

**Testimony in SUPPORT of House Bill 743
Teachers' Retirement and Pension Systems - Reemployment**

**Senate Budget & Taxation Committee
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The Maryland State Education Association supports House Bill 743, which reduces barriers to retired educators working in critical areas of our schools and helps to address the urgent educator shortage.

MSEA represents 75,000 educators who work in Maryland's public schools, teaching and preparing our 896,837 students for careers and jobs of the future. MSEA also represents 39 local affiliates in every county across the state of Maryland, and our parent affiliate is the 3 million-member National Education Association (NEA).

MSEA thanks the Joint Committee on Pensions for their commitment to educators during this time and for looking for ways to combat the growing educator shortage. It's imperative that we look at all options to combat the shortage, reduce educator burnout, and continue to provide a quality education that our students deserve. Across the state we are witnessing a shortage of educators. Many are leaving the profession due to burnout, feeling disrespected, and the current climate caused by the pandemic. MSEA recently polled our members and found that more than 90% reported burnout as a serious or very serious concern. Others are retiring as soon as they are eligible for the same reasons. This has caused shortages where educators are working 16 hours a day and barely keeping up, at the same time when students and parents need even more individualized attention. This bill would make it easier for educators who are eligible for retirement to receive their hard-earned retirement benefits while coming back to our classrooms.

This bill also allows retirees to come back as substitute teachers. This is an important aspect of the bill, as substitute shortages are reaching dire conditions. Substitute teaching might be a perfect role for educators at retirement age who are not able to keep up with the demands of a full-time teaching position, but still want to contribute.

Senate Bill 410 would help to alleviate some of these shortage issues in systems across the state. While it won't fix everything, it would help keep some of our most seasoned and experienced educators in classrooms when we need it the most. We believe that opening these provisions, along with additional communication and information to eligible educators, is one way to keep our schools running.

For those reasons, MSEA urges a favorable report on House Bill 743.