

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

My name is Anna Flood, and I am a student teacher at Oregon State University. 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.

It is unfair that I pay tuition to student teach. I essentially have adopted another part time/full time job on top of my actual job as a caregiver at a skilled nursing facility. I also have my studies which put in my full time student status for the majority of the year. Each week, between all these commitments, I work, student teach and attend classes for 60 hours. Every single week. It is so exhausting. I have gotten ill three times this winter alone. I rely on food stamps, support from friends and my own inner strength to get through these times. If I were able to earn some compensation for the work I put into this program, it would improve my quality of life drastically. I would be able to work less, focus on my studies and preparations as a teacher more, and prioritize my physical.

This bill is so important due to the financial burden of one's student teaching year. It has not only affected me, but almost each and every student teacher in my program. It has put so much strain on me emotionally, financially and physically. I feel so burnt out and yet my education career has not even begun. How can I become an inclusive, uplifting and supportive teacher when I am struggling to even support myself?

I urge you to consider supporting SB717 in order to foster a new generation of passionate and invested educators.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Anna Flood

Oregon State University