

brother, Joseph Mediate and a daughter-in-law, Porsia Pennel.

There is no doubt that Antoinette was a strong person of faith and loved her family above all else. I thank Mrs. Pennel for her love of community and all her hard work over the years. My condolences go out to her children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren, her entire family, and to all whose lives she touched.

INTRODUCTION OF THE INTERSTATE TEACHING MOBILITY ACT

HON. ANDRÉ CARSON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 9, 2020

Mr. CARSON of Indiana. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to reintroduce the Interstate Teaching Mobility Act. This broadly supported legislation will create a new voluntary program at the Department of Education (DOE) to allow licensed teachers to use their licenses across state lines. I am pleased that this legislation has been endorsed by both National Education Association (NEA) and Third Way.

In 2018, the United States experienced a shortage of 112,000 teachers in our classrooms across the country. This shortage deprives our students of high-quality learning and negatively affects student outcomes. Alarming, our country's projected annual shortage of teachers is expected to almost triple—to 316,000—by 2025. Teacher shortages disproportionately disadvantage students in underserved communities by widening student-to-teacher ratio which then negatively affects student achievement. Having low student-to-teacher ratios ensures that every student gets the attention they need, and struggling students are not left behind. In Indiana, this problem has gotten worse: between 2016 and 2020, the student-to-teacher ratio in my state grew from 16:1 to 17:1, bringing our state's student-to-teacher ratio well above the national average. In fact, Indiana remains the 42nd worst state in the nation for student-to-teacher ratios. And this teacher disparity does not affect all students equally: student-teacher ratios are highest in minority schools and schools with the most low-income schools.

Teacher shortages not only affect student-teacher ratios, they also limit the number of subject-matter teachers available for students. In Indiana, we have consistently faced major teacher shortages as defined by the Department of Education (DOE). In the most recent data available, Indiana continues to face a shortage of teachers in the subjects of mathematics, science, early childhood, and technology. Study after study has shown that teacher shortages which results in poor student-to-teacher ratios, insufficient subject-matter teachers, and the corresponding decline in education quality disproportionately disadvantage Black and Brown students.

One of the main reasons that many schools can't fill teacher shortages is because of the inconsistent state-by-state differences in teaching licensing requirements. This prevents licensed teachers from taking their skills and credentials to teach in other states without significant obstacles. These obstacles can include completing additional requirements, such as exams or coursework, or paying addi-

tional fees, even if the teacher has already completed an approved credentialing program or has a strong teaching record. Alarming, a majority of states do not accept out-of-state teaching credentials, further compounding shortages in disadvantaged areas.

As our nation's workforce becomes increasingly mobile, these requirements also dramatically decrease the flexibility of our nation's teaching workforce. For military spouses—who frequently relocate and among whom teaching is the second most common profession—or out-of-state college graduates who want to teach in their home state, this problem is especially pronounced. Long term, these roadblocks likely deter many prospective teachers from entering this vital profession. The bottom line is this: differing licensing requirements and lack of licensing reciprocity prevents too many teachers from serving in understaffed and underserved communities across state lines. And as we have seen in states like Indiana, our communities desperately need more high-quality teachers to lower student-teacher ratios and improve outcomes.

These obstacles have real and negative impacts on our students. Teacher shortages disproportionately harm students in underserved communities by denying them adequate teacher-student ratios that research shows help to enable student success. School administrators in underserved communities face difficulties in attracting out-of-state, high-quality teachers to fill their open teaching positions due to licensing inconsistencies.

That's why I am reintroducing the Interstate Teaching Mobility Act today. This legislation will create a voluntary interstate application program at the Department of Education (DOE) to allow licensed teachers to use their licenses across participating state lines.

This legislation will empower teachers to apply for open teaching positions in participating states without being subject to additional certifications or assessments. As a result, it will be easier for teachers to transfer their skills across participating state lines and provide more students with access to high-quality teachers. Importantly, this new flexibility will help alleviate teacher shortages—especially in disadvantaged communities and school districts—by allowing school administrators greater ability to hire more high-quality teachers.

Under this legislation, increased flexibility will not come at the cost of teacher quality. A participating state will be required to adhere to standards of content knowledge, pedagogical assessment, and performance assessments. This would ensure high standards for our teachers, while maintaining the essential role of the states in setting specific requirements for teaching in the state or obtaining licenses in the state.

The COVID-19 pandemic has taught us the importance of flexibility and teacher quality in ensuring that our students receive the best education. However, the current state-by-state inconsistencies regarding teacher licenses prevent many high-quality teachers from transferring their skills across state lines to serve in communities facing teacher shortages.

The Interstate Teaching Mobility Act will help address these issues by empowering teachers to transfer their skills across state lines and enabling school administrators to hire more high-quality teachers to fill teacher shortages, especially in disadvantaged communities, and lead to better student outcomes.

I urge the House to support this bill.

RECOGNIZING THE SERVICE OF ROBERT WILSON

HON. TRENT KELLY

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 9, 2020

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the U.S. Military service of Robert Wilson who is a recipient of the Purple Heart Medal. Robert "Bobby" Wilson, a native of Tupelo, Mississippi, volunteered for the U.S. Army in December 1951. Once he completed Basic Training in Hawaii, he entered the Korean War.

On February 6, 1953, Mr. Wilson was on patrol with other members of his company 1½ miles in Chinese territory called the Coonwah Valley. On that frigid night with the temperature below zero, he and his fellow men were attacked by the enemy who were firing mortar rounds. Mr. Wilson was seriously injured and needed to be transported to receive medical treatment. He was picked up by a medic and placed on a stretcher. Another firefight ensued before he could be taken to a Mobile Army Surgical Hospital where he would be treated for 18 shrapnel wounds over the course of 39 days. His courage and bravery under fire earned him the Purple Heart Medal. It is my honor to recognize Mr. Wilson for his service to America and his pledge to protect our freedoms.

In December 1953, Mr. Wilson completed his military service and returned home to his wife, Tomicene. The high school sweethearts remained in Tupelo where they raised two boys, David and Robert. The Wilsons were married 64 years before Tomicene passed away. In the years since her death, Mr. Wilson has often reflected on his days of service. "I'd do it again," Mr. Wilson said. "I still have shrapnel in my leg and pain, but I will always be proud that I served my country."

Mr. Wilson's service and sacrifices made to defend our nation will always be remembered. I am honored to call this Mississippi patriot a friend.

THE PASSING OF COMMUNITY LEADER AND ACTIVIST SHARON COTRELL

HON. ALAN S. LOWENTHAL

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 9, 2020

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to express my deep sadness on the passing of my dear friend Sharon Cotrell. A voice of the progressive community in Long Beach for over 40 years, Sharon was a consummate professional who cared deeply about our community and making the world a better place for us all.

She was the first woman dock worker on the West Coast, starting with SeaLand in 1974 at the Port of Long Beach, and eventually becoming the leader of Teamsters Local 692.

Karen Harper, a longtime friend, told the Long Beach Press-Telegram that Sharon was ". . . not welcomed by the men at first and