

Testimony of

Mark Grudzien

West Hartford 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.

I will be retiring this June after 37 amazing years as a public school teacher. I am ready to enjoy the next chapter in my life and have tried to be financially responsible in preparing for retirement. The one sorry I have is having to cover my health insurance since it will now cost almost \$2000 per month to keep the insurance offered by the town where I taught. It has me concerned about my retirement and I truly believe that it would be fair to increase the subsidy since health care costs have risen greatly in the 26 years since the subsidy was established.

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