

LINDA LINGLE
GOVERNOR



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Testimony of Linda L. Smith
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Before the

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
on
SENATE BILL No. 3039 and 2698

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 testimony in support of Senate Bills 2698 and 3039.

The Administration strongly supports allowing recipients of any State-approved teacher education program to receive their teaching degree anywhere, as long as they commit to teaching in the Hawaii public education school system for six years.

We prefer the language contained in the Administration's Senate Bill 3039 and we support the language in Senate Bill 2698 that allows a recipient to attend an out of state program. We request that whichever vehicle the committee passes reflect all of the components contained in the two measures.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of the measures.

Date of Hearing: January 30, 2008

Committee: Senate Education

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Patricia Hamamoto, Superintendent

Title: S.B. 2698, Relating to teachers.

Purpose: To authorize the expansion of the Hawaii educator loans program to include applicants from state-approved teacher education programs outside of the University of Hawaii and the State. Appropriates funds for the loans.

Department's Position: The Department of Education (Department) supports S.B. 2698 which authorizes the expansion of the Hawaii educator loans program to include applicants from State-Approved Teacher Education Programs (SATEP) outside of the University of Hawaii and the State. The expansion to other State-Approved Teacher Education Programs will encourage more students and teachers to complete their programs in teaching. The Department is in agreement with the loan requirements for teachers who complete a SATEP to return and teach in a hard-to-fill location for the Department for a period of time and that the educator loan program be administered by the University of Hawaii, in partnership with a financial institution. Expanding the Hawaii educator loan program should attract more teachers to the Department. However, funding priority must be given to the Board of Education's supplemental operating budget requests before this measure.

Date: January 28, 2008

Committee: Education

Hearing: Wednesday, January 30, 2008, 1:15 p.m. State Capitol, Conf. Rm. 225

Person Testifying: Dr. Valentina M. Abordonado, Director, Teacher Education Program, Hawai'i Pacific University

Title of the Bill: SB 2698

Purpose of the Bill: Authorizes the expansion of the Hawaii educator loans program to include applicants from state-approved teacher education programs outside of the University of Hawaii and the State. Appropriates funds for the loans.

Hawaii Pacific University Teacher Education Program's Position:

The Hawaii Pacific University Teacher Education Program (HPU TEP) is dedicated to preparing highly qualified teachers for the State of Hawaii, and as such, supports the Legislature's continuing efforts to address the critical shortage of teachers.

The Hawaii Pacific University Teacher Education Program concurs with the intent of this Bill and strongly supports the appropriation of funds for this program.

The proposed revision to the bill would allow teacher candidates enrolled in the state-approved teacher education program at Hawaii Pacific University to participate in this program, which was previously afforded only to students enrolled at public institutions. All institutions, both public and private, prepare highly qualified teachers for the Hawaii State Department of Education and no one institution is equipped to meet the critical need for teachers; therefore this program should be extended to all programs that serve our State.

As the largest private institution of higher learning in the State of Hawaii, HPU's Teacher Education Program represents a significant pipeline into the profession of education. Our field-based, standards-driven, inquiry-oriented, and technology-rich curriculum forms the basis for a quality program that prepares highly qualified teachers for Hawaii's public schools. The vast majority of our students are employed as teachers for the State Department of Education, and we have already begun to make significant contributions to easing the critical shortage of teachers in our State. Therefore, we believe that the Legislature would be well-served to support this bill as it would provide an important incentive for all individuals seeking to serve Hawaii as public school teachers.

Antonette Port
Educational Consultant
808-941-9624

January 30, 2008

Senator Norman Sakamoto, Chair
Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Vice Chair
Committee on Education

**Testimony: SB 3039 Relating to the Hawaii Educator Loan Program
and SB 2698 Relating to Teachers**

My name is Antonette Port. I am an educational consultant currently on contract with Hawaii Pacific University. I am also a retired State Department of Education employee having served as an Educational Officer with the Department for 32 years.

Both SB 3039 and SB 2698 will provide an incentive for individuals who aspire to be teachers in the public schools of Hawaii. It is especially significant that this educator loan program is open to teacher candidates from any state approved teacher education program recognized by the Hawaii Teacher Standards Board.

I urge your committee to approve both bills or combine them into one bill.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Antonette Port