

Dear committee members:

My name is David Gryte and I am currently a teacher in the North Branch Area Public Schools district. I am in my 27th year of teaching in North Branch, and am in my 32nd year of teaching overall.

I began my teaching career in Texas in 1988 and spent 4 years there. When I returned to my home state of Minnesota, I was able to go back to school to obtain my teaching license here. Now, in my 58th year, I am at the point where it is time for me to look toward retirement.

If I would have began my career here in Minnesota, I would qualify for Rule of 90 and be retiring at the end of this school year. That, sadly, is not the case. With the current rules in place, my retirement date is still approximately 8 years away. That is very concerning for me and my family. My wife is also a teacher, and she and I are both very concerned about having to spend 8 (for her, 12) more years to receive a full benefit. I have spent much of my career here in North Branch coaching, supporting our association as a member, executive board member, and co-president. With the pressures of class sizes, student mental health concerns, COVID, and teacher shortages, I feel that my personal mental health is becoming a much more concerning health issue for me as I approach 60 years of age.

Please support and pass SF 1938 / HF 2222, 62 years of age or 35 years of service, which would bring the much needed pension reform to MN Tier II teachers. We, as educators, hope that you understand the high demands of our jobs and the unfairness of the tiered teacher retirement system that is currently in place.

Thank you for you time and consideration.

David Gryte
North Branch ISD 138
Educator in MN and Texas for 32 years