

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

My name is Kaylee Osbun, a current student at Oregon State University. I am in my third year at OSU, pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Teaching with an Emphasis in Elementary Education and a minor in Human Development and Family Sciences. I am amidst a year-long practicum at an elementary school in Corvallis and am looking to a year-long student teaching experience during my 4th and final year. 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.

Once a week, I attend my placement, Letitia Carson Elementary School, to observe and provide my time in a 5th grade classroom. Already, I have experience helping students with class work, preparing materials for lessons and projects, and attending to the different needs of the students in my classroom. When it is time for me to become a student teacher, these experiences will become expectations, and more intense. Instead of once a week, I will be in the classroom multiple times a week and in a teaching role. I will be expected to lead lessons and be involved in teacher preparation, and gradually take over the classroom. I will graduate with over 700 hours of in-classroom experience while having taken upper-level courses throughout my entire school year. Without a doubt, student teaching will train me to be an equipped professional, but this experience to better my skills to support future generations comes at a cost. With so much dedication to the internship, I will be expected to take a step back from commitments, including my job.

Like myself, many aspiring teachers are prohibited from working part-time jobs. With all the responsibilities that come with being a student teacher, it makes it financially difficult, sometimes impossible to work toward becoming a teacher. As an out-of-state student who relies on my job to pay rent and take care of myself while away from home, I often worry about what will happen when I take a step back from work. Currently, I work at an office that is open from 8:00am-5:00pm. However, if I am in the classroom throughout that time, I will physically be unable to make money to support myself. I have plans to look for night jobs, but still worry because so much of my energy will be put into the classroom and my own course work. Every year, I have paid out of pocket for some of my tuition- which has been difficult. I will also be in a tough financial situation, as I am no longer eligible for a large scholarship that I have been receiving for the past three years. During the current school year, my entire paycheck (and sometimes I must pull from savings) pays for rent. I make just enough while hitting 18-20 hours per week. My hope is that I will be eligible for enough loans to attend Oregon State, but I am scared nonetheless.

With that, supporting this bill will have a positive impact on the lives of our future educators. The passing of this bill will be important for many reasons, and will show educators that their work and commitment is valued by the people they are serving.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Kaylee Osbun

*Bachelor of Science in Teaching with an Emphasis in Elementary Education, Oregon State University*

