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Representative Tila Hubrecht's Capitol Report - Friday, April 21, 2017

APRIL 24TH 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

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State Rep. Tila Hubrecht Supports Charter School Compromise, Includes Full Funding for Missouri's Public Schools

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. – Missouri's public schools will receive full funding for the first time under a charter school bill supported by state Rep. Tila Hubrecht. Hubrecht had been opposed to charter school expansion but said a compromise put forward by House Speaker Todd Richardson included the funding and accountability measures that made the bill more palatable.

“I am a strong defender of our public school system and believe we have amazing schools providing a world class education to our young people. I don't want to do anything to jeopardize that, and I firmly believe the bill the House passed has protections in place to ensure our public schools will be able to continue to succeed,” said Hubrecht, R-Dexter. “As part of the compromise on the bill, public schools will now receive record funding levels as our foundation formula will be fully funded for the first time. This is great news for our young people and for our educators who will have access to the resources they need to provide a quality education.”

The language included in the charter school bill (HB 634) would limit charter school expansion only to areas where schools are failing. The bill is meant to provide additional options to students who would otherwise have nowhere else to turn to receive a quality

education.

“Some have accused me of being dishonest on this issue because I supported the bill after being opposed to charter school expansion in the past. The truth is that Speaker Richardson listened to my concerns and worked with me and other members of our caucus make this bill one we all could live with,” said Hubrecht. “This bill isn’t perfect but it does strengthen our support for public schools, while also allowing for the doors of opportunity to be opened for young people who would otherwise be left behind.”

Hubrecht noted that the legislation would increase the accountability and academic requirements for not only new charter schools, but existing ones as well. The bill would limit charter school expansion to districts that have a school building with an Annual Performance Report (APR) score of 60 or lower in two of the last three years. If a charter underperforms in comparison to similar schools in their district for two of the past three years, they will be limited to a three-year charter renewal. The bill provides that charter schools will have a three year probationary period, and if a charter performs poorly during two of the three years, that charter school will be ineligible for renewal and will be forced to close.

The bill would also limit the public dollars sent to charter schools to more than 90 percent of the sending district’s tuition. Additionally, the bill is contingent on the school foundation formula being fully funded. If the K-12 formula is not fully funded, then no charter school changes go into effect.

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