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I'm writing to urge you to vote against HB2001. I have taught in Portland Public Schools for over 20 years. While racial and linguistic diversity are important, this bill sponsored by Stand for Children is part of an attack against the working class and unions, funded by billionaires like the Waltons, not only pushing privatization but attacks on unions as part of a political strategy. Those groups have used their money power to attack teachers' unions, using everything from Hollywood films like, *Waiting for Superman* and *Won't Back Down*, to funding nonprofit organizations to create their narrative against teachers' unions and ultimately public institutions, while underfunding public services and protecting the wealthy and corporations from paying their fair share of taxes. There has been a richly funded agenda pushing to get rid of seniority and introduce a "merit" system often tied to invalid test scores and other metrics.

The bill is problematic in disguising concerns about racial and linguistic diversity with using "merit" to weaken unions. It's part of a larger ploy of employers to get rid of older workers who are more costly in pay and healthcare benefits, while replacing them with younger more precarious workers who management can more easily wield their power over. I have both witnessed this and experienced it. As one of the few educators of color and an immigrant, administration at my school have attempted to unassign me twice, in addition to threatening me with insubordination, because I've been critical about policy, on everything from the name of Woodrow Wilson back in 2014 to the push for standardization and testing, even though I had seniority and the Portland Association of Teachers' contract includes a clause on racial diversity. This is despite the fact that renowned researcher, Sonia Nieto, included me in her book, *Finding Joy in Teaching Students of Diverse Backgrounds: Culturally Responsive and Socially Just Practices in U.S. Classrooms*, as one of several outstanding teachers in the nation.

As a building rep, I have witnessed my former principal harass an older colleague, putting the colleague on "Plan of Assistance" and attempt to use gossip from a few students in hallways against the teacher. I also remember when the TELL survey results came out, my school administration (most of whom have resigned mired in scandal) were rated one of the worst in the district. In the next year, came a huge influx of new educators who were probationary, without the institutional knowledge of problems, that were more manageable for that administration, bringing their ratings up while not addressing the problems.

It seems that this is being used partially for budgetary reasons. In a time of record inequality, the legislature should work on raising revenue from the 1% and corporations, rather than letting them dictate public policy. If the legislature uses this policy for budgetary reasons and allows districts to get rid of experienced educators and replace them with cheaper, younger teachers, it will be a disservice to not only the experienced educators, but to both students and younger educators working in conditions that are unfair to all. Our working conditions are students' learning conditions.

As MLK pointed out, unions and working class power is essential for the fight against racism. Numerous studies show that unions and worker solidarity is an important antidote to racism, whereas there has been a long history of the 1% using racial division to oppress the working class of all colors.