

From: [Sara S](#)
To: [Lisa Diesslin](#)
Subject: Education Pension Reform - Testimony
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Greetings ~

Please vote in FAVOR of HF2222 (Wolgamott); SF1938 (Frentz) to improve the currently abysmal pension that educators in the state of Minnesota are facing and address the crisis in education.

If the pandemic taught us anything at all, it is the absolutely *crucial* role that schools play in a functional economy and society. Without schools, families must take time off from work - which negatively impacts nearly every aspect of daily life as we know it. Every one of us has experienced and witnessed this over the past several years. We *must* bolster our schools and our teachers immediately.

As an educator, I have been watching teachers leave the profession at an alarming rate. My daughter is a junior in college and is planning to become a third-generation high school English teacher; her professors are sounding the alarm at the shocking reduction of students enrolling in college Education Departments across the state. Currently, there is very little enticement to join our ranks, and very little enticement to stay. This job is hard. We love our kids, but the politicization of schools has created an environment that puts educators on the defensive at every juncture. This, in combination with very real safety concerns, low pay, little respect, and now pensions that require teachers to work a decade longer than those who retired last year, is prompting far too many to hang it up and find work in the private sector. I'm seeing teachers who are in their 20s, 30s, and 40s leaving the profession, and I'm seeing an alarming shortage of new recruits. As a department chair in one of Minnesota's largest high schools, I've seen shifts in potential teacher candidates over the years, but never like this. We are at a precipice here. This is not a drill. Please do your part and vote for the above bills in order to recruit and retain quality educators here in the great state of Minnesota!

Sincerely,

Sara Strege

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