

February 8, 2017

Honorable Stephen Schmidt, Chairman
House Labor, Industrial and Rehabilitative Services Committee
Legislation Office Building, Room #307
107 North Main Street
Concord NH 03301

Re: Testimony In Opposition to Senate Bill 11 and House Bill 520

Dear Honorable Stephen Schmidt, Chairman,

Due to work obligations, I am unable to attend the hearing on Senate Bill 11 and House Bill 520. However, I would like my letter entered into the record.

I have been an educator in New Hampshire for over fifteen years. Today's educators face many challenges, as the expectations placed on teachers have increased to issues beyond the classroom over the past decade. We no longer just need to be concerned with curriculum and assessment; we now need to often act as surrogate parents. Without the protection of a union, teachers could be exposed to unrealistic expectations as districts struggle to solve cultural problems through the classroom.

Unions help towns be competitive when they are seeking qualified applicants. Unions provide employees with fair wages and benefits, which can't be changed through the whim of temporary board members. Unions allow employees to have a voice, without the fear of repercussions, which creates an environment where the best solutions can be sought to create the best outcomes for students.

As president of the Hudson Federation of Teachers, we have over 98% of our members choosing to join the union. They understand what being a union member provides for them. No member is forced to join, but our members appreciate having supplemental insurance, members who negotiate contracts for them, and members who will represent them should they request it. Unions make working situations better for everyone.

With all the challenges facing New Hampshire, such as the opioid crisis, it seems that there are other issues that requires the time and energy of our legislators rather than fix something that is not broken.

I ask that you vote Inexpedient to Legislate on Senate Bill 11 and House Bill 520, so we can move forward with a positive agenda for NH. If you would like to discuss this further, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth Lavoie
President, Hudson Federation of Teachers Local 2263
22 Robin Dr.
Hudson, NH 03051