

Submitter: Brittani Geniza  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Senate Committee On Education  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB717

Chair Frederick, Vice Chair Webber, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Brittani Geniza and I am an Elementary Education Major at Western Oregon University. I will be entering the Teacher Candidate program in the fall of 2025 and I am in strong support of SB717, which seeks to address financial barriers for aspiring educators and ensure mentor teachers receive fair compensation.

In my time as a college student I have been overwhelmed by passion and support for the world of education. I want nothing more than to be a teacher and to make a difference in the lives of my future students. But I am concerned about my ability to meet my financial needs during this process.

I have learned in my professional career that in order to care for others in the way I'd like to, I have to prioritize my own health and well-being at the same time. I have seen and heard from so many current educators and Teacher Candidates and have been mentally preparing myself for the hardship to come in my own Student teaching experience. I have to pay rent. I have to eat food. I have to get sleep. I have to take care of myself. But the current state of the financial barriers for aspiring educators will not suit my needs.

If nothing changes, I will be working towards my career goals from 7am-4pm Monday-Friday, working a part time retail job every weekend and some weeknights, and probably doing DoorDash too to make ends meet. And as much as I know I will do what I have to do to become a teacher, I also know this will burn me out before my career as an educator has even begun.

I am calling you to address these concerns in order to ensure that the people who are working so hard to care for the children who will make up our future are cared for too.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration.

Kind Regards,  
Brittani Geniza