

**2025 HOUSE EDUCATION**

**HB 1238**

# 2025 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

## Education Committee Coteau AB Room, State Capitol

HB 1238  
1/21/2025

Relating to the reporting requirements for a lifetime teaching license.
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10:58 a.m. Chairman Schreiber- Beck called the hearing to order.

Members Present: Vice Chairman Schreiber- Beck, Representatives, Conmy, Hager, Hatlestad, Hauck, Jonas, Longmuir, Maki, Marchall, Morton, Novak, Osowski

Members absent: Chairman Heinert, Representative Heilman.

### Discussion Topics:

- Workforce Retention
- Licensure requirements
- Renewal fees
- Lifetime licenses

10:58 a.m. Representative Ista introduced the bill and submitted testimony. #30324

11:14 a.m. Nick Archuleta, President of North Dakota United, testified in favor and submitted testimony. #30303

11:19 a.m. Kevin Hoherz, ND Council of Educational Leaders, testified in favor.

11:27 a.m. Joseph Drumm, Science teacher from Grand Forks, Vice President and Contract negotiator for the Grand Forks Education Association, testified in favor and submitted testimony. #29893

11:30 a.m. Dr. Rebecca Pitkin, Executive Director of the ND Education Standards and Practices Boards, testified in opposition and submitted testimony. #30254

11:42 a.m. Dr. Cory Steiner, Superintendent, Northern Cass School District, NCSD, Chairman of the Education Standards Board, ESPB, testified in opposition and submitted testimony. #30290

11:51 a.m. Ann Ellefson, Director of the Academic Support with NDDPI, testified in opposition and submitted testimony. #30420

### Additional written testimony:

Carrie Spellerberg, Teacher, Fargo Public Schools, submitted testimony in favor. #29807

Laura Halvorson, ND Resident, submitted testimony in favor. #29867

Kimberly Rensch, ND Resident, submitted testimony in favor. #29952

Andee Woodmansee, ND Resident, submitted testimony in favor. #29956

Grant Kraft, ND Resident, submitted testimony in favor. #30061

Brenda Seehafer, Teacher, ND United, submitted testimony in favor. #30078

Melissa Buchhop, ND Resident, submitted testimony in favor. #30113

Dawn Mord, ND Resident, submitted testimony is favor. #30158

Aimee Copas, Executive Director, ND CEL, submitted testimony in favor. #30216

Matt Liebel, ND Resident, submitted testimony in favor. #30259

Melanie Unser, 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Teacher, Fargo Public Schools, submitted testimony is favor.  
#30414

Margaret Hilbers, ND Resident, submitted testimony in favor. #30441

12:01 p.m. Vice Chairman Schreiber- Beck closed the hearing.

*Leah Kuball, Committee Clerk*

Dear Sir or Madame:

In no other profession that I have heard of do the employees pay for their own continuing ed credits or licensure renewals. In most other professions, the company will pay the employee to take continuing education seminars. In fact, they send their employees across the country to interesting locations to take these continuing ed courses. They also will pay to keep the license updated. Teachers do not get this luxury. In my 25 years of teaching, I have paid thousands of dollars for the mandated continuing ed credits and licensure updates. This is one of the causes of teachers leaving the profession entirely.

Please allow the lifetime licensure to move to 20 years. This could help retain some teachers in what is becoming a teacher shortage crisis.

Thanks for your consideration,

Carrie Spellerberg

8<sup>th</sup> grade teacher

Fargo, ND

January 18, 2025

I am writing in support of HB 1238 to establish a lifetime teaching license after twenty years of teaching.

Dear Committee Members,

I am writing to let you know how much I support House Bill 1238, which proposes the creation of lifetime teacher licenses for North Dakota educators after twenty years. This legislation is essential to recognizing teachers' invaluable contributions to our state and its future.

Educators are at the heart of our communities, shaping the minds and lives of the next generation. However, the licensing renewal process can often add unnecessary stress and administrative burden to our already demanding responsibilities. We can reduce this strain by implementing lifetime teacher licenses, allowing educators to focus on what we do best—teaching and inspiring students.

Additionally, this legislation sends a powerful message: we value and respect teachers' lifelong commitment to their profession. It reflects North Dakota's dedication to retaining and supporting quality educators, addressing workforce challenges, and strengthening public education across the state. Our state currently has a teacher shortage to fill all open teaching positions. Passing this bill will send a clear message that we support the profession and will attract more teachers to the profession.

I urge you to give a "DO PASS" recommendation to House Bill 1238 and demonstrate your commitment to educators who make such a difference in the lives of North Dakota's children. Thank you for considering this critical step in supporting our teachers and our schools.

Sincerely,

Laura Halvorson  
Teacher, Bottineau Public School



**Joseph Andrew Drumm**  
**Teacher/GFEA Vice President**  
**Grand Forks Public School District #1**  
**Grand Forks, ND**  
**1/18/2025**

**Written Testimony in Support of HB 1238 – Reduction of Years for Lifetime Teaching License**

To Whom it May Concern;

My name is Joe Drumm. I'm a Science Teacher of 10 years in the state of North Dakota, with experience in Williston and Grand Forks. I am active in my local union in the role of Vice President and Contract Negotiator, and am also a coach and advisor on a plethora of committees. I'm submitting this testimony in support of HB 1238, the proposed reduction in the lifetime licensure from 30 years to 20 years of teaching.

This change will benefit the majority of teachers in our state, and will assist in alleviating one of the biggest barriers in our profession: the cost of recertification. Removing barriers or reducing barriers to stay in the profession can only lead to more individuals staying in our field, and the proposed bill still allows for accountability on the part of the teacher. It removes the cost (both in finances and time) of staying in the field earlier, leading to a potential mitigation of the current shortage we find ourselves in. Teaching is already a profession that is not compensated well for the amount of certification, schooling and daily work that is required. The proposed bill moves the state of North Dakota in the direction of being more equitable and fair to our educators.

At this point in my career, 30 years feels far too long to demonstrate that I'm an effective teacher 'worthy' of not needing to pay for my license to renew. By reducing the time required, a clear signal is sent to the educators of our state that lawmakers are working to address barriers to our profession. It costs the state very little to enact this legislation, and the money teachers would keep can be further invested into the rising cost of living the entire country is dealing with today.

I strongly encourage you to reach out to other educators and get their opinion on this matter, as I'm certain the vast majority are in favor of this legislation. I'm willing and able to provide in person testimony in order to further clarify the positive impact this bill will have.

In closing, this bill is good for Teachers, School Districts and students in our state.

Thank you for your consideration and time,

Joe Drumm

[jdrumm040@mygfschools.org](mailto:jdrumm040@mygfschools.org)

(701) 335 9684

Dear House Education Committee Members,

I am writing today in support of HB 1238. Thank you for considering this bill. As a veteran teacher with 24 years of experience, I look forward to the opportunity to have one less detail to attend to. Every new school year brings with it a large to do list, mostly due to new initiatives, new technology tools to learn, new policies to be accustomed to, and the list goes on. At my age (and the age that many teachers would reach this proposed licensure milestone), many teachers are also caring for children and even their elderly parents. There are so many details to keep track of that having one less thing to worry about would bring a measure of peace to the people entrusted to educate the next generation. Earning the opportunity to hold lifetime licensure would be a better than a "20" pin or paperweight that many in the private sector receive to commemorate twenty years of experience.

I encourage you all to vote in favor of HB 1238.

Thank you!

Kim Rensch, Fargo Public Schools

Fargo/Cass County District 11

I am writing to express my strong support for House Bill 1238, which proposes the creation of lifetime teacher licenses for North Dakota educators after twenty years. This legislation is an important step toward recognizing the invaluable contributions teachers make to our state and its future.

Educators are at the heart of our communities, shaping the minds and lives of the next generation. However, the licensing renewal process can often add unnecessary stress and administrative burden to their already demanding responsibilities. By implementing lifetime teacher licenses, we can reduce this strain, allowing educators to focus on what they do best—teaching and inspiring students. I have dedicated 27 years of my life to teaching.

Additionally, this legislation sends a powerful message: we value and respect the lifelong commitment that teachers make to their profession. It reflects North Dakota's dedication to retaining and supporting quality educators, addressing workforce challenges, and strengthening public education across the state.

I urge you to give a "DO PASS" recommendation to House Bill 1238 and demonstrate your commitment to the educators who make such a difference in the lives of North Dakota's children. Thank you for considering this critical step in supporting our teachers and our schools.

Thank you for your consideration,

Andee Woodmansee



January 19, 2025

Chairman Heinert and Members of the North Dakota House Education Committee:

This letter is to voice **support** for HB 1238, which will change the number of years a teacher must serve before being granted a lifetime license in our state.

Two years ago, I wrote testimony in support for a similar bill.<sup>1</sup> At that time I noted that the millennial generation is shown to be more likely to “job-hop” with, “21% of millennials say[ing] they’ve changed jobs within the past year, which is more than three times the number of non-millennials who report the same.”<sup>2</sup>

I wrote about how this data helps illuminate the need for making the teacher licensure program both attractive to new teachers and alluring for existing teachers. I also shared my personal story of feeling the effects of the “job-hopping” generation. I noted that while I observed my similar-aged peers come and go, I also was having thoughts about pursuing other opportunities outside of education.

I argued in 2023 that for teachers like me, recognition from a bill like this may provide an incentive to remain employed in public education. Unfortunately, the 2023 legislature let me down. Seeing a lack of support from my legislators was one factor that contributed to me choosing to “job-hop”. As I began to get asked why I was leaving teaching, I found the question difficult to answer. Why was I choosing to leave a profession I love while still feeling called to serve students and teachers? After contemplation I determined that I left because I could no longer tolerate the conditions I was enduring, including the lack of support from the legislature. You see, it’s not so much that I left teaching, but rather that “teaching left me”. What I had been called to do: to teach, was no longer being supported by my elected officials. Public schools became hot springs for political warfare and my legislature couldn’t even pass a law to say that teachers who had been investing in our students for 20 years should be recognized as expert teachers. It was a disgusting rejection of the time, money, emotion, energy, and dedication I had given to invest in the future leaders of this state.

Today, I am certain there are other educators wondering something similar to what I was wondering in 2023: “Will my legislators pass a simple bill to demonstrate their support of my work?” The work of educators is challenging in many ways and the legislature, has often implemented legislation that has hampered public school teachers. In this bill though, you have a simple opportunity to not *hamper* but *help* educators.

This legislation is an act of goodwill toward some of our state’s most experienced teachers. If passed, this bill would provide recognition and serve as a milestone for many educators to work toward in their coming years.

**Therefore, I urge the committee to issue a DO PASS recommendation on HB 1238.**

**Grant Kraft**

*Former Teacher*

Fargo, ND – District 45

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<sup>1</sup> [https://ndlegis.gov/assembly/68-2023/testimony/HEDU-1329-20230131-17973-F-KRAFT\\_GRANT.pdf](https://ndlegis.gov/assembly/68-2023/testimony/HEDU-1329-20230131-17973-F-KRAFT_GRANT.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gallup.com/workplace/231587/millennials-job-hopping-generation.aspx>

Members of the House Education Committee,

I am Brenda Seehafer, an elementary Title I reading and math teacher from Rolla, ND. I am asking for your support on HB 1238, the Lifetime Teacher Licensure Bill.

I feel that it is time to allow teachers to obtain a lifetime license after twenty years of teaching in the state of North Dakota. Teaching is a profession that has been dwindling in numbers of people entering it over the last years. Not only aren't people going into the education profession, but then when they do enter it, they leave after short periods of time. This bill can help the issue of teacher retention as it would become an incentive for educators who want to continue their careers in North Dakota; this would help in the areas of recruitment and retention. Lowering the threshold of lifetime license to twenty years acknowledges the dedication and expertise of North Dakota educators by offering them well-deserved recognition earlier in their careers. Lifetime licensure after twenty years also reduces the burden of periodic renewals, enabling teachers to concentrate more on their students and less on administrative tasks; isn't that where we want the focus of our teachers to be, working with and preparing our students for a successful future? Teachers wear various hats and serve in many different roles daily with their students. They need to be given the recognition they deserve sooner, as this will show the importance of the teaching profession.

We have the Education Standards and Practices Board that places a high priority on the licensing of our teachers. This Board ensures that professional standards are upheld by teachers, which would continue with this licensure change.

Please support HB 1238 by lowering a lifetime teacher license to twenty years to show your support of the dedication and expertise of North Dakota teachers. Help teachers recruit and retain fellow educators to this wonderful, fulfilling profession by recognizing them after twenty years in their careers with a lifetime license.

Chair Owens and the members of the House Education Committee,

My name is Melissa Buchhop and I am a 4th grade teacher in Grand Forks. I urge a Do Pass of HB 1238. At a time when recruitment and retention of teachers is so difficult, this bill is an excellent opportunity to address retention issues as it recognizes the dedication of long-term educators and helps to relieve this financial burden to teachers . Currently teachers have to pay for 6 semester credits every 5 years to keep their teaching license, with the opportunity of buying a lifetime license at 30 years. Having a 20 year lifetime license saves teachers the expense of buying two more licenses as well as not having to buy 12 more semester credits.

Lowering the lifetime license will not stop teachers from keeping up to date with education. Professional development days are part of the teacher contracted school year. So teachers will still be continuing their education; they just won't have to pay for credit hours and a new license. HB 1238 is one way of showing appreciation for all teachers do and is an incentive to continue their teaching career in North Dakota.

Thank you for considering this step in supporting our teachers.

Sincerely,  
Melissa Buchhop

Dear Chairman Heinert and the House Education Committee,

I am Dawn Mord, an educator of 34 years in the state of North Dakota. I am currently in my 31<sup>st</sup> year of teaching in the Grand Forks Public School system and hold my lifetime teaching certificate. Applying for and receiving my lifetime certification was a highlight in my career. It was an acknowledgement that I am an excellent educator and no longer have to have proof of it every 5 years. It is also part of the reason I have decided to stay and finish my career here in North Dakota.

I urge you to give HB 1238 a “Do Pass” recommendation. This bill is a practical way to retain quality educators without sacrificing professional standards. By reducing the time required for lifetime teaching licenses from 30 to 20 years, you’re recognizing the commitment of long-time educators. Twenty years in a classroom is more than enough to demonstrate dedication and professionalism.

This is a great opportunity to demonstrate respect for our state’s teachers. Please, support HB 1238 and ease the burden of re-licensure for experienced teachers who give their all for North Dakota’s children.

Dawn Mord  
1723 S 35<sup>th</sup> Street  
Grand Forks, ND 58201



1 Chairperson and Members of the Committee,

2 Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of House Bill No. 1238, regarding  
3 the years of service in ND before eligible for lifetime license as well as reporting requirements  
4 for a lifetime teaching license.

5 We commend the sponsors of this bill for their efforts to streamline the licensure process while  
6 maintaining accountability and high standards for educators in North Dakota. This change  
7 appropriately balances the value of experience with the need for continued professional  
8 responsibility.

9 It is important to emphasize that the reporting requirements included in the bill uphold the  
10 integrity of the teaching profession. The five-year reporting mandate ensures that individuals  
11 holding a lifetime license remain in good standing, affirming their commitment to ethical  
12 conduct and professional responsibility. By requiring educators to disclose any criminal  
13 violations or other relevant information, the bill safeguards the welfare of our students and  
14 preserves public trust in our educational institutions.

15 Furthermore, we believe this amendment aligns with our state's commitment to supporting  
16 educators throughout their careers. By reducing unnecessary bureaucratic hurdles, the bill allows  
17 experienced teachers to focus more on their instructional responsibilities while maintaining  
18 compliance with the Education Standards and Practices Board's oversight.

19 While not addressed in the bill it is worth noting as an aside that we wish to underscore our firm  
20 belief that this legislation does not, and should not, diminish the rigorous requirements for  
21 obtaining and maintaining administrative credentials. We recognize that our teachers receive  
22 significant professional development each year, ensuring they remain well-equipped to meet the  
23 evolving needs of students. However, it is imperative that our administrators continue to pursue  
24 new and innovative training opportunities to stay current with best practices and emerging  
25 trends. By doing so, they can bring fresh ideas and forward-thinking strategies to their districts,  
26 fostering a culture of continuous improvement and excellence in education.

27 In closing, we respectfully urge your support of House Bill No. 1238. We believe this bill strikes  
28 the right balance between honoring the dedication of our educators and maintaining the  
29 professional standards necessary to ensure the highest quality of education for our students.

30 Thank you for your time and consideration.

31

Testimony House Bill 1238  
House Education Committee  
January 21, 2025  
Education Standards and Practices Board

Good morning, Vice Chair Schreiber-Beck 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 represent our Board in opposition to HB1238, which proposes lifetime licenses for teachers who have been teaching for 20 years, instead of the 30 years currently in administrative rules. Although 30 may seem like an arbitrary number, it represents the majority of an educator's career, during which time they are required to complete ongoing professional development and report offenses during each renewal period.

The Board appreciates the efforts made by Representative Ista since last session to address the reporting concerns as the safety of our students is a Board priority. We would ask for further discussion regarding what the reporting guidelines entail and the immediacy of reporting.

The Board has continued to meet regarding this topic since last session. A summary of the Board's views on this topic was discussed in July 2024, and the Board recommended no changes to the current 30-year license. The Board's conclusions were as follows:

1. ESPB needs to continue to require self-reporting on renewals, particularly considering a recent increase in special meetings to address boundary violations. This has been addressed in the bill.
2. ESPB is currently in the administrative rules process, adding specificity relating to boundary violations in the ethics section of administrative rules. The removal of a "check" would contradict these efforts.
3. Lowering the requirements of ongoing education for teachers does not promote the profession.
4. Requiring 6 reeducation college credits in 5 years should not be a reason to leave the profession and many of these credits can be obtained at the district level.
5. Given the recent reading requirements, and now HB 2213—relating to the science of math—as well as increased changes in education, teachers need to continue to engage in professional development, as do all occupational board licensees.
6. Beneficial, content specific professional development credits are readily available in all formats. North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) provides numerous professional development opportunities to assist and support schools as well as the North Dakota Education Hub and North Dakota United.

In 2024, former Governor Burgum approved emergency rules allowing teacher education students who had completed all their coursework, except for student teaching, to act as the teacher of record, (or be the teacher) with signatures from schools indicating they would provide support to those individuals. This was met with mixed responses, as is all change, but it is the position of the Board that a person trained as a teacher is more qualified than a substitute teacher

who has had potentially no training in teacher education. To date, 69 individuals have received a teaching authorization, evidencing not all teacher education students are qualified or want this pathway. The attention to the shortage resulted in the Governor's Retention and Recruitment task force, whose recommendations will no doubt be addressed this session. There was no recommendation from the committee for less professional development for teachers, but instead, seven other recommendations for state lawmakers to consider this session, all of which would directly benefit educators.

HB1238 would allow an individual to potentially receive a lifetime license in their early 40's, with many more years in their career to teach. In the past 10 years, education has seen dramatic changes in areas such as technology integrations, the impact of social media on students, trauma and mental health of students, and changing ways of assessment to name a few. In addition, the public perception of teaching has been impacted negatively.

Most states require continuing education for license renewal. Both teachers and learners benefit from this; teachers become better at their craft and content, leading to a positive impact on the learning experiences of students and their achievements. A recent survey of state teacher licensing boards indicates 83% require professional development courses to renew a license or certificate until the end of a teacher's career. Continuing education credits and requirements are a crucial way to ensure that teachers remain effective, and removing continuing education requirements also removes a crucial connection between individual teachers and the ongoing developments in the teaching field as whole.

Forty years ago, I received my first teaching license, a lifetime license. Thirty-five years ago, I received a letter from that state indicating my life license was no longer valid and ongoing professional learning was needed for the life of my license. The past 10 years has been filled with change both in learners and in teachers. Rapid change has occurred in remote learning, real time assessment and feedback, technology integration, artificial intelligence, individualized learning models and many other areas. Teachers are the model of life-long learning that we constantly advocate for our students. Teachers do need to be rewarded for their work and commitment to our learners, and the board recognizes this fact, but this bill is not the solution.

Madam Vice-Chair and Members of the Committee, this concludes my testimony. I stand for any questions.

Rebecca Pitkin, PhD

[rpitkin@nd.gov](mailto:rpitkin@nd.gov)

701.328.9646

Dear Members of the House Education Committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for House Bill 1238, which proposes to reduce the number of years required for teachers to earn a lifetime teaching license from 30 years to 20 years. This bill is a significant step towards recognizing and valuing the dedication and commitment of our educators.

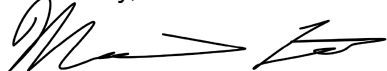
Teachers are the backbone of our education system, and their contributions to shaping future generations cannot be overstated. By allowing educators to achieve a lifetime license after 20 years, we are acknowledging their hard work and the expertise they develop throughout their careers. This change will not only motivate current teachers to remain in the profession but will also attract new talent to North Dakota's schools.

Furthermore, reducing the time frame for a lifetime license can help alleviate the burden of administrative processes that often detract from teachers' primary focus: educating students. It also sends a powerful message that we trust our educators and recognize their long-term commitment to the profession.

I urge you to support House Bill 1238 and to stand behind our teachers, ensuring that they receive the recognition and respect they deserve.

Thank you for considering this important legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Matt Liebel', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Matt Liebel



**Testimony of Dr. Cory Steiner**  
**Northern Cass Superintendent**  
**HB 1238**  
**Tuesday, January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2025**

Chair Heiner, Vice-Chair Schreiber-Beck, and members of the committee, my name is Dr. Cory Steiner, and I am the Superintendent of the Northern Cass School District. I'm also in my second term as a representative on the Education Standards and Practices Board (ESPB). I speak in opposition to HB1238 which proposes lifetime licenses for teachers who have been teaching for 20 years instead of the 30 years currently, as required in administrative rules.

I truly appreciate the effort made since last session to address the reporting concerns as the safety of our learners is a priority not only in our district but also for ESPB.

ESPB has continued to engage in conversation related to this since last session. Throughout these conversations, one thing has remained constant. The Board has recommended no changes to the current 30-year license. The board has based their decision on the following reasons:

1. ESPB needs to continue to require self-reporting on renewals. Since my time on the board, we have seen an increase in the need for special meetings to address significant concerns/issues related to the behavior of practicing educators. An educator would have a significant amount of time remaining in their career where they would not be required to self-report infractions. It would take away a check which has proven vital to ensuring learners receive the education they deserve.
2. ESPB is currently in the administrative rules process, adding specificity relating to boundary violations in the ethics section of administrative rules. The discussion on this area has been robust and done so with a sense of urgency. The removal of the checks after five years would contradict these efforts.
3. I do not know of any 'four-year college' profession which does not require formal learning to continue throughout their career. By not requiring further education, I believe we are conflict with the work being done in the state to lift 'up' the field of education.
4. Throughout my career, I have never had an educator leave the professional due to obtaining additional credits for their license renewal. They are aware it is part of being a lifelong learner.
5. There are many requirements for professional learning at the district level. Districts can work with educators to assist them in making these learning experiences credit-bearing. This would allow for local control to be practiced.
6. We live in a world which is changing at an exponential rate. Whether it is the Science of Reading or now the Science of Math, we are learning more about learners than ever before. With that knowledge requires us to do more. Professional learning is the catalyst to change our system when necessary. I fully understand that simply offering learning does not mean there will be significant change. However, I do know nothing of significance changes without education and new learning.
7. If cost is a concern, the state of North Dakota has put into place many credits which can be earned at no cost to the educator. The North Dakota Department of Public Instructino

(ND DPI) has done excellent work with the Education Hub. Director Ann Ellefson can speak to this at a much higher level.

There is no doubt we are facing a crisis in terms of not having enough teachers. However, we are also facing a similar crisis with librarians, school counselors, and administrators. The bill does not address those positions. If this bill is about benefitting those who work with learners in the field of education, it must include all educational careers which have requirements for continuing education. To not include the other areas will create a 'have' and 'have not' scenario.

Governor Doug Burgum engaged a Retention and Recruitment Task Force, whose recommendations have already been part of the proposals and discussions during this legislative session. There was no recommendation from the committee for less professional development for teachers. Instead, multiple other recommendations for legislators to consider this session were suggested, all of which would directly benefit educators at a more impactful level.

In my opinion, I believe the concept shared in HB1238 is admirable. However, I believe the unintended consequences far outweigh the potential benefits. We must continue to celebrate teaching and the field of education as not less than other fields, but equal to all other fields. I worry this bill will reinforce the negative public perception that currently exists.

I ask for this committee to recommend a 'do not pass' vote. In addition, because I believe this conversation is important, I ask you to challenge key stakeholder groups to work together to find a solution which embraces successful longevity while also maintaining the highest levels of learning and safety in our schools.



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*Great Public Schools**Great Public Service*

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**Testimony Before the House Education Committee  
HB 1238  
Tuesday, January 21, 2025**

Chairman Heinert and members of the Committee, I am Nick Archuleta, ND United president, and I am here today in support of North Dakota's long-time teaching professionals, and to encourage a ***do pass*** recommendation for HB 1238.

Mr. Chairman, over the course of the last decade, the North Dakota legislature has worked with the North Dakota Education Standards and Practices Board to implement alternative pathways to teacher licensure, different than the traditional pathway that generations of teachers navigated to become education professionals. This was done, of course, to mitigate the effects of the ongoing teacher shortage. The persistent shortage of teachers has meant many communities have had to scramble to meet the needs of their districts. Many districts have even turned to hiring foreign national teachers to fill their open positions. While these teachers are qualified and fulfill a need in many communities, we believe that recruiting, retaining, and respecting teachers here is the best way to meet our needs in the long-term.

Through it all, a resolute cadre of North Dakota teachers has persisted and dedicated themselves to teach and inspire learners in every corner of the state despite seeing new colleagues entering the profession with provisional or alternative licenses or permits. In short, Chairman Heinert and members of the Committee, ND has made every effort to accommodate the facilitation of newly licensed and permitted teachers while doing little for those teachers who have stayed true to the course through thick and thin.

Mr. Chairman, HB 1238 provides the opportunity to genuinely appreciate these teachers by lowering the number of years one must teach to be eligible for a lifetime license from 30 years to 20 years. You may hear opposition testimony expressing concern that if teachers earn lifetime licensure, they will quit taking courses and earning credits that, without

lifetime licensure, they would have otherwise taken and earned. Not only is that argument a slight to the professionalism of teachers, but it also discounts entirely the fact that teachers, regardless of the type of license they hold, have to take coursework to make lane changes and advance on the salary schedule. Additionally, teachers complete many hours of meaningful state and district mandated professional development. That said, the teachers I know engage in unmandated professional development simply because they want to continually improve their practice for the benefit of their students and profession.

Chairman Heinert and members of the Committee, please stand up for teachers, please show them that their dedication to the students of North Dakota is appreciated, and please give a ***do pass*** recommendation to HB 1238.

Mr. Chairman and Members of the House Education Committee:

For the record, I'm Rep. Zac Ista from District 43 in Grand Forks.

This session, two of our top priorities should be lowering costs for our citizens and enacting policies to recruit and retain talented workforce. HB 1238 helps achieve both priorities. By making educators eligible for a lifetime teaching license after 20 years in the profession (rather than the current 30-year benchmark), the bill will cut costs and red tape while incentivizing teachers to remain in the classroom.

For those returning members of the House, this bill will look very familiar. That is because you saw it last session as HB 1329, which left this committee with a unanimous "do pass" recommendation and passed with 87 votes on the House floor. Thank you to each of the returning members of this committee who supported this bill in 2023, and I hope to earn both your and the new members' support again in 2025.

Unfortunately, when the bill crossed over to the Senate, it failed on a tied floor vote (with one member absent). As you'll see from the strong support of those behind me and who have submitted supporting testimony online, this bill certainly warrants another run at becoming law.

The concept of a lifetime teaching license is not new in North Dakota; it's been in place since 2001 for those teachers who have been in the classroom at least 30 years. Since 2011, over 2,600 educators have earned a lifetime teaching license, with over 250 new lifetime licensees in just the last two years. This strong and sustained interest in a lifetime teaching license is a testament to the enduring popularity of this option.

HB 1238 seeks to expand the pool of eligible teachers by changing the threshold for eligibility from 30 years to 20 years. This would allow more teachers in the prime of their careers to qualify, as opposed to current law that issues the lifetime license closer to the end of an average teaching career. In a time of increased concern about teacher recruitment and retention, we should be doing everything we reasonably can to keep our best teachers in the classrooms, and HB 1238 moves the needle in the right direction towards this goal.

The primary way it does this is by reducing the financial and time burden on teachers by eliminating two license renewal periods between years 20 and 30 of their careers. Under current law, teachers must renew their license every 5 years (after an initial 2-year licensure period at the beginning of their careers) with the Educational Standards and Practices Board ("ESPB" or "the Board"). The license renewal fee is now \$140 (up from \$130 in 2023). By the time a teacher reaches eligibility for a lifetime license under current law, he or she will have paid nearly \$1,000 in license fees alone.

In addition, educators must also complete a minimum of 6 semester hours of re-education within their 5-year license period. Teachers typically take these college-level courses in the evenings, on weekends, or in the summer. The coursework is time-consuming, with each semester hour requiring multiple real hours of work to complete. According to practitioners, teachers spend up to 180 hours completing these courses during each renewal period.

Naturally, these courses are not free. Instead, teachers incur significant out-of-pocket costs to complete them, with each credit hour averaging \$50 plus fees. This equates to at least \$300 in course costs on top of the \$140 license fee each renewal period. In total, by the time a teacher reaches lifetime license eligibility after 30 years, he or she may have spent upwards of \$3,000 on the licensing process alone.

Changing that threshold to 20 years would eliminate 2 renewal cycles for qualified educators. With license fees and course costs/fees, this could easily save the average educator \$1,000 in out-of-pocket costs, plus a substantial number of hours spent completing the re-education credits. As you'll hear from those in support of this bill, this is a small but significant incentive for educators who, after 20 years of service, have proven themselves to be exactly the type of people who we need to retain in our schools.

But does removing two renewal cycles risk teachers falling behind on the latest best practices in their field or, worse, risk potentially dangerous teachers (like those who committed a crime) staying in the classroom? The answer to these questions, I believe, is a resounding no.

On that first question, teachers are themselves lifelong learners, living the same value they hope to instill in their students. Even by lowering the lifetime license threshold to 20 years, teachers will still have to navigate at least 4 renewal cycles before becoming eligible. That means nearly 25 semester hours of re-education course, which requires over 700 actual hours of educator work. This is above and beyond the annual professional development mandated by Century Code and school district contracts that every licensed educator engages in each year. Nothing in HB 1238 changes that ongoing professional development, nor does it prevent school districts from requiring or incentivizing additional professional development if they choose. We know many districts already condition pay increases on educators obtaining advanced degrees or hitting certain amounts of credit hours of higher education coursework. This bill would not disrupt the option districts have to do that.

The bill likewise will not risk teachers being allowed to continue in the profession after committing a disqualifying offense. It's true that one part of the license renewal process now is for teachers to self-report potential misconduct or violations of their professional code of conduct (*e.g.*, criminal convictions, adverse employment action, or license discipline in another jurisdiction). When it receives reports of misconduct, the ESPB is empowered to take remedial action. Most often, that action is only minor (like a teacher being required to take an ethics course), but it can be license suspension or revocation.

When we considered this bill in 2023, the only noted opposition was from the ESPB and centered on its concern about a new 10-year period in which educators would not be self-reporting potential license violations to the Board. This bill takes those concerns seriously and, in a change from 2023, now includes language specifically authorizing ESPB to continue requiring reports for lifetime licensees every 5 years on whether such persons have violated a criminal statute or need to disclose any other information that could result in license suspension or revocation. The language in line 15 makes clear that this must be done at no cost to the licensee, as reducing out-of-pocket costs remains a motivating goal of this legislation.

In addition to this new express authority, lifetime licensees remain subject to the state's Code of Professional Conduct for Educators (found in Title 67.1 of the Administrative Code), a violation of which "constitutes grounds for disciplinary action which includes the issuance of a warning or reprimand or both, suspension or revocation of the license of the affected educator, or other appropriate discipline conduct." As with professional development requirements, nothing in HB 1238 prevents local school districts from requiring more frequent disclosure of misconduct, and the Board certainly can monitor media reports for the most egregious criminal conduct. Moreover, members of the public may make a "Request for Inquiry" into any licensed educator for suspected violation of Century Code or the Code of Professional Conduct by filling out a form available online through ESPB's website. These existing safeguards plus the new authority set forth in HB 1238 provide adequate assurances that lifetime licensees will not evade appropriate professional consequences if their conduct falls short of the important safety standards we have in place for our schools and students.

In conclusion, HB 1238 will provide our state's education workforce with a meaningful incentive to stay in the classroom. It recognizes that, after 20 years of high-caliber teaching, educators have proven their qualifications to the students, parents, administrators, and colleagues in their schools. And it provides an appropriate balance that ensures our schools and licensing regime continue to have student safety and achievement front of mind.

Let's help lower out-of-pocket costs for teachers and move the ball down the field in our efforts to retain our skilled workers. I humbly urge a DO PASS recommendation for HB 1238, and I will stand for any questions.

January 21, 2025

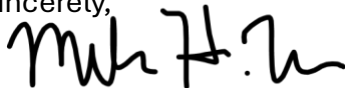
Dear Representative Ista,

My name is Melanie Unser and I am a 24-year veteran teacher currently working as a third-grade teacher in Fargo Public Schools. I am writing to support HB 1238. There are many reasons I support reducing the years needed for a teacher to earn a lifetime license. First, completing continuing education credits is incredibly expensive and time-consuming. Veteran teachers like me are getting the smallest increases in wages of all educators. Most of the big raises are going to the new hires to attract them to a field that is struggling to find qualified workers. Second, the state has already made it easier for people who did not go to school to earn education degrees to get teaching licenses. Why wouldn't North Dakota then reduce the requirements for those of us who have already put in the time, money, received the needed education (and continuing education), and have the experience? Also, it's rarely the veteran teachers who are leaving the field to worsen the teacher shortage; it is the younger, less experienced educators. Therefore, this is a way to incentivize educators to stay the course. Also, school districts are required to provide professional development throughout the school year, so all teachers already are getting many professional development opportunities to continually grow and improve their skills. Through another lens, teachers, especially elementary teachers, spend a lot of their own money on their classrooms. By not having to spend the money for more credits, we'd have more months to either spend directly on meaningful things for our classrooms and students or to use to pay our own bills for our families. Lastly, the best education is experience. People who have survived 20 years in the classroom have a wealth of knowledge about how to be impactful. That is something no professional development class can teach.

Representative Ista, teaching today is vastly different and markedly more difficult than it was when I started in 2001. There have been countless times I've wanted to leave the profession due to the current culture of education in our state and in our country. However, I stay for the children and because I have dedicated my life to working to positively impact the lives of the eight-year-olds in my charge. Being able to earn a lifetime licensure after 20 years would allow me to have more of my own money to spend on my own children's college tuition, as well as give me one small pat on the back for the sacrifices I've made financially and emotionally to stay in this grueling profession.

Thank you for listening and I pray this bill passes. Teachers could use one good thing going their way for a change.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Melanie H. Unser', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Melanie Hastings Unser



**TESTIMONY ON HB 1238**  
**HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE**  
**January 21, 2025**  
**By: Ann Ellefson, Director of Academic Support**  
**North Dakota Department of Public Instruction**

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Vice Chair Schrieber-Beck and Members of the Committee:

My name is Ann Ellefson, Director of Academic Support with the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI). I am here to provide informational testimony, on behalf of the department, regarding the department's collaborative partnership with the North Dakota Educational Hub and its connection to the teacher licensure process.

The North Dakota Educational Hub is an online platform that contains a variety of professional development, training opportunities, and educator resources in one centralized, easy-to-access online location. The online location is at [my.ndeducationalhub.org](https://my.ndeducationalhub.org). With initial planning beginning in 2021, today's Educational Hub is a product of collaborative partnerships between the NDDPI, each of the six North Dakota Regional Education Associations, and other state agency partners. NDDPI has prioritized its discretionary Title II funds to provide access to the Educational Hub at no cost for North Dakota educators as well as other school officials participating in training or coursework. The department has been successful

in its initial vision of providing access to no-cost professional development to all zip codes across the state.

The North Dakota Educational Hub hosts professional development and continuing education courses through synchronous, asynchronous, and hybrid delivery models. Education personnel are able to participate in this professional development through models that work best for each individual and with flexible access regarding time. Additionally, many courses on the Hub are available for college credit, providing an easy route to educator license renewal. The course structure provides opportunities for school improvement, role-focused training, life-long learning for areas of development or interest, and even coursework to assist in meeting state or federal requirements.

All courses within the Hub are offered at low- or no-cost for educators. Some entities charge a nominal cost for a course (\$40 registration), which goes directly to the course developer to assist with implementation, oversight, and future course refinement. When offered for college credit, a standardized price has also been negotiated with Valley City State University to assist with the cost of course transcriptions and documenting continuing education credits. It is important to note the Educational Hub also has the ability to provide transcript documentation regarding course completion, even if college credit is not pursued. The ability of the ND Educational Hub to document and transcript individual learning has been a well-

utilized component. For instance, when schools are required to report staff Science of Reading training status, this information is easily available through the Educational Hub. In neighboring states that have structures similar to the Educational Hub, the requirement of a university transcript for teacher licensure has been eliminated and ongoing professional development is documented through their state-provided learning management system.

Since the North Dakota Educational Hub launched, we have had over 4,000 unique users within the system; currently, there are 557 active users pursuing courses. As of today there are a total of 68 courses open for enrollment within the North Dakota Educational Hub. There are a variety of topics for all education personnel, including child nutrition, North Dakota Native American studies, the science of reading, teacher and paraprofessional supports, mathematics, educator ethics, topical book studies, and specialized courses provided by the Regional Education Associations.

Access to the North Dakota Educational Hub provides a system that allows the state and our partners to proactively provide professional development and training on important topics or rising issues in an expedited manner to all four corners of North Dakota.

Madam Vice-Chair and Members of the Committee, this concludes my testimony. I stand for any questions.

Dear Sir or Madam:

I have had the privilege of being an educator for 12 years, all in the state of North Dakota. Throughout my young, but determined career, I have retained my masters of education and most recently, my doctorate. While I have chosen this path for myself, I understand the pressing issues of continuing education credits. Keeping a license updated with personal finances is as struggle for most, as we know that the pay rate for teachers is drastically undercut and underappreciated in most areas.

I believe that moving the lifetime license to 20 years instead of 30, would help increase the state of North Dakota to not only retain but bring in educators that are wanting to stay within the field. Not only will it help in that aspect, but it will allow those of us who have higher degrees in the field to sustain our financials and not constantly worry about what other credits we need to complete, regardless of the fact that we are highly educated.

We are in a critical teacher shortage and by lowering the lifetime license to 20 years, we would be able to sustain teachers for longer. I urge you to consider the positive, rather than negative outcomes of passing this bill. I am in high favor, not just for myself, but for my fellow colleagues.

I thank you for your consideration.

Dr. Margaret Hilbers

Watford City, North Dakota

# 2025 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

## Education Committee Coteau AB Room, State Capitol

HB 1238  
1/22/2025

Relating to the reporting requirements for a lifetime teaching license.
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3:38 p.m. Chairman Heinert called the hearing to order.

Members Present: Chairman Heinert, Vice Chairman Schreiber- Beck, Representatives, Conmy, Hager, Hatlestad, Hauck, Heilman, Jonas, Longmuir, Maki, Marchall, Morton, Novak, Osowski

### Discussion Topics:

- Committee Action

3:39 p.m. Representative Jonas moved a Do Pass.

3:39 p.m. Representative Conmy seconded the motion.

Representatives	Vote
Representative Pat D. Heinert	Y
Representative Cynthia Schreiber-Beck	Y
Representative Liz Conmy	Y
Representative LaurieBeth Hager	Y
Representative Patrick R. Hatlestad	Y
Representative Dori Hauck	Y
Representative Matthew Heilman	Y
Representative Jim Jonas	Y
Representative Donald W. Longmuir	Y
Representative Roger A. Maki	Y
Representative Andrew Marschall	Y
Representative Desiree Morton	Y
Representative Anna S. Novak	Y
Representative Doug Osowski	Y

Motion carried: 14-0-0

Bill carrier: Representative Hager

3:45 p.m. Chairman Heinert adjourned the meeting.

*Leah Kuball, Committee Clerk*

**REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE**  
**HB 1238 ([25.0477.01000](#))**

**Education Committee (Rep. Heinert, Chairman)** recommends **DO PASS** (14 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). HB 1238 was placed on the Eleventh order on the calendar.

**2025 SENATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**

**HB 1238**

# 2025 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

## Workforce Development Committee Fort Lincoln Room, State Capitol

HB 1238  
3/6/2025

A BILL for an Act to amend and reenact section 15.1-13-12.1 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to the reporting requirements for a lifetime teaching license.

9:00 a.m. Chairman Wobbema called the meeting to order.

Members Present: Chairman Wobbema, Vice-Chairman Axtman, Senator Boschee, Senator Larson, Senator Powers.

### **Discussion Topics:**

- Licensing Process Costs
- Disciplinary Actions
- Experience Requirement
- Title 2 School Funding

9:00 a.m. Representative Zach Ista introduced the bill and submitted testimony in favor #39123 and #39201.

9:20 a.m. Nick Archuleta, President of ND United, testified in favor and submitted testimony #38960.

9:24 a.m. Kevin Hoherz, North Dakota Council of Educational Leaders, testified in favor.

9:29 a.m. Joseph A. Drumm, Vice President of Grand Forks Education Association, testified in favor and submitted testimony #38890.

9:33 a.m. Rebecca Pitkin, Executive Director of Education Standards and Practices Board, testified in opposition and submitted testimony #39091.

9:41 a.m. Ann M. Ellefson, Director of Academic Support NDDPI, testified in neutral and submitted testimony #39156.

### **Additional written testimony:**

Kimberly J. Rensch submitted written testimony in favor #38693.

Melissa Buchhop submitted written testimony in favor #38703.

Brenda A. Seehafer, Rolla Teacher, submitted written testimony in favor #38782.

Matthew Liebel submitted written testimony in favor #38881.

Alexis Rasset, Special Education Teacher Mandan Public Schools, submitted written testimony in favor #38951.



Jennifer J. Hammami submitted written testimony in favor #39113.

Cory Steiner, Superintendent and Chair of Northern Cass and Education Standards and Practices Board, submitted written testimony in opposition #39087.

9:47 a.m. Chairman Wobbema closed the hearing.

*Andrew Ficek, Committee Clerk*

Dear House Education Committee Members,

I am writing today in support of HB 1238. Thank you for considering this bill. As a veteran teacher with 24 years of experience, I look forward to the opportunity to have one less detail to attend to. Every new school year brings with it a large to do list, mostly due to new initiatives, new technology tools to learn, new policies to be accustomed to, and the list goes on. At my age (and the age that many teachers would reach this proposed licensure milestone), many teachers are also caring for children and even their elderly parents. There are so many details to keep track of that having one less thing to worry about would bring a measure of peace to the people entrusted to educate the next generation. Earning the opportunity to hold lifetime licensure would be a better than a "20" pin or paperweight that many in the private sector receive to commemorate twenty years of experience.

I encourage you all to vote in favor of HB 1238.

Thank you!

Kim Rensch, Fargo Public Schools

Fargo/Cass County District 11

Members of the Senate Workforce and Development Committee,

My name is Melissa Buchhop and I am a 4th grade teacher in Grand Forks. I urge a Do Pass of HB 1238. At a time when recruitment and retention of teachers is so difficult, this bill is an excellent opportunity to address retention issues as it recognizes the dedication of long-term educators and helps to relieve this financial burden to teachers . Currently teachers have to pay for 6 semester credits every 5 years to keep their teaching license, with the opportunity of buying a lifetime license at 30 years. Having a 20 year lifetime license saves teachers the expense of buying two more licenses as well as not having to buy 12 more semester credits.

Lowering the lifetime license will not stop teachers from keeping up to date with education. Professional development days are part of the teacher contracted school year. So teachers will still be continuing their education; they just won't have to pay for credit hours and a new license. HB 1238 is one way of showing appreciation for all teachers do and is an incentive to continue their teaching career in North Dakota.

Thank you for considering this step in supporting our teachers.

Sincerely,  
Melissa Buchhop

Members of the Senate Workforce Development Committee,

I am Brenda Seehafer, an elementary Title I reading and math teacher from Rolla, ND. I am asking for your support on HB 1238, the Lifetime Teacher Licensure Bill.

I feel that it is time to allow teachers to obtain a lifetime license after twenty years of teaching in the state of North Dakota. Teaching is a profession that has been dwindling in numbers of people entering it over the last years. Not only aren't people going into the education profession, but then when they do enter it, they leave after short periods of time. This bill can help the issue of teacher retention as it would become an incentive for educators who want to continue their careers in North Dakota; this would help in the areas of recruitment and retention. Lowering the threshold of lifetime license to twenty years acknowledges the dedication and expertise of North Dakota educators by offering them well-deserved recognition earlier in their careers. Lifetime licensure after twenty years also reduces the burden of periodic renewals, enabling teachers to concentrate more on their students and less on administrative tasks; isn't that where we want the focus of our teachers to be, working with and preparing our students for a successful future? Teachers wear various hats and serve in many different roles daily with their students. They need to be given the recognition they deserve sooner, as this will show the importance of the teaching profession.

We have the Education Standards and Practices Board that would still retain the authority to take action against a lifetime license if necessary ensuring that professional standards are upheld. This Board ensures that professional standards are upheld by teachers, which would continue with this licensure change.

Please support HB 1238 by lowering a lifetime teacher license to twenty years to show your support of the dedication and expertise of North Dakota teachers. Help teachers recruit and retain fellow educators to this wonderful, fulfilling profession by recognizing them after twenty years in their careers with a lifetime license.

Chairman Wobbema and Members of the Senate Workforce Development Committee,

My name is Matt Liebel, and I am writing in **strong support of HB 1238**, which seeks to reduce the number of years required for a lifetime teacher license from 30 years to 20 years. This legislation is a critical step in supporting and strengthening North Dakota's educator workforce.

As our state faces ongoing teacher shortages, it is essential that we recognize and retain the dedicated professionals who have committed decades of service to our schools. By adjusting the requirement to 20 years, we are not diminishing the value of experience but rather acknowledging the evolving landscape of education, where burnout and early retirements have become more prevalent.

A lifetime license at the 20-year mark serves multiple benefits:

- **Retention & Morale:** Many teachers dedicate their entire careers to North Dakota's students but leave the profession early due to growing challenges. This bill provides an incentive for educators to remain in the field longer, knowing they will be recognized and supported.
- **Workforce Stability:** Allowing teachers to secure a lifetime license earlier can encourage experienced educators to stay engaged in mentoring roles, leadership positions, and part-time teaching opportunities, rather than leaving the profession entirely.
- **Recruitment & Sustainability:** In a competitive job market, North Dakota must remain proactive in attracting and keeping quality teachers. A 20-year lifetime license demonstrates that we value educators' contributions and wish to reduce unnecessary bureaucratic barriers.

Two years ago, this bill narrowly failed on a tied 23-23 vote. However, the challenges facing North Dakota schools have only grown more urgent since then. Now is the time to take meaningful action to honor veteran educators and strengthen the future of our schools.

I respectfully urge you to **support HB 1238** and ensure it moves forward in the legislative process. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Matt Liebel

Williston, ND



Senator Wobbema and committee,

My name is Joe Drumm. I'm a Science Teacher of 10 years in the state of North Dakota, with experience in Williston and Grand Forks. I am active in my local union in the role of Vice President and Contract Negotiator, and am also a coach and advisor on a plethora of committees. I'm submitting this testimony in support of HB 1238, the proposed reduction in the lifetime licensure from 30 years to 20 years of teaching.

This change will benefit the majority of teachers in our state, and will assist in alleviating one of the biggest barriers in our profession: the cost of recertification. Removing barriers or reducing barriers to stay in the profession can only lead to more individuals staying in our field, and the proposed bill still allows for accountability on the part of the teacher. It removes the cost (both in finances and time) of staying in the field earlier, leading to a potential mitigation of the current shortage we find ourselves in. Teaching is already a profession that is not compensated well for the amount of certification, schooling and daily work that is required. The proposed bill moves the state of North Dakota in the direction of being more equitable and fair to our educators.

At this point in my career, 30 years feels far too long to demonstrate that I'm an effective teacher 'worthy' of not needing to pay for my license to renew. By reducing the time required, a clear signal is sent to the educators of our state that lawmakers are working to address barriers to our profession. It costs the state very little to enact this legislation, and the money teachers would keep can be further invested into the rising cost of living the entire country is dealing with today.

I strongly encourage you to reach out to other educators and get their opinion on this matter, as I'm certain the vast majority are in favor of this legislation. I'm willing and able to provide in person testimony in order to further clarify the positive impact this bill will have.

In closing, this bill is good for Teachers, School Districts and students in our state.

Thank you for your consideration and time,

Joe Drumm

## Testimony in Support of House Bill 1238 - Lifetime Teaching License

Chairperson and distinguished members of the committee,

I am writing to you today in strong support of House Bill 1238, which proposes the establishment of a lifetime teaching license for educators with twenty years of dedicated service. This bill represents a significant step towards recognizing and valuing the commitment of our experienced teachers.

For two decades, these educators have poured their hearts and minds into shaping the future of our state. They have navigated countless curriculum changes, adapted to evolving technologies, and most importantly, they have invested in the lives of generations of students. This bill acknowledges their unwavering dedication and the wealth of knowledge they have accumulated.

A lifetime license would offer several key benefits:

- **Recognition and Retention:** It sends a powerful message that we value our experienced teachers and their contributions. This recognition can boost morale and encourage them to continue serving our students.
- **Reduced Administrative Burden:** Eliminating the need for repeated license renewals would free up valuable time for teachers to focus on what they do best: teaching. It also reduces administrative costs for school districts.
- **Stability and Continuity:** Experienced teachers provide stability and continuity within our schools. A lifetime license would encourage them to remain in the profession, benefiting students with their accumulated expertise.
- **Focus on Professional Development:** This change will allow for the focus to shift from license renewal requirements to meaningful professional development that enhances teaching skills and student outcomes.
- 

It is important to emphasize that this bill does not diminish the importance of ongoing professional development. Experienced teachers remain committed to continuous learning, and schools will continue to provide opportunities for growth.

By passing House Bill 1238, we demonstrate our commitment to supporting our dedicated educators and ensuring that our students have access to the best possible education. I urge you to vote in favor of this important legislation.

Thank you.

Alexis Rasset



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*Great Public Schools**Great Public Service*

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**Testimony Before the Senate Workforce Development Committee  
HB 1238  
Thursday, March 6, 2025**

Chairman Wobbema and members of the Committee, I am Nick Archuleta, ND United president, and I am here today in support of North Dakota's long-time teaching professionals, and to encourage a ***do pass*** recommendation for HB 1238.

Mr. Chairman, over the course of the last decade, the North Dakota legislature has worked with the North Dakota Education Standards and Practices Board to implement alternative pathways to teacher licensure, different than the traditional pathway that generations of teachers navigated to become education professionals. This was done, of course, to mitigate the effects of the ongoing teacher shortage. The persistent shortage of teachers has meant many communities have had to scramble to meet the needs of their districts. Many districts have even turned to hiring foreign national teachers to fill their open positions. While these teachers are qualified and fulfill a need in many communities, we believe that recruiting, retaining, and respecting teachers here is the best way to meet our needs in the long-term.

Through it all, a resolute cadre of North Dakota teachers has persisted and dedicated themselves to teach and inspire learners in every corner of the state despite seeing new colleagues entering the profession with provisional or alternative licenses or permits. In short, Chairman Wobbema and members of the Committee, ND has made every effort to accommodate the facilitation of newly licensed and permitted teachers while doing little for those teachers who have stayed true to the course through thick and thin.

Mr. Chairman, HB 1238 provides the opportunity to genuinely appreciate these teachers by lowering the number of years one must teach to be eligible for a lifetime license from 30 years to 20 years. You may hear opposition testimony expressing concern that if teachers earn lifetime licensure, they will quit taking courses and earning credits that, without



lifetime licensure, they would have otherwise taken and earned. Not only is that argument a slight to the professionalism of teachers, but it also discounts entirely the fact that teachers, regardless of the type of license they hold, have to take coursework to make lane changes and advance on the salary schedule. Additionally, teachers complete many hours of meaningful state and district mandated professional development. That said, the teachers I know engage in unmandated professional development simply because they want to continually improve their practice for the benefit of their students and profession.

Chairman Wobbema and members of the Committee, please stand up for teachers, please show them that their dedication to the students of North Dakota is appreciated, and please give a ***do pass*** recommendation to HB 1238.

This concludes my testimony and I am happy to stand for any questions.

**Testimony of Dr. Cory Steiner**  
**Northern Cass Superintendent**  
**HB 1238**  
**Senate Workforce Development Committee**  
**Thursday, March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025**

Good morning, Chairman Wobbema and members of the committee, my name is Dr. Cory Steiner, and I am the Superintendent of the Northern Cass School District. I'm also in my second term as a representative on the Education Standards and Practices Board (ESPB). I speak in opposition to HB1238 which proposes lifetime licenses for teachers who have been teaching for 20 years instead of the 30 years currently, as required in administrative rules.

ESPB has continued to engage in conversation related to this topic since last session. Throughout these conversations, one thing has remained constant. The Board has been reluctant to change to the current 30-year license. However, the Board understand compromise is important and has reconsidered its position. The Board would ask for this committee to consider an amendment making the lifetime license available at 25 years. The board has based their decision on the following reasons:

1. ESPB needs to continue to require self-reporting on renewals. Since my time on the board, we have seen an increase in the need for special meetings to address significant concerns/issues related to the behavior of practicing educators. An educator would have a significant amount of time remaining in their career where they would not be required to self-report infractions. It would take away a check which has proven vital to ensuring learners receive the education they deserve.
2. ESPB is currently in the administrative rules process, adding specificity relating to boundary violations in the ethics section of administrative rules. The discussion on this area has been robust and done so with a sense of urgency. The removal of the checks would contradict these efforts.
3. I do not know of any 'four-year college' profession which does not require formal learning to continue throughout the entirety of their career. By not requiring further education, I believe we are conflict with the work being done in the state to lift 'up' the field of education.
4. There are many requirements for professional learning at the district level. Districts can work with educators to assist them in making these learning experiences credit-bearing and cost-efficient. This would allow for local control to be practiced.
5. We live in a world which is changing at an exponential rate. Whether it is the Science of Reading or now the Science of Math, we are learning more about learners than ever before. With that knowledge requires us to do more. Professional learning is the catalyst to change our system when necessary. I fully understand that simply offering learning does not mean there will be significant change. However, I do know nothing of significance changes without education and new learning.
6. If cost is a concern, the state of North Dakota has put into place many credits which can be earned at no cost to the educator. The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction

(ND DPI) has done excellent work with the Education Hub. The various educational entities throughout the state can and should find a long-term solution for a low or no cost solution to professional learning.

There is no doubt we are facing a crisis in terms of not having enough teachers. However, we are also facing a similar crisis with librarians, school counselors, and administrators. The bill does not address those positions. If this bill is about benefitting those who work with learners in the field of education, it must include all educational careers which have requirements for continuing education.

Governor Doug Burgum engaged in a Retention and Recruitment Task Force, whose recommendations have already been part of some of the proposals and discussions during this legislative session. There was no recommendation from the committee for less professional development for teachers. Instead, multiple other recommendations for legislators to consider this session were suggested, all of which would directly benefit educators at a more impactful level.

In my opinion, I believe the intention of HB1238 is admirable. It is necessary to find ways to support teachers, especially those who commit their career to this noble field. We must find ways to ensure educators feel valued. However, I believe the unintended consequences far outweigh the potential benefits. We must continue to celebrate teaching and the field of education as not less than other fields, but equal to all other fields. I worry this bill will reinforce the negative public perception that currently exists.

I ask for this committee to recommend a 'do not pass' vote. In addition, I ask for the consideration of an amendment for a lifetime license to be issued after 25 years of service. Finally, because I believe this conversation is important, I ask you to challenge key stakeholder groups to work together to find a solution which embraces successful longevity in teaching while also maintaining the highest levels of learning and safety in our districts. Teachers are the foundation of our educational system, and we must have a comprehensive and impactful plan to support them now and in the future.



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Testimony House Bill 1238  
Senate Workforce Development Committee  
March 6, 2025  
Education Standards and Practices Board

Good morning, Chairman Wobbema 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 represent our Board in opposition to HB1238, which proposes lifetime licenses for teachers who have been teaching for 20 years, instead of the 30 years currently in administrative rules. Although seemingly arbitrary, the 30-year license originates from the time frame when educators had to meet the rule of 80 to retire, and this generally occurred around the 30 years of teaching mark. Changing a 30-year license to a 20-year license eliminates ten years or more of an educator's career when they would be required to complete reeducation credits for license. Following testimony before the House Education Committee, the Board agreed they would be satisfied with an individual receiving a life license at 25 years, thus removing some of the factors mentioned in testimony, one specifically related to cost. Representative Ista noted in his testimony before the House Education Committee that requirements for attorneys were not removed but were reduced and perhaps this is a direction to pursue. In addition, the office staff is committed to investigating low cost and no cost continuing education options-recognizing that as an occupational board which licenses educators, continuing education is a must. Meaningful professional development done in a district should count for reeducation for license renewal as ESPB allows educators to determine the professional development they need. The Board appreciates the efforts made by Representative Ista since last session to address the reporting concerns as the safety of our students is a Board priority.

The Board has continued to meet regarding this topic since last session. A summary of the Board's views on this topic was discussed in July 2024, and the Board most recently concluded a life license at 25 years may be a compromise. The Board holds the following beliefs:

1. ESPB needs to continue to require self-reporting on renewals, particularly considering a recent increase in special meetings to address boundary violations. This has been addressed in the bill.

2. Lowering the requirements of ongoing education for teachers does not promote the profession and all occupational boards require continuing education in some form. To my knowledge, and evidenced by occupational board testimony this session, there is no other occupational board that gives a 30-year license, and the Boards require continuing education the lifetime of the license.
3. Given the recent reading requirements, and now HB 2213—relating to the science of math—as well as increased changes in education, educators need to continue to engage in professional development, as do all occupational board licensees.
4. Beneficial, content specific professional development credits are readily available in all formats. North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) provides numerous professional development opportunities to assist and support schools as well as the NDHub and NDUnited.
5. Educators should use their district mandated professional development for license renewal.

In the past 10 years, education has seen dramatic changes in areas such as technology integrations, remote learning, the impact of social media on students, trauma and mental health of students, and changing ways of assessment to name a few. In addition, the public perception of teaching has been impacted negatively.

A recent survey of state teacher licensing boards indicates 83% require professional development courses to renew a license or certificate until the end of a teacher's career. Teachers are the model of life-long learning that we constantly advocate for our students. Teachers do need to be rewarded for their work and commitment to our students. Perhaps a compromise can be reached which would benefit both the Board's commitment to ongoing professional development and would require the ESPB staff to explore low cost and no cost professional development options, as this work has already begun.

This concludes my testimony. I stand for any questions.

Rebecca Pitkin, PhD

[rpitkin@nd.gov](mailto:rpitkin@nd.gov)

701.328.9646

March 5, 2025

Dear Senator Clemens,

I am a resident of West Fargo in District 16 and a proud supporter who voted for you. As a 24-year veteran teacher in North Dakota, I am writing to express my strong endorsement of House Bill 1238.

While I could elaborate on the many reasons educators across the state likely support this bill, my appeal is rooted in a simple yet compelling truth: veteran teachers deserve this recognition. For over two decades, I have dedicated my career to educating and serving the youth of North Dakota. It has been a labor of love—coaching for 18 years, advising numerous extracurricular activities, including leading over 400 students annually to Washington, D.C. through the Close Up program, and contributing to countless school committees.

This bill represents an opportunity for the state to demonstrate its appreciation for the tireless efforts of teachers like me who have committed their lives to enriching our communities and shaping the next generation. Our salaries alone do not reflect the value of this service, making legislative support such as House Bill 1238 all the more meaningful.

I respectfully urge you to recommend a "DO PASS" on House Bill 1238, affirming your commitment to the educators who play a vital role in the lives of North Dakota's students. Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Hammami  
West Fargo Public Schools



# North Dakota House of Representatives

STATE CAPITOL  
600 EAST BOULEVARD  
BISMARCK, ND 58505-0360



## Representative Zachary Ista

District 43  
3850 15th Avenue South  
Grand Forks, ND 58201-3727  
[zmista@ndlegis.gov](mailto:zmista@ndlegis.gov)

**Minority Leader**  
**COMMITTEES:**  
Finance and Taxation

March 6, 2025

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Senate Workforce Development Committee:

For the record, I'm Rep. Zac Ista from District 43 in Grand Forks.

This session, two of our top priorities are lowering costs for our citizens and, as your committee is focused on especially, enacting policies to recruit and retain talented workforce. HB 1238 helps achieve both priorities. By making educators eligible for a lifetime teaching license after 20 years in the profession (rather than the current 30-year benchmark), the bill will cut costs and red tape for teachers while incentivizing them to remain in the classroom.

For returning Senators, this bill will look familiar. You saw it last session as HB 1329, which, after passing overwhelmingly in the House, failed on a tied floor vote in the Senate. As you'll see from the strong support of those behind me and who have submitted testimony online, this bill certainly warrants another run at becoming law--and it is well on its way after passing in the House with 79 votes.

The concept of a lifetime teaching license is not new in North Dakota; it's been in place since 2001 for those teachers who have been in the classroom at least 30 years. Since 2011, over 2,600 educators have earned a lifetime teaching license, with over 250 new lifetime licensees in just the last two years. This strong and sustained interest in a lifetime teaching license is a testament to the enduring popularity of this option.

HB 1238 seeks to expand the pool of eligible teachers by changing the threshold for eligibility from 30 years to 20 years. This would allow more teachers in the prime of their careers to qualify, as opposed to current law that issues the lifetime license closer to the end of an average teaching career. In a time of increased concern about teacher recruitment and retention, we should be doing everything we reasonably can to keep our best teachers in the classrooms, and HB 1238 moves the needle in the right direction towards this goal.

The primary way it does this is by reducing the financial and time burden on teachers by eliminating two license renewal periods between years 20 and 30 of their careers. Under current law, teachers must renew their license every 5 years (after an initial 2-year licensure period at the beginning of their careers) with the Educational Standards and Practices Board. The license renewal fee is now \$140 (up from \$130 in 2023). By the time a teacher reaches lifetime license eligibility under current law, he or she will have paid nearly \$1,000 in license fees alone.

In addition, educators must also complete a minimum of 6 semester hours of re-education within their 5-year license period. Teachers typically take these college-level courses in the evenings, on weekends, or in the summer. The coursework is time-consuming, with each semester hour requiring multiple actual hours of work to complete. According to practitioners, teachers spend up to 180 hours completing these courses during each renewal period.

These courses typically are not free. Instead, teachers incur significant out-of-pocket costs to complete them, with each credit hour averaging \$50 plus fees. This equates to at least \$300 in course costs on top of the \$140 license fee each renewal period. In total, by the time a teacher reaches lifetime license eligibility after 30 years, he or she may have spent upwards of \$3,000 on the licensing process alone.

To the ESPB's credit, it is taking proactive steps towards reducing the cost of continuing education courses, which I anticipate it will describe in more detail in its own testimony regarding HB 1238. To further that effort, the Board requested an amendment (25.0477.01001) that would put in Century Code language requiring the Board to continue the work it is already doing towards making low and no-cost continuing education credits available for educators. I greatly appreciate the Board's outreach on this issue, and I would consider the amendment to be a friendly one if adopted by this Committee.

The language in the amendment, however, is a supplement, not a replacement, for the lifetime license threshold that is the main thrust of the bill. Changing that threshold to 20 years would eliminate two renewal cycles for qualified educators. With license fees and course costs/fees, this could easily save the average educator around \$1,000 in out-of-pocket costs, plus a substantial number of hours spent completing the re-education credits. As you'll hear from those in support of this bill, this is a modest but meaningful incentive for educators who, after 20 years of service, have proven themselves to be exactly the type of people we need to retain.

But does removing two renewal cycles risk teachers falling behind on the latest best practices in their field or, worse, risk potentially dangerous teachers (like those who committed a serious crime) staying in the classroom? The answer to these questions, I believe, is a resounding no.

On that first question, teachers are themselves lifelong learners, living the same value they hope to instill in their students. Even by changing the lifetime license threshold to 20 years, teachers will still have to navigate at least 4 renewal cycles before becoming eligible. That means nearly 25 semester hours of re-education courses, which requires hundreds of actual hours of educator work. This is above and beyond the annual professional development mandated by Century Code and school district contracts that every licensed educator engages in each year. Nothing in HB 1238 changes or removes that ongoing professional development, nor does it prevent school districts from requiring or incentivizing additional professional development if they choose. We know many districts already condition pay increases on educators obtaining advanced degrees or hitting certain amounts of credit hours of higher education coursework. This bill would not disrupt the option districts have to do that. Put plainly, veteran teachers will continue to grow in the profession if this bill becomes law.

The bill likewise will not risk teachers being allowed to continue in the profession after committing a disqualifying boundary violation. It's true that one part of the license renewal process now is for teachers to self-report potential misconduct or violations of their professional code of conduct (*e.g.*, criminal convictions, adverse employment action, or license discipline in another jurisdiction). When it receives reports of misconduct, the ESPB is empowered to take remedial action. Most often, that action is only minor (like a teacher being required to take an ethics course), but it can be license suspension or revocation.

When we considered this bill in 2023, the opposition from the ESPB centered on its concern about a new 10-year period in which educators would not be self-reporting potential license violations to the Board. This bill takes those concerns seriously and, in a change from 2023, now includes language (starting on page 1, line 13, of the .01000 version) specifically authorizing ESPB to continue requiring reports from lifetime licensees every five years on whether such persons have violated a criminal statute or need to disclose any other information that could result in license suspension or revocation. The language in line 16 makes clear that this must be done at no financial cost to the licensee, as reducing out-of-pocket costs remains a motivating goal of this legislation. Likewise, the intent of this language is for it to create a very minimal burden on current and future lifetime licensees, with the contemplation being that they would simply check a box (or some similar mechanism devised



by the Board) every 5 years attesting to the lack of any relevant boundary violations since their last reporting period (with more follow-up to the Board required if the licensee needs to disclose a violation).

In addition to this proposed new express authority, lifetime licensees remain subject to the state's Code of Professional Conduct for Educators (found in Title 67.1 of the Administrative Code), a violation of which "constitutes grounds for disciplinary action which includes the issuance of a warning or reprimand or both, suspension or revocation of the license of the affected educator, or other appropriate discipline conduct." As with professional development requirements, nothing in HB 1238 prevents local school districts from requiring more frequent disclosure of misconduct, and the Board certainly can and does monitor media reports for the most egregious criminal conduct. Moreover, members of the public may make a "Request for Inquiry" into any licensed educator for suspected violated of Century Code or the Code of Professional Conduct by filling out a form available online through ESPB's website. Additionally, the Senate this session already unanimously passed SB 2043, which would require immediate license revocation for teachers convicted of the most heinous crimes. That bill, the existing safeguards I've outlined, and the new authority set forth in HB 1238 provide strong assurances that lifetime licensees will not evade appropriate professional consequences if their conduct falls short of the important safety standards we have in place for our schools and students.

In conclusion, HB 1238 will provide our state's education workforce with a meaningful incentive to stay in the classroom. It recognizes that, after 20 years of high-caliber teaching, educators have proven their qualifications and abilities to the students, parents, administrators, and colleagues in their schools. And it provides an appropriate balance that ensures our schools and licensing regime continue to have student safety and achievement front of mind. Let's help lower out-of-pocket costs for teachers and move the ball down the field in our efforts to retain our skilled workers. I respectfully urge a DO PASS recommendation for HB 1238, and I will stand for any questions.

**TESTIMONY ON HB 1238  
SENATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

**March 6, 2025**

**By: Ann Ellefson, Director of Academic Support  
North Dakota Department of Public Instruction**

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Chair Wobbema and Members of the Committee:

My name is Ann Ellefson, Director of Academic Support with the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI). I am here to provide informational testimony, on behalf of the department, regarding the department's collaborative partnership with the North Dakota Educational Hub and its connection to the teacher licensure process.

The North Dakota Educational Hub is an online platform that contains a variety of professional development, training opportunities, and educator resources in one centralized, easy-to-access online location. The online location is at [my.ndeducationalhub.org](https://my.ndeducationalhub.org). With initial planning beginning in 2021, today's Educational Hub is a product of collaborative partnerships between the NDDPI, each of the six North Dakota Regional Education Associations, and other state agency partners. NDDPI has prioritized its discretionary Title II funds to provide access to the Educational Hub at no cost for North Dakota educators as well as other school officials participating in training or coursework. The department has been successful

in its initial vision of providing access to no-cost professional development to all zip codes across the state.

The North Dakota Educational Hub hosts professional development and continuing education courses through synchronous, asynchronous, and hybrid delivery models. Education personnel are able to participate in this professional development through models that work best for each individual and with flexible access regarding time. Additionally, many courses on the Hub are available for college credit, providing an easy route to educator license renewal. The course structure provides opportunities for school improvement, role-focused training, life-long learning for areas of development or interest, and even coursework to assist in meeting state or federal requirements.

All courses within the Hub are offered at low- or no-cost for educators. Some entities charge a nominal cost for a course (\$40 registration), which goes directly to the course developer to assist with implementation, oversight, and future course refinement. When offered for college credit, a standardized price has also been negotiated with Valley City State University to assist with the cost of course transcriptions and documenting continuing education credits. It is important to note the Educational Hub also has the ability to provide transcript documentation regarding course completion, even if college credit is not pursued. The ability of the ND Educational Hub to document and transcript individual learning has been a well-

utilized component. For instance, when schools are required to report staff Science of Reading training status, this information is easily available through the Educational Hub. In neighboring states that have structures similar to the Educational Hub, the requirement of a university transcript for teacher licensure has been eliminated and ongoing professional development is documented through their state-provided learning management system.

Since the North Dakota Educational Hub launched, we have had over 4,000 unique users within the system; currently, there are 557 active users pursuing courses. As of today there are a total of 68 courses open for enrollment within the North Dakota Educational Hub. There are a variety of topics for all education personnel, including child nutrition, North Dakota Native American studies, the science of reading, teacher and paraprofessional supports, mathematics, educator ethics, topical book studies, and specialized courses provided by the Regional Education Associations.

Access to the North Dakota Educational Hub provides a system that allows the state and our partners to proactively provide professional development and training on important topics or rising issues in an expedited manner to all four corners of North Dakota.

Chair Wobbema and Members of the Committee, this concludes my testimony. I stand for any questions.

25.0477.01001  
Title.

Prepared by the Legislative Council  
staff for Representative Ista  
February 10, 2025

Sixty-ninth  
Legislative Assembly  
of North Dakota

## PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO

### HOUSE BILL NO. 1238

Introduced by

Representatives Ista, Hager, Heinert, Jonas, Murphy, Pyle, Schreiber-Beck

Senators Axtman, Boschee, Cleary, Rummel

1 A BILL for an Act to amend and reenact ~~section~~sections 15.1-13-17 and 15.1-13-12.1 of the  
2 North Dakota Century Code, relating to the requirements for a teaching license and the  
3 reporting requirements for a lifetime teaching license.

4 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:**

5 **SECTION 1. AMENDMENT.** Section 15.1-13-17 of the North Dakota Century Code is  
6 amended and reenacted as follows:

7 **15.1-13-17. Teaching license - Requirements - Exceptions.**

- 8 1. An individual may not engage in the profession of teaching unless:
  - 9 a. The individual holds a teaching license issued by the board; or
  - 10 b. The individual is approved to teach by the board.
- 11 2. An individual may be approved to teach by the board only if the individual has  
12 previously held a North Dakota teaching certificate or license, holds a teaching  
13 certificate or license issued by another state, or has filed a completed application for  
14 licensure with the board.
- 15 3. The board shall grant a teaching license to an applicant who is a military spouse or  
16 military member who meets the requirements of section 43-51-11.1.
- 17 4. The board shall adopt rules establishing the terms and conditions under which an  
18 individual may be approved to teach, as provided for in this section. The terms and  
19 conditions may include the payment of a fine to the board in an amount not exceeding  
20 two hundred fifty dollars per incident, enrollment in and completion of continuing

1 education courses, and submission of a completed application for licensure by a date  
2 certain.

3 5. The board shall research and may provide low and no-cost continuing education  
4 courses for teachers to satisfy requirements for teaching license renewal.

5 **SECTION 2. AMENDMENT.** Section 15.1-13-12.1 of the North Dakota Century Code is  
6 amended and reenacted as follows:

7 **15.1-13-12.1. Teaching license - Lifetime licensure - Report to the board.**

8 1. If an individual has been licensed to teach in this state for a period of ~~thirty~~twenty  
9 years, the education standards and practices board shall grant the individual lifetime  
10 licensure.

11 2. Nothing in this section precludes the board from taking any action against an  
12 individual's lifetime license if the board determines that the action is warranted under  
13 this chapter.

14 3. An individual holding a lifetime license who is or intends to be employed as a teacher  
15 shall provide a report to the board at least once every five years. The report:

16 a. Must be made in the form and manner prescribed by the board.

17 b. May not cause the individual holding a lifetime license to incur any cost.

18 c. Must disclose:

19 (1) Whether the individual has violated a criminal statute since the issuance of  
20 the lifetime license or the last report; and

21 (2) Any information that may cause the individual's teaching license to be  
22 revoked or suspended.



# 2025 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

## Workforce Development Committee Fort Lincoln Room, State Capitol

HB 1238  
3/7/2025

Relating to the reporting requirements for a lifetime teaching license.
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9:14 a.m. Chairman Wobbema opened the hearing.

Members Present: Chairman Wobbema, Vice-Chairman Axtman, Senator Boschee, Senator Larson, Senator Powers.

### Discussion Topics:

- Experience Requirement

9:22 a.m. Senator Larson moved Amendment #25.0477.01002.

9:22 a.m. Senator Axtman seconded the motion.

Senators	Vote
Senator Mike Wobbema	Y
Senator Michelle Axtman	Y
Senator Josh Boschee	Y
Senator Diane Larson	Y
Senator Michelle Powers	Y

Motion Passed 5-0-0.

9:27 a.m. Senator Boschee moved Do Pass as Amended.

9:27 a.m. Senator Larson second the motion.

Senators	Vote
Senator Mike Wobbema	Y
Senator Michelle Axtman	Y
Senator Josh Boschee	Y
Senator Diane Larson	Y
Senator Michelle Powers	Y

Motion passed 5-0-0.

Senator Senator Boschee will carry the bill.

9:29 a.m. Chairman Wobbema closed the hearing.

*Andrew Ficek, Committee Clerk*

Sixty-ninth  
Legislative Assembly  
of North Dakota

**PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO**

**HOUSE BILL NO. 1238**

Introduced by

Representatives Ista, Hager, Heinert, Jonas, Murphy, Pyle, Schreiber-Beck

Senators Axtman, Boschee, Cleary, Rummel

3-7-25

JB 1 of 2

- 1 A BILL for an Act to amend and reenact section 15.1-13-12.1 of the North Dakota Century  
2 Code, relating to the reporting requirements for a lifetime teaching license.

3 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:**

4 **SECTION 1. AMENDMENT.** Section 15.1-13-12.1 of the North Dakota Century Code is  
5 amended and reenacted as follows:

6 **15.1-13-12.1. Teaching license - Lifetime licensure - Report to the board.**

- 7 1. If an individual has been licensed to teach in this state for a period of  
8 ~~thirty~~twenty-five years, the education standards and practices board shall grant  
9 the individual lifetime licensure.
- 10 2. Nothing in this section precludes the board from taking any action against an  
11 individual's lifetime license if the board determines that the action is warranted under  
12 this chapter.
- 13 3. An individual holding a lifetime license who is or intends to be employed as a teacher  
14 shall provide a report to the board at least once every five years. The report:
- 15 a. Must be made in the form and manner prescribed by the board.  
16 b. May not cause the individual holding a lifetime license to incur any cost.  
17 c. Must disclose:  
18 (1) Whether the individual has violated a criminal statute since the issuance of  
19 the lifetime license or the last report; and



- 1                   (2) Any information that may cause the individual's teaching license to be
- 2                   revoked or suspended.

**REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE  
HB 1238**

**Workforce Development Committee (Sen. Wobbema, Chairman)** recommends **AMENDMENTS** ([25.0477.01002](#)) and when so amended, recommends **DO PASS** (5 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSENT OR EXCUSED AND NOT VOTING). HB 1238 was placed on the Sixth order on the calendar. This bill affects workforce development.