

Testimony House Bill 1517
House Education Committee
February 4, 2025
Education Standards and Practices Board

Good morning, Chairman Heinert and members of the committee. My name is Rebecca Pitkin, and I am the Executive Director of the North Dakota Education Standards and Practices Board (ESPB). I am here to present neutral testimony and to ask for clarification on some items. The Board appreciates the sentiment of the bill and your desire to support pre-service or student teachers in their clinical experiences. Line 21 of the bill states that to be eligible to receive a scholarship an individual must “not hold a teaching license.” Most student teachers do have a substitute teaching license, which is recommended by their institutions and ESPB. Student teachers having a substitute license ensures that they have had a BCI/FBI background check as well as enabling them to gain experience subbing and be compensated for it. In addition, their ability to be a substitute teacher because of their license helps school districts in their substitute teacher shortage. We ask that you consider changing the wording of the bill to: “Not hold an initial teaching license or an alternate access teaching license.”

In addition, we seek clarification in Section 1, line 13 referring to state-approved teacher preparation program. Is this referring to ND state-approved or any state-approved teacher preparation program, as nearly all colleges would fall under state-approved. Again, we appreciate the intent of this bill and are happy to answer any questions.

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