

Support
PERA for All Driver Education Instructors
HB 247 Amendment #1 (Carroll-D)

HB 247 would require school districts that have elected to contract out their driver education programs to commercial driving instructors, to hold those instructors to the same observation and evaluation requirements of PERA as driving instructors who work in a high school setting. While commercial driving schools are required to employ a state licensed instructor to teach these students they are not monitored or observed in any way by the school district that has contracted them.

Background: When the Evidence Based Funding formula was passed in 2017, there was a provision that made contracting out driver education for school districts (particularly large suburban districts) a much easier prospect. While this may ease some of the financial burden faced by the school district, one of the drawbacks is that there is very little accountability on the part of the commercial driving schools. While driving instructors in a high school setting are under very clear and strict observation responsibilities that follow the laws as laid out by PERA, the commercial driving instructors are under no district scrutiny whatsoever. Once the district has contracted with a commercial driving school, they wash their hands of all responsibility as the Secretary of State has oversight of commercial driving schools and does not employ school district administrators who are trained to perform the same observations and evaluations of educators.

Rationale for Support: The Illinois Education Association, along with all other education stakeholders, supported PERA for all schools and educators in 2010. The IEA still supports PERA. Therefore, it only makes sense that any teacher, in any subject area, should be held to the same universal standards laid out by the General Assembly in statute, regardless of where their classroom setting may be.