

Dear Councilmember Tolbert,

As a St. Paul resident passionate about our city and about education, I am writing to ask you to not to adopt a blanket policy against issuing conduit revenue bonds to public charter schools.

Public charter schools are an important and valuable option for St. Paul families. We need to keep students at the center. Our city is home to some excellent charter schools that continue to grow with help from low rate bonds. A blanket policy blocking the issuance of conduit revenue bonds would stand in the way of progress for schools that are effectively serving our city's youth.

I believe access to these bonds can help ensure a strong system of services and support to new and existing public charter schools, and they should continue to qualify for the conduit revenue bonds. The proposed resolution singles out public charter schools as the only nonprofits that cannot qualify for these bonds. This is an issue of equity and can lead to drawn out legal battles costing the city money and time as well as reducing the almost \$2 million dollars in revenue that the city receives from fees on the bonds.

This proposal appears to be punitive and short-sighted. It will require public charter schools to spend more money on financing, and will not be a financial benefit to the city. It will actually be detrimental to the budget as the city will in fact lose revenue through the loss of existing fees. This is not the right approach to resolving larger land use questions. I ask you to not to advance counter-productive policy on this issue, and to engage with local schools and the families they serve to more deeply understand community needs and how St. Paul can support all students, regardless of the school they attend.

Thank you for your commitment to our children and community,

Brock Behling  
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