

Testimony of

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Before the

Education Committee

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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.

The needs of our students change with each year, each class and often each week or day. I am in my 15th year as a middle school teacher and have had class sizes range between 15-30 students. The challenge of larger class sizes does not come from the classroom management side as many would assume but solely from the inadequacies it creates in allowing the teacher to meet the needs of our students. Students are at different reading levels, writing levels, have different disabilities with unique IEP or 504 plans requiring special seating or grouping; and the students who are excelling and need challenging - all of these students are in one class for 45 minutes to 80 minutes per period. That is about 2-3 minutes I am able to dedicate, individually to each child. Capping class sizes would help to alleviate time constraints of one on one time, would allow better classroom communities to form with better relationships built, it would allow for greater differentiation, small groupings and better to allow the teacher to focus on the needs of the students in front of them each period. It also helps to better allocate classroom tools, books and classroom resources. In addition to viewing education through the lens of a teacher I am also a parent of 4, 3 of which in elementary school. I see daily how larger class sizes impact the anxiety and stress of our elementary students; how the needs of struggling students cannot be met because there just isn't enough time during each element of the day with 26 students in one class. Our teachers bring 110% to the table each day; they are skilled, talented and passionate about education and impacting the lives of the little ones they see each day; capping class sizes is a small step that can be taken to allow them greater focus, greater connection and the ability to simply succeed at reaching all students they see each day.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

