Mr. Chairman and Senators, I am Randall Yadon Principal and administrator of Meridian Technical Charter High School

I would ask that you hold SB1248 in committee

As charter schools we have a tremendous amount of flexibility in how and what we offer our local communities.   When managed correctly and with a maintained relevant focus, we are a successful branch on the tree of public education. However, that success is rooted solely in the ability to attract and maintain highly qualified teachers. As you know, the State of Idaho requires a list of qualifications and expectations in order to be called "certified teacher." Those minimum requirements create an assurance that the teacher brings certain knowledge and expertise to the classroom. The state, in response, assures the teacher that they will be treated fairly as a respected professional as it relates to their teaching contract. All public education teachers can and should expect a minimum standard assurance from the state. Teaching is not a job, it is a career.

However, this bill would begin to create, whether intended or not, differentiated contract levels. Charter school teaching positions could become, in perception or reality, merely a stepping stone to a "real teaching job." This cannot happen. At Meridian Tech 60% of our teachers have advanced degrees (Master's-PhD), we have zero turn over and average 14yrs of experience. These teachers can be assured that they have some basic contractual protection, no greater or no less, than they would find in any other public school in the State of Idaho. Each teacher made a career move to be in a charter school. It was not a "foot in the door" position, or a "rise above" our traditional peers, it was simply an option. I think that those of us in the charter school system often times forget that we are public charter schools. If you wouldn't do this for all teachers in all public schools, please don't do it for us.

Again, SB 1248 should be held in committee.

I will stand for any questions you may have.

1.   Mr. Chair (then wait for him to say go ahead, or nod his head to you that it is ok to respond);

2.   Then you would acknowledge the Senator asking the question

3.   Senator

4.   Then answer the question