

Please find my written testimony for HB 1160 below.

Thank You,
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Teacher calls for a more balanced approach to "last-in, first-out" layoffs

As a tenured teacher who has taught for ten years, I will probably not be one of the many teachers laid off this year. Seniority is currently the only factor used in layoff decisions in most districts in Connecticut, and this "last-in, first-out," policy will affect many newer gold star teachers whose only known flaw is being new to teaching.

We will lose some teachers who are incredible and may not return, causing us to lose a generation of teachers. Faced with the potential of being laid off repeatedly, and unable to have job security, many may choose to pursue other careers than teaching. Who would want to face a career of being shuffled from one school to the next as you are consistently the last person in and the first to receive layoffs? We must find a solution that includes factors besides solely seniority, and do it in a timely manner before this year's layoffs.

Decisions should include teacher evaluations, involvement in the school, student growth, specialized training, and awards. Longevity and tenure should still play a role in the equation. We do not want teachers targeted to be laid off because they are high on the pay scale from their years of experience and training, or because they are vocal about educational issues. We need to have a well-rounded picture of the professional when we decide who is laid off, and there are steps we can take this year.

We are responsible for educating the next generation. In order to ensure our students' success and close Connecticut's massive achievement gap, we need to support the next generation of teachers too.