

# Comment Report

HF 400

A bill for an act relating to rules adopted by the board of educational examiners establishing standards for substitute teacher authorizations.(See HF 675.)

Subcommittee Members: Gobble-CH, Cahill, Moore, T.

Date: 02/15/2021

Time: 12:00 PM

Location: House Lounge 1

**Name:** Margaret Buckton

**Comment:** Thanks for the opportunity to comment on behalf of RSAI and UEN members. Both organizations are strongly in favor of flexibility on hiring substitutes and know this bill comes from the best of intentions. However, we are registered as undecided on the bill with a few questions; does it inadvertently interfere with current requirements for background checks and a substitute authorization course (things like mandatory reporter training and basics that will prepare them to step into the classroom?) The Session delay on proposed rules will expire once the Session adjourns, allowing the current proposed rules to move forward. Both RSAI and UEN are in favor of those proposed rules. Is this bill needed to ensure that there is no transitional interruption in providing substitutes this Spring if the Governor removes the public health emergency declaration before the Legislature adjourns and the rules are not yet effective? If so, should the effective date be on enactment? We haven't heard of any negative effects of the expanded flexibility during the pandemic. We have heard stories across the state of other staff and community members stepping into substitute teaching and finding they have a passion and talent for teaching. We know that individuals already connected to our communities, both urban and rural, are more likely to teach in a similar environment if we can get them the right degree and support. We see this flexibility as a great recruiting tool. We also know that the substitute shortage predated the pandemic and is likely to continue. This kind of flexibility is of benefit if the bill is drafted in a way to avoid the unintended consequences.