



1 SB 2258

2 Testimony in support

3 Chairman Elkin and members of the Senate Education committee, my name is Dr. Aimee  
4 Copas, and I am the Executive Director for the North Dakota Council of Educational  
5 Leaders representing school leaders across North Dakota.

6 I am here to testify in support of SB 2258. This bill and its sister bill HB 1219 both  
7 provide for a fiscally responsible way for retired teachers to return to the profession due  
8 to teacher shortage issues and to not negatively impact their retirement nor  
9 tremendously impact the TFFR fund and its progress toward being fully funded.

10 One of the calls I get often in my office from fellow administrators is to whether we could  
11 do something – even for a short time – to allow for retired teachers to come back and to  
12 not be bound by the 750-hour limitation. This call comes to me most often in our rural  
13 schools. This option could provide a 1-2 year stop gap as the district continues to try to  
14 find a qualified employee to fill that open position.

15 In this bill the teacher would begin again receiving their teacher’s salary under their  
16 contract. They would also continue to receive their retirement benefit. The employee  
17 and employer would contribute to the TFFR fund while they are working. When they  
18 choose to “re-retire” there would be no recalculation of benefits. At the time of drafting  
19 this testimony the RIO office had not completed their actuarial study on the fund impact  
20 but generally speaking they thought it would be minimal. The sister bill to this one HB  
21 1219 was heard in House GVA last week. In this bill, the teacher receives their salary,  
22 their retirement payment stops during that time, the contributions continue into the

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for all students in North Dakota.*

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1 fund but their retirement is recalculated upon “re-retirement” thereby possibly  
2 increasing their future benefit. The RIO office did provide a response to the fund and  
3 the progress to fully funded is impacted very little providing leeway for the ability to  
4 support this bill. There is however another bill along these lines that is NOT a bill that  
5 is fiscally responsible to the fund and that is going to be heard in House Education this  
6 afternoon (HB1271) In that bill teachers return, retirement continues as in this bill  
7 before you today, BUT neither the employer or employee contribute to the fund. This  
8 would dismantle and destroy the TFFR fund and in my opinion is not a fiscally  
9 responsible use of taxpayer dollars.

10 In summary, the bill before you today SB2258 could potentially help temporarily alleviate  
11 some instances of unfilled positions. We’d ask that you consider this testimony as you  
12 discuss this bill.