

Indian Employment Preference

HB 258-Wanzenried

Testimony Bud Williams, Deputy, Office of Public Instruction

Mr. Vice Chairman,

~~Madam Chairman~~, Members of the Committee

For the record my name is Bud Williams, Deputy Superintendent in the Office of Public Instruction

The Office of Public Instruction would like to go on record in support of this Legislation.

Slightly more American Indian students represent over 11% of the children in Montana's Schools today but we have less than ~~2%~~^{3.38%} of our teachers that are American Indian.

We need to encourage more American Students to become Teachers in our Montana Schools. Our office is convinced that we need American Indian teachers in our schools to act as role models for the children as well as provide the kind of culturally sensitive instruction that is so meaningful to our Indian students.

We are encouraging Schools of Education in Montana to educate and graduate more American Indian Teachers, and it is imperative that we place those new graduates in our schools! *Talk about MSUB Billings*

This legislation allows local School boards the option of adopting a policy for an Indian hiring preference, when candidates have substantially equal qualifications. And so whether Schools allow Indian Hiring preference will be dependent upon the local School Board.

If we are going to reduce the American Indian dropout rate in our schools and if we are going to provide a better education for these students we must do everything we can to develop and attract more American Indians into the classroom.

6.5 Supt