

Chair Holvey and members of the committee,

In support of SB580.

I've worked in schools for most of my life. As I listened to today's testimony regarding mandatory collective bargaining around class size, I heard both sides saying the same thing - class size is an important variable in the quality of education and it is difficult to resolve this in the face of inadequate funding for public schools. The difference in the two sides was the answer to the question:

Do teachers bring an important professional view to the decisions around how to balance inadequate resources?

Schools boards and administrators say that decisions about how to balance resources are difficult and they should be the ones allowed to make them. Teachers say that they have the knowledge of the impact of class size on their day to day functioning and their ability to fully educate their students and their voice is essential in deciding how to prioritize class size among all of the competing fiscal demands.

If we value the professionalism and dedication of the people who spend much of their day with our children in the classroom, we should also value the necessity of hearing their voices as we decide how to run our schools. They should have the opportunity to weigh in on class size and case load.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter,

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