

Opposition to HF2497
Lines: 173.13, 177.13, 218.23

Teresa Fenske
School administrator

My name is Teresa Fenske. As an elementary school administrator, I have the opportunity to hire, support and coach teachers during their time at our school. When I hire, I look for educators who have a passion for kids, who have experience in a classroom and who strive for equitable outcomes for their students. Ms. B is one of the teachers I hired for this school year. Ms. B came to us with 25 years in education - starting as a paraeducator and then moving into the classroom all while completing advanced degrees and raising her own family. Even after all of this experience and education, Ms. B is stuck because she holds a Tier 2 teaching license.

Being stuck at tier 2 prevents her from being eligible for tenure and therefore, at a higher risk of being cut due to budget. It also prevents her from increasing her salary at a higher rate even after all of the education she has achieved and her years of experience. A lot of teachers whom I have worked with, at this point, quit education and our schools lose some excellent teachers.

Ms. B is a highly experienced and effective teacher and I wish all of you could see how students engage with her. As she walks down the hall, she radiates joy. She receives hugs from so many students, including some that aren't in her class, and she always wears a glowing smile while greeting everyone with authentic enthusiasm. She is a phenomenal teacher who is able to connect students to content in such a natural and loving way that students are eager to learn more.

Ms. B is the teacher that all students deserve to have, and I know there are so many teachers like Ms. B out there that we are at risk of losing in our schools because they are stuck with few options to move Tiers. REMOVE lines 173.13, 177.13, and 218.23. Please allow teachers, like Ms. B to advance to a Tier 3 license with years of experience and effective performance appraisals. This will provide teachers like Ms. B the opportunity for tenure and be compensated at a higher rate. It will also allow administrators like me to keep teachers like her in our school, in front of students, where they belong.