

Testimony of

Myles Cohen

Retired 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.

There are many retired educators that dedicated their lives to their careers. We did not collect our 40 quarters but volunteered our time to improve and enrich the lives of our students. Some, as myself, are eligible for Medicare through our spouses but many of our older retired teachers are surviving on a small pension. Their medical insurance is expensive and often comes with a high deductible out of pocket expenses. As you know the amount we receive from the state has stayed the same since 1996 but medical expenses have skyrocketed. It is time for the state to increase the subsidy for this aging population.

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