



September 10, 2019

The Honorable Gavin Newsom  
Governor, State of California  
State Capitol, First Floor  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Request for Signature: AB 500 (Gonzalez)**

Dear Governor Newsom:

On behalf of EdVoice, I request your support on AB 500 (Gonzalez), which would require K-14 districts to provide employees paid leave, when required to be absent, for at least six weeks due to pregnancy, as specified.

Most employees not covered by state disability insurance (SDI) do not receive additional paid leave for pregnancy and pregnancy-related health complications, unlike private employees. This means employees are forced to exhaust their sick or vacation leave for pregnancy and childbirth, which depletes their accrued leave and limits their ability to fully recuperate prior to returning to work.

Female school employees are left with the decision to either “schedule” pregnancies based on the school calendar or try to get by without income. And, many end up leaving the profession for good after pregnancy making the structural teacher shortage even worse.

Today, there are over 150,000 students in California K-12 classrooms being taught by adults with waivers and no formal training as a teacher. Teacher shortages affect turnover within and across districts. And, high teacher turnover rates have a negative impact on pupil achievement and research demonstrates the effect is more pronounced in high-poverty schools.

AB 500 will help keep valued school employees in the workforce after having children, will end the discriminatory practice that forces female employees to utilize their leave balances, and will help ensure that every child in California is taught by a great teacher. We respectfully request your signature.

Sincerely,

Bill Lucia  
President & CEO, EdVoice

CC: Hon. Assemblywoman Lorena Gonzalez  
Anthony Williams, Legislative Affairs Secretary  
Jennifer Johnson, Legislative Affairs Deputy Secretary  
Karen Stapf Walters, Executive Director, State Board of Education  
Jeff Bell, Education Program Budget Manager, Department of Finance