

Association of Texas Professional Educators

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Supporting Your Freedom to TeachSM

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ATPE encourages lawmakers to protect the classroom

AUSTIN—The Texas House of Representatives is set to take up House Bill (HB) 400 Thursday, April 21. The following is a statement by Brock Gregg, governmental relations director for the 116,000-member Association of Texas Professional Educators (ATPE), regarding the bill, which the organization believes will jeopardize the quality and standards of education statewide.

“If this bill were to pass in its current form, it would be a sad day for Texas schoolchildren. HB 400 would diminish or in some cases completely eliminate standards that have benefited public education for years. Educator contract laws, a minimum salary schedule and the 22-to-1 class-size limit for grades K–4 have led to educational progress. This is not the time to move backward by overcrowding classrooms and enticing our best teachers to leave the profession.

“With the deep cuts that many districts are facing and the thousands of teachers and public school employees that are being laid off, this bill adds insult to injury.”

ATPE and other educator groups are asking legislators to support a “Protect the Classroom Amendment” to HB 400, a compromise proposal that would help districts deal with the budget crisis without sacrificing educational quality.

“Unless drastic changes are made to this bill, it will be detrimental to the success of our students and teachers,” Gregg said. “ATPE encourages all educators to contact their legislators about this bill asking them to oppose HB 400 in its current form and ‘Protect the Classroom’ instead.”

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The 116,000-member Association of Texas Professional Educators is the largest educators’ group in Texas and the largest nonunion educators’ group nationwide. Its membership consists of classroom teachers, para-educators, administrators, college students and retired educators.- ATPE is committed to advocating for better benefits for all educators, promoting a collaborative work environment and the right of educators to choose the association they feel represents their interests, and providing the best education possible for all Texas school children.