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## IN RESPONSE TO NEW ANTI-CHARTER LAWSUIT, COMMISSION WILL CONTINUE TO STAND WITH WASHINGTON FAMILIES AND STUDENTS

**August 3, 2016**

OLYMPIA – The Washington State Charter School Commission (Commission) is profoundly disappointed with the recent lawsuit filed by El Centro De La Raza, League of Women Voters, Washington Association of School Administrators, three individuals and eight unions challenging the constitutionality of the new Charter School Act. A majority of voters, senators and representatives have agreed that families throughout Washington should have the ability to enroll their children in high-quality public charter schools. The Commission will continue to stand with families and students as this legal process unfolds. The Commission will work with the Attorney General’s Office in defense of the strong, new and constitutionally-sound Charter School Act.

It is the will of the people that public charter schools remain an option in the public education landscape. Citizens have spoken: with their vote, by passing Initiative 1240; with their feet, by enrolling their children in charter schools; and with their hearts, by showing up at the Capitol and rallying to save their schools last fall and winter. Our elective officials responded to these voices by passing the new Charter School Act this past March.

“In filing a new lawsuit, El Centro De La Raza, League of Women Voters, Washington Association of School Administrators, three individuals and eight unions, continue to turn a cold shoulder to the will of the people and strive to undermine the hard work of so many educators, families and students who have made high-quality charter schools a reality in Washington,” said Steve Sundquist, Commission chairman. “Our highest priority during this time will be to continue to make sure these schools are meeting the needs of their students and get the resources they need to do so.”

The Charter School Act directed the Commission to prioritize the approval of qualified charter schools who serve at-risk youth. With this directive, 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 an effective component of a comprehensive public school sector.

The Commission hopes for swift resolution to this lawsuit, which will validate the Charter School Act and provide assurance to parents throughout the state that high-quality charter schools are and will continue to remain a public school option for their children.

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