

Jamie
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My name is Jamie Linde and I am here to represent the unionized educators of the Dallas Center Grimes school district.

As a public school employee, I feel our presence in the work force does not just apply to the here and now, it applies to the future. I can guarantee, not 1 person here opposing your bill is solely here due to bargaining for compensation. We are here because the ability to bargain affects safe working conditions, rights to a due process, and gives workers basic provisions that need to be in place to create a balance between work and personal obligations.

Let me tell you about my purpose for being here. I am here to represent unionized and un unionized educators in my district. We all benefit from negotiating our contract. Our contract ensures more than simply a paycheck. It allows us to change and adapt our job as our profession changes and adapts along with the public education atmosphere today. What happens in public schools today, affects our tomorrow as well as future generations. If you strip away an educator's voice what do you hope to accomplish? What do you hope to gain?

I have put my heart into my career because I believe in our future. I believe in our tomorrow. If I am not able to use my voice for change and evolution who will? Will you? Do you know what it takes to grow and instill a positive education into 38 tiny learners every day? That is what I do. I facilitate and foster a love of learning into 38 4-year-old children everyday through a preschool program in a public school. I use my own resources, my own time, and my own voice for my kids. These are MY kids. They are not mine biologically, but I care for them and want to see them all succeed today, tomorrow, and 20 years from now. If you strip away our basic rights to do that will you be there to replace us? Are you going to spend your own money, your own time, and your own resources on giving the future everything it deserves? Why does this have to be about one political party winning a fight and one losing a fight? Why

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do we even have to fight? MY kids deserve more than this. Actually, they deserve more than I can give them already. So what is your real purpose? Because if you can show me it is for my student's best interest, their families best interest and my own best interest, I will fully support you.

Politics team speech

But if all you can do is feel like you won by having your bill passed, you need to search deep within your own purpose and start realizing this is more than you, it is our future. I want to know your true purpose is behind stripping basic rights away from public workers? What do you hope to accomplish by silencing the citizens of this country, from the state of Iowa you claim to love? Because I can tell you, I do not even feel liked, let alone loved and that resonates through our future more than you will ever know.

Hello, my name is Sarah Beth Weinberg, and I teach at an Iowa public school. I've been teaching in classrooms for six years, though only half of those years have been in this state.

I am the kind of teacher that Iowa says it wants to attract: I have earned multiple degrees and have worked extensively with both elementary and secondary students of a variety of cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds. I'm fluent in three languages, having lived and worked in multiple countries and both American coasts, and I have an extensive arts-education background that I apply daily in my fourth-grade classroom.

I **chose** to come back to Iowa after teaching elsewhere because, as a graduate myself of Iowa public schools, I recognized the unparalleled quality of the teachers and schools in this state. From personal experience, I knew the effect that good teachers have on their students. I knew that Iowa teachers were the people I not only wanted to work with, but who I wanted to learn from.

Had this proposed legislation had been in place, I would not have made the same choice to return home to Iowa. Collective bargaining is foundational to Iowa's public-sector employee protections, and a key component of how this state attracts good teachers—good *people*—to guide our children into the future. Should this law pass, how many of those good teachers will choose to go elsewhere? How many good people will look at Iowa, a supposed heartland of opportunity, and say, "I don't think so," because Iowa doesn't support its public servants? How can we expect to attract—and **keep**—the best teachers, the teachers that have made Iowa schools so successful, if they know that coming here means sacrificing any agency as an employee?

As it stands, Chapter 20 does **not** give unions unfair advantages; it offers Iowa's dedicated workers a seat at the table. It gives us a voice. Every teacher in this room tonight—every teacher in America—knows that to exclude and silence students won't inspire growth, or improve performance. So please, don't exclude and silence those of us who have dedicated our lives to public service here in Iowa. The future of our

children and our state depends on **opposing these changes** to Chapter 20; it depends on you voting **no**.

Iowa Legislature Public Hearing on Collective Bargaining Changes
Brent C. Oleson, Chairman of Linn County Board of Supervisors
February 13, 2017 (written statement in lieu of speaking slot)

I graduated Burlington High School in 1989. I said then and I say now, that Mr. David Wendt was the best teacher I ever had. He had a huge impact on my life. He just retired last year from Keokuk High School with more than 35 years of service, with a pension he earned and the satisfaction of having educated and positively impacted the lives of tens of thousands young Iowans. The most important concept he taught me was to truly critically think...to critically think, an invaluable skill.

Mr. Wendt was my speech and debate coach. I blame him for driving the two hours here to speak for 3 minutes. Mr. Wendt always said, if you don't stand up and say something well-informed, intelligent and persuasive, then the status quo, good or bad...or very bad, will win the day.

I'm not here as some political stooge for the unions and I'm not here as some stooge for the now in-vogue anti-union groups. As an elected official in Iowa's second largest county and city, I have been on the management side of negotiating contracts for the taxpayers. I wasn't able to secure an endorsement from AFSCME this last election, presumably because I took my high school teacher seriously when he encouraged us to truly develop our abilities to critically think. As a negotiator for management of Linn County, I operate in the realm of negotiating in good faith for a win-win outcome for the taxpayers and those providing the services that the taxpayers demand and prioritize. In my 8 years we have never once went to arbitration. Not once. We have never once given away the store either. Quite the contrary.

I have used permissive bargaining topics as leverage for a reasonable deal. The unions have used their own leverage for their own ends. I have used health insurance premium contributions against other bargaining items like wage increases to be more in

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line with our private sector partners. Our average year over year wage and fringe package is a quite low to our comparables. In Linn County we have been able to implement property tax cuts and have a levy below that of the rate when I started 8 years ago. So don't count Linn County in your counties clamoring for state legislators to play big brother to us by dictating our collective bargaining rules, or to ban our Board from spending the 30 seconds needed to enter a routing number on an employee's paycheck to go for a contribution to United Way or the dues for the Union for which they belong.

No, don't count us among them, because what you're doing is pure and raw partisan politics. It's a so-called solution in search of a problem.

In Linn County, some of the biggest labor expenses we face in our local governments is law enforcement, emergency preparedness/response and fire protection. But, I see Law Enforcement and Firefighters are exempt...THIS TIME. Hmmmm, is that good public policy or again raw politics. We know the answer to that question.

Teachers, Snowplow drivers, janitors, prison guards, in fact all county, city and school district workers will not be permitted to take the 30 seconds it takes each year to have a payroll deduction of union dues, even though Iowa has long been a "right-to-work" state and all employees who sign up to pay dues, do so voluntarily. Good public policy? Or raw politics. Can we still allow employees to give to United Way? Or is that bad public policy TOO...or just good politics?

The only topic on which unions will retain bargaining rights is wages. Even then, wage bargaining is largely meaningless. The new law will allow the arbitrator to grant a wage increase of no more than 3 percent or the percentage increase in the consumer price index, whichever is less. A formula? A formula with an arbitrary number and another formula generated number that isn't directly correlated to inflation and by coincidence hasn't been over 3% in in more than a decade. Doesn't sound like the so-called

flexibility and local control that is being sold as the justification for these unprecedented and sweeping changes being proposed.

Chapter 20, the Iowa Code section for collective bargaining in the public sector, was enacted in 1974 by Republican Governor Robert Ray and a majority Republican Iowa House and Senate.

I could understand if you were tweaking the arbitration process. I could understand if you were tweaking mandatory bargaining subjects. I could understand if you were tweaking options for Health Insurance participation and rate of contribution. But that's not what this bill does. This bill takes a sledgehammer to the pesky fly that has been labor leaders you dislike. And that's what this really is...payback! Political payback.

I didn't receive the AFSCME endorsement last election. They didn't even return my call. Did I take it out on my local bargaining unit in contract negotiations? Hell No! Because I am a grown up and have a job to do for the people, all the people. Grow up and do what you're elected to do, which is serve all the people.

I say grow up and do what you were taught to do by your teachers, your teachers that were the equivalent to my civics/government/speech teacher Mr. Wendt...critically think. This proposal isn't solving any problems other than the pure partisan politically driven problems you have with the labor leaders of the teachers, county, city, and other government employees. What is saddest of all is that it isn't even solving that problem, because what goes around comes around. A 40 year compromise is being replaced by a two-week fiat, that will likely be replaced by an alternative fiat sometime in the future. Because that's what we do now, in our take-no-prisoners approach to political supremacy, rather than measured and thoughtful public service. Good bye 1974 Iowa, welcome to our brave new Iowa of "I win, you lose, compromise is for losers."

Kelly McMahon
5508 Dostal Drive SW
Cedar Rapids, IA 52404
HSB 84 Public Hearing Testimony
February 13, 2017

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you this evening. My name is Kelly McMahon. I teach kindergarten at Hoover Elementary School in Cedar Rapids. I am here tonight as a former Wisconsin school teacher to please ask you to learn from the lessons of Wisconsin and vote no to HSB 84.

While attending the University of Northern Iowa, my Meeting the Needs of Diverse Learners professor stressed the importance for educators to be advocates for our students. It was our responsibility to a voice for our students within and outside of our school building. I took this lesson to heart and became a very active advocate for my students.

I spent the first nine years of my teaching career in Milwaukee Public Schools. Despite loving my students and school, Milwaukee was a very toxic environment to teach. Our schools were constantly under attack from pro-voucher school and pro-charter school supporters, and the local media. Despite our schools being severely underfunded, we endured through the constant attacks to do what was best for our students and schools.

Prior to the passage of Act 10, I was an outspoken teacher that spoke up for my students at my school, local school board, and state level. As an educator, I knew that in order for my students to reach their fullest potential, it was critical that I was able to implement developmentally appropriate, research based best practice. I also needed the opportunity to teach, and not just test my young learners. After having the Superintendent of MPS call me a liar in front of an auditorium prior to the start of a public hearing to address early childhood concerns that I helped organize, I was thankful that I was a union member! I knew my union would be there to protect me from standing up for my students. I was a good teacher and didn't deserve to be fired.

However, after the passage of Act 10, I no longer felt I could do my job as an educator. I didn't feel safe to speak up for my students to ensure I could provide them the education they all deserved. I wasn't the only educator that felt this way, and Wisconsin lost thousands of educators and they cannot recruit enough teachers for their schools, especially in the rural and impoverished urban districts.

In the fall of 2011, I made the difficult decision to leave behind the students and colleagues I loved in Milwaukee to move back to Iowa. I have continued to advocate for my students in order to ensure my

students get the educational opportunities for them to reach their fullest potential. I have felt safe to question what we are doing in education at the building, district and state level during the past six years. That all changed on Tuesday, February 7th when this state legislature submitted HSB 84 and Senate File 213. Under the proposed changes, a teacher can be fired without just cause. Thankfully, I have a principal that appreciates my willingness to speak up for my students and challenge some of the things we are implementing at the school level. That may not always be the case. Under the proposed changes, I could be fired for speaking up for my students because a new principal, the superintendent, or school board do not appreciate being challenged when it comes to ensuring we are doing what is best practice for our students.

I ask that you please vote no to HSB 84 to ensure Iowa's children always have educators that are able to advocates for their educational needs. Thank you.

My name is Sue Cahill. I live and teach in the Marshalltown school district. There are many things that bother me about this bill and the effect it will have on Iowa families, schools, and students. I will touch on two of them this evening.

I am a single mother of six boys. My husband passed away ten years ago. I am proud of the young adults that my boys have grown into. I still have two of my sons on my health insurance. To support myself and my kids on my insurance, I pay over \$800 per month and that cost will again increase this year. Please do not buy into the fact that public employees do not pay toward our health care as the governor has stated. My district does pay for part of my insurance as does almost every major employer and business in Iowa. It is part of what attracted me to teach in Marshalltown.

My second and biggest concern is providing the best education for students in my district and across Iowa. We must have a way to attract and retain highly qualified teachers for our children. I have been a teacher for 18 years and as most Iowans-- especially those in less affluent districts like mine—know, we have a teacher shortage. Fewer students are entering the pre-service education programs and wanting to enter the teaching profession. Schools are struggling to secure teachers. My senator Jeff Edler asked me if school boards should be able to offer teachers more money for a hard to fill position. On the surface that sounds OK, but in reality the districts such as East and West Marshall, GMG, BCLUW, Grinnell-Newburg, Newton, and Marshalltown

will not have enough money to prevent more affluent district from "Poaching" our best teachers with the lure of greater salary as happened in Wisconsin. High quality teachers may be lured away to districts willing to offer more money. But my district deals with a high percentage of students from backgrounds of poverty, we have the third largest percentage and third largest population of English learners. These students in Marshalltown need the most experienced and highest qualified teachers to provide their instruction and help them reach high standards. These students do not deserve to have their teachers turned into Free Agents who can move to a new school at anytime. We need the best teachers to serve our students. Every student, no matter where they live deserves that. . . not having teachers leave for higher salaries down the street.

Quality schools and quality education are what define our children's ability to succeed. Making sure that every school district in Iowa can attract and retain the most talented, qualified and dedicated teachers is part of making that happen.

I don't see how this legislation and the attacks on teachers and other public servants gets us to that end.

This legislation hurts Iowa workers, Iowa students and Iowa families.

Thank you.

Tom Wayer

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The First change in this bill is to divide the unions by singling out a group, I thought we were long past doing those types of things discriminating against groups. For that reason alone, it should be removed all public employees should have the same right when it comes to collective bargaining.

The next change deals with evaluations and discharge. Evaluations are in every contract bargained by our members. Which gives the employer the right to evaluate? So, we don't understand where the problem is, as these evaluations are used for promotions and sometimes discipline (one of the other things you politicians seem to believe the employer doesn't have). Discharge is a right the employer has and if management does its job correctly that would leave the employee no right for recourse. That is they need to document, document and document. Subsection 5 of Chapter 20.7 currently gives the right to relieve an employee for lack of work or legitimate reason. (Job Abolishment, Reduction in force, etc), This does accomplish the changes you are presenting. So why add more words?

The next change deals with negotiations and dues check off, with respect to negotiation the bill presents the separation of public safety employees from all other public employees when it comes negotiations. Public safety employees will be able to bargain for wages, hours, vacations, insurance, holidays, leaves of absence, shift differentials, overtime, compensation, supplemental pay, seniority, transfer procedures, job classifications, health and safety matters, evaluation procedures, procedures for staff reduction, in-service training, grievance procedures for resolving any question. All other public employees will be able to bargain for base wages only, this leaves very little left to negotiate and nothing says the employer has to bargain for anything but base wages. The claim for this is that the public has no control over these things, we beg to differ on this as they are elected officials or appointed officials doing as the elected officials want. Are you officials not listening to your constituents? Oh that is right you're not.

This brings us to the next point dues check off which is currently negotiable not mandated on the public entity. The changes would make it

mandated to be removed. This is a tactic to bust the Unions as it costs money to represent the Union (meaning the members as they are the union) in grievances, negotiate contracts and discipline procedures.

Many organizations receive money from employees through paycheck deduction, it is a process for convenience for the organizations and the employees usually promoted for other organizations by the public employer so they can be proud of what their employees contribute. Our own government requires certain mandatory deductions so they can make it easier on the employee and the government. So, with that being said there is no other reason for this than to make it more complicated and shrink the organized labor groups. I have plenty more changes to talk about as I only have made through part of page 4 of 68 pages but I am out of time so Vote NO ON HF 291!!!

Joshua Levai-Baird
West Liberty, IA 52776

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My name is Joshua Levai-Baird. I come today to speak against this bill as a father, son, teacher ~~and~~ proud union member & Townsman. Most importantly, I speak to you as a citizen with inalienable rights of life, liberty & - free to pursue happiness as I see best for myself, my family, my community, my country, and my world.

Our IA flag bears the motto, "Our liberties we prize and our rights we will maintain." Our 1st Amendment guarantees us freedom of speech and assembly - this ~~is~~ Constitution we love enshrines these rights. Collectively assemble, speak, and represent our profession. This Republican proposal degrades our liberties. Minimizes, reduces, & eliminates rights working families worked hard to guarantee for each every Townsman.

A final ~~point~~ point of fact, The Republican party, a party consumed w/ Alternative Facts and outright lies about election fraud, crowd size, & fictional Bowling Green Massacres, is the party attacking education, the institution tasked to ~~open~~ teach truths & facts, & attacking our 1st amendment right.

The author of our declaration of Independence, Thomas Jefferson, wrote
"An educated citizenry is a vital requisite for our survival as a people."
This is about our survival as a free people.

Elizabeth Levai-Baird
West Liberty, Iowa

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Let me begin this letter by say: I know I'm not a selfish teacher, my students tell me everyday. A few of them say they would like put me into a suitcase and carry me off to college, so I can help them with their essays. I remind them that I have email. So, though the following words are about me; its' because this bill is about my family, which includes my handsome husband who is standing here reading this note, my two children Grayson who is 7 years old and Marian who is 4. Both attend West Liberty Community Schools - Go Comets! My name is Elizabeth Levai-Baird, my students call me Ms. LB, I am currently in my 10th year teaching; 6 as an elementary special education teacher, 2 as a middle school US/History teacher, and 2 as a Secondary ESL teacher. I have served on Building Leadership roles, currently I am a Model teacher and I am also a Mentor. I have 2 Masters degrees in education, one in special education and one in curriculum and instruction; I am currently earning my third in TESOL at the University of Northern Iowa and will have that completed December 2017. I guess, what I'm trying to say is, I think I know a thing or two about educational issues and let me tell you from a person in the middle of her career, who has seen every level. Unions and collective bargaining aren't the issue and they will not make things better. If you want to call me and have a conversation about what I feel are the issues you can get my number from my husband and call me around 4am - It's usually when I wake to write lesson plans or type assignments for graduate school, but I can fit you in.

Now, let me tell you what collective bargaining means to me, it means making sure we get a fair deal on health insurance and sick leave. Which we all know is why Unions and collective bargaining was created in the first place. So why

do I care about health insurance more than my base salary, which you claim I can “negotiate.” You see, I have Primary Sclerosing Cholangitis (PSC). It is rare, it is unpredictable and I doubt most hear have ever heard of it. Let me educate you, It is believed to be an autoimmune disease, where my immune system attacks my bile ducts in my liver and narrows them. Since November 2016 I have had 4 ERCPs, 2 stents. In previous years I have had numerous MRIs, ultrasounds, blood work (currently every two weeks), and, as you can imagine, many trips to the doctors office. I have also had a Sphincter Oddi, a very painful PTC procedure to gain access to my duct, and 2 liver biopsies. I have been through a lot of pain and discomfort over the years. I am told that I have basically one functioning bile duct. I may be lucky and never need anything further then stents and dilation every 2-5 years and medication 3 times a day. I may be lucky and never get an infection from the stents I need and end up in the hospital. Or I may not be lucky and I may need a liver transplant some day. I may need it so I can see my children grow and my grandchildren. I want you to please take a moment close your eyes and imagine you have a rare disease like me, with no predictable future, if you have children imagine you don’t get to see them as adults, through those major milestones. Imagine your grandchildren if you have them and if you hadn’t gotten the chance to meet them, if those moments were stolen from you. IF you will look at these two pictures here of my children, don’t I have a right to sit down at the table with my community and negotiate health care that is fair, right, and very much needed. Without good health insurance, I couldn’t pay my medical bills, I couldn’t afford the medicine and the procedures that keep me from hopefully EVER needing a transplant, which

according to transplantliving.org costs on average \$577,100. Which is why if this bill passes, my husband and I will be considering taking our 17 years of combined experience in education and our brilliant children, to another state that respects their teachers enough to keep collective bargaining. Collective bargaining, means to me the right to work with my school system to insure I have the health care I need and deserve for the work I do and want to continue to do in this beautiful state.

Please, vote no. Thank you.

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2-13-17

Written Comment

T. Waldmann-Williams, PhD

Knoxville, TN

641.828.6407

PRO - overall for Bill.

Three points:

1) Agree recertification of unions by all union members annually - not just by those who show up.

2) Agree that org. should not be acct'ble for taking + passing on dues.

3) Agree that org. should

have more control
over hire & fire but
both should include
peers.

3) Believe HC should
be more effective +
efficient but without
more effectiveness, ^{this} is not
improvement. Put a
sunshine on this bill
to ensure expected
measured results are
achieved. This bill
did not seem to follow
inclusivity nor effective
communication. Also if
public workers are under this
HC then ^{so should} legislators
& leadership.