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Mr. Chairman and members of the committee,

My name is Tom LeClaire and I am the president of the Coalition of Idaho Charter School Families. We are a Coalition of parents, grandparents, students and teachers who support the expansion of school choice in Idaho, equal funding for charter schools, and funding that "follows the child" to the school of their choice. I am here today to support the public-school funding formula change.

The new funding formula will be more student-centered and less program-centered. There will be more local control and spending flexibility for school districts, full funding will follow students as they move from one school to another, and charter schools will be better funded.

Many charter school students fall under the specially weighted groups in the model such as mobile students, at-risk students, ELL students, and students with disabilities. The current funding formula punishes charter schools for taking on many of these special students.

The new formula is more student-centered and will allow for funding to better follow students as they move from one school to another. This will have a positive effect for charter schools in Idaho and the students that rely on and need them.

Voters in Idaho also support school choice and I think they will support your efforts to modernize the funding formula. Over 70% of voters support charter schools and improving school choice for parents.

The Coalition of Idaho Charter School Families will be vigilant during this session of the Idaho Legislature to be sure that the new student-centered funding formula does not get "watered down." During this legislative process we will have parent advocates available to help you learn and support school choice.

We want school choice to get the fair funding it deserves. We hope you consider the families that we represent and vote for this new funding model.

Thank you for giving us this opportunity to promote school choice and offer support for improving the public school funding formula.