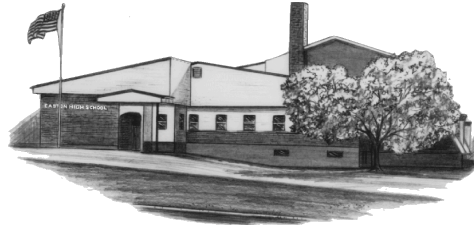


# Easton Junior/Senior High School

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TO: Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs

FROM: Easton School Department

RE: In Opposition of LD 512: An Act to Provide Educational Opportunities for STudents in Secondary Schools with 200 or Fewer Students

Date: March 12, 2025

Senator Rafferty, Representative Murphy, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs. My name is Laura Hunter and I am the principal at Easton Jr/Sr High School. I am writing as a concerned constituent and stakeholder in our local educational system to express my opposition to LD 512 as currently written.

While I appreciate the goal of increasing educational opportunities for students in small secondary schools, I have significant concerns about both the feasibility and the potential unintended consequences of this bill. My primary concerns include:

**1. Fiscal Responsibility and Resource Allocation:**

The proposal, as drafted, may impose an unsustainable financial burden on local communities and the state. Redirecting funds or creating new programs without a robust analysis of long-term costs risks diverting resources from other critical educational initiatives. In particular, schools that already struggle with limited budgets could face additional challenges in meeting new administrative and programmatic requirements.

**2. Equity and Implementation Challenges:**

Small schools serve a diverse range of communities with unique local needs. A one-size-fits-all statewide mandate does not adequately address the differing circumstances among rural, suburban, and economically disadvantaged areas. Rather than expanding opportunities uniformly, the bill may inadvertently widen existing disparities by providing benefits that are easier to implement in some

communities than in others.

3. **Local Control and Flexibility:**

Local education agencies possess the expertise and intimate knowledge of their students' needs. Centralized programs may undermine local control by imposing standardized criteria that do not reflect the particular challenges and strengths of individual school districts. Effective educational reform should empower local leaders to design solutions that are tailored to their community rather than applying a prescriptive model across the state.

For these reasons, I urge the committee to oppose LD 512. I advocate for a team approach to help strengthen small schools instead of policies that will weaken them. Every student should have access to a high quality education regardless of the size of their school or where they live.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I remain available should you require further details regarding my perspective.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Laura A. Hunter". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "L" and "H".

Laura A. Hunter