

*Testimony of*

**Joel Nelson**

Winchester Educator

Before the

**Appropriations Committee**

Re:

**SB 107: AN ACT CONCERNING THE TEACHERS' RETIREMENT SYSTEM HEALTH INSURANCE  
SUBSIDY.**

March 18, 2022

Good morning, Senator Osten, Representative Walker, Senator Miner, Representative France, and members of the Appropriations Committee.

I testify today in support of SB 107 and the increase in the health insurance subsidy for retired teachers; however, I urge you to amend the proposal to increase the subsidy amount for all retired educators.

The retired teachers' health insurance subsidy has not seen an increase since its 1996 even though insurance prices have continued to go up exponentially. As such, I encourage you to amend this proposal to double the current subsidy from \$110 to \$220 per person month for retired teachers and their spouses under age 65 to purchase insurance coverage from their former school districts and to \$440 per month for retired teachers age 65 and over who do not qualify for Medicare.

Health insurance is the number one hurdle for educators retiring under the age of 65. I will be retiring this year at the age of 62. I will need to find another job to help subsidize my health insurance premium. Increasing the state subsidy to \$220 would be a big help to someone like me who has dedicated their career to public service.

Thank you for addressing this critical issue impacting our retired educators.