

Submitter: Zoe Diacou

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Education

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2900

As a retired Salem-Keizer teacher, I am writing to express my support for the proposal to reduce the teacher probationary period. I have had too many highly-qualified colleagues who left the profession or changed districts out of frustration with the length of the probationary period and the lack of protections that come with a contract. There are so many different stories, from someone who moved due to their spouse's work or family death bringing them to a new (or returning to an old) community, to someone escaping an abusive partner, to someone simply wanting a better life for themselves or their family members. All were forced to "start over", each and every time they changed districts. No other profession does this (even in other similarly critical professions such as healthcare and law, most probationary periods are only six months!). This provides an opportunity for Oregon to "catch up" to Washington and, together, can lead the nation in making this more equitable rather than continuing an antiquated, inefficient, ineffective system for teacher evaluation. By reducing the probationary period, teachers will have the protections that come with a contract sooner, helping them stay in the communities they serve and build stronger connections with students, families, and colleagues.