



NASSAU-SUFFOLK SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION, INC.

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TO: Long Island State Senate and Assembly Delegations

FROM: Susan Bergtraum, President
Martin Kaye, Legislation Chairperson

RE: Imposing Charter Schools on Suburban Communities

It is reported that at today's special session of the New York State Legislature, lawmakers will weigh the *quid pro quo* for garnering gubernatorial support for an increase in their pay. Is an agreement to lift the present cap on the establishment of new charter schools to be the trade-off? Will the charter school legislation once again evade public scrutiny and become yet another back-room deal?

The Nassau-Suffolk School Boards Association remains confident of the support of your constituents for its long-standing opposition to the expansion of charter schools into our communities. Long Islanders understand that charter schools have no direct accountability to school districts or to local taxpayers.

N-SSBA urges that you not compound the difficulties presented by New York's ill-conceived charter school legislation. Reject any proposals that would pierce the current cap and grant further automatic access to local tax dollars by for-profit business enterprises that operate outside of the control of any publicly elected body. Insist that charter applications have the approval of the locally elected school board. Address the funding impact on host school districts. Correct the current charter school funding formula that awards full K-12 funding to charters that limit enrollment to less costly elementary grades. Subject charter schools to the same percentage limits imposed upon local schools under a contingency budget. Provide districts with a mechanism to immediately recover charter payments if registered students either do not attend the charter school or return to the district. Prevent charter schools from denying enrollment to children with special educational needs and English Language Learners. Hold charter schools to the same standards and accountability as traditional locally supported public schools and evaluate these schools annually.