

Submitter: Katherine Watkins
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Education
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2900

Testimony in Support of HB2900A

I'm writing in support of HB2900A to reduce the probationary period for licensed educators in Oregon.

I've been teaching for over 25 years: three years in Yuma, Arizona; three years in Scappoose; twenty years in the Beaverton School District; and currently, I teach at Metro East Web Academy. Despite all of this experience, every time I changed districts in Oregon, I was required to start over with a full three-year probationary period. No other profession that values expertise treats its professionals this way.

Because of this policy, I would not return to a traditional district role. It's not because I don't love teaching, I do. It's because the system erases my history and my contributions every time I relocate. That isn't just disheartening; it's structurally unfair.

In nearly every other public profession: healthcare, fire services, law enforcement, probation is six to twelve months. Credentials and experience are portable. Teachers in Oregon deserve the same dignity. Instead, the current system fuels turnover and burnout, discouraging experienced educators from staying in the profession or re-entering it.

HB2900A doesn't lower expectations. It affirms that experience matters. It creates a pathway for retention, stability, and long-term investment in our schools. It would allow educators like me to continue serving students and communities without constantly starting from scratch.

Please pass HB2900A. It's time Oregon aligned its policies with its values.

Katherine Watkins
Licensed Oregon Educator