

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 2232

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**As Reported by House Committee On:**  
Appropriations

**Title:** An act relating to defining earnable compensation for the teachers' retirement system.

**Brief Description:** Defining earnable compensation for the teachers' retirement system.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Sehlin, H. Sommers and Fromhold.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Appropriations: 4/10/01, 4/18/01 [DP].

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Excludes from the definition of earnable compensation in the Teachers Retirement System bonuses and stipends received for attaining certification by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

**Majority Report:** Do pass. Signed by 28 members: Representatives Sehlin, Republican Co-Chair; H. Sommers, Democratic Co-Chair; Barlean, Republican Vice Chair; Doumit, Democratic Vice Chair; Lisk, Republican Vice Chair; Alexander, Benson, Boldt, Buck, Clements, Cody, Cox, Dunshee, Fromhold, Gombosky, Grant, Kagi, Keiser, Kenney, Lambert, Linville, Mastin, Mulliken, Pearson, Ruderman, D. Schmidt, Schual-Berke and Talcott.

**Staff:** Denise Graham (786-7137).

**Background:**

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) is an independent, nonprofit organization created in 1987 that provides advanced, voluntary certification for experienced teachers. The board was created as a way for the teaching profession to recognize highly accomplished teaching practice. The NBPTS is governed by a 63 member board of directors, comprised primarily of classroom teachers. The organization is funded through gifts and grants from foundations, corporations, individuals, the U.S.

Department of Education, and the National Science Foundation.

A certificate is awarded for 10 years and is intended to show that a teacher has been judged by his or her peers as one who meets high and rigorous professional standards. Teachers seeking certification must pay a \$2,300 fee. Private foundations, the NBPTS, and some school districts pay for some or all of the participation fee for a limited number of teachers. There are about 68 educators with NBPTS certification currently teaching in Washington and this number is expected to continue to grow.

At least one school district provides an annual \$1,000 bonus for the life of the certificate. The 2000 supplemental operating budget provides a two year bonus of \$3,500 for NBPTS teachers who obtained certification before or during the 2000-01 school year. A proviso states that the bonuses are not included in pension calculations.

The Teachers Retirement System provides a benefit at retirement that is based on the retiree's highest consecutive two year annual average earnable compensation. "Earnable compensation" includes salaries and wages earned by a retirement system member but excludes payments for unused sick and annual leave. Both employees and school districts must pay pension contributions on earnable compensation.

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**Summary of Bill:**

Excluded from the definition of earnable compensation for members of the Teachers Retirement System are bonuses or stipends received for attaining certification by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

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**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

**Testimony For:** None.

**Testimony Against:** This bill would result in National Board certification being treated like sick leave and annual leave. This is a rigorous program and teachers should be encouraged to become certified. If the stipends are excluded from earnable compensation for pension purposes, there will be no incentive to get the certificate.

**Testified:** Bob Maier, Washington Education Association; and Ken Kanikeberg, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

