



March 30, 2021

Chair Alonso Leon, Vice Chairs Neron & Weber, and Members of the Senate Education Committee:

My name is Maureen Wolf, and I am the Immediate Past Chair for the Teacher Standards and Practices Commission and serve as Chair of the Tigard-Tualatin School Board. I am writing today to share my support for HB2135 which will expand the crimes sanctionable by TSPC and will extend the maximum suspension and revocation periods for up to three years.

Sanctioning those licensed through TSPC has been one of the most difficult volunteer roles I have ever been tasked to do. The Commission reviews all cases and understands the weight that our decisions will hold for those under review. Domestic violence crimes have often been brought to TSPC where the complainant believes actions of domestic violence have had a direct impact on the individual's ability to complete the duties as an educator. Often the concern is valid. However, TSPC often lacks the appropriate nexus (or connection between teachers and students) for the case to move forward which would allow the Commission to assign a sanction. On behalf of the Commission, I request that SECTION 1 - ORS 342.143 is amended to include acts of domestic violence (which is defined as abuse between family or household members).

Additionally, the Commission should have the right to extend a loss of license to a greater period than one year. While the Commission can always deny reinstatement, we believe it is valuable to assign a longer period at the time the act has occurred. As a reminder, educators sanctioned with a suspension or revocation are the most serious of acts which often include abuse of alcohol on school grounds, boundary invasion, grooming or physical assault. After reviewing other state policies regarding discipline terms, several have lengths up to five years for suspensions or revocations. Others allow their governing body to determine the appropriate term which is often two years. We believe amending the sanction period for up to three years is appropriate and will be reflective of the action required.

Once again, thank you for your time.

Maureen Wolf
Immediate Past Chair
Teacher Standards and Practices Commission