

May 22, 2017

Testimony to the Joint Education Committee on Ways and Means
SB 182

Presented by Dr. Randy Hitz, Dean, PSU Graduate School of Education

Co-Chairs Monroe and Warner,

I am writing to support SB 182. This bill builds on the good work of the Legislature and the earlier creation of the Network for Quality Teaching and Learning (NQTL). The NQTL as you well know, provided funding for a variety of initiatives designed to strengthen the teaching profession. The premise of the NQTL is that the best way to improve education for all students is to ensure that professional educators are well prepared and supported.

The Educator Preparation Program of Oregon and our school district partners have certainly benefitted from the programs designed to improve teacher education through stronger school district partnerships. Through our work together and through the support we have received we are improving our recruitment of a diverse population of aspiring educators, strengthening the student teaching experience, and creating a more seamless system of educator preparation and ongoing professional development. Without a doubt this work helped the PSU Graduate School of Education tremendously in our successful effort to meet the new and more rigorous standards of the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation. Thank you.

SB 182 will take this and the other NQTL initiatives and create an Educator Advancement Fund to be led by a new Educator Advancement Council consisting primarily of practicing educators, the people “on the ground” who have the best insights into how to support professional educators. SB 182 also gives greater funding flexibility by encouraging funding for “networks” of likeminded school districts and other entities that wish to work together to address problems of practice through the initiatives of the Educator Advancement Fund.

The ultimate goal of the NQTL, to strengthen the teaching profession is, through SB 182, advanced as professional educators are given more authority and oversight of the work at the state and local levels and they are given more flexibility in the distribution of funds. Thank you for your vision and good support for professional educators through the NQTL and through the important changes suggested in SB 182.