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SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

January 20, 1997 Hearing Room 343

3:00 P.M. Tapes 5-6

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Sen. Tom Hartung, Chair

Sen. Marylin Shannon, Vice-Chair

Sen. Ken Baker

Sen. Gary George

Sen. Cliff Trow

Sen. Susan Castillo

MEMBER EXCUSED: None

STAFF PRESENT:

Jan McComb, Administrator

Shirley Spendal, Administrative Support

MEASURE/ISSUES HEARD: Public Hearing on Charter Schools

These minutes are in compliance with Senate and House Rules. Only text enclosed in quotation marks reports a speaker's exact words. For complete contents, please refer to the tapes.

Tape/#	Speaker	Comments
TAPE 5, A		

005 Chair Hartung Call meeting to order at 3:08 p.m.

007 Lowell Smith School Psychologist, Salem Public Schools. Supports charter schools (EXHIBIT A).

019 Smith Wide diversity of views. Find way to work with all people of state. Force consensus or recognize diversity and allow avenues to be expressed.

044 Smith Movement in funding. Dangers if state wants more responsibility. More centralized, less responsive to local, individual needs. Increased polarization and politicization of whole process. Charter schools one means of looking at choice in education.

067 Smith Regarding good charter law - some support weak charter law because hard to come out and say do not support choice. Emphasized starting school hard work. Need strong law to protect charter starters.

094 Sen. Baker You talk about consensus on education, do you think school reform reflects a consensus of a community in the state to do certain things.

101 Smith Depends on definition of consensus.

103 Sen. Baker Talking about consensus from state - consistent in applying certain principles to education, would you define as consensus?

114 Smith There were hearings, listened to range of views, ended up passing law which may make majority comfortable, but saying significant minority.

115 Sen. Baker Do you think that if we do a charter school bill we should allow schools to essentially ignore the school format?

115 Smith Not only population concerned about. Highlight there is one segment of population whose needs are not being met. Wide views about what constitutes education. With religion say not going to come to consensus, individual choice.

120 Sen. Baker Have 35,000 in state private schools.

135 Smith Those sending kids to private schools don't have choice not to fund public schools. If we have a significant portion that feels deeply divided against current system, need vehicle to allow them to pursue education as they see fit. Opposed to imposition of one particular view on individuals who are opposed to that - charter schools does offer some choice. Feels no charter school bill better than weak.

144 Sen. Shannon Refers back to AOI research, L.L . Stewart - 67 percent said reform law either made our schools worse or not better. Discussed monies allocated to each student. If these charter schools are not going to be under school board association and sponsors different, do you see the charter school providing transportation?

Smith If they have the full funding - define boundaries, etc. No expert, but if talking full funding, should provide transportation system.

169 Chair Hartung Stated the AOI testimony exactly from Julie Brandis' testimony. Did not specifically address school reform. Spent a lot of time on HB 2991 to try to reinstate local control aspect, recognizing with state soon to provide 85% of funding, a lot of legislators would want to micro-manage school system. Tried to make site counsel the vehicle by which local school boards would reinstitute the importance of local school boards in developing curriculum, staff training. Do we have a chance to succeed?

200 Smith Chance to succeed, but HB 2991 not vehicle to do that. All falls into same system which

allows very little flexibility. Reality is not happening. Regarding Sen. Baker's question, yes, they have to be waived from state regulations. Uses McDonalds as example. Feels if have charter school legislation you could see what diversity could be.

215 Chair Hartung Do you have charter school bill from another state which is to you the best. Find one and present to us.

216 Smith Lot of them out there. Can provide their initiative.

217 Chair Hartung Tell us what you do like.

222 Smith Portion dissatisfied needs vehicle to meet needs.

226 Chair Hartung Come to Friday meeting with your initiative.

228 Smith Unable to come.

230 Chair Hartung Asked him to provide to committee administrator.

233 Sen. Trow What do you mean by "multiple sponsors"?

235 Smith In LC 511 local school board to sponsor. Basically charter starter has no recourse.

240 Sen. Trow What sort of authorities do you want?

243 Smith In their initiative said any publicly elected school board. Thinks room to compromise - local school board, ESD, community college. An option to go somewhere else. Feels in same situation but

could do so much better.

252 Sen. Trow What regulations should be waived?

253 Smith Waiver all - except for the health and safety ones.

255 Sen. Trow Indicates all would be waived.

258 Smith Accountability if can prove your students learning.

259 Sen. Trow Whoever organizing the school can select any staff member regardless of being certified.

265 Smith Comfortable with LC 511 language.

266 Sen. Trow Asks for clarification.

267 Smith Basically what he is saying. Interest purely academic.

272 Sen. Trow Autonomy and freedom to innovate - should there be any controls over that.

TAPE 6, A

001 Smith Not saying no controls. Charged with outcomes. If not meeting those outcomes, should be terminated. Look at absolutely fundamental issues such as health, safety, discrimination, then specify in charter what going to comply with. Accountability would be stronger.

007 Sen. Trow Clarification of difference between weak and strong charter law.

009 Smith Weak has caps, one sponsor - local school district. Difficult to waive regulations, requires unionized teachers. My definition. Does not have some appeal process.

013 Sen. George Gives example of past school district with 15 separate school entities with school boards, compares with what discussed. Have a subdivision within an area which would have its own board which would be a charter school. Do you think unreasonable way to equate this - some having trouble with another board within an area.

023 Smith No.

024 Sen. George This would have been the 20's, 30's, 40's, 50's.

025 Smith Sure, charter school new concept, but it would not differ from those schools. Public oversight with publicly elected school board. 35,000 private students with minimal regulation

043 Sen. Castillo What does this mean to you, more charter schools in state?

044 Smith Has no intention of being involved in charter schools. Concerned what is proper and right in a just society. Research can tell you how, but not what to teach. Lot of discussion about what is being taught. Fundamental freedom of our citizens to have choice. Schools having to be everything to everyone.

089 Bob Duehmig Represent Oregon Federation of Teachers, Education and Health Professionals. American Federation of Teachers affiliate in Oregon.

100 Duehmig Submits (**EXHIBIT B**). Charter schools are method of reform used in different states. Advocates believe will encourage innovation, be more accountable, expand choice, require little money to implement and act as catalyst for improvement. Opponents believe they will cream off more affluent students, be no more innovative than existing schools, rely on cheap labor, take resources, be less

accountable.

111 Duehmig Charter legislation must make sure all children can participate, governance structure collegial, professional, democratic. Schools operate within established standards, curriculum, assessments for students. Teachers, school employees have professional authority to find, achieve standards.

116 Duehmig Accountability. Must be properly funded, publicly supported. Not be used as quick fix. Refers to page 2 of **EXHIBIT B**, basic outline of important components.

127 Duehmig Number of people in AFT that have worked with charter schools across the country, if you need assistance looking at different laws.

129 Chair Hartung Would like to have them send one or two laws think working best in states adopted charter schools. What percentage of certified teachers do you represent in Oregon?

132 Duehmig No K-12 teachers in this state; represent classified employees at K-12 level.

142 Chair Hartung Interest in AFT. What about Washington?

143 Duehmig Does not know.

144 Chair Hartung Any higher ed in Portland?

145 Duehmig Yes, we represent faculty and staff in number of community colleges and faculty at Western Oregon, part timers at Portland State, graduate teaching fellows at University of Oregon and staff at Lewis and Clark college.

149 Chair Hartung Any other private colleges unionized?

150 Duehmig No.

165 Sen. George Asks to clarify group of people want to dismantle public education.

184 Duehmig Speaks of debates. Concerned legislation be done to improve education system.

190 Sen. George Asks again for clarification..

191 Duehmig Not directed to anyone in particular.

164 Ed Edwards Oregon School Employees Association.

165 Edwards Submits (**EXHIBIT C**). Outlines change, problems in education process. Ballet Measure 5, now 47.

206 Edwards Be extremely cautious in what type of legislation produced, charter schools established. Quality education. Does not see anything in LC 511 that we are not already trying to do in our public school system. Discusses "responsible risks." Good choice of words. Massive reform act changing system. Urge committee to be sensitive to fact of how much more change we can take. Catch up, then try something new. Be careful of not creating dual system of publicly funded schools. Take close look at administrative rules.

240 Sen. George Gives example of teacher with students who could not read or write. Think we could do much worse? Give people more chance to innovate?

250 Edwards That type of story injures education. Should make sure diploma from high school means something.

TAPE 5, B

001 Sen. Shannon Discusses teachers' salaries rising. Here to educate children. Children should be receiving research-based education.

020 Edwards Majority of his membership would say that. Teachers have taken dramatic cuts.

046 Caryl Gertenrich Recently retired school teacher. Four children through Salem-Keizer School District

047 Gertenrich Something seriously wrong if 25 percent of our children are dropping out of school. Charter schools have a great potential. Accountability of school districts. Suggests charter schools try new things to get kids, teachers excited. Delighted our state trying to do something. Feels Dale Parnell's books' approach sound. Charter schools gives parents a choice.

100 Gertenrich Wants to give charter schools starters a chance to see what they can do. Starting out more prudent not to have such tight regulations. Public schools are a monopoly.

120 Sen. George Forcing everyone through same mold. Bill may be just too big too soon. The idea of a limited number with maximum flexibility, is that what you are thinking?

130 Gertenrich Yes, start out initial legislation for two years, and see and learn from what they come up with. Lots of creative ideas. Teachers for the most part very committed.

158 Sen. Shannon Indicates Rep. Sunseri's invitation to attend house hearing beginning tomorrow, 7:00 to 8:15 on HB 2991 (1993).

164 Sen. Trow Believes there is a lot of good teaching in public schools. Corvallis schools do real good job. Everyone should not be down on education.

171 Gertenrich Yes.

174 Sen. Trow What surrounds schools causes failures.

175 Gertenrich Yes. Charter schools, because small, allow teachers to spend time with children.

183 Sen. Trow Wants to make possible in public schools for those teachers.

184 Gertenrich Yes.

186 Chair Hartung Meeting adjourned 4:17 p.m.

Submitted By, Reviewed By,

Shirley Spendal, Jan McComb,

Administrative Support Administrator

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EXHIBIT SUMMARY

A - Testimony, Lowell Smith, 2 pg

B - Testimony, Bob Duehmig, 2 pg.

C - Testimony, Ed Edwards, 2 pg.
