



Testimony  
House Bill 1013  
Appropriation Committee  
January 13, 2021  
Dr. Becky Pitkin

Chairman Monson and Members of the Committee,

For the record, my name is Becky Pitkin and I am the Executive Director of ESPB. Thank you for your past support for the National Board Certified funding. National Board's mission is to advance the quality of teaching and learning through a voluntary advanced certification for teachers, like other professions where board certification symbolizes accomplished practice.

There is consensus that teacher quality is the most important school-based variability in determining how well a child learns. Effective teachers who stay in the profession continue to expand and grow their skills, assume leadership positions within the school, work to build the capacity of their colleagues, and finally, seek professional learning opportunities for themselves. National Board certification is an advanced professional learning opportunity.

Teachers must complete four components, all focused on improving teaching and student learning. According to NDCC 15.1-18.1 the National Board grants are administered by ESPB.

Teachers received reimbursement for each of the four components they complete, as well as a yearly stipend if they maintain their certification. In response to national recognition of this

prestigious certification, ESPB recently had administrative rules approved indicating National Board certification satisfies reeducation credits necessary for relicensure.

Currently in North Dakota there are 65 National Board certified teachers who teach in a variety of school settings around the state. Funding for this certification has a direct impact on students in our state and data evidences the positive impact certification has on increased student achievement.

I am requesting the committee consider an amendment to the current funding allocation of \$108,00 (line 1, page 2) to \$158,000, an increase of \$50,000. The proposed funding covers those currently certified and the 10 who are in the process, but no others. An increase will provide funding for approximately 20 teachers, 10 each biennium.

During the past few years there has been increasing interest in National Board and several cohorts have begun. Other cohorts have expressed interest, but funding has been a barrier. This past year, more than ever before, we recognize the work teachers have done. Increased funding will allow more teachers to attain National Board certification as we continue to support a workforce defined by accomplished practice. I respectfully ask you to consider additional funding for National Board Certification. This concludes my testimony and I will answer any questions.