

For Immediate Release: *June 16, 2011*

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Congressman Duncan Hunter, chairman of the Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education, today introduced legislation to empower parents and students with greater access to quality education opportunities.

The Empowering Parents through Quality Charter Schools Act (H.R. 2218) will modernize an outdated federal law to help facilitate the development and expansion of high-quality charter schools. This is the second in the committee's planned series of education reform bills; The Setting New Priorities in Education Spending Act (H.R. 1891) was introduced on May 13 and approved in committee on May 25.

"An estimated 420,000 students in the U.S. are on charter school waitlists, desperate to escape underperforming public schools," Rep. Hunter said. "It's time we enhance school choice by improving access to charter schools. These innovative institutions empower parents to play a more active role in their children's education, open doors for teachers to pioneer fresh teaching methods, and promote high academic standards. By facilitating the development and expansion of successful charter schools, H.R. 2218 will provide parents and children more opportunities for a better education."

Committee Chairman John Kline (R-MN) expressed strong support for the legislation. "Charter schools embody two key principles American families want from the nation's education system: choice and flexibility," he said. "This successful educational model began in my home state of Minnesota, and the fact that 39 states and the District of Columbia have established charter schools is a testament to its success. Every child deserves access to the kind of education high-performing charter schools provide, and I am proud to support an effort that will bring these schools to more students. Mr. Hunter's legislation is another step forward in the committee's ongoing efforts to reform America's failing public education system and ensure more children can have a quality classroom experience."

Under current law, the federal Charter School Program awards grants to states for the development of new charter schools, but does not include support for the replication or expansion of successful charter schools. H.R. 2218 will modernize the Charter School Program, and provide states more incentives to support the development and expansion of successful

charter schools. Additionally, the legislation will increase support for charter school quality, ensuring taxpayer dollars are being used effectively to promote improved student achievement.

To view more information about the bill, click [here](#) .

Earlier this month, the Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education held a hearing to examine valuable role of charter schools in the nation's education system. An archived webcast of the hearing, as well as related documents, can be found [here](#) .