



Chairman Buckley, Vice Chair Bernal, & Members of the Committee:

My name is Justin Yancy, President of the Texas Business Leadership Council here to testify in favor of HB 2.

The TBLC is a non-partisan network of business leaders advancing policies to support a globally competitive Texas. As you know, we currently have a skills gap in Texas due to low postsecondary attainment that is putting a strain on our workforce.

College and career readiness starts with a strong K-12 education, however, the increase in uncertified, underprepared teachers is negatively impacting student outcomes and this is becoming an economic issue for the state. Research shows that students taught by an uncertified teacher experience learning loss and this is linked to lower annual wages, reflecting that these students are less prepared for workforce success.

HB 2 will address the growing number of uncertified teachers in our classrooms by limiting their role in foundation courses, incentivizing districts to help these teachers earn certification, and expanding the mentor allotment so that new teachers will have a better support system.

Additionally, the first-ever state investment in high-quality educator prep pathways provided by HB 2 will increase participation in programs with a meaningful classroom training component to ensure new teachers are fully prepared to be successful.

We commend you, Chairman Buckley, for the thoughtful steps that House Bill 2 takes to strengthen our teacher workforce, including expansion of the Teacher Incentive Allotment which has a proven record of improving both student performance and teacher retention.

The increase in the State Compensatory Allotment is a step in the right direction and we respectfully suggest bolstering the proposed weights to more adequately support the 53% of Texas students that are performing below grade level.

We applaud updates to other programs that have a proven record of improving student outcomes including reducing barriers to district participation in ADSY to increase instruction time and expanding funding for Pre-K.

Thank you to the committee for this historic infusion of funding into our public schools. We appreciate the bill's targeted investments that are focused on improving student outcomes which will ultimately lead to a more competitive workforce in Texas.

And thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today and for the leadership you are providing to the State of Texas.