

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 have taught kindergarten for 11 years in the same district and same building. I have had varying class sizes from 18-25 students over the years, and many of those years are with no adult extra support in the classroom. Before teaching kindergarten, I taught pre-k and the ratio of students to teacher is 10:1. Once you jump to public kindergarten, there is no student to teacher ratio cap usually. Those children go from having 1 teacher with 10 students, or 2 teachers with up to 20, to sometimes 25-30 students with just one teacher. It is overwhelming for students who are many times only 4 years old when they start kindergarten to have only one adult to teach them, help them, and care for them all day. It is also overwhelming for the teacher to try to get to know, teach, and care for 20+ students who are only 4-6 years old. Early childhood is so important to a child's development and when we expect students to reach their full potential AND expect the teacher to get these students to reach their full potential, it is NOT possible with the student to teacher ratio we have now. I am also a mother to two boys age 6 and 9 and have seen the benefit of having a small class size and the detriment when they are in classes with too many students and not enough adult support in the room. The needs of the students coming into our classrooms now are greater than they have ever been. Teachers are burning out at a rate I have not seen before due to the stress and pressure in education right now. Teachers need to be heard and feel supported so we can continue to be our best for our students. Ensuring smaller class sizes will benefit both the students and the teacher. Teachers can get to know their students better in a smaller class, meet with each student more frequently, and have a better connection to the students family as well. I am in full support of

this bill and anything we can do as teachers, parents, and community members to make public education the best it can be for our students.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

