

WSPTA Testimony on SHB 1599 – Assessments House Appropriations, February 25th, 1:30 PM

Good afternoon Chairman Ormsby and members of the Committee. I am Robin Zaback and I'm here today representing the Washington State PTA.

We are Other on Substitute House Bill 1599.

Since 1991, the Washington State PTA has opposed policies that would make a single test a barrier to a student's advancement and high school graduation.

We do support giving students multiple pathways to advance.

And while we appreciate the policy committee adding the two most common paths students take after high school – college and a career – from a fiscal side we are concerned that what's missing is increased academic guidance counselors and family engagement coordinators who can help students and parents understand the more than a dozen paths in this bill to earning a diploma.

We support a 24-credit diploma and high expectations for our students. After all, our vision is that every child's potential becomes a reality.

But to change a system for this year's **high school juniors** will require some major parent outreach and student advising, which means increasing funding for more counselors and family engagement staff, particularly in middle and high school just for **academic** support.

And that continues to give us pause on this approach.

Unless the legislature makes significant investments in school staffing this session to support this bill and student well-being, PTA prefers a straight delink approach, and will trust the 24-credit diploma, grades, and other methods districts are using now to help students find successful post-high school paths.