

Audrey A. Kludtke

Paraprofessional at Metro Deaf School

Testimony in support of HF2340

House Taxes Hearing

Tuesday, March 7, 2023

Chair Gomez and members of the committee,

My name is Audrey Kludtke. I am Deaf and a paraprofessional at Metro Deaf School. I am here to state my support for HF2340 and to share my personal story.

Growing up, I wanted to become a physical education teacher. After graduating high school, I thought I would finish college with a master's degree in Deaf Education. But my student loan debt piled up because vocational rehabilitation declined to pay for my college student loans due to my parents' incomes.

I graduated with a bachelor's degree with a ton of debt which prevented me from continuing my studies to become a teacher for the deaf. My dream of being a teacher was lost. My life felt like it was falling apart. I ended up moving back with my parents, starting over, and exploring other opportunities to bring my joy back.

For a long time, I worked random jobs to build up my resume, while secretly hoping to discover other job opportunities to bring my joy back. I couldn't find joy. Then Metro Deaf School opened a door: an opportunity for me to work as a paraprofessional. I was able to bring my joy back.

I want to go back to school as a teacher again to chase my dreams once again. This bill will help me with my student loans so I can become a successful teacher one day. It will help others chase their dreams to become teachers for our children, who are the future of this nation. Thank you to Rep. Klevorn for carrying this bill. I also thank this committee for your time and ask that you support HF2340 to open the door for more aspiring Deaf Education teachers like me.

Audrey Kludtke
451 Edmunds Ave
St. Paul, MN 55103