



FLORIDA CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS
The nonpartisan public policy voice of the Catholic Church in Florida

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**Prepared Remarks for House PreK-12 Appropriations Subcommittee on HB 7061
Regarding Teacher Preparation
James Herzog, Associate Director for Education
March 25, 2019**

Thank you Mister Chair.

The Florida Conference of Catholic Bishops represents more than 7,000 teachers, principals and vice principals serving 85,000-plus students from pre-k to 12th grade.

Today I am speaking for information only about three main points:

- 1.) Catholic and certain other nonpublic schools see state teacher certification as an important best practice and professional standard. Working with the dioceses, the Conference thus requires our Catholic school classroom teachers to obtain Florida Department of Education certification.
- 2.) Umbrella associations of nonpublic schools are allowed under state law to track annual Master In-Service Plan or MIP goals and credits and to create mentoring programs for novice teachers.
- 3.) HB 7061 is a well-intentioned effort to streamline certification for public school teachers in regards to the General Knowledge (GK) exam flexibility provided. However, lines 385-391 and 554-559 appear to only contemplate certified professionals at public or district schools.

Before the next Committee stop, the Conference would like to work with the sponsors to see if nonpublic school personnel could also gain access to streamlined certification.

Thank you Mister Chair.