



# LEGISLATIVE POSITION MEMO

Philadelphia Federation of Teachers  
Jerry T. Jordan, President

**June 14, 2021**

**To: Members of the General Assembly**

**From: Jerry Jordan**

**Re: OPPOSITION TO SB1**

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***The PFT remains in absolute opposition to SB1.***

**This bill does the following:**

- Massively expands vouchers via EITC funding to the tune of \$3Billion in the first year and then a massive 25% annual escalator after that.
- Opens the door to massive charter expansion with unknown costs, certainly in the tens of millions of dollars.

This bill flies in the face of the constitutional and moral obligation to provide a thorough and efficient system of public education to all of our children. We reiterate our opposition to the unfettered expansion of charter schools and the privatization of public schools. Instead of looking for ways to truly fund public education so that our students can receive the resources they so richly deserve (and to which they are constitutionally entitled), the legislature is once again considering legislation aimed at privatizing and profiting from public education.

**Additional Analysis:**

Following are some points of concern within the legislation. This analysis is not comprehensive but does outline some of our main areas of concern and opposition.

- Establishment of public charter school commission (p.29): this allows charter operators to circumvent local processes and will open the door for irresponsible and fiscally unmanageable expansion. This will, again, shortchange public education.
- Allowance of educational management service providers (p.41): this allows already outsourced education services to be even further outsourced. It encourages the furtherance of a business model for education which is exactly the opposite of what public education needs. Instead of looking for ways to invest in public education, this bill looks for ways to further privatize it.
- Circumvents local governing body (p.42): the process outlined beginning on p.42 outlines the ultimate authority to renew charters—thus further attempting to render local boards powerless and further the unfettered charter expansion that is the goal of this legislation.
- Provision of facilities for standardized testing (p.46): the provision of facilities for cyber charter schools in order to allow their administration of standardized testing is a problematic component of the legislation and seems an absurd item to need to codify by state law. In fact, this practice should be determined at the local level to the degree possible.
- Enrollment: the section on enrollment begins on p.47 by outlining the need for universal enrollment without academic requirements for charters. However, the entire section is then negated by the language on p.50 which allows all charters to have a host of criteria for 'specialized' programs which would entirely allow selective admissions and thus further the inequities perpetuated by charter schools.
- OST/EITC voucher expansion (p.89): this legislation increases "opportunity scholarship tax credits" to the tune of \$300,000,000 (from \$155 Million). Additionally, this legislation increases this allowance by an astonishing 25% annually beginning in 2022-23. This would be catastrophic for public education and the students we serve, and a boon for corporations looking to profit in the name of faux charity.