Thank you, Chair Wiggam, Vice Chair Ginter, and Ranking Member Kelly and members of the House and State and Local Government Committee, for the opportunity to testify alongside my friend Representative Rick Perales on behalf of House Bill 133, a bill that will mandate temporary license for professional occupations for Active Duty military members and their spouses.

My name is Christina Kosobud and I am married to an active duty USAF Lt. Col. We have been married for 15 years this month and we have recently relocated to our current 6th duty station together with our 12 year old son. This has been our hardest move, not only because anything with a middle schooler is challenging, but also due to the lack of reciprocity for my teaching license in the state of Ohio. Besides being a proud military spouse and mother, I am a Special Education teacher. I have my Masters with a 10 year Postgraduate Professional License, endorsed in Biology and Special Education – General Curriculum K-12 from the Common Wealth of Virginia. When we got orders to Ohio, I was quick to look up teaching positions as I love what I do. I was excited to see so many opportunities to apply for. (46 in the Dayton Consortium to be exact). I applied for a handful of positions and opened my Ohio Safe account to start the process for my Ohio teaching license. Within 2 days, I had an interview booked via Facetime and a position was offered that day as a high school intervention specialist teaching science. I was thrilled! However, it was short lived. I received word my Ohio teaching license was denied and I require 2 additional reading classes and 3 exams to qualify for my intervention specialist teaching license. Ohio does not acknowledge my qualifications to teach biology which is evident due to not recognizing national testing such as the Praxis. I took the biology praxis test and was pre-med for my undergrad. Many military spouses deal with this frustration with every move. Not only is this disheartening as a professional, but Ohio loses out on amazing talent.

I am blessed to be currently employed but I am working at a charter school (which are more forgiving on licensure) on a long-term sub license. Next year, I will work on a one year out of state license. I am unsure if I will continue on to get certified in the state of Ohio. Although I have a 10 year professional license and my Masters, Ohio requires me to do a RESA program for new teachers. This is a program similar to one I have already completed to get my 10 year professional license but my program was only 3 years instead of 4 like Ohio’s. The focus should be on our students and how we can best make them successful in the classroom and filling the 46 empty intervention specialist positions there is a need for.

Things to think about as you move forward. Military families have been around the country (and even the world) so we bring new and fresh ideas to share. Imagine having to go back to driving school and re-take your exams because you didn’t take it in the new state you are moving to. How frustrating would that be? We are excited and want to become a part of our new community, to work hard in our professions. Think of the impact for families who are close to retirement like we are. How much of a difference would my teaching licensure in the state of Ohio impact our choice to retire here?

It is this reason, among many more that I request consideration of House Bill 133. Chair Wiggam, Vice Chair Ginter, and Ranking Member Kelly and members of the House and State and Local Government Committee thank you for your time and opportunity to testify today.

States that accept National Praxis exam for biology:

Alabama

Alaska

Arkansas

Connecticut

Washington DC

Hawaii

Idaho

Iowa

Kansas

Kentucky

Louisiana

Maine

Maryland

Mississippi

Montana

Nebraska

Nevada

New Hampshire

New Jersey

North Carolina

North Dakota

Pennsylvania

Rhode Island

South Carolina

South Dakota

Tennessee

Utah

Vermont

Virginia

West Virginia

Wisconsin

Wyoming

American Samoa

Northern Mariana Islands