

**Written Testimony of David Anderson**  
*General Counsel*  
**Raise Your Hand Texas**

Before the Texas State House Public Education Committee  
The Honorable Harold Dutton, Chair  
**March 30, 2021**

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**Committee Substitute for House Bill 1468 by Representative Keith Bell**  
**Position: Support**

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**KEY POINTS**

- The bill provides funding for remote public school instruction.
  - The bill limits funding for remote services to students in a school district's attendance area, ensuring they can also access in-person services.
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Raise Your Hand Texas supports Representative Keith Bell's Committee Substitute for House Bill 1468. The bill empowers Texas districts and charters to innovate using technology in instruction, while creating the right incentives to serve their students effectively.

The COVID pandemic has challenged our schools to adopt online instruction, in some cases overnight. While our educators have responded heroically in that time, we still have a great deal to learn about how to use online services in the student's best interest. CSHB 1468 provides funding for remote public school instruction and creates a thoughtful and responsible structure for those programs.

Most importantly, CSHB 1468 is limited to programs supporting students who would otherwise — or may also be — served by the same district or charter at a physical campus. We should not replicate the poor performance of statewide full-time virtual programs that often enroll students hundreds of miles away. CSHB 1468 is a limited authorization to flexibly combine in-person and remote learning as best meets a student's needs. The key difference is that the district or charter remains responsible for

the student's education and performance in that community, not at the other end of the state.

We appreciate that the funding is essentially the same for remote and in-person instruction. Attendance is taken daily, and a student is considered half or full-time based on the same course load regardless of whether a student is in a building or served remotely. There is no financial incentive to prefer remote or in-person, just whatever combination best meets the student's needs. This flexibility also supports students utilizing both in-person and remote services within the same course or grade.

The bill also supports districts and charters cooperatively sharing remote instructional resources with each other. Because the student remains enrolled in their home district, that district has appropriate incentives to police the quality of instruction for those students. Teachers are also protected from being required to teach remotely and in-person in the same class.

Finally, CSHB 1468 maintains extracurricular activities and other services for a student. Because the student is enrolled at a physical campus they can attend, in-person counseling, services for students with disabilities, UIL contests, and other important community connections can be maintained.

CSHB 1468 empowers our public schools to creatively use remote learning, while maintaining responsibility for local students and their connection to the community. This framework is our best option to learn what works.

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