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**Testimony Senate Bill 2043**

**Education Standards and Practices Board**

**March 5, 2025**

Good morning, Chairman Heinert, and members of the House Education Committee. My name is Rebecca Pitkin, and I am the Executive Director of the Education Standards and Practices Board. I represent our Board in support of SB 2043, a bill which relates to denial or immediate revocation of a teaching license for crimes against a child and sexual offenses.

When an individual with a teaching license is accused of a crime against a child and sexual offense, the Board convenes a special meeting as soon as possible and motions to offer a settlement agreement to immediately suspend the individual's teaching license. Upon a plea or being found guilty of any charge based on the underlying facts, the license is immediately and permanently revoked under N.D.C.C. § 15.1-13-25 (1) (c). The amendment in this bill (lines 18 and 21-23) provides for the same action for an equivalent federal charge because an individual may have committed a qualifying crime in another state or another country, or the crimes brought against the individual are under federal jurisdiction. Often, we have seen that cases will move between state and federal jurisdictions for related crimes, and the Board should have the same remedies available to it to protect students no matter whether the case is brought in state or federal court. The central focus of this amendment is to protect the children in our schools and for the Board to be able to act quickly on a license upon a conviction for these crimes. The actions the Board takes against the individual's license is added to a national clearinghouse. Other states check their teaching applications against the clearinghouse listings in a national effort to protect children from those who may attempt to cross state lines. This bill prevents the Board from having to convene a second special meeting when the conviction changes jurisdictions, and the possibility of having to negotiate amendments to settlement agreements leaving a gap in licensure suspension.

Our Board urges a do pass on SB 2043. This concludes my testimony, and I will answer any questions.

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