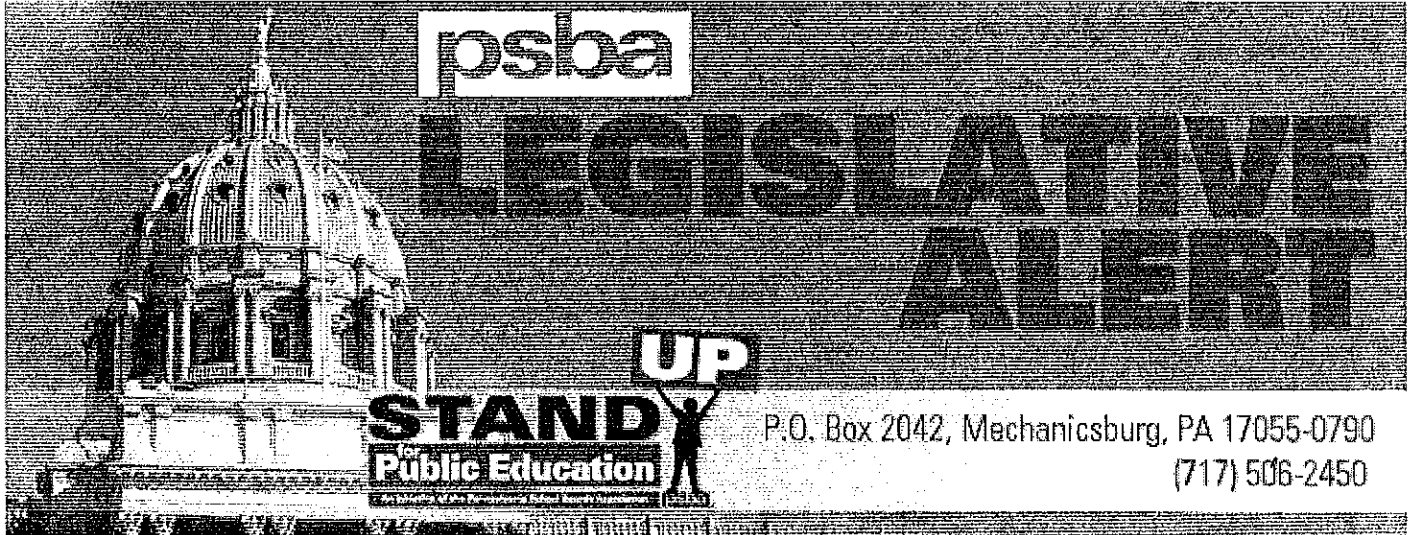




Ask Your Senator to Vote "NO" on SB 1085 Charter Reform Bill

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Ask Your Senator to Vote "NO" on SB 1085 Charter Reform Bill

Nov. 4, 2013

Take Action!

The Senate Education Committee recently approved its own version of charter reform under **SB 1085**, legislation that negatively impacts school districts and differs significantly from the more balanced provisions of **HB 618** that passed the House in September. **SB 1085** will soon be positioned for consideration by the full Senate.

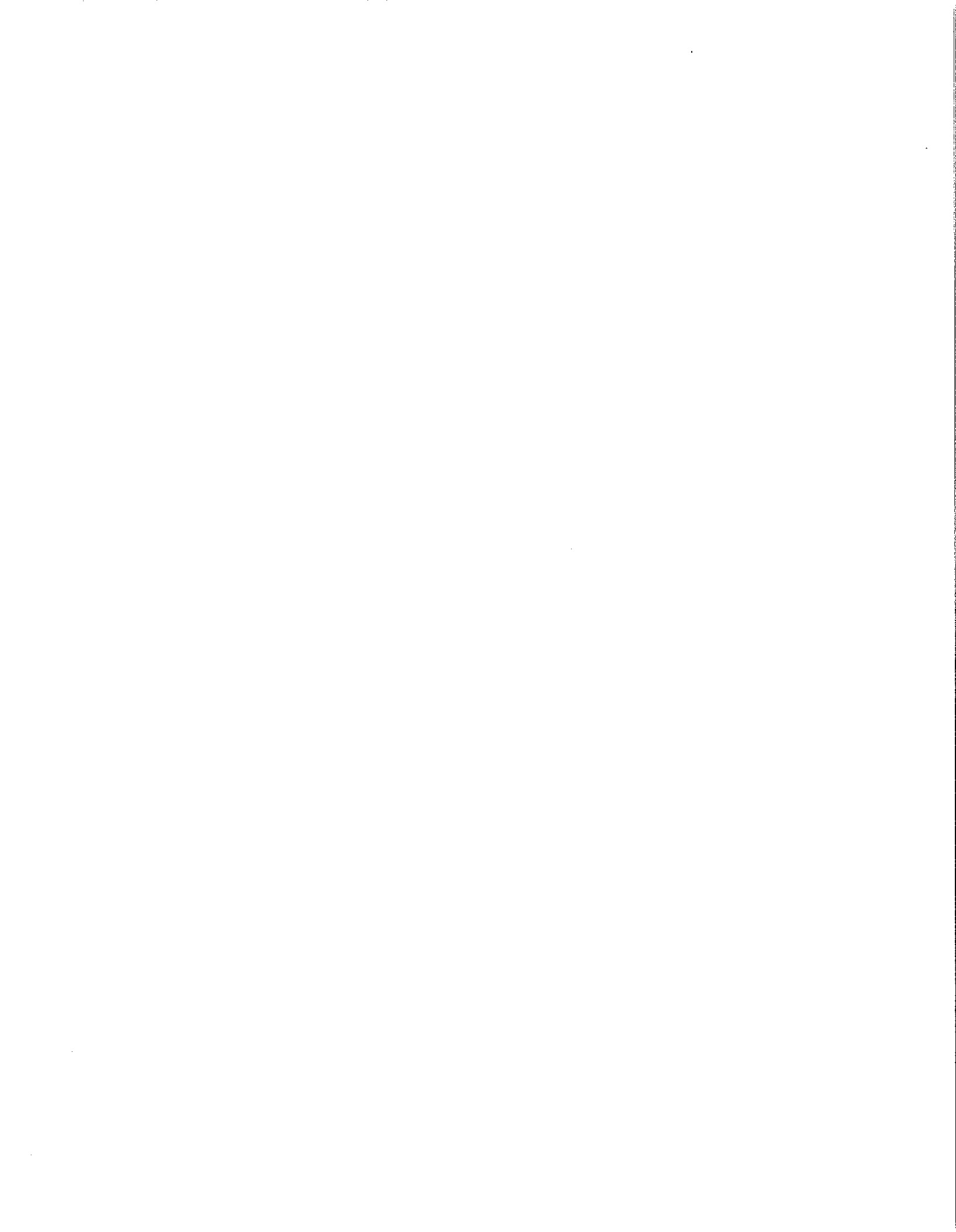
PSBA opposes SB 1085. Please contact your member of the Senate immediately to ask for a "No" vote on SB 1085. Please contact your members now by clicking on "Take Action" at the top right corner of this alert and you will find a letter prepared for your convenience. After completing the address information required, the letter will automatically be sent from you to your senators.

Among the most troublesome components of SB 1085:

*** Approach to pension double dip provides no savings for districts:** SB 1085 eliminates the pension double-dip from the **state** contribution, resulting in zero savings for school districts and taxpayers. Currently, the formula for calculating per student charter school payments from school districts includes funding for employee pensions, even though the state reimburses charter schools for these costs. As a result, charter schools are paid twice – once from the school district and once from the state. **Unfortunately, SB 1085 eliminates the pension double-dip from the state contribution, leading to increasing the tuition paid to charter schools as pension costs continue to rise.** These costs will become unsustainable in the coming years because school districts must continually increase their budgeted expenditures to align with PSERS contribution requirements and, thus, will pay higher tuition to charter schools based on these *district* increases.

*** Creates university authorizers with no accountability to districts and taxpayers that will be forced to foot the bill:** Charter school authorization is expanded to allow Pennsylvania universities to authorize and provide oversight for charter schools. However, tuition reimbursements for each resident student attending a charter school are paid by the local school district. There is no accountability to the local taxpayer or requirement for taxpayer input under this system. Such a change could result in increased local property taxes without input from those required to pay. Additionally, this creates a situation prone to venue shopping by charter school operators.

*** Creates a new mandate by requiring payment for 4-year old kindergarten:** School districts will be required to



pay tuition for students who enroll in charter schools but have not yet reached the minimum age of enrollment for kindergarten programs established by the resident district. This would effectively nullify the 2011 Pennsylvania Supreme Court decision in the case of *Slippery Rock Area School District v. Pennsylvania Cyber Charter School*, which concluded that a school district did not have an obligation to fund or submit payments for those students who enroll in a cyber charter school but have not yet reached the district's minimum age of enrollment.

SB 1085 creates numerous changes to the Charter School Law, but does not provide any meaningful reforms or relief from increasing charter funding costs. Instead, it makes new rules that only benefit charter schools at the expense of students, school districts, and local taxpayers. [Click here](#) to read PSBA's description of the provisions of SB 1085.

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