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**TESTIMONY OF THE CITY OF BRIDGEPORT  
TO THE  
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION  
Friday, March 15, 2013**

**RE: H.B. 6622 AN ACT CONCERNING DISTRICT PARTNERSHIPS**

The City of Bridgeport urges your support for H.B. 6622: An Act Concerning District Partnerships

Bridgeport Public Schools are in the midst of an intense reform effort aimed at ensuring every child in our city has access to a high-quality education regardless of wealth, race, or zip code.

A significant part of our public school improvement efforts includes expanding access to charter public schools. Bridgeport students have benefitted from the successes of our district's high-performing charter schools. We are working furiously to bring even more of these high-quality, high-performing options to the city. Expanding school choice will help us reach the goal of ensuring every student in Bridgeport will have an equal opportunity to thrive.

H.B. 6622 will facilitate the growth of the charter school sector in Bridgeport by allowing us to enter into partnerships with charter school operators. Through these partnerships, the city can provide things like facilities and covering construction costs, which will incentivize and attract new, high-quality charter school operators to our city. Bridgeport is willing to invest in these charter school operators because they are willing to invest in our kids.

H.B. 6622, if passed and signed into law, will:

- Make the existing pilot program for district-school collaborations a permanent program

- Allow for districts to incorporate the scores of their participating charter schools in their District Performance Index
- Expand the range of districts that can participate to include the rest of the Alliance Districts

In order to continue making progress toward improving Bridgeport Public Schools, we must encourage reform efforts that will ensure all students have access to the high quality public schools they are entitled to. We cannot allow success to be limited just to the families that can afford it. This includes growing and supporting high-performing charter public schools.

Expanding high-performing charter public school options in the district is a critical and effective way to deliver a higher-quality education to Bridgeport students, and H.B. 6622 – if passed and signed into law – will be a key part of ensuring the necessary growth of that sector.

We all owe it to our students to ensure they have access to the world-class education they deserve.

Sincerely,



Bill Finch  
Mayor