

Testimony of

Bill Murray

President,
Connecticut Education Association Retired

Before the
Appropriations Committee

Re:

SB 107: AN ACT CONCERNING THE TEACHERS' RETIREMENT SYSTEM HEALTH INSURANCE SUBSIDY.

SB 405: AN ACT CONCERNING THE TEACHERS' RETIREMENT BOARD AND VALUATIONS OF THE TEACHERS' RETIREMENT SYSTEM.

March 18, 2022

Good morning, Senator Osten, Representative Walker, Senator Miner, Representative France, and members of the Appropriations Committee. My name is Bill Murray and I am a retired teacher who serves as the President of the Connecticut Education Association Retired (CEA-R). CEA-R is part of the Connecticut Education Association and represents the interests of our retired members across the state. I am also Vice-Chair of the Teachers' Retirement Board and serve on the Insurance Committee.

I testify today in support of **SB 107** and the increase in the health insurance subsidy for retired teachers; however, I urge you to amend the proposal to increase the subsidy amount for all retired educators.

The retired teachers' health insurance subsidy has not seen an increase since its establishment in 1996 even though insurance prices have continued to go up exponentially. These retired teachers are paying \$10,000 or more per person for insurance. In my dual roles, I receive many calls and emails related to insurance issues. I can assist people on our TRB insurance plan but I can't help people who are burdened by the insurance cost increase from their former employers. Only the state can help them. I encourage you to amend this proposal to raise the subsidy to \$220 per month for retired teachers under age 65 to purchase insurance coverage from their former school districts and to \$440 per month for retired teachers age 65 and over who do not qualify for Medicare.

Finally, I would urge you to consider the ramifications of acting on **SB 405**, which would put TRB under the Comptroller's Office and require an annual valuation of the TRB. I encourage you to defer to the Treasurer's Office and the TRB actuary on these subjects before taking legislative action.

Thank you for your time.