

Chair Frederick, Vice Chair Webber. and Members of the Committee,

My name is **Diana Herrera Gonzalez**, and I am a **middle school teacher**. I am submitting this testimony in strong support of SB717, which seeks to address financial barriers for aspiring educators and ensure mentor teachers receive fair compensation.

I am very grateful and fortunate to have had a full ride scholarship in college and I did not have to worry about struggling to pay for my needs which allowed me to focus all my energy in my education and learning to become a teacher. I wish everyone had this opportunity. Even being able to focus fully on my student teaching and final year, I felt exhausted and overworked. I cannot imagine having to also work- either on weekends or evenings after a long day of student teaching.

I have heard many people- especially from low income families and people of color who cite lack of compensation as the reason they do not go into teaching. We are missing out on amazing resources and people who could fill in the many empty positions.

I urge the committee to support SB717

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Diana Herrera Gonzalez

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3rd year Middle School teacher