

Submitter: Rachel Hanes

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Education

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3652

Dear Chair Neron, Vice Chairs Dobson and McIntire, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Rachel Hanes, and I am a fifth grade teacher at Glencoe Elementary School in Portland and a proud union member (OEA/PAT). I am submitting this testimony in strong support of HB 3652, which would make class size and caseloads a mandatory subject of collective bargaining in all Oregon schools.

This is my second year with a class size over 30. There are many issues with a large class size, from the difficulty navigating the crowded physical space to the difficulty giving students the individual attention they need. Last year I had a wide range of academic, behavioral and emotional needs that were extremely challenging. I became so stressed and overwhelmed that, even as a veteran teacher with 17 years under my belt, I came close to leaving the profession. I love teaching and public education is an institution that I believe in as an essential common good. More than ever, I see how important it is to teach students how to think critically and learn about the world around them.

Students deserve a teacher that has the time to adapt lessons to meet their needs, to grade their papers in a timely manner, to answer their parents emails, to review difficult concepts one on one or in small groups, and to support their learning. They deserve to be known as complex, multidimensional humans. Educators deserve to have the time and emotional bandwidth to do what they know is best for their students. They deserve a workload that allows them to not have to choose between doing all that needs to be done and having a life outside of their job.

This bill costs nothing to implement. It simply ensures that we have the right and the ability to negotiate this absolutely crucial aspect of our working conditions. This issue is consistently one of the most important to educators, students, and parents. I urge you to support HB 3652.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Rachel Hanes  
5th Grade Teacher