

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

My name is Isabella Namuche, and I am an aspiring educator and education major at the University of Oregon. I am submitting this testimony in strong support of SB717, which seeks to address financial barriers for aspiring educators and ensure mentor teachers receive fair compensation.

Next year, I will begin my master's program at the University of California, Santa Barbara. During this time, I will not be able to work, as the program is full-time alongside full-time student teaching. I will have to take out personal and student loans in order to support my education in addition to the loans I've taken out for my undergraduate education. Without the support of my partner, who is going to work full-time to support us both while studying for the MCAT, I would not have any chances of attending this graduate program.

In addition, I know many of my peers in the education program who are taking off a year to work, as they cannot support themselves in a graduate program without working. This completely removes prospective teachers from an already suffering profession, and could prevent other students from joining. This is detrimental for the profession as a whole, and it directly impacts the Oregon educator pipeline.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Isabella Namuche

UO Aspiring Educator