

Mr. President, Colleagues, I bring for your consideration SB 279, on a 6-1 vote from the Committee on Education.

SB 279 allows Oregon to join a new interstate compact on teacher licensure, which will allow teachers who relocate to Oregon to begin working in our schools right away.

The Council of State Governments (CSG), Department of Defense (DoD) and the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification (NASDTEC) partnered to support the mobility of licensed teachers through the development of a new interstate compact.

Why the Department of Defense, you may ask? It's a result of the difficulty that military families face all the time when their active-duty family member is transferred and their spouse or partner faces barriers to rapid licensure in the new state. Among the biggest challenges faced is by family members who are educators.

Representatives from all over the country have been working on this project for the last couple of years. They finally completed this work in December, and the compact is now ready for adoption.

To become part of the compact, a state needs the authorization of its state legislature, and that's why SB 279 is before you.

The compact will allow teachers who hold an eligible license from another compact state to immediately receive an initial Oregon professional teaching license after their background check has been completed. Their license from the previous compact state must be unencumbered—that is, it cannot be a restricted, probationary, provisional, substitute, or temporary license. The one exception is for teachers meeting the definition of an eligible military spouse, who WILL be able to use a temporary or provisional license for the purposes of the compact.

If they have any additional Oregon-specific requirements to complete, they will need to complete those before the next renewal period, generally 3 years.

Colleagues, This bill will make Oregon more competitive, helping us to attract and retain more world-class educators to guide our students.

Colleagues, one final note: the first ten states to secure legislative approval and the Governor's signature to join the compact will form the new compact's initial steering committee. Getting this bill passed by the Senate at the very beginning of March puts us in the running to be part of that elite group.

Let's do it. I urge an aye vote.