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Grand Forks Public School District #1
Grand Forks, ND
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Written Testimony in Support of HB 1238 – Reduction of Years for Lifetime Teaching License

To Whom it May Concern;

My name is Joe Drumm. I'm a Science Teacher of 10 years in the state of North Dakota, with experience in Williston and Grand Forks. I am active in my local union in the role of Vice President and Contract Negotiator, and am also a coach and advisor on a plethora of committees. I'm submitting this testimony in support of HB 1238, the proposed reduction in the lifetime licensure from 30 years to 20 years of teaching.

This change will benefit the majority of teachers in our state, and will assist in alleviating one of the biggest barriers in our profession: the cost of recertification. Removing barriers or reducing barriers to stay in the profession can only lead to more individuals staying in our field, and the proposed bill still allows for accountability on the part of the teacher. It removes the cost (both in finances and time) of staying in the field earlier, leading to a potential mitigation of the current shortage we find ourselves in. Teaching is already a profession that is not compensated well for the amount of certification, schooling and daily work that is required. The proposed bill moves the state of North Dakota in the direction of being more equitable and fair to our educators.

At this point in my career, 30 years feels far too long to demonstrate that I'm an effective teacher 'worthy' of not needing to pay for my license to renew. By reducing the time required, a clear signal is sent to the educators of our state that lawmakers are working to address barriers to our profession. It costs the state very little to enact this legislation, and the money teachers would keep can be further invested into the rising cost of living the entire country is dealing with today.

I strongly encourage you to reach out to other educators and get their opinion on this matter, as I'm certain the vast majority are in favor of this legislation. I'm willing and able to provide in person testimony in order to further clarify the positive impact this bill will have.

In closing, this bill is good for Teachers, School Districts and students in our state.

Thank you for your consideration and time,

Joe Drumm

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