

108TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. RES. 351

Congratulating charter schools and their students, parents, teachers, and administrators across the United States for their ongoing contributions to education, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 4, 2004

Mr. GREGG (for himself, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mr. FRIST, Mr. CARPER, Mrs. DOLE, Mr. SUNUNU, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. DOMENICI, Mr. CRAIG, Mr. COLEMAN, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. DEWINE, and Mr. BROWNBACK) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to

RESOLUTION

Congratulating charter schools and their students, parents, teachers, and administrators across the United States for their ongoing contributions to education, and for other purposes.

Whereas charter schools deliver high-quality education and challenge our students to reach their potential;

Whereas charter schools provide thousands of families with diverse and innovative educational options for their children;

Whereas charter schools are public schools authorized by a designated public entity that are responding to the needs

of our communities, families, and students and promoting the principles of quality, choice, and innovation;

Whereas in exchange for the flexibility and autonomy given to charter schools, they are held accountable by their sponsors for improving student achievement and for their financial and other operations;

Whereas 41 States, the District of Columbia, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico have passed laws authorizing charter schools;

Whereas nearly 3,000 charter schools are now operating in 37 States, the District of Columbia, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and serving 750,000 students;

Whereas over the last 10 years, Congress has provided more than \$1,000,000,000 in support to the charter school movement through facilities financing assistance and grants for planning, startup, implementation, and dissemination;

Whereas charter schools improve their students' achievement and stimulate improvement in traditional public schools;

Whereas charter schools must meet the student achievement accountability requirements under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 in the same manner as traditional public schools, and often set higher and additional individual goals to ensure that they are of high quality and truly accountable to the public;

Whereas charter schools give parents new freedom to choose their public school, routinely measure parental satisfaction levels, and must prove their ongoing success to parents, policymakers, and their communities;

Whereas nearly 40 percent of charter schools report having a waiting list, and the total number of students on all

such waiting lists is enough to fill over 1,000 average-sized charter schools;

Whereas charter schools nationwide serve a higher percentage of low-income and minority students than the traditional public system;

Whereas charter schools have enjoyed broad bipartisan support from the Administration, Congress, State Governors and legislatures, educators, and parents across the United States; and

Whereas the fifth annual National Charter Schools Week, to be held May 3 to 7, 2004, is an event sponsored by charter schools and grassroots charter school organizations across the United States to recognize the significant impact, achievements, and innovations of charter schools: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That—

2 (1) the Senate acknowledges and commends
3 charter schools and their students, parents, teachers,
4 and administrators across the United States for
5 their ongoing contributions to education and improv-
6 ing and strengthening our public school system;

7 (2) the Senate supports the fifth annual Na-
8 tional Charter Schools Week; and

9 (3) it is the sense of the Senate that the Presi-
10 dent should issue a proclamation calling on the peo-
11 ple of the United States to conduct appropriate pro-
12 grams, ceremonies, and activities to demonstrate
13 support for charter schools during this weeklong

- 1 celebration in communities throughout the United
- 2 States.

