

Bill addressing teacher shortage advances

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LITCHFIELD - In response to the teacher and substitute teacher shortage in Illinois, new legislation has been filed in the Illinois legislature make it easier for educators coming from other states to teach in Illinois and to make it simpler for substitute teachers to meet licensure requirements. House Bill 5627 was assigned to Elementary and Secondary Education, a House Committee, where it awaits hearing and debate.

State Representative Avery Bourne (R-Raymond) is a Chief Co-Sponsor of the bill that includes recommendations brought forward by the Illinois State Board of Education in an attempt to address the shortage of teachers in Illinois. Representative Bourne stated, “Under this legislation the amount of red tape has been cut significantly.” She added, “Our rural school districts have been hit hard and are suffering. HB 5627 will help to resolve this teacher shortage.”

According to the Illinois State Board of Education, there are currently 2,013 unfilled positions in the state. The total includes teachers, administrative staff, and school support staff. House Bill 5627, will address this deficiency by making the following changes:

Creates full reciprocity of out-of-state applicants for a Professional Educator License (PEL). This will allow out-of-state licensed educators to teach in Illinois without meeting additional requirements.

Makes an individual with a PEL eligible to substitute teach without a Substitute Teaching License, enables an individual with a lapsed PEL to be able to substitute teach, and provides that any individual who has completed 60 credit hours of coursework is eligible to receive a Substitute Teaching License.

Provides that an Alternative Educator Licensure Program should be a one-year program instead of a two-year program.

Clarifies that professional development may be completed at any time during after issuance of the license.