

Rauner signs bill to alleviate burdens on teachers moving to Illinois

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Cuts red tape & helps experienced, out-of-state teachers move into classrooms more quickly and efficiently

CARBONDALE – Governor Bruce Rauner today signed legislation that will ensure the transition to classrooms is made easier for out-of-state teachers moving to Illinois. State Sen. Dave Luechtefeld, a co-sponsor of the bill, and State Representative Terri Bryant joined the governor at Carbondale Community High School for the bill signing.

“This bill is about teachers, jobs and opportunities,” Governor Rauner said. “We are clearing a better pathway to the classroom for teachers who have moved to Illinois and ensure they can focus on the important job they do, which is educating our children. It’s time to build on this success story and work together to pass a balanced budget and

changes that will lead to new jobs and stronger schools to put Illinois back on the right path.”

SB 2912 makes it easier to transfer an out-of-state teachers’ license to Illinois by streamlining the process. The Illinois State Board of Education can now grant an Illinois license to teachers with comparable out-of-state licenses. The bill also reduces several burdens on people trying to become substitute teachers.

“Investing in our teachers is a critical component to ensuring all children in Illinois are healthy, safe, and well educated, so that by the time they turn 25 they are in good paying, high-quality careers,” Secretary of Education Beth Purvis said. “Lifting these burdens will allow experienced educators quicker access to the classroom without compromising on quality.”

“Illinois has a teacher shortage, especially in underserved areas. Additionally, we struggle to retain a healthy pool of substitute teachers,” said State Senator Dave Luechtefeld (R-Okawville), who was a bill sponsor. “Teaching licensure reciprocity will hopefully enable us to bring some of our best and brightest minds back to Illinois from our surrounding states. Many times our youth travel to bordering states to begin their careers; we are encouraging them to come back home and teach our future generations.”

"The statewide substitute teacher shortage has had an adverse impact on local schools, especially in southern Illinois," State Rep. Terri Bryant (R-Murphysboro) said. "By reducing certificate fees, allowing individuals with four-year degrees to apply for substitute teacher certificates, and cutting red tape for out-of-state applicants, SB 2912 helps expand the pool of potential substitute teachers for schools statewide."

This bill helps address Illinois regional teacher shortage and substitute teacher shortage by making it easier to obtain a teaching license if a teacher holds an out-of-state license. In addition, it reduces the fee to obtain a substitute teaching license and lifts some of the burdens retired teachers faced if they wanted to return to the classroom to sub for a teacher.

“I am deeply appreciative of the General Assembly and the Governor for working with the State Board of Education to address the statewide substitute teacher shortage,” said State Superintendent of Education Tony Smith, Ph.D. “The bill signed into law today streamlines the process for becoming a licensed teacher in Illinois, without lowering standards. Our goal and the goal of superintendents across the state is to ensure classrooms are led by qualified individuals every single day. We must continue to think creatively and be open to adapting in order to meet the needs of all students.”

“I want to commend Governor Rauner for signing SB 2912, and the General Assembly for passing it with bipartisan support,” said Carbondale Community High School Superintendent Steve Murphy. “Attracting, developing, and retaining Highly Effective Educators for Illinois schools are one of the pillars of Vision 20/20, and SB 2912 provides common sense solutions addressing the statewide shortages in teachers and substitutes. Not a week goes by at CCHS when we don't require administrators or other support personnel to cover classrooms because of a lack of qualified substitute teachers. Teacher and substitute shortages impact Illinois students and families, and I commend our leaders in Springfield for working together to provide solutions that benefit our schools and communities.”

"Schools have been asking for more flexibility to hire qualified teachers and substitute teachers so that they can offer our children the best education possible," said State Senator Jason Barickman (R-Bloomington). "This measure will help districts deal with a dire shortage of substitute teachers, while enhancing residents' local control of their schools."

“Anything we can do to make things easier for teachers who move to Illinois to get into the classroom as soon as possible is incredibly important,” State Senator Dale Righter (R-Mattoon) said. “This new law will also benefit rural districts that oftentimes have a difficult time finding experienced substitute teachers. Most importantly, our students will benefit the most from this new law as it ensures more qualified teachers are in our classrooms.”

“These commonsense changes to the state’s licensure system will make it easier and more attractive for qualified teachers to seek work in Illinois,” said State Senator Karen McConnaughay (R-St. Charles). “I believe this new law will help reduce the shortage of teachers in a number of Illinois communities, as well as the shortage of substitute teachers across the state, which many schools have been grappling with. This will be particularly helpful in rural areas, which have been hit hard by this shortage, and our border communities, which have seen qualified teachers seeking placement in neighboring states.”

"A shortage of teachers and substitute teachers has been a real problem in some parts of the state," said State Rep. Chad Hays (R-Catlin). "This new law eliminates much of the red tape and bureaucracy that out-of-state and retired teachers face, and streamlines the process so we can do a better job of having highly qualified teachers in our classrooms."

“This commonsense law will help address the current teacher shortage in our state,” said State Rep. Bob Pritchard (R-Sycamore). “In a recent survey, 60 percent of participating schools reported they are having trouble filling certain teaching positions. This act

allows teachers who have comparable training in another state to work in Illinois and help prepare our students for promising futures.”

"Today's action is a good step toward addressing the shortage of substitute teachers in Illinois while also reducing burdensome regulations on those who want to teach," said State Rep. Tim Butler (R-Springfield). "This was a top issue for school administrators from my district and I applaud the Governor's action on this bill."