

LATE TESTIMONY

Date of Hearing: January 30, 2008

Committee: Senate Education

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Patricia Hamamoto, Superintendent

Title: S.B. 3039, Relating to the Hawaii educator loan program

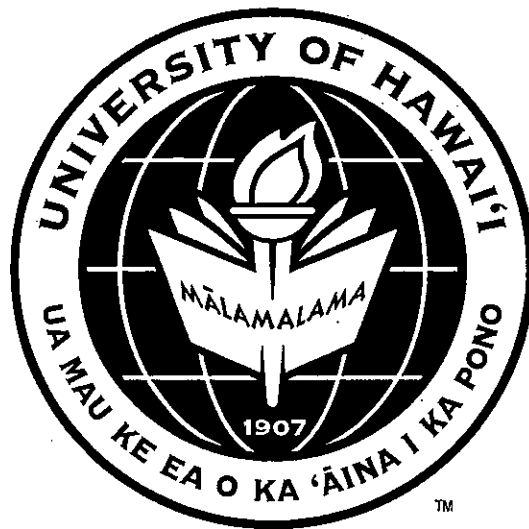
Purpose: To allow recipients of awards from the Hawaii Educator Loan Program to attend any university or college with a State-approved teacher education program and allows them to teach at traditional public or charter schools as a way to repay the loan.

Department's Position: The Department of Education supports S.B. 3039, which will allow recipients of assistance from the Hawaii educator loan program special fund to attend any State-Approved Teacher Education Program recognized by the Hawaii Teacher Standards Board. Expanding the number of State-Approved Teacher Education Programs will increase the number of opportunities for prospective teacher candidates.

Allowing loan program participants to teach at charter schools to reduce the size of their loan and increasing the loan forgiveness percentage from 25 to 50 percent on the total amount of the loan award and interest to be waived (if the loan recipient teaches in a public or charter school), should also increase the pool of qualified teacher candidates for public and charter schools.

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UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I SYSTEM
LEGISLATIVE TESTIMONY



SB 3039 – RELATING TO THE HAWAII EDUCATOR LOAN
PROGRAM

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Education
January 30, 2008 at 1:15 pm

by

Karen C. Lee
Interim Associate Vice President for Student Affairs
University of Hawaii System

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SB 3039 – Relating to the Hawai'i Educator Loan Program

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

The purpose of SB 3039 is to allow recipients to attend any state-approved teacher education program recognized by the Hawai'i teacher standards board, to define the years of service as 6 years, and to allow loan recipients to teach in charter schools as eligible schools for the purposes of the fulfillment of loan program.

The University supports the intent of the Legislature to broaden the scope of the program to include students who attend non-University of Hawai'i institutions as there is a shortage of teachers across the State. If adequately funded, we believe the Hawai'i Educator Loan Program can be of value to students. However, as an institution of higher education, the University of Hawai'i is not equipped to serve as a loan agency, and the expansion of the loan program would cause an administrative burden to the University, in particular because of the difficulties of administering a loan to students who would attend non-UH institutions. As a result, we oppose the bill as written.

Should it be the desire of the Legislature to pass this bill, we respectfully request that there be an appropriation to adequately fund the administration of the expansion of this program.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.