



NDSBA
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SB 2270
Senate Education | January 30, 2023
Testimony of Alexis Baxley

Good morning, Chairman Elkin, and members of the Senate 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.

The North Dakota School Boards Association stands in support of SB 2270. As you are aware, North Dakota school districts, particularly our small, rural districts, often struggle to find enough teachers to fill all of their open positions. We are hopeful that the program created in SB 2270 may help. While many of our rural districts often host student teachers now, they are not often able to convince that teacher to return after graduation. Young teachers, like most young people, are often seeking a different lifestyle than the one many of our rural communities provide. The ability to provide compensation for their student compensation could help these districts retain newly-licensed teachers.

While school districts already have the ability to compensate student teachers under NDCC § 15.1-09-33.3, they do not often do so because of budgetary constraints. Directing funds towards retaining teachers already employed with the district has so far seemed to be a better long term investment. However, targeting rural districts, high-need areas, and schools with a high number irregularly filled positions with state funds has the potential to improve both recruitment and retention in these districts.

I urge you to give SB 2270 a do-pass recommendation, and I would stand for any questions. Thank you.