



Don Jones
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State Representatives

Chairman Brenner, Vice-Chairman Blessing, Ranking Member Fedor, and members of the Senate Primary & Secondary Education Committee, thank you for allowing us to provide sponsor testimony on House Bill 583 today.

Because of the COVID-19 Pandemic, the last 2 school years have been very hard on school administrators, teachers, and especially our students.

One of the hardest parts has been trying to keep students in the classroom as much as possible. There have been many cases where students have had to go to a study hall or in extreme cases go remote because a substitute teacher was not available.

That is why the last 2 school years the General Assembly has given flexibility to school districts to hire substitute teachers that:

- 1) Meet the school districts education requirements
- 2) Pass a criminal background check
- 3) Are 18 years of age

This needed flexibility has been well received and has kept students in the classroom where they need to be.

HB 583 extends this same language through June 2024, so for the next 2 school years. It is clear that this shortage of substitute teachers is not ending soon and this flexibility will be much needed for these 2 years to plug holes when they arise. We recognize this is not a long-term solution which is why this provision will sunset in 2024.

HB 583 also establishes a study committee that will seek to find more long-term solutions to the sub shortage. This report will be due in October of this year.

HB 583 also contains an appropriation of \$338,000,000 of ARPA dollars to the federal school lunch program. After all, if the kids are staying in the classroom we must feed them!

HB 583 has had major support passing out of the House PSE Committee 10-3, House Finance 21-2, and the House Floor 80-10. This bill is going to help our students and is a good local control bill. We strongly encourage your support.

Chairman Brenner, Vice-Chairman Blessing, Ranking Member Fedor, and members of the Senate Primary & Secondary Education Committee, thank you for allowing us to present this vital bill to you and we look forward to your support and questions.