

Submitter: Devon Lawson-McCourt
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Education
Measure: SB1550

Honorable Members of the Senate Committee on Education,

I stand before you today as a fervent advocate for the principles of equity, solidarity, and collective empowerment, principles that are at the heart of my vision for Oregon Education. It is from this perspective that I wholeheartedly endorse Senate Bill 1550, a legislative measure that promises to fundamentally transform the landscape of education in our state, making it more responsive, centralized, and attuned to the needs of our educators and students alike.

The transfer of certain duties, functions, and powers related to teaching, administrative, and personnel licensure from the Teacher Standards and Practices Commission (TSPC) to the Department of Education (ODE) represents a significant step towards a more unified and equitable education system. By centralizing these responsibilities within the ODE, we are not merely streamlining bureaucratic processes; we are asserting the belief that education is a public good that must be managed and protected as such. This shift acknowledges the need for a cohesive strategy that can better address the disparities and challenges facing our educational system.

Moreover, the retention of the TSPC's duties related to licensure standards and licensee discipline ensures that educators continue to be held to high professional standards, a necessity for maintaining the quality of education. This balance between centralization for efficiency and specialization for quality safeguards is a model of governance that aligns with socialist values of efficiency, equity, and accountability.

The directive for the ODE to establish the Educator Advancement Council is another aspect of this bill that deserves our full support. This Council has the potential to become a powerful vehicle for professional development, ensuring that educators are not only qualified but also continually learning and growing in their profession. This focus on ongoing advancement is essential for building a teaching workforce that is dynamic, informed, and capable of adapting to the ever-changing needs of our students.

The declaration of an emergency and the immediate effectiveness of this bill underscore the urgency of the issues at hand. Our education system is at a crossroads, and the need for decisive action has never been more apparent. By passing SB 1550, we are not just enacting a piece of legislation; we are making a bold statement about the value we place on education and our commitment to the

principles of social justice and equity.

In conclusion, I urge you, esteemed legislators, to support SB 1550. This bill is a step towards a future where our education system is more equitable, efficient, and responsive to the needs of all Oregonians. It is a future that aligns with our shared values of solidarity, community, and collective empowerment. Let us seize this opportunity to create a better future for our children and our state.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Devon Lawson-McCourt
Associated Student Body Business Manager
11th Grade Class Treasurer
McKenzie River Community School