

Bill SB 2147
Taryn Sweet
Testimony in Support

Chairman Senator Schaible, members of the Education committee, for the record, my name is Taryn Sweet and I come to you today in my role as Secondary Principal for Beach High School to help you better understand how from my perspective this bill will help us serve our students. As some of you may know, Beach High School services the educational needs of those who are placed at Home on the Range, which is a resident placement center for teenagers.

We see many students come through that are between the ages of 16-18 years old who are off track for a timely graduation. Some so much so that they will age out of our education system before they will be able to successfully complete the graduation requirements. We want to see them rehabilitated and on track to become productive citizens. To them, staying several more years in high school or trying to make up for lost time seems impossible. Without this legislation, I am legally left with two options. We would have them work on their coursework which may or may not transfer making regular graduation requirements seem insurmountable; or option 2 they must work on their own time without help from my staff on completion of a GED. We have no legal way to work with them on GED prep as the situation stands now, but they are required to attend the school according to their placement. I do not believe that this is what is in the best interests of the kids who come into our care.

What would be most beneficial for the kids would be for us to set up criteria with the school board to establish when a student qualifies for this program. Our care team will be able to determine the best path for the student. Students could come to the classroom, receive supports so they are successful in completing their GED or use GED scores to focus on

educational gaps on what they have left to complete in their graduation requirements. My Title I teacher, Special Education Teachers and other staff could help with GED prep programs and provide supports. We could operate like an educational intensive care unit. It would also enable us to provide a student an opportunity to not just get their GED but their High School Diploma. The freedom and the flexibility of this change allows for us to be able to offer what is best for all students not just on track students. Thank you for your time.