

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 Chairman Schmidt and Members of the Committee,

My name is Marie Bahlert and I am a Middle School math teacher. I have been a teacher in the Rochester School District for 20 years. I currently serve as President of the Rochester Federation of Teachers. I have also served on my negotiating team and represent members as a building rep as part of my daily responsibilities.

I am submitting this testimony since this hearing is held on a school day and I know that my members and I would want to be heard. I am respectfully requesting that you vote against Senate Bill 11 and House Bill 520, the so-called "Right To Work" legislation.

The Rochester Federation of Teachers does not have any agency fee provision, but so-called right to work is really only meant to weaken our unions. We are very lucky in that we work collaboratively with our school administration and school board to address concerns of mutual interest. As a result of this hard work we both help fulfill our primary mission of providing excellent education to the students in Rochester. The presence of the union affords a check and balance system to assuring that all options are clarified and evaluated when pursuing the best options for our students.

This unnecessary attack on unions is not an issue that is on the minds of most NH voters. No educators can be forced to join a union but they all get the advantage of our strong representation on their behalf.

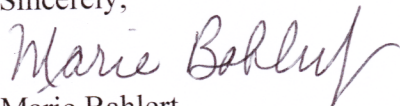
I would ask you to vote against right to work. There is no justification to take this gamble with our NH advantage.

This legislation will just take us down the wrong path and hurt working families.

I would urge you to vote no on SB 11 and HB 520.

As a New Hampshire citizen, taxpayer and union official I'd like to thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Marie Bahlert
President, Rochester Federation of Teachers, AFT#3607
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Rochester, NH