



JIM DOYLE
GOVERNOR
STATE OF WISCONSIN

April 18, 2006

TO THE HONORABLE MEMBERS OF THE ASSEMBLY:

I am vetoing Assembly Bill 730. This bill modifies current law by allowing any baccalaureate or graduate degree granting institution within the University of Wisconsin (UW) System to operate or contract for the operation of an independent charter school with the approval of the Board of Regents. Specifically, the bill permits the chancellors of any UW institution besides UW-Milwaukee and UW-Parkside (to which current law would still apply) to establish or contract for the establishment of up to five independent charter schools each.

The bill requires the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) to approve the first five requests from UW institutions (other than UW-Milwaukee and UW Parkside) and to maintain a waiting list of subsequent requests. While the bill effectively limits the number of UW institutions that may establish new independent charter schools to five, each institution is permitted to include up to five new charter schools in a single request. Thus, the bill potentially allows up to 25 new independent charter schools.

AB 730 requires the chancellor of each approved UW institution to submit to the state superintendent a charter school plan with specific details. In the event that the chancellor from an approved UW institution does not submit this plan by the specified date, that institution is prohibited from establishing or contracting for the establishment of a charter school. Finally, the bill provides that any pupil who resides in the state may attend a new charter school established by a UW institution under the bill.

I am vetoing AB 730 because I object to the lack of accountability measures for the new charter schools that would be established under the bill. While charter schools can be a good option for many families, this bill doesn't ensure that the new charter schools would be high-quality. The bill requires DPI to automatically approve the first five requests that it receives from UW institutions, regardless of their merit. Further, each request from a UW institution may include plans for up to five charter schools, some of which may be excellent and some of which may be inadequate. Unfortunately, the bill includes no mechanism to allow DPI to make this determination. Nor does the bill provide any requirements that UW institutions have the capacity to serve as effective and knowledgeable charter school authorizers.

While AB 730 may benefit some of Wisconsin's students by providing additional opportunities to learn and creative and innovative educational settings, the bill fails to provide important accountability measures.

Respectfully submitted,

JIM DOYLE
Governor