

From: [Paschke, Holly](#)
To: [Lisa Diesslin](#)
Subject: Written Testimony for March 6, 2023
Date: Thursday, March 2, 2023 1:02:51 PM

Written Testimony
Agenda Item #6

To The Distinguished Members of the LCPR-

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter. My name is Holly Paschke, and I am a Speech/Language Pathologist in my 31st year of teaching. I am currently working in Eastern Carver County Schools in the western suburb of Chaska, and am a Tier II teacher according to TRA timelines. I opted to attend graduate school after completing my undergraduate degree (a Master's Degree is required in MN), so I missed the Rule of 90 by one year.

I am writing in support of HF2222 (Wolgamott) and SF1938 (Frentz). The current TRA pension program is inequitable, and a deterrent to young teachers entering the field. Please know that the teacher shortage has been a problem in the making for quite some time, and Tier II teachers should not be held accountable to fix it. Teaching, as a profession, used to be highly valued by parents, community members and politicians. This seems to have changed, with teachers having to settle contracts with 1%-2% increases, or in my case pay freezes. Tier II teachers are contributing more to TRA than Tier I ever did, and will most likely not reap the full benefit of our contributions if reform does not happen this session. The problems we are currently facing are the direct result of decisions made by past legislators and TRA Board Members. We can pass meaningful reform this year which is the right thing to do for Minnesota's teachers.

The differences between Tier I benefits and Tier II benefits are staggering. The high normal retirement age of 66 for Tier II, along with the monumental penalties for retirement prior to age 66 are appalling. Please support the pension reform that is outlined in HF2222 and SF1938. These bills propose an unreduced retirement benefit at age 62 OR 35 years of service. They also reward teachers with extra service credits for teaching during the Covid-19 Pandemic for the years 2020, 2021 and 2022. Included in these bills is an increase to employer contributions that would be funded by the state.

The national average for normal retirement age for teachers is just under 59. Our neighboring states have even lower normal retirement ages, as well as penalties that are fair. We are not asking for more than average. We are asking for doable reform that can happen this session.

Please support HF222 and SF1938. Minnesota's teachers are counting on you to help us.

Thank you for your time and consideration, and thank you for serving the state of Minnesota.

Holly C. Paschke

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"Work Hard, Be Kind, Give Compliments" ~ JGP

From: [Paschke, Holly](#)
To: [Lisa Diesslin](#)
Subject: Written Testimony For March 6th, 2023
Date: Friday, March 3, 2023 11:55:55 AM

Agenda Item #6

Dear Members of the LCPR –

My name is Holly Paschke, and this is my second written testimony that I have submitted for your meeting on Monday, March 6th, 2023. I am a Speech/Language Pathologist in my 31st year of teaching. I am currently working in Eastern Carver County Schools in the western suburb of Chaska, and am a Tier II teacher according to TRA timelines.

I have just been made aware that the pension reform proposal written by Jay Stoffel, Executive Director of the Teachers Retirement Association (TRA), is in bill form and has been submitted. I am writing in support of this bill and asking you to support it as well. The bill is [LCPR23-029](#).

Like the Ed MN bill that has been submitted, this bill creates more equity between Tier I and Tier II teachers in Minnesota, and allows teachers to retire before the age of 66. [LCPR23-029](#) is a bill based on teachers being able to retire upon reaching the age of 60 with 30 years of teaching. It also calls for increases in employer and employee contributions to the pension fund, which I also support. I am in favor of contributing more in order to retire before the age of 66.

It may seem odd to you that I have submitted written testimony for two separate pension reform bills. I am supporting both because they both improve the current pension program drastically. I believe this bill submitted by Jay Stoffel and TRA has a lower price tag for the state of Minnesota. Teachers in Minnesota work very hard to educate our children. We believe we deserve an average pension program when compared both locally and nationally.

Please support [LCPR23-029!!!](#)

Thank you!

Holly C. Paschke

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