



**NDSBA**  
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**HB 1187**  
**House Education**  
**January 17, 2023**  
**Testimony of Alexis Baxley**

Good afternoon, Chairman Heinert, and members of the House Education Committee. My name is Alexis Baxley, and I serve as the executive director of the North Dakota School Boards Association. NDSBA represents the elected school boards of all 170 public school districts and several special education units in North Dakota.

I am here today in support of HB 1187. As you all know very well, we are facing a significant workforce shortage in North Dakota. Education has not been immune to that shortage; my districts are looking for bus drivers, teachers, custodians, counselors and more on a near constant basis. In addition to the challenges presented by such a shortage, public school districts also have to work within a significant number of restrictions when it comes to employing teachers. This restricts our ability to be as creative as private industry when it comes to attracting and retaining talent.

While we do currently have the ability to offer sign-on bonuses, the criteria for individuals to be eligible to receive such a bonus treats all teaching positions as a single role and does not include critical positions like school psychologists. The changes in this bill will allow local school boards to determine its most-needed positions, differentiate teaching positions based on grade-level or subject matter, and incentivize those positions that are most urgent. The new language will allow us to incentivize some of our best employees into the positions we most need them.

I encourage you to give this bill a do-pass recommendation, and I will stand for any questions.