

Chairman Jones, Ranking Member Robinson and members of the House Primary and Secondary Education Committee,

As an early career educator, I am emailing you in support of HB 322, which recently had its 5th hearing on the House Primary and Secondary Education Committee.

I am a first year educator in the special education field. I focus on special education because it combines my passion for learning and helping others in an extremely rewarding career. I love seeing my students succeed and building relationships with them through quality instructional time.

As someone who recently graduated from an accredited university that implemented the EdTPA during the last year of undergraduate school, I feel that completing RESA takes valuable time away from helping my students succeed and become responsible learners. My mentorship program has not been helpful, as it focuses on passing RESA requirements rather than helping me become an educator that our children need. After already completing very similar requirements for obtaining my teaching license and bachelor's degree, I think that my time that is used for RESA can be used to build relationships with students and focus on quality instruction rather than recording specific videos and writing arbitrary answers to prompts.

Through my discussion with other new educators at my district, I have learned that I am not the only one in support of HB 322, and I am not the only one exhausted of jumping through the RESA program's hoops.

I understand that the proposed bill refocuses new educator programs around professional development and locally developed mentoring plans. My current experience with my mentor has been to prepare me for filming the videos for year 3 of the program rather than actually mentoring me and giving me helpful advice. However, this bill allows mentors to focus on authentic mentoring rather than focusing on preparing REs in years 1 & 2 for the video task in year 3. This version of the mentorship program is something that I, and all new educators, need in order to succeed.

I have heard that opponents to this bill are arguing that changing the RESA program now will confuse new educators and add more work. I assure you that removing tasks 3 & 4 would greatly decrease my workload as a new educator and allow me to focus my time and energy into something that would benefit the students that I serve each day.

If you care about supporting educators throughout this state and ensuring they have the tools and support necessary to give students a quality education, please act on this important issue!

Thank you for your consideration. Please feel free to contact me to follow up with any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Sarah Hodson