



February 8, 2019

The Honorable Patrick O'Donnell  
Chair, Assembly Committee on Education  
1020 N Street, Room 159  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: AB 221 (Garcia) – OPPOSE**

Dear Chair O'Donnell:

On behalf of the EdVoice Board of Directors, I write to express opposition to AB 221, which would prohibit Teach For America (TFA) teachers – explicitly by name – from teaching in schools where at least 40 percent of students are low-income.

AB 221 ignores the significant successful impact TFA teachers have on academic outcomes of students, particularly students of color and from low-income backgrounds. This is imprudent, given California's current state of academic outcomes for students from low-income backgrounds – for example, only 1 in 5 low-income 11<sup>th</sup> graders passed the most recent Smarter Balanced math test – and research has demonstrated TFA teachers have had a significant impact on student achievement. A study of Los Angeles Unified by the Center for Education Policy Research at Harvard University found that TFA teachers are “more effective than the typical novice teacher.” Additionally, multiple randomized controlled trial studies by Mathematica Policy Research found that pre-k through second grade students of TFA teachers receive the equivalent of an additional 1.3 months of reading instruction per year compared to the students of non-TFA teachers and sixth through twelfth grade students taught by TFA teachers achieved 2.6 months or more per year of additional progress in math than those taught by non-TFA teachers – at the very same school.

AB 221 would also disproportionately impact teachers of color. State-approved intern credentialing programs, including TFA, are the most diverse pipelines to teaching in the state. While the general California teaching population is 38% people of color, 61% of current TFA teachers are people of color. Multiple research studies agree that students of color do better when they have at least one teacher of the same race. Eliminating one of the most diverse pipelines to teaching in California, then, will not only exacerbate the shortage of effective teachers, it is a callous disservice to students of color in poverty.

Additionally, as drafted, this measure is likely unconstitutional for more than one reason, including but not limited to, stripping a teacher of their due process rights, permanent status protections and seniority preference rights under existing contracts that have been collectively bargained under California law. These teachers could be forced to have a pink slip and stripped of due process rights even though they've already earned permanent status and been teaching in California classrooms for well over 5 years.

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The legislature should be creating more opportunities for a diverse teaching corps and focusing on improving the academic outcomes of California's students. This bill does neither. We strongly encourage you to oppose AB 221.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bill Lucia".

Bill Lucia  
President

Cc: Assembly Member Christina Garcia, 58<sup>th</sup> District  
Members of the Assembly Committee on Education