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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CONTINUING TO STAND WITH FAMILIES AND STUDENTS

March 20, 2017

OLYMPIA – The Washington State Charter School Commission (Commission) continues to support its schools and their families and students, in its defense of Washington’s charter school law.

Washington’s voters made charter schools an option for Washington’s students in 2012. Last year a bipartisan legislature re-enacted the law, giving continued effect to the will of the voters. On Friday, February 17, 2017, King County Superior Court Judge John H. Chun, ruled that Washington’s charter school law is constitutional on all counts. Furthermore, Washington’s law is recognized as one of the strongest in the U.S. in its support for school quality and accountability. In fact, Washington’s charter school law received a perfect score from NACSA (<http://www.qualitycharters.org/policy-research/state-map/washington/washington-2016-state-policy-detail/>), and just today, the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools ranked (<http://www.publiccharters.org/publications/measuring-model-ranking-state-charter-public-school-laws/>) Washington’s law fourth strongest in the country in its model charter school law rankings.

Unfortunately, charter opponents have appealed Judge Chun’s ruling, extending the unnecessary distraction for our state’s charter public schools, and families and students across our state who worked so hard advocating for the new law passed last year.

“Parents who have chosen to send their students to charter public schools deserve certainty and continuity, not ongoing legal challenges,” said Joshua Halsey, Commission Executive Director.

The Charter School Act directs the Commission to prioritize the approval of qualified charter schools that serve at-risk youth. With this charge, the Commission has and will continue to focus on helping all students reach their full potential and closing the opportunity gap in Washington. The Commission strongly believes that charter schools are a critical and effective component of a comprehensive and successful public school sector.

The Commission continues to seek final resolution to this lawsuit so that Washington’s citizens continue to have high-quality charter schools as public school options for their children.

About Washington State’s Charter School Commission

Washington State’s Charter School Commission was formed with the mission of creating a rigorous and comprehensive proposal process and to hold charters accountable to high standards of quality. The Commission is an independent state agency that exists to authorize and oversee high quality public charter schools throughout Washington with an emphasis on schools designed to expand opportunities for at-risk

students, providing leadership and oversight that is consistent with national principles and standards of charter school authorizers and the provisions of Washington’s charter school law. For more information, visit: <http://charterschool.wa.gov/>

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Contact: Joshua Halsey joshua.halsey@k12.wa.us (360) 725-5511