

WSPTA Testimony on SHB 1139 Monday, February 25, 1:30 PM, House Appropriations Committee

Good afternoon Chair Ormsby and members of the committee.

Thank you for hearing this bill today.

I am Robin Zaback, representing the Washington state PTA, in support of substitute House Bill 1139. I am also a parent and live in the ____ legislative district.

Washington state PTA adopted a position last fall to support legislation and policies that recruit and retain effective educators, develop a diverse workforce, and ensure equity and access to educator programs through:

- Funding of recruitment and conditional scholarship programs;
- Expansion of PESB-approved conditional certificates and alternative routes to certification; and
- Phased in expansion of Beginning Educator Support Team – or BEST – grants to all schools.

HB 1139 is a comprehensive approach to increasing the teacher pipeline and improving the diversity of our work force. Districts need tools like Grow your Own, loan forgiveness, resident teacher stipends, getting high school students excited about teaching, supporting beginning principals, and much more to help us build a professional corps of educators who are also as diverse as the students they teach.

And yes, to implement this approach it will cost money. But if we don't make the investments now, the gap will only widen.

It is critical to support ways that make it possible for first generation graduates, students of color and students from diverse experiences to access higher education without being deterred by the cost. This bill will help.

Please pass substitute House Bill 1139. Thank you.