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**Subject:** Education Pension Reform - Testimony  
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Good Afternoon!

Please support HF2222 (Wolgamott); SF1938 (Frentz).

The education system has taken considerable hits over the last several years. First Covid changed the way people view education and now public education has been so politicized it's a profession many continue to leave (and no one is choosing to join) -- not to mention the general lack of respect for teachers.

I work in one of the largest districts in the state and we constantly struggle to maintain a full staff. Because of shortages I have not had a prep period in over a year now, covering for a position that has yet to be filled. We have had 0 applicants for that position. I repeat 0 applicants. We currently have 7 teachers of 16 total in our department teaching overloads right now to fill the void. In the fall we are facing 3.0 FTEs to be filled. I cannot imagine the load the 16 of us will need to take on if those positions remain unfilled.

Our lone student teacher said her college program began with five math teacher candidates. She is the only person remaining. The other four chose to leave for more lucrative fields. Teaching used to be that. We have had solid health insurance, sufficient pay (even though it has always lagged behind), and a solid pension for our years of service. But now all have been gutted. There are few choosing to join because of it.

I love what I do, but remaining in the classroom for 43 years until I qualify for full pension benefits is obscene. It's not fair that Tier II teachers carry most of the burden for funding our pension as well as having to work 8 years longer (on average than our prior counterparts) in order to receive the same benefit. 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,

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Matthew Wagner

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(New email effective 10/20/22 is [mwagner@plsas.org](mailto:mwagner@plsas.org))