

May 9th, 2022

H. B. No. 554

To amend section 3319.222 of the Revised Code to require the State Board of Education to issue temporary educator licenses to applicants with expired professional teacher's certificates and professional educator licenses.

Representatives Lightbody, Bird

Cosponsors: Representatives Miller, A., Brown, Click, Galonski, Hillyer, Humphrey, Lanese, Lepore-Hagan, Liston, Merrin, Miller, J., O'Brien, Robinson, Seitz, Sheehy, Sobecki, Troy, Weinstein, White,

My name is Chrisitne Maleki, I am a long term substitute for 7th grade math. It is my privilege to share with you my experience.

I left the profession of teaching in 2017 to stay at home with my young children. My husband and I had decided that it was more costly for me to continue working in my chosen field of teaching. Daycare for two children, not yet in school, was a significant part of our budget. In fact, after paying for our family insurance and into my retirement my salary could not do much more than pay the daycare provider. I decided to stay home. Thankfully, I had already been working towards renewing my license that was set to expire that year. I had the credit and now I needed to complete the checklist and pay the fees for renewal. Although I do not remember the exact cost, I know it was more than a few days of substitute pay.

There are several things I had to do to become a substitute teacher through the ESC. I had to take all steps necessary to make sure my license was renewed. Then I had to complete the application for the ESC of Central Ohio on their website. It is the longest application I have ever completed. Next, I obtained my BCI & FBI background check and sent all documentation over to the ESC (licensure, identification, background check). I had to attend a mandatory unpaid training session and then I could access the online tools to get substitute jobs. I feel for someone who is looking to be full time employed this way it is unreasonable and costly.

Under the current law, if I did have all the continuing education credits and be able to pay the costs, I would have had to let my licensure laps. If that would have happened it would have cost me thousands of dollars in lost wages. I would have had to go back to school, get my credits and do an unpaid internship (student teaching) again. I know people who have had to do this personally.

It is imperative that we encourage our teachers to take the time they need and then return smoothly to teaching. There are already so many challenges they face on a daily basis.

They do not need to be even more discouraged from returning to the profession they love. The need for educators is great and the process should not be cumbersome to the already qualified and vetted.

Thank you for your time and consideration and your time.

Christine Maleki
New Albany, Ohio