

LINDA LINGLE
GOVERNOR



LINDA L. SMITH
SENIOR POLICY ADVISOR

**STATE OF HAWAII
GOVERNOR'S POLICY OFFICE
EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813
(808) 586-5330**

Testimony of Linda L. Smith
Senior Policy Advisor to the Governor

Before the

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
on
SENATE BILL No. 2691

Wednesday, January 30, 2008
1:15 P.M.

Chair Sakamoto, Vice Chair Tokuda, and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on Senate Bill 2691.

The Administration takes no position on Senate Bill 2691 at this time, but would like to commend this committee and the sponsors of this bill for the bold step toward performance based pay in public education.

As the session moves forward we would like to work with the Committee and affected individuals to assist in crafting legislation that best achieves the goal of rewarding performance and supporting our teachers.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments.



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 2691 – RELATING TO TEACHERS

January 30, 2008

ROGER TAKABAYASHI, PRESIDENT
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Chair Sakamoto and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association supports SB 2691, which provides those teachers receiving satisfactory service performance evaluations with annual step increases for five years.

HSTA has always supported the concept of annual step increases as a mechanism for recruiting and retaining teachers. Currently, step increases are negotiated every two years when new contract negotiations occur. SB 2691 allows for an annual step increase for at least the next 5 years, without the negotiation. Step increases would be determined by each teacher's performance evaluation.

HSTA has reservations with regard to the evaluation concept and how the annual step increases will be determined as stated in this bill. Teachers are not formally evaluated on an annual basis; instead a formal evaluation takes place in a 5-year cycle. Teachers found to be satisfactory during the formal evaluation are deemed to be satisfactory during the remainder of the 5 year cycle. With this in mind, we question how a teacher's yearly performance will be determined during the four years when no formal evaluation is scheduled.

HSTA would suggest an amendment to Section 1, sub letter (c), to read as follows:
"~~Upon receipt of a satisfactory performance evaluation, t~~The teacher shall be entitled to a one-step increase to the next highest step in the teacher's classification for the following fiscal year, as long as the teacher is deemed satisfactory. We believe this amendment may clear up any confusion regarding how a teacher will receive the step increase without a formal evaluation.

We urge the committee to pass this bill with suggested amendments.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.