

Chair Owens and the members of the House Education Committee,

My name is Melissa Buchhop and I am a 4th grade teacher in Grand Forks. I urge a Do Pass of HB 1238. At a time when recruitment and retention of teachers is so difficult, this bill is an excellent opportunity to address retention issues as it recognizes the dedication of long-term educators and helps to relieve this financial burden to teachers . Currently teachers have to pay for 6 semester credits every 5 years to keep their teaching license, with the opportunity of buying a lifetime license at 30 years. Having a 20 year lifetime license saves teachers the expense of buying two more licenses as well as not having to buy 12 more semester credits.

Lowering the lifetime license will not stop teachers from keeping up to date with education. Professional development days are part of the teacher contracted school year. So teachers will still be continuing their education; they just won't have to pay for credit hours and a new license. HB 1238 is one way of showing appreciation for all teachers do and is an incentive to continue their teaching career in North Dakota.

Thank you for considering this step in supporting our teachers.

Sincerely,  
Melissa Buchhop