

My name is Judith Dixon and I am writing in opposition to Senate Bill 2934.

I am writing to express my concern and opposition to the senate bill 2934. Although this bill states it aims to make conditions better in the Providence Public Schools, its eventual outcome will be to make conditions worse. I believe if this bill passes, teachers will leave the Providence Schools to work in a district where their rights are intact. Providence teachers already have a difficult job. There are many factors such as poverty, housing and food insecurity that impact how students behave and perform in the Providence Schools. A lot of these factors are systemic and are not a result of any particular teacher's skills. To take away the rights of senior teachers who have dedicated their lives to the district despite its challenges not only makes no sense but appears discriminatory. To take away guaranteed increases for the first 12 years in just one urban district appears to target the very teachers who are persisting despite the challenges. Research shows that young people are leaving the teaching profession at faster rates than before. Stripping teachers of their collective bargaining rights, is not a way to attract young people to the Providence Schools and to the profession. Not only does this bill take away rights from teachers, it also strips the community of their right to have an elected school board that makes hiring and firing decisions. In circumventing the school board in hiring and firing decisions, this bill is essentially taking away the community's voice.

I am asking the Senate Committee on Education to please do the right thing and stop this discriminatory bill that aims to make conditions harder for Providence Public School Educators.