

Date of Hearing: January 25, 2008

Committee: House Education

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Patricia Hamamoto, Superintendent

Title: H.B. 2482, Relating to Teacher Salaries

Purpose: Eliminates the salary differential between newly hired public school teachers with more than 6 years of experience and incumbent teachers in the department of education with the identical number of years of experience.

Department's Position: The Department of Education (Department) opposes H.B. 2482. Currently, the School Code allows a maximum of six years of prior teaching experience for salary placement credit for full-time experience in a recognized public or private school (K-12) in the United States (including territories, possessions or Department of Defense Dependents Schools overseas). The "teaching experience allowable" should be negotiated under a collective bargaining agreement as required under Chapter 89, Hawaii Revised Statutes, Collective Bargaining in Public Employment.

berg1-Liz

From: CSMGlenn@aol.com
Sent: Thursday, January 24, 2008 5:44 PM
To: EDNtestimony
Subject: testimony for HouseBill 2482

To Whom It May Concern,

Thank you for hearing my testimony concerning this bill. I am a veteran teacher with 22 years of teaching experience, 2 Bachelor of Arts degrees in Psychology and Social Sciences, and a Masters degree in Curriculum and Instruction. I am currently employed as a 3rd grade teacher in the Hawaii Department of Education. My husband is military, and we have been fortunate to live here for the last 2 years. I love teaching for Hawaii as I see some excellent things happening in the schools. However, I am disappointed in a policy that the DOE has adopted, particularly a separate pay scale for teachers that are coming here from out of state. Teachers from the mainland are only giving 6 years experience on the pay scale. Under this policy, I have lost 16 years of experience step pay increases. I am being paid approximately \$15,000 less than a local teacher that lives here with the same education and experience. I have really tried to understand this policy, but I am at a loss. There is no good reason I can think of to pay one person less than someone else who is doing the same work. I believe there is an Equal Pay for Equal Job ruling out there that fights this kind of discrimination. Teachers get paid extra per year of experience and extra education, but I am not being compensated for my years of experience and extra college experience. Even though I am at the top of my school in years of teaching and education, I am being paid far less. I am being paid about the same as a teacher with 6 years of experience with no extra education other than their original B.A. that they graduated with. This is morally defeating for me, as I feel like I am not on the same level playing field as my peers even though I have more experience and education. One shouldn't base their value on their pay, but it is demoralizing for me to not get paid for my work and experience. We are retiring here. I work hard and love what I do, but after 22 years of teaching in a career that I love, I have been looking for other jobs outside of teaching that will better compensate me, as with the lower pay and the higher cost of living, this has really hurt my family financially.

I will also speak, if I may, about many of my friends who are military and teachers. I have been blessed to work with some of the finest teachers out there whose spouses are in the military. These teachers have been exposed to many school districts on the mainland and have a wealth of materials, resources, and ideas. They have lived in many countries and can enrich our classrooms here about the world views, experiences, and cultures outside of Hawaii. They are also flexible and highly skilled as they have been trained by many different school districts, each district having different academic training for teachers. I really feel that mainland teachers have a lot to share and give to the Hawaii school district. Unfortunately, I know some military teachers that aren't bothering to teach during their time here because of the separate low pay scale they would receive. I hear about teacher shortages in the DOE and how they need teachers from the mainland, but yet they give them an inferior separate pay scale. That combined with the higher cost of living here adds up to the fact that you won't have many teachers wanting to come here and teach. Those that do soon find out they can't afford to live here and move back to the mainland. It just seems so counterproductive that the DOE spends lots of money for recruitment in the mainland, but doesn't offer any financial reason for them to come here. They get a lot of young, inexperienced teachers to come for a short while with romantic notions of swaying palm trees and glistening beaches, but the statistics show that many leave the profession after a couple of years or move back to the mainland. It really seems like a waste of money and resources to recruit on the mainland, when all they have to do to recruit is pay these mainland teachers the same as the local Hawaiian teachers. What the Hawaii Schools need are seasoned professionals, those who would move their families here and teach as a lifetime career.

One of the things I love most about Hawaii is the spirit of Aloha. I urge you to remember this welcoming spirit as you vote on this legislation. Let's welcome teachers from the mainland and compensate them equally. Together, we can make the Hawaii Schools the best in the nation!

Thank you for listening,

Sincerely,

Joy Glenn
92-7029 Elele St 25
Kapolei, HI 96707

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