

Submitter: Sakura Hamada
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Education
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2900
Chair Frederick, Vice Chair Webber, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Sakura Hamada, and I currently serve as a school counselor with Portland Public Schools. I live in Beaverton, and I've worked in education for over seven years—including five as a certified counselor and two and a half as an educational assistant.

In that time, I've built strong relationships with students and families, led school clubs, served on professional boards, and presented at statewide conferences. I'm deeply committed to Oregon's education system and to the well-being of our students—not just at my school, but across the state.

That's why I'm writing in support of HB 2900A.

After completing my three-year probationary period in one Oregon district, I found myself needing to leave due to a toxic work environment. While that decision was necessary for my mental health and professional sustainability, the system made it even harder: I had to start the entire probationary process over again in my new district—despite being an experienced, effective school counselor.

This puts me in a more vulnerable professional position, even though I was hired for my expertise and have been embraced by my school community. Like many other educators, I'm not new to this work. I know how to implement a comprehensive, student-centered counseling program. I do not need three more years of oversight to prove my worth again.

The current system is not just inefficient—it's demoralizing. HB 2900A would allow experienced educators like me to move between districts without being penalized for doing what's right for our well-being and professional growth.

This bill doesn't eliminate accountability. It simply ensures that our experience is recognized and that we don't have to re-earn professional stability every time we take a new job within the same state.

I respectfully urge your support of HB 2900A so that educators—especially those who are already deeply embedded in their school communities—can continue to serve with dignity, stability, and the respect we've earned.

Thank you for your time and consideration.