

February 23, 2025

Dear legislators,

I am writing to express my support for SB 322. I am a substitute educator and have been working in the Portland and Tigard-Tualatin school districts for the last three years. I began subbing because I had some experience and needed work, but I quickly fell in love with teaching and realizing that I had a talent for it. Unfortunately, as a restricted substitute, there is no accessible pathway for me to grow in my career in educator. For restricted substitutes who are passionate about their work and want to grow as educators, there needs to be a pathway to develop their talent and train them in the necessary skills to be great substitute teachers. While excellent teaching programs exist in the state, many restricted substitutes are professionals who have made a career change and have already accumulated significant student debt. On a substitute teacher's small wage, teaching programs are rarely a viable option. For this reason, the state needs to develop licensure pathways for restricted substitute teachers that are financially accessible, such as tuition vouchers for enrollment in local teaching programs. Enrollment in a teaching program and access to more advanced licenses would not only provide greater job security, but allow me to make an even bigger difference in students' lives and educations.

Thank you for your consideration,

Anthony Shannon-Thorn
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