

**House Education Primary and Secondary Education Committee**

**HB 67 – Proponent Written Testimony**

**February 15, 2021**

**Carl Sondereker, High School Science Teacher in the Southeast Local School District**

Chair Manning, Ranking Member Robinson and members of the House Primary and Secondary Education Committee,

Thank you for this opportunity to provide proponent testimony in support of HB 67.

I would like to convey to the committee a little insight into the type of school year this year has been. I have students that have been working hard in the myriad of schedules, templates, and strategies for learning that have been placed in their world of education. Nothing is “normal” and nothing is “regular” as far as school and learning is concerned this year. Couple that with the abrupt end to last year and you can begin to appreciate the difficulties to learning that these students have and continue to endure!

In my district we have been hybrid, totally remote, and now are preparing for all students returning to school but in a block format. The multiple types of schedules for the school day has impacted the pace (slower), depth of learning material (much shallower), and just an overall decrease in the acquisition of material and knowledge that these students are able to accomplish. On top of these items, many students have also struggled with being quarantined or having their teachers, administrators, and support staff quarantined as well. Again, these disruptions lend to a less than ideal learning environment in which to succeed at a high level.

For many of the before mentioned items I do not believe Spring testing should occur this year. I and every one of my colleagues are substantially behind in the material that we normally would be able to cover. This is overwhelmingly due to the severe loss of instructional time. The week of Spring testing times will put us even further behind as it “steals” more of our precious class time. And who can’t predict the results of the testing...they will be lower scores than we have seen in the past, as the entire educational system has been in turmoil since the onset of Covid.

I have asked students what they think of taking the Spring tests this year and they have responded unanimously that they do not believe they would be accurate, fair, or appropriate due to the type of school year they have so far endured.

I would also like to address Part (D) of HB 67 that allows for students that receive a scholarship that is based off of taking the Spring tests and their resulting test scores. I agree that they should not be considered ineligible due to not testing or their scores from this year. With provision (D) and your decision to not give the Spring tests, these scholarship students won’t be affected negatively in any way.

I would ask the House Education Primary and Secondary Education Committee to act on HB 67 and ensure that the waiver of state assessments for the 2020-2021 school year goes into effect.

Thank you for your consideration. I am available to respond to any questions you may have.