

**ASSEMBLY CONCURRENT
RESOLUTION No. 222**

**STATE OF NEW JERSEY
218th LEGISLATURE**

INTRODUCED MARCH 5, 2019

Sponsored by:

**Assemblyman HAROLD "HAL" J. WIRTHS
District 24 (Morris, Sussex and Warren)**

Co-Sponsored by:

Assemblymen Space, DiMaio, Peterson, Auth and Rooney

SYNOPSIS

Opposes sale of Westminster Choir College to Chinese government-owned company Beijing Kaiwen Education Technology.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



ACR222 WIRTHS

2

1 **A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION** opposing the sale of Westminster
2 Choir College to Beijing Kaiwen Education Technology.
3
4 **WHEREAS**, Believing that a choir of volunteer singers could be trained
5 to perform on a professional level, John Finley Williamson
6 established the Westminster Choir in 1920 at the Westminster
7 Presbyterian Church in Dayton, Ohio; and
8 **WHEREAS**, In 1929, the Westminster Choir College was established at
9 Ithaca College, and three years later in 1932 the choir college
10 relocated to Princeton, New Jersey; and
11 **WHEREAS**, For nearly 100 years, Westminster Choir College has been
12 one of the nation's premier academic institutions for advanced
13 musical studies, preparing men and women for careers as
14 performers and as music leaders in schools, universities, churches,
15 and professional and community organizations; and
16 **WHEREAS**, Over the years the small college struggled to remain
17 solvent, and in 1992 it merged with Rider University. The
18 partnership continued for almost 26 years, until in 2016, Rider
19 University President Gregory Dell'Omo announced that Rider was
20 seeking to sell Westminster; and
21 **WHEREAS**, On June 21, 2018, the Rider University Board of Trustees
22 announced that it had signed a purchase and sale agreement for the
23 transfer of the choir college to a Chinese company, Beijing Kaiwen
24 Education Technology (Kaiwen Education); and
25 **WHEREAS**, Prior to when it began operation in January 2018, Kaiwen
26 Education was known as Jiangsu Zhongtai Bridge Steel Structure
27 Company (Jiangsu). It has been alleged in a lawsuit brought to
28 prevent the sale of Westminster that the steel company is a
29 manufacturer of components of Chinese naval vessels and is a
30 government-owned defense contractor for China's military; and
31 **WHEREAS**, It has been speculated that Jiangsu changed its name to
32 Kaiwen Education to create the appearance that it is an educational
33 entity in order to justify its acquisition of the choir college; and
34 **WHEREAS**, Although often thought of as primarily a college town
35 because of its association with Princeton University, Princeton is
36 home to many world-renowned research centers in high technology,
37 defense, and cyber-space and is a center of studies for the United
38 States intelligence community; and
39 **WHEREAS**, Acclaimed and preeminent scientists and researchers in
40 various fields from around the world have chosen Princeton as a
41 place to live and work, a tradition famously highlighted by Albert
42 Einstein's decision to flee Nazi Germany for Princeton; and
43 **WHEREAS**, Given that Kaiwen Education, formerly a steel company,
44 does not have a history in higher education, particularly
45 professional music training, and with the multitude of world-class
46 scientists, researchers, and institutions located in Princeton, it
47 appears that the Chinese government may be using the guise of
48 academia to infiltrate the choir college for nefarious purposes,

ACR222 WIRTHS

1 including the collection of United States intelligence and
2 intellectual property theft; and

3 **WHEREAS**, Nothing is more vital than the safety and security of the
4 citizens of New Jersey and the nation, and it is essential that every
5 possible precaution is taken to ensure that a Chinese government-
6 owned company does not exploit the openness of the world of
7 academia to establish a foothold in our open and free society for
8 illicit activities; now, therefore,

9
10 **BE IT RESOLVED** by the General Assembly of the State of New
11 Jersey (the Senate concurring):

12
13 1. The Legislature of the State of New Jersey opposes the sale
14 of Westminster Choir College by Rider University to Beijing
15 Kaiwen Education Technology because the proposed sale of the
16 choir college to a Chinese government-owned company could
17 jeopardize the security of United States citizens.

18
19 2. Copies of this resolution, as filed with the Secretary of State,
20 shall be transmitted by the Clerk of the General Assembly or the
21 Secretary of the Senate to the President of Rider University and to
22 each governing board member of Rider University.

23
24

25 STATEMENT

26
27 This concurrent resolution opposes the sale of Westminster Choir
28 College by Rider University to Beijing Kaiwen Education
29 Technology (Kaiwen Education) because the proposed sale of the
30 choir college to a Chinese government-owned company could
31 jeopardize the security of United States citizens.

32 On June 21, 2018, the Rider University Board of Trustees
33 announced that it had signed a purchase and sale agreement for the
34 transfer of the choir college to Kaiwen Education. Prior to when it
35 began operation in January 2018, Kaiwen Education was known as
36 Jiangsu Zhongtai Bridge Steel Structure Company, a government-
37 owned Chinese defense contractor. The steel company's main forms
38 of business included the fabrication of large-scale bridge structures,
39 heavy steel sections of power plants, and construction of ship
40 blocks. Given that Kaiwen Education, formerly a steel company,
41 does not have a history in higher education, particularly
42 professional music training, and with the multitude of world-class
43 scientists, researchers, and institutions located in Princeton, it
44 appears that the Chinese government may be using the guise of
45 academia to infiltrate the choir college for nefarious purposes,
46 including the collection of United States intelligence and
47 intellectual property theft.