



# PHILADELPHIA FEDERATION of TEACHERS

TO: MEMBERS OF THE PENNSYLVANIA STATE LEGISLATURE

FROM: JERRY T. JORDAN, PRESIDENT, PHILADELPHIA FEDERATION OF TEACHERS

RE: PENDING LEGISLATION

DECEMBER 6, 2017

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Below, I outline the Philadelphia Federation of Teachers’ positions on several pieces of legislation. We look forward to working with you to ensure that schoolchildren have the resources they need to thrive.

### **SB 166: Paycheck Deception [OPPOSED]**

- The notion that union members are required to contribute to the union is unequivocally false. Membership and political contributions are two entirely different deductions, and both must be signed up for independently. We are vehemently opposed to SB 166 and any legislation that seeks to silence workers.
- This is anti-worker legislation, plain and simple.
- Union membership is voluntary in Pennsylvania, and the collection of dues is negotiated.
- SB 166 pertains to member’s voluntary contribution to a union’s political action fund. It is, like union membership itself, an entirely voluntary and separate “opt in” contribution.
- There is no financial gain to restricting this practice, and it would be detrimental to the working men and women who rely on collective bargaining for a fair salary and working conditions.
- Notably, this legislation does nothing to restrict practices of private sector corporations whose political activity is unfettered.

### **HB 1386: Certification Changes [OPPOSED]**

This legislation proposes changes to the certification bands as they currently exist. It is noteworthy that the certification bands underwent a major overhaul in 2013, and some of the changes outlined below, while proposed as a means of updating the certification system, simply revert the requirements back to the 2013 language (or very close to it).

Pre 2013	Current	Proposed
PreK-3	Pre K- 4	Pre K-4
Elementary K-6	4-8 by subject area	Elementary 1-6
Middle 6-9	7-12 by subject area	Middle 6-9
Specialized areas: PreK-12	Specialized areas: PreK-8	Specialized areas: PreK-12
Special Education: PreK-12	Special education: 7-12	Special education: PreK-12

- We are opposed to these changes because we believe they will further confound an already challenging certification process, and potentially have a significant impact on our younger teachers who may have a Level 1 certification in an area that will no longer be valid as they are pursuing their level 2 certification.
- Additionally, there are already varying certifications that exist from previous iterations of the certification law.
- Further shifting the certification requirements with very little pedagogical rationale is unwise.
- Districts are having difficulty getting per diem substitute teachers already; with the projected shortage of teachers within the next 5 years, these changes will exacerbate the shortage.

**HB 1401: Extraction Tax on the Marcellus Shale [SUPPORT, *without harmful environmental regulatory changes*]**

- We will continue to advocate for a shale tax, because it simply makes sense. With communities across the commonwealth in great need of funding, the notion that Pennsylvania remains the only major natural gas drilling state without a true extraction tax is unconscionable.
- House Bill 1401 should be passed as a clean bill. Amendments that allow for environmentally reckless provisions should be rejected.
- Pass a clean and true tax on the Marcellus Shale industry.

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