

Testimony of

**Maria Stage**

**Bridgeport Educator**

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 am a special education teacher at the high school level. To better service our students our school provides self-contained classes taught by special education teachers for the 4 core subjects as well as co-taught/push in services where special education teachers work within the general ed classrooms to support students.

In the majority of our classes our co-taught/push in classes numbers are maxed at 29 in a co-taught/push in class. Some of these classes are composed of a higher ratio of special education students to general education students requiring more intense supports for students as well as making lessons move at a slower pace.

In the self-contained classes (where our most needy students require a smaller setting with more embedded supports) our teachers face class sizes of up to 20 students. This is too much for one special education teacher to successfully meet the needs of her students. Today we are losing a lot of our teachers due to our already large class sizes, abundant amount of paperwork and more students on our caseloads with no time or support to meet their needs. How are our children going to get the best possible education less teacher interaction?

Thank you for your time and consideration.

