

DEMOCRATS IN WEST VIRGINIA CRITICAL OF GOP EDUCATION BILL

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CHARLESTON, W.Va. (AP) — Democrats in West Virginia are criticizing a Republican-backed draft bill aimed at revamping the state’s education system.

The Republican-led Senate Education Committee voted 7-5 along party lines Friday to send the draft to the Senate Finance Committee.

In a statement Saturday, West Virginia Democratic Party chairwoman Belinda Biafore said out-of-state lobbyists were allowed input into the bill committee but not teachers or parents.

The bill is aimed at creating charter schools. It would establish savings accounts for families to pay for private school and require teachers to sign off annually on union dues.

Biafore says the legislation is “an attack on our public education system” and “retaliation for the teachers’ strike last year.”