

February 22, 2023

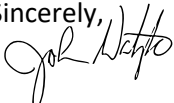
TO: House Committee on Education

RE: Support of HB2609

The School of Education at the University of Portland (UP) supports HB2609 and believes the fees assessed to Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs) in the state of Oregon outlined in SB129 are detrimental. EPP concerns and points of opposition have been presented in the public comments and communications from OACTE and OAICU. However, I would like to highlight the growing financial impact on individuals wishing to become a teacher as an obstacle to ensuring a diverse and sustainable teacher workforce.

Based on the number of annual teacher candidates graduating from UP and the proposed fees, we estimate an additional \$20,000 in direct expense to our teacher education programing budget, or approximately 20% of this budget. Given lowering enrollments and decreasing revenue, these costs would need to be passed on to students as program fees. Students already pay for subject-specific testing, finger printing, and performance-based national testing. Given these newly proposed fees, teacher candidates can expect to pay out-of-pocket over \$1,200 in addition to tuition and other costs associated with university enrollment. These additional fees come at a time when teacher candidate are student teaching and cannot work for supplemental income, thus creating an additional financial hardship.

We believe the fee structures SB129 create yet another barrier for individuals seeking to become teachers at a time when critical teacher shortages exist. It will hit hardest the students with the most financial need and students of color. We, therefore, support HB2609.

Sincerely,


John Watzke
Dean of the School of Education
Dean of the University Graduate School