

1408

**Hearing on SB 1408**  
**“An Act Concerning Charter Schools”:**  
**Kadijah Wright (7<sup>th</sup> Grader)**

My name is Kadijah Wright and I am speaking on behalf of Trailblazers Academy and the entire charter school community in Connecticut in support of Senate Bill 1408, An Act Concerning Charter Schools. Charter schools like the one I attend, have made very significant student gains for me and my peers.

One of the aspects I enjoy about my school is the smaller environment which allows me to get the help I need and the structure I need to remain focused.

Even as a 7<sup>th</sup> grader I hear a lot about the need for greater accountability in education. Connecticut's charter schools have been doing a great job of this for more than 10 years.

Charter schools like the one I attend are given greater freedom to develop cool classroom programming in exchange for greater accountability for results. For my school, this means that if the school does not help students to perform, we may not be renewed and have to close down.

We are not afraid of this. In fact, this year charter schools are again stepping up to accept an even greater level of accountability. Under SB 1408 every charter school will be given a letter grade from A to F for student performance and a number from 1 to 5 for school culture. If a school gets less than a “C” and a “3” for more than three years it is closed down. It is that simple.

The only problem that I see with this is that my school does not get the same support as other public schools. In Connecticut, charter schools get \$3,500 less per student than traditional public schools.

As a student at Trailblazers Academy, I have had the benefit of being exposed to some great education opportunities, not the least of which has been a trip to Washington D.C. and the Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland. However, as a school we are required to do more fundraising than other public schools.

This bill suggests a simple solution that is in the best interest of all. Please bridge the gap and fund charter schools equally.

Thank you.

Public Hearing Testimony Speaker: non-speaker  
Kadijah Wright

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