



## **A2Y Regional Chamber Statement Opposing House Bill 5626**

**April 26, 2018**

The Michigan Legislature is considering a bill which will dramatically decrease the transparency provided to voters in education millage elections. Under current law every public school district, including charter schools, needs to be listed on the ballot language. This allows for full transparency with respect to where the tax dollars are going. Legislation (HB 5626) before the Michigan Senate would remove this transparency.

HB 5626 would remove the requirement that charter schools be listed on the ballot for intermediate school district (ISD) enhancement millages. Under Michigan law, each governmental unit must be named on a ballot if it is to receive revenue. This means that when the Washtenaw Intermediate School District (and other ISDs around the state) puts an enhancement millage before voters, it must state which districts and charter schools are receiving the money.

Proponents of HB 5626 say it will make ballots language less cumbersome. While ballot language can be long, HB 5626 would decrease transparency because ISDs would not have to fully list where funding from voter approved enhancement millages would be used. So voters will not easily know that when they vote on an enhancement millage they think is funding traditional public schools, it will also be used to fund charter schools.

Education funding remains a necessity not just for educational purposes, but to ensure young people have the skills needed to enter and succeed in the workforce. Without full transparency voters may be reluctant to properly fund education. The Michigan Legislature should maintain that necessary transparency and not act on HB 5626.