

WRITTEN TESTIMONY – February 27, 2025
Senate Economic Development, Housing, and General Affairs

I am very nervous. I don't do this kind of thing, but it is important so here I am...

I am Rebecca Pellegrini and go by Becky. I live in Orange but work in Washington Central Unified Union School District, at Berlin Elementary School.

I am currently in my thirty-sixth year as a para educator. I work alongside the classroom and special education teachers as a one on one.

I am employed for 183 seven-hour days. I receive twenty-six substantially equal pay checks and the money is spread from July 1 to June 30. Some districts pay in 22 checks which means no pay over Christmas, February and April breaks or over the summer. Either way, it is 183 (or so) 7-8 hour days for school year employees.

I work 35 hours a week and have worked additional hours at a store for sixteen years. I am married to someone with raises and benefits so eventually we didn't need the extra hours. However, I work with folks who have two and three extra jobs to supplement their incomes.

My health insurance comes from my husband, if I purchased the school insurance my take home pay would be less than \$1000. I would not be able to live on my own. I say this to emphasize that unemployment benefits during the summer would help tremendously to pay bills, purchase food, fuel oil and catch up from the past winter or prepare for the next. It would NOT be "extra play money".

My job is focused on some of the most challenging to educate. I, and other school year employees need and deserve to not also worry about paying bills and buying food.

Thank you for your time.

Becky Pellegrini