restricting their access to a quality education, but negatively affecting the future workforce of this city and our great state."

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*Senator Donna Campbell represents Senate District 25 and sits on the Education Committee.*