

Good afternoon Honored Legislators,

My name is Katri Lein, I am a teacher for Arrow Child and Family Ministries at Arrow Center for Education – Riverside. I am asking for support of the Senate Bill 311/House Bill 448, Thank you for giving time to address this important issue today.

I have taught as a general educator and as a special educator in a wide variety of school settings, public, non-public, and private. I have taught all grade levels from Pre-K to High School.

I have seen the work that teachers put in and here is no way to quantify in 2 minutes how much they do for a disturbingly small salary. I have experienced the learning curve of a special educator trying to grasp the language of the Individual Education Program, or IEP. I have worked the endless hours required to write, implement, and track the progress of those same IEPs. I have accepted the risks of teaching in a non-public school setting. I have felt often overwhelming, pressure of this work and becoming rich is certainly *not* reason I continue. I do what I do to make a change in the lives of students who are often 'left behind'. I have seen the incredible positive changes that come from our efforts, in spite of being left behind ourselves in terms of salary.

Teachers in Special Education Schools, aka Non-public schools, accomplish all of the things that teachers in the public school do and more. The majority of our students receive placement with us, at least in part, because they exhibit big behaviors, ones that create an unsafe environment for other students and staff. Each of these students require an extra level of care and therapeutic programming which we provide.

As non-public school teachers, we receive extra trainings, such as crisis management and trauma-informed practices. Why? To be able to respond to those big crisis behaviors when students kick, hit, and try to destroy anything around them. All teachers run the risk of physical or emotional harm at the hands of their students, we run that risk every day, every hour.

It is not surprising that there is a shortage of teachers in non-public schools when we do so much more and are paid so much less. It is impossible for you to know, unless you have lived it, how much Teachers in non-public schools experience. It is equally impossible to show appreciation for all the things that they do. But you should at least try.

We do the work that public school teachers do, and more.

We take the risks that public school teachers take, and more.

We deserve to be paid at the rate that public school teachers are paid, and more.

Thank you for your time.