

Written Testimony for HF4415

Good Afternoon Representative Youakim and Committee members. My name is Kendra Caduff, and I am a teacher from the Farmington School district. I currently serve as President of the Farmington Education Association. I want to thank all of our legislative members for their hard work in ensuring the well-being of all of our educators, from pre-service to veteran teachers, from those licensed to our education assistants. The extraordinary efforts of all school employees to pitch in and fill the gaps for the needs of our families have been astounding and worthy of your attention to just legislation on their behalf. House File 4415 addresses many of these needs.

As part of my work as a union president, I organize professional development opportunities for my members. I also personally lead professional development trainings and have been busy this school year providing the appropriate sessions for the new cultural competency category for licensure renewal. These 8-hour trainings have been implemented over the past seven months with additional trainings planned to be offered by the end of this school year in time for our re-licensure deadline. I have had to cancel those remaining sessions, leaving numerous teachers without those opportunities, resulting in worries and stress added to their already overwhelmed lives with distance learning transitions. With an extension to the re-licensure timeline, we can adjust and still provide the appropriate trainings that we value as professionals. These competencies for license renewal should not suffer due to this unexpected, life-interrupting event of COVID-19. The addition of six months would allow us the time to continue our focus right now on educating our students in these drastically different and challenging ways and allow us the opportunity later to come together for in-person trainings, which we know is a highly effective mode for adult learning. The licensure requirements should not be viewed as just boxes to check but should be encountered in meaningful ways. Teachers who planned for these last few trainings of the year have had those opportunities taken from them. As a trainer, I need time to implement meaningful training sessions for professional growth. We need this extension to preserve the integrity of the renewal process with professional development, and it will serve to accommodate its purpose. Please consider the many merits of this bill for educators. Thank you!

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