

Representative Susan McLain
House District 29



RE: Support for House Bill 4011-1

Dear Chair Grayber, Vice Chairs Muñoz and Scharf, and Members of the Committee:

As a teacher for over 42 years, I write in support of House Bill 4011-1. This bill would provide educators and school staff with the opportunity to bargain over decisions that impact their working conditions. By including class sizes and caseloads as subjects of mandatory bargaining, we ensure there is a place at the table for critical discussions.

I have seen firsthand how class sizes affect the experience of students and educators. My hope as a teacher was always to instill students with confidence in their skills and a love for lifelong learning. At times, large class sizes limited my capacity to serve the specific needs of each student and achieve this goal. Class size directly impacts the ability of educators to do their best work and provide the safe, supportive learning environment students deserve.

I was glad to see class size become a mandatory subject of bargaining for Title 1 schools in 2021, and I believe it is time all educators have the ability to discuss conditions that affect the safety and quality of learning environments. Other workers have the right to bargain over factors that define their working conditions, and educators should not be the exception. This legislation lays the foundation for dialogue on a priority issue for students, families, and education workers. I recognize that it takes resources to reduce class sizes, and investment from the state must follow.

The -1 amendment would also include student disciplinary measures that have an effect on worker safety as an item of mandatory bargaining. I am aware that questions of constitutionality have been raised regarding this amendment. If there is no constitutional issue found after thorough review, I am supportive of HB 4011 with the -1. This bill simply ensures teachers and staff have an opportunity to advocate for safe, manageable working conditions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Susan McLain". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Representative Susan McLain