

Date of Hearing: January 30, 2008

Committee: Senate Education

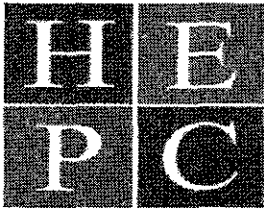
Department: Education

Person Testifying: Patricia Hamamoto, Superintendent

Title: S.B. 2112, Making an appropriation to hire teachers through the Teach for America program.

Purpose: To make an appropriation to hire 10 teachers from the Teach for America Program to teach in high needs schools in Hawaii.

Department's Position: The Department of Education (Department) does not support S.B. 2112 because its provisions are unnecessary. The Department currently has a contract with Teach for America that addresses many of the issues presented in this bill regarding personnel numbers and costs, related professional development costs, and ongoing assessments to determine the effectiveness of the Teach for America Program. The Department would prefer to negotiate these provisions with Teach for America under the authority of the Superintendent. The Department does not support appropriating funds for a specific teacher recruitment agency. In addition, funding priority must be given to the Board of Education's supplemental operating budget requests before this measure.



HAWAI'I EDUCATIONAL POLICY CENTER
Informing the Education Community

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Education

January 30, 2008, 1:15 pm, Room 225

by
Donald B. Young, Director
Hawai'i Educational Policy Center
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

SB 2112: Making an Appropriation to Hire Teachers Through the Teach for America Program

Chair Sakamoto, Vice Chair Tokuda, and Members of the Committee:

The Hawai'i Educational Policy Center (HEPC) opposes SB 2112, which appropriates funds to the department of education to hire ten highly qualified Teach for America teachers.

HEPC supports the intent of SB 2112, to appropriate additional funds to the department of education to hire additional highly qualified teachers. However we do have concerns about retaining appropriate authority over determination of qualifications.

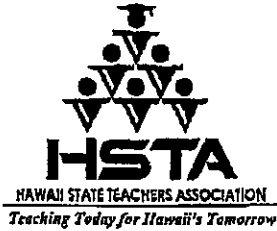
The discretion as to who the Department should hire to meet its highly qualified teacher needs lies with the Department which must evaluate all candidates, rather than assuming that Teach for America teachers are indeed highly qualified, or more qualified than other candidates. In fact, until teachers obtain a Hawai'i license and are teaching in the subject area and grade level for which they hold license, they are not considered highly qualified under the federal No Child Left Behind legislation.

An additional issue is the preference implied in the bill for new arrivals over our own local students who are graduating as highly qualified teachers from our Hawai'i Institutions of Higher Education. A more effective strategy would be to provide support for highly qualified local students to enter and remain in the teacher workforce.

As a recent report by the Hawai'i Educational Policy Center pointed out:

Barriers to Recruitment Process. Professors in Hawai'i college teacher preparation programs report that some newly licensed teachers are not offered positions in the DOE when they apply; that the initial posting of positions in the DOE is for tenured transfers and thus only after this period of time are such positions offered to new graduates, some of whom have already accepted positions in the private schools or outside education. Further, the emphasis on NCLB testing has "turned off" some prospective teachers who initially sought a career in the DOE, but instead seek employment in private schools or public charter schools.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.



1200 Ala Kapuna Street • Honolulu, Hawaii 96819
Tel: (808) 833-2711 • Fax: (808) 839-7106 • Web: www.hsta.org

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**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON
EDUCATION**

**RE: SB 2112 – MAKING AN APPROPRIATION TO HIRE TEACHERS
THROUGH THE TEACH FOR AMERICA PROGRAM**

January 30, 2008

**ROGER TAKABAYASHI, PRESIDENT
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION**

Chair Sakamoto and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association supports SB 2112, which makes an appropriation to hire 10 teachers from the Teach for America Program to teach in high-needs schools in Hawaii.

Currently there are teachers from the Teach for America Program teaching at Nanakuli in the Leeward District and in other schools with high needs. SB 2112 will boost the number of teachers needed to help meet the shortfall in these areas. The bill will serve as a mechanism for recruiting and retaining promising individuals into the teaching profession, and helping address the chronic need in Hawaii's public schools.

We urge the committee to pass this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

**Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Education
Conference Room 225**

January 30, 2008 at 1:15pm

**SB 2112 MAKING AN APPROPRIATION TO HIRE TEACHERS THROUGH THE
TEACH FOR AMERICA PROGRAM**

Chair Sakamoto, Vice-Chair Tokuda, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Kathryn Matayoshi, Executive Director of the Hawai'i Business Roundtable. I am testifying in support of Senate Bill 2112, which proposes an appropriation to hire teachers for high needs schools through the Teach for America Program.

The Hawai'i Business Roundtable has been a supporter of the Teach for America Program since it was first brought to Hawaii, and many of its members have made significant financial contributions to its ongoing success. We understand that it costs Teach for America between \$15,000 to \$20,000 per teacher. Expansion of the program would require public support as well as private support.

There are currently 97 teachers in Hawaii (49 in their second year of teaching, 48 in their first year of teaching). We understand that these teachers are making a difference in their schools and in the lives of their students.

There are many needs that face our public schools. Certainly the Teach for America program has been able to assist with one of them, getting more quality teachers into high needs schools. We understand that the contract between Teach for America and the Department of Education addresses some of the data collection and evaluation required by the bill. That information and evaluation is also an important factor in ongoing improvement and accountability.

In short, the Hawai'i Business Roundtable supports Teach for America and SB 2112.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.