

Testimony of

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Before the

Education Committee

March 1, 2023

Good afternoon, Senator McCrory, Representative Currey, Senator Berthel, Representative McCarty, and members of the Education Committee.

I testify today in support of the caps on class sizes proposed in Senate Bill 1093, which would take an important step in ensuring that classrooms are places where students can learn, and educators can teach.

I've been a teacher for 16 years and students are coming in with trauma and challenges that we teachers alone can hardly deal with at times. It is not just one or two students, it is many in each class. Yes we have a social worker and a psychologist but classroom teachers are the people who are in front of the kids every day, all day. With one crisis, testing, or PPT, that social worker or psychologist is pulled away for the day and my other students who receive services don't get them and then I'm still left with 20 something students to teach. In addition to trauma, students are also coming in 2 and 3 years below grade level. The span of levels in my elementary class is vast. To teach at all those levels and meet the instructional needs of all students is nearly impossible. If you think of the trauma, the various levels in a class, special education students, ELL students, etc. you can bet there are behaviors we see that are very challenging to deal with and still teach. The more students we have in a class, the less small group time and individual time we can give each student. Smaller class sizes won't solve everything, but it will make a huge difference. I will tell you that during Covid, having a smaller number of students in a class made a big difference in the time I could give each student and the relationships I could build with them. Please come into the schools (low performing public schools in various DRGs) and see what is going on so you can make an informed decision. Education needs positive change or staff will continue to leave this profession.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

