

# KENTUCKY HOUSE REPUBLICAN CAUCUS

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Rep. Brad Montell prefiles bill to allow charter schools in Kentucky**

*BR 117 would provide communities the opportunity to open a charter school*

**FRANKFORT, Ky. (11/16/11)** – Rep. Brad Montell, R-Shelbyville (58<sup>th</sup> District) announced today he is prefilng legislation that if passed would establish a charter schools initiative in Kentucky. The proposal would allow communities across the Bluegrass State the opportunity to open a charter school for the benefit of students, parents, teachers and the community as a whole.

“Our current public school system works fairly well for many of our students. But unfortunately far too many of them are falling through the cracks,” said Rep. Montell in filing the bill. “About 25 percent of Kentucky’s public school students don’t graduate, and of those that do 6 out of every 10 need remediation before they can attend college. What’s more, the achievement gap between white students and minority students is staggering. Across the country, many public charter schools have demonstrated the ability to drastically improve high school graduation rates and close the achievement gap.”

The charter school reform movement started in 1991, and there are currently 5,400 charter schools serving almost two million students in 41 states. Rep. Montell’s proposal uses model law principles from the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, which would focus on those schools with students at risk of academic failure who will be given priority when selecting which charter schools will open. It also places no cap on the number of charter schools that could open in Kentucky, so long as they meet the accountability requirements as spelled out in the bill.

“We can no longer stand by and watch as other states allow their children to grow and prosper in their education through the option of charter schools,” added Rep. Montell. “Kentucky is one of only nine states that don’t allow public charter schools. We must provide our children with all avenues of learning, and public charter schools offer families a wider variety of options to give every child an equal chance at the best education possible.”

According to Rep. Montell, public charter schools are:

- Innovative public schools that are designed by educators, parents or community leaders
- Free and open to anyone who wishes to attend
- Free from much of the bureaucracy that stifles many traditional public schools
- Accountable for results; charter schools that do not perform up to standards are closed
- Public charter schools are only an option; no child is forced to attend a charter school.
- Charter schools offer an alternative to traditional public schools, providing choice for parents and children in public education.

For more information about charter schools, go to the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools’ website at <http://www.publiccharters.org/>.

The bill is prefiled as BR 117 for the 2012 Regular Session.

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