

# Central Labor Council Contra Costa County AFL-CIO

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## Charter School Reform Resolution

WHEREAS, since the passage of the 1992 California Charter Schools Act calling for 100 charter schools, the number of publicly-funded, and privately-operated charter schools statewide, has grown rapidly to over 1,300 charter schools; and

WHEREAS, in 2018, researchers from Columbia University and the University of Florida found that charter schools nationwide are less likely to respond to enrollment requests from students with significant special needs; and

WHEREAS, in May 2018 a study from In The Public Interest found that charter schools led to a net fiscal shortfall of \$57.3 million annually for Oakland Unified, \$65.9 million annually for San Diego Unified, and \$19.3 million annually for East Side Union High School District in Santa Clara County; and

WHEREAS, in August 2018, an evaluation by Public Advocates of 43 Local Control Accountability Plans for charter schools in five districts, found charter school engagement, transparency, and accountability woefully lacking to such a degree that it was sometimes impossible to determine how charter schools were spending millions of dollars; and

WHEREAS, current law requires district campuses to accommodate co-locations of charter schools, resulting in shortages of resources and space and increasing tension and conflict within school communities; and

WHEREAS, current law allows charter schools to locate outside of the boundaries of their authorizing district in cases where suitable space is not available, without the need for authorization from the neighboring district school board, parents, or greater community; and

WHEREAS, local school boards are accountable to parents and students that live in their communities and have the best ability to review charter petitions, but are consistently overruled by state-level boards that are often hundreds of miles away and without any accountability to voters; and

WHEREAS, local school boards are the best determiners of how local education dollars should be spent to benefit local students, including the appropriate number and type of schools in their district, yet are prohibited under current law from considering such factors when deciding whether or not to approve a charter school petition; and

WHEREAS, a report by Education Week shows that in California, 27% of charter high schools have a high school graduation rate below 50 percent, and that 98% of the high schools in California that don't graduate a majority of their students are charter schools; and

WHEREAS, the NAACP, the Journey for Justice Alliance, the Movement for BlackLives, the Los Angeles Unified School District, the Anaheim Union High School District, the City of Richmond, the West Contra Costa Unified School District, the City of Huntington Park, and other organizations have called for and/or passed a moratorium on charter school expansion and for the strengthening of oversight in governance and practice of charter schools.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Contra Costa AFL-CIO Labor Council joins the above organizations and hereby supports a moratorium on the establishment of new charter schools in the state of CA, and will seek to have state legislation introduced and enacted to establish such a moratorium; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED, that efforts to pass a series of charter school oversight and local control bills be supported by this body including;

1. Assembly Bill 1505 (O'Donnell), which ensures all matters related to charter schools' authorization, renewal and other key decisions be made by the local school communities—those who actually know the needs of neighborhood children;
2. Assembly Bill 1506 (McCarty), which establishes a cap on the growth of charter schools. The current, unchecked and unregulated growth has led to destabilizing school districts and the proliferation of privately-managed charters;
3. Assembly Bill 1507 (Smith), which closes a loophole in current law which allows a charter school to operate outside of its authorizing district;
4. AB 1613 (O'Donnell), which will maximize the use of limited taxpayer resources by applying prevailing wage standards to charter projects financed with conduit bonds.
5. Senate Bill 756 (Durazo), which creates a moratorium on charter schools until 2024 unless policies contained within the aforementioned legislation are chaptered into law and requires the Legislative Analyst Office to report on various impacts that the charter industry has on the public education system in California.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Contra Costa AFL-CIO Contra Costa shall convey the importance of the passage of this legislation to the state-level elected officials that represent the areas contained within the jurisdiction of this body.

**Passed and Adopted by the Contra Costa AFL-CIO Labor Council on May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2019.**