

Good Afternoon, and thank you for allowing me to testify before this committee about the importance of protecting teacher prep time.

I have been teaching for 30 years, and this career has certainly changed over that time. With all the added expectations and responsibilities added to teachers and education as a whole over that time, intentionally protecting a teachers prep time is paramount.

Due to those added responsibilities and expectations, teachers are having to do more work at home, taking time away from their families and wellness. A teacher's prep time **should** be used to allow a teacher to create assignments, assessments; to do grading and contacting families. The more prep time a teacher loses during the day, the more they have to do outside of the school day.

When teachers are required to give up their prep periods for meetings, to cover other classrooms due to the dearth of substitute teachers and things that happen throughout the school day like pep fests, assemblies, speakers, active shooter drills, fire drills etc... That only adds to the stress and burnout that teachers not only statewide, but nationwide are experiencing daily.

Representative Keeler's bill HF 827 creating more protections around teacher prep time and if necessary paying teachers more when they are required to cover another classroom is supporting teachers on multiple levels.

- It validates the importance and value of a teachers prep time
- It forces school districts to honor that time
- It shows legislative support for the value and importance of teachers as a whole

The last three years have proven a few things:

- That public schools ARE important to the success of the state of Minnesota
- That teachers ARE important to the success of those schools
- That the teaching profession is under attack
- Teacher burnout is real
- Teachers are leaving the profession in unprecedented numbers and few are choosing education as major in college
- This exodus of teachers with few to fill those valuable positions is going to create a crisis in public education that will not be solved by making it easier to become a teacher

HF 827 is but one of many steps that the state of Minnesota can take to show those already in teaching and those considering teaching that they are valued and the State will support them in supporting our children's development.

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