



# *Testimony*

to the  
**Assembly Higher Education Committee  
and  
Assembly Education Committee**  
on the  
**New Statewide Teacher Certification Requirements**  
**April 30, 2014**

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*Representing more than 600,000 professionals in education and health care*  
*Affiliated with the AFT – NEA – AFL-CIO*

*Testimony of  
Andrew Pallotta  
Executive Vice President  
New York State United Teachers  
to the  
Assembly Higher Education Committee  
Deborah J. Glick, Chair  
and to the  
Assembly Education Committee  
Catherine T. Nolan, Chair  
on the  
New Statewide Teacher Certification Requirements  
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Chairperson Glick, Chairperson Nolan, honorable members of the Assembly Higher Education and Education Committees and distinguished staff, I am Andrew Pallotta, Executive Vice President of New York State United Teachers (NYSUT). NYSUT represents more than 600,000 teachers, school-related professionals, academic and professional faculty in higher education, professionals in education, in health care and retirees statewide.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today on the new statewide teacher certification requirements. My testimony represents the concerns of over 75,000 faculty and professional staff who work in colleges and universities across New York State. These include the members of United University Professions at the State University of New York, the Professional Staff Congress of the City University of New York, and the faculty and staff at nearly all the SUNY community colleges in this state.

I am joined today by Dr. Frederick Kowal, President of United University Professions (UUP) and by Dr. Barbara Bowen, President of the Professional Staff Congress. You will hear from both Dr. Kowal and Dr. Bowen in a few moments.

I want to begin by expressing our sincerest gratitude to the Assembly, and by especially thanking you Chairperson Glick, and you Chairperson Nolan for your advocacy and leadership on calling for a delay on the implementation of the educative teacher performance assessment (edTPA).

We firmly believe that the introduction of your legislation and the call to hold this hearing were instrumental in providing a collaborative atmosphere whereby a positive first step was made possible and realized on this important issue. Yesterday, the Regents of the State Education Department (SED) provided an appropriate safety-net to students who do not achieve a passing score on the edTPA until June 30, 2015. These students will be able to obtain an initial teaching certificate provided they receive a satisfactory level of performance on the written assessment of teaching skills examination, which has been past practice for many years.

NYSUT supports this safety-net and believes that this regulatory change will be beneficial to students and faculty. Aside from your efforts, we believe that the action taken by the Regents yesterday was made possible due to the information that was provided to the legislature and SED by students and faculty in the field that outlined concerns with the edTPA. NYSUT has also received over 200 letters indicating problems the edTPA has created for faculty and students. If requested, this information can be made available to you and your colleagues.

While we believe there are outstanding substantive issues associated with the edTPA, we support its general framework. We are gratified that SED worked collaboratively with us and our higher education affiliates to bring about this needed regulatory change, which will relieve a great deal of anxiety in the field. Moreover, the decision to create a taskforce that includes representatives

from UUP, the PSC and P-12 members to review the rubrics and handbooks associated with edTPA, demonstrates SED's willingness to work collaboratively with faculty to ensure this new assessment is implemented properly and reflects the best practices of New York's teacher preparation institutions. The regulatory changes provide the needed time to have meaningful deliberations and we are hopeful that this taskforce will be successful in achieving these goals. We will keep you apprised of how this process moves forward.

In conclusion, I again thank you for all your continued efforts on this issue and for the opportunity to testify here today. You will now hear more detail regarding the outstanding substantive issues associated with this new assessment from my colleagues. I will turn the microphone over to Dr. Kowal who will be followed by Dr. Bowen.

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