



STATE OF HAWAII
HAWAII TEACHER STANDARDS BOARD
650 Iwilei Road, Suite 201
Honolulu, Hawaii 96817

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

RE: SB2663 SD1 Relating to the Hawaii Teacher Standards Board

Friday, February 22, 2008

DR. JONATHAN GILLENLINE, CHAIRPERSON
Hawaii Teacher Standards Board

Chairwoman Baker and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii Teacher Standards Board supports all but one of the changes proposed in SB2663 Relating to the Hawaii Teacher Standards Board.

In Section 2 of the bill, we believe the increase in the total members of the Board negates the proposal to increase the minimum number of licensed teachers to no fewer than seven (7), thus resulting in a professional board without a majority of professionals. We feel that the current number of 13 members has worked well and that the only change needed is to provide for a majority of teaching professionals on the Board. For this reason, we ask that on page 2, line 21 you revert "fourteen" back to "thirteen." This will then provide for a majority of teachers on the Hawaii Teacher Standards Board.

We strongly support Section 2's clarification of the term "regularly engaged in teaching." This terminology was originally included in the law because it is a term used by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards to clarify who on its board can sit as a "teacher." Last year the Office of the Attorney General said that someone who teaches only one class meets this definition and we disagree. Teachers feel strongly that a board member who sits as a representative of teachers must indeed be teachers, school counselors or school librarians and since the board already has seats for school administrators, teacher board members should not also be administrators. Teacher board members should spend more than 50% of their work assignment in teaching.

We also support the proposal in Section 2 that seeks to clarify the organizations that can nominate individuals to serve on the Board. Being nominated by these organizations means that the individuals represent the interests of their constituency group and not their own personal interests. However, we request further clarification of page 3, lines 20-21 since it is not clear whether the national organization or the local chapter makes the nomination.

In addition, we ask for your approval of the amendments in Section 2 that seek to ensure that the board composition is balanced and representative of the subject areas, grade levels, and

Testimony on SB2663 Relating to the Hawaii Teacher Standards Board
Page 2 of 2

geographic distribution of teachers and school administrators. This new language will describe what has already been past practice.

The Hawaii Teacher Standards Board along with all the members of the Teacher Education Coordinating Committee strongly supports Part III of the bill. We all have supported the development of a means by which we all can share information that will enable us to facilitate our work as well as provide data to be used for program improvement and for informing policy. The following is a list of examples.

HTSB needs:

- DOE reports about teachers' work site so that we can contact teachers more quickly.
- DOE reports of teachers terminated for cause so that we can determine whether an action on the teacher's license is needed.

DOE needs:

- HTSB reports of teachers' license status so that it can complete its NCLB reports as well as adjust teachers' probationary status as needed.
- HTSB reports of license denials or revocations so that these individuals are not employed by the DOE.

Teacher preparation institutions need:

- Aggregated data about their program completers—whether they sought a license and employment in Hawaii, where they are employed, how they are faring in the classroom, etc.
- The above data enables the institutions to demonstrate the degree to which their programs are meeting the State Approval of Teacher Education performance standards, i.e. whether their candidates are performing as desired.

State policymakers need:

- Data that provides an accurate picture of teacher preparation, distribution, fields, etc., so that they can better plan for future needs.

The Board supports the intent of Part IV of the bill, but we are confused about why a statutory change was needed to accomplish this. With regard to page 8, lines 4-7, I think a verbal request would have achieved the same result. In the past we have included information about how our budget has been used, but we were never advised that "income and expenditures" as mentioned in SB 2663 were missing and/or inadequately reported. We are even more confused by the amendments in Lines 6-7 on page 8 since we have annually provided hard data in our report about licenses issued, etc.

As noted in every report we have submitted, we want to work with the Legislature and we believe that open and ongoing communications is necessary if we are to do so.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Date of Hearing: February 22, 2008
Committee: Senate Ways and Means

Department: Education
Person Testifying: Patricia Hamamoto, Superintendent
Title: S.B. 2663, S.D. 1 (SSCR2283), Relating to the Hawaii Teacher Standards Board

Purpose: To change the composition of the Hawaii Teacher Standards Board to include seven licensed teachers regularly engaged in teaching members; defines the term "teachers regularly engaged in teaching"; and clarifies nominating procedures for board members. Appropriates funds for data/information management efforts of the board. Requires the Hawaii Teacher Standards Board to include in its annual report to the governor and the legislature information on income and expenditures and supporting data.

Department's Position: S.B. 2663, SD1 (SSCR 2283) has five (5) parts. The Department would like to comment on Part III as it relates to S.B. 2880 for which the Department has previously submitted written testimony.

The Department supports Part III in SB 2663, SD1 which authorizes the Hawaii Teacher Standards Board (HTSB) to coordinate an effort to create a network incorporating the teacher education institutions and the Department in order to support the free interchange of information valuable to all participating organizations and to provide funds to achieve this interchange. An electronic teacher licensing system would expedite operations and avoid the need for duplicative collection of data by multiple institutions and agencies. This sharing of information would enable all parties to expedite the processes required in the performance of their duties and responsibilities. In Section 4, the Department strongly recommends that the technical method for data exchange not be specified in the legislation. There are many acceptable methods of data exchange and it is not reasonable to require a specific method in the law.

As written, the bill requires network interface partners "to implement SOAP-based web services or to install turnkey hardware/software/communications translation solutions," which will require extensive and unnecessary expenses on the part of participating organizations in cases where the partner agencies have legacy systems. For example, for most of the types of data to be exchanged between HTSB and participating organizations, a simple encrypted nightly file transfer will accomplish all of the objectives without

requiring extensive modifications and/or complex “turnkey hardware, software, and communications translation solutions” as mandated in the bill. The Department’s personnel system for certificated employees is such a legacy system. The Department plans to replace this system over the next three years as part of an automation project and it would be a huge and unnecessary waste of resources to build a complex interface for the old system, when proven, long-established file transfer methods can accomplish the same result. Accordingly, we strongly recommend that the legislation not prescribe a specific data transfer method.

The Department recommends that the second sentence of the second paragraph of Section 4 be replaced by: “The Hawaii Teacher Standards Board and partner agencies are directed to determine a mutually acceptable data transfer method for the data to be exchanged.” The Department will work with participating organizations to agree on a list of transactions that each organization will be prepared to service and originate. The Department would appreciate the right to determine which licensing data the Department is willing to support in the interfacing of information.