

Good morning Chairman Schaible and Committee members. Thank-you for the opportunity to share my opinion. My name is Jay Schobinger. I am a high school math teacher with the Dickinson Public School District. I am currently in my 31st year of teaching, the past 30 at Dickinson High School. I have been a Dickinson resident for over 40 years, graduating from Dickinson High School and Dickinson State University.

I am an active member of the Dickinson Education Association. Throughout my teaching career, I have been involved in the negotiation process as a representative of the DEA. The Dickinson Education Association represents professional educators within the Dickinson Public School District and is recognized by the Dickinson Public School Board as the representative organization in contract negotiations.

I deliver my testimony today in opposition of SB 2215 and urge a DO NOT PASS recommendation for this bill.

Mr. Chairman, if SB 2215 were to pass, it would only serve to limit the voice of teachers by setting a deadline on our ability to negotiate in good faith a fair contract with our employer.

Please consider the following:

- 1) The Legislature generally does not pass an education funding bill until the last days of the session, which are usually around the end of April or in early May.
- 2) Board members and teachers have full time jobs as well as other commitments in their lives. Finding mutually agreeable dates can be challenging. As in my case, many negotiators are also coaches with many evenings and weekends taken up with practices and competitions.
- 3) Every school district is different. This bill would effectively create a situation in which the representative organization and the school board would have to put a deadline on the meaningful conversations that build trust between the negotiating parties and the ability to come to a fair agreement on a contract.
- 4) If June 1 were to trigger automatic impasse, the school board could simply wait until that date, go through impasse and then impose contracts.
- 5) The impasse process is very time consuming. There is also a cost for the impasse process that is shared between the negotiating parties.

As a teacher and local negotiator, I believe the state legislature setting statutory deadlines that limit local control will make discussions and community engagement more difficult. This would be unproductive and would only serve to limit the voice educators have in their workplace and community. More importantly, it will also limit the teacher's ability to advocate for their students and classrooms.

The current wording in the Century Code has been sufficient for the vast majority of the school districts during the negotiations process and does not need to be changed due to an exception rather than the norm.

Therefore, I urge you to recommend a DO NOT PASS for SB 2215.

Thank-you again for allowing me this opportunity.

Sincerely,

Jay Schobinger