



TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 2708

February 2nd, 2023

Chair Fahey, Vice-Chairs Breese-Iverson and Kropf, and members of the committee,

For the record, my name is Madison Walters, and I am the political liaison and lobbyist for United Food and Commercial Workers Local 555. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 2708, which would designate the first week of March as Classified School Employees Week.

UFCW Local 555 is the largest private sector labor union in Oregon. Our members come from a number of industries, including grocery, retail, food processing, manufacturing, and healthcare. We are a diverse group of workers who take pride in acting as a strong collective voice for working people.

While UFCW 555 does not represent classified school employees ourselves, we are proud to stand in solidarity with OSEA in recognizing these essential workers.

Classified employees are the most diverse component of the professional education workforce and are the most reflective of the communities that they serve; and as such, are overcoming systemic barriers to access and inclusion, both in the workplace and in their daily lives. They work directly with all students throughout each school day, and they share responsibility for the daily care, human connection, transportation and nutrition of our children, as well as the maintenance of school property.

Our members rely on classified school workers to support their children, and support the academic, mental, emotional, social, behavioral, physical, and communication needs of all Oregon's students from early childhood learning and K-12, through community college.

Designating the first week of March as "Classified School Employees Week" is the least we can do to recognize the impact these workers have on our lives, and will go a long way towards generating awareness and appreciation of these workers.

We must do all we can to recognize the vital work that classified school employees perform. I urge your aye vote on HB 2708.

UNITED FOOD & COMMERCIAL WORKERS LOCAL 555

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