

Date of Hearing: Monday, February 8, 2010

Committee: House Committees on Education and  
Labor and Public Employment

Person Testifying: Garrett Toguchi, Chairperson, Board of Education

Title of Bill: H.B. No. 2306, Relating to Salaries

Purpose of Bill: Repeals the statutory salary caps of the superintendent of education, deputy superintendent, assistant superintendents, complex area superintendents, and state librarian.

Board's Position: Chairpersons Takumi and Rhoads, Vice Chairpersons Berg and Yamashita, and members of the House Committees on Education and Labor and Public Employment, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of H.B. No. 2306.

This bill would authorize the Board of Education (Board) with full flexibility and latitude to establish the salaries of the superintendent of education, deputy superintendent, assistant superintendents, complex area superintendents, and state librarian, by repealing the statutory salary caps on these positions.

As the appointing body of the superintendent and state librarian, authorizing the Board with greater flexibility over the salaries of these positions will enable the Board to establish salaries that are commensurate with various factors, including the scope and responsibilities of these individual positions, as well as the experience

and skills that individuals bring to these positions.

The Board notes that the cap on the superintendent's salary was last established in 2000 and the cap on the state librarian's salary was last established in 2001. The Board believes that these leadership salaries must be competitive to attract and retain highly qualified and effective individuals to lead our public school and public library systems.

Furthermore, with the salaries of the deputy superintendent, assistant superintendents, and complex area superintendents capped under current law at no greater than 80 percent of the superintendent's salary, there is significant disparity among these salaries and many principals and other school-, district-, and state-level administrators who earn more than the deputy superintendent, assistant superintendents, and complex area superintendents.

While the salaries of other state positions have increased, the salaries of the superintendent and state librarian, as well as the Department of Education (DOE) leadership salaries that are tied to the superintendent's salary cap, have not increased in nearly a decade. There are four principals whose salaries are higher than the superintendent's \$150,000 salary cap. About 100 principals earn between \$121,000 to \$149,000, and are within 80 percent of the superintendent's salary, and about the

same number of principals are paid more than the deputy superintendent. A far greater number of principals earn more than complex area superintendents. It is clear that the salaries of the Department's top leadership are not commensurate with their scope and breadth of responsibilities.

A January 2009 report by Watson Wyatt and the DOE included a compensation analysis of the salary of the superintendent, deputy superintendent, and complex area superintendents, and the salaries of the assistant superintendents. The report indicated that, for example:

- Hawaii's superintendent salary of \$150,000 is 59.87 percent below the market average of \$250,537 for comparable position;
- Hawaii's deputy superintendent salary of \$120,000 is 69.88 percent below the market average of \$171,723 for comparable position;
- A Hawaii complex area superintendent's salary of \$115,000 is 81.40 percent below the market average of \$141,271 for comparable position; and
- The Hawaii assistant superintendent-chief financial officer's salary of \$115,000 is 67.42 percent below the market average of \$170,578 for comparable position.

A March/April 2008 Scholastic Administrator article that included the 25 largest school districts in the United States listed Hawaii as the tenth largest in size, with Hawaii's superintendent earning \$150,000, the lowest paid superintendent among the top 10 districts and the lowest paid among all 25 districts listed.

To hire and retain individuals with the best expertise, knowledge, and experience to run our public school and public library systems, the Board requires the ability to attract the best quality professionals to these leadership positions. As a community, we must hold the positions of the superintendent and state librarian and their responsibilities in the highest regard because it is through their leadership, vision, commitment, and talents that contribute to the running of a quality public school system and public library system. Affirming the importance of these top leadership positions must extend to attractive, fair, and competitive compensation.

The breadth of responsibilities, complexities of the jobs, and the importance of the superintendent's and state librarian's positions are reflected in that the superintendent oversees a statewide public school system of 258 public schools, 15 complex areas, and 172,327 students; and the state librarian oversees a statewide public library system of 51

public libraries on Hawaii, Kauai, Lanai, Maui, Molokai, and Oahu.

The Board firmly believes that the salaries of the superintendent and state librarian positions should reflect the importance of their positions, the breadth and scope of their work, and the worth that must be extended to draw a high caliber of individuals to the positions.

The Board is currently developing a search process to hire a permanent superintendent of education. The Board believes that this bill will enable the Board to attract and recruit a greater number of applicants to lead our public education system, and allow Board members to select from a range of individuals with multiple talents, and leadership, academic, and professional experiences. The flexibility of the Board to establish competitive and fair salaries for these positions, along with performance measurements, will ensure accountability and feedback to these individuals.

Lastly, the Board views H.B. No. 2306 as being a proactive measure to support the premium value we should place on education in our State.

For these reasons, the Board supports H.B. No. 2306. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

House Committee on Education  
House Committee on Labor and Public Employment

**Date of Hearing: Monday, February 8, 2010**

**TESTIMONY: HB 2306 Relating to Salaries**

**Submitted by: Breene Harimoto, Board of Education Member**

**POSITION: Comments**

Chairpersons Takumi and Rhoads, and members of the House Committees on Education and Labor and Public Employment, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on HB 2306.

My name is Breene Harimoto. I am a member of the Board of Education (Board) but I am submitting this testimony as an individual Board member and not on behalf of the Board.

The Board voted to support this measure. While I do not wish to contradict the Board's testimony, I ask that you consider my comments.

First, please consider the timing. While I have always supported the Board having complete authority to establish the salary of Superintendents and the State Librarian, I ask that you consider the timing of lifting the existing salary caps. We are in the middle of a deep fiscal crisis. Hundreds of state workers are losing their jobs and thousands have had their salaries reduced. Countless more will be affected as this crisis continues. The Board is now discussing the possibility of slashing more programs and positions to meet continued budget cuts. Is this the right time to allow the Board to increase the salary of the Superintendent to \$200,000 or \$300,000 or more?

Second, please consider the comparison with other departments. One of the justifications for lifting the salary cap is that some principals are currently being paid more than the Superintendent. In most, if not all, other departments of the State and City, department directors are not the highest paid person in their respective departments. Because of collective bargaining agreements, salaries of subordinates have continued to increase while salaries of directors have not. This is a state-wide issue, not one limited to the Department of Education.

Third, please consider the morale of employees. How will our teachers and staff feel when their salaries have been reduced and their friends and co-workers have lost their jobs, then the Board hires a new Superintendent at perhaps twice the salary of the prior Superintendent? And with hiring a new Superintendent at a much higher salary, it is likely that the salaries of the Deputy Superintendent, Assistant Superintendents, and Complex Area Superintendents will also be significantly increased. Employees will quickly figure out that the legislature did not appropriate more money to fund these significant salary increases, but rather, the money for these salary increases would come from what they would view as their reduced salaries and salaries of their former co-workers whose positions were eliminated. Teachers and staff get salary reductions and are struggling with great personal financial hardships while their bosses get huge salary increases. Might this situation cause a serious morale problem that would significantly impact productivity of remaining staff who are being asked to do more with less?

Finally, please consider this thought: Doing the right thing at the wrong time does not make it right. Perhaps this is not the right time to lift the salary caps.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

## berg1-Matthew

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**From:** Calvin Endo [calvinendo@msn.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 08, 2010 7:50 AM  
**To:** EDNtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in Favor of HB 2306 and HB 2486

To: COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION and COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT

From: Calvin Endo, Hawaii State PTSA board member

Aloha Representative,

I want to encourage you to vote in favor of HV 2306 and HB 2486.

I started to work for the DOE at Waianae High School after retiring from Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard. I was shocked to find out what our teachers and DOE employees make. Compared to national averages our DOE employee are one of the lowest paid, shameful. Just on this fact alone HB 2306 should be made into law. The other fact is that many employers pay their employees according to the hazards they face during their work hours. Anyone working with students today face many hazards/threats that did not exist when many of you and I need not face. So I ask that you support this bill.

Furlough Fridays should never have been allowed. This is rubbing our children of proper educational hours/days. Furlough Fridays have shown our children that law makers do not care if the children of Hawaii are educated. We at the high school level see and hear it from our student or should I say not seeing them at school since you sent a clear message that education is not important to the law makers of Hawaii. The only reason Furlough Fridays were allowed was that Hawaii does not have a law that require a minimum amount of days/hour per school grade or school year. This is why HB 2486 is very import that you vote in favor of the bill, for this bill will ensure that Furlough Fridays will not happen again.

Thank you for doing the right thing!

I'm sorry for submitting this so late. But I had a more pressing matter I had to attend to. As you know we at Waianae lost a great teacher, Mr. Michael Anderson. If you watched or read the news of his accident you would have heard my name since Mr. Anderson and I were very close and because of this I received the honor to field most of the calls and to help plan his memorial service. In Honor of Mr. Michael Anderson please do the right thing and vote in favor of HB 2306 and HB 2486.

I understand you are schedule to meet on:

DATE: Monday, February 8, 2010  
TIME: 2:00 p.m.  
PLACE: Conference Room 309  
State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street

HB 2306

Status

RELATING TO SALARIES.

Repeals the salary caps of the superintendent, state librarian, and other state and complex area leadership positions specified under section 302A-621, Hawaii Revised Statutes.

EDN/LAB, FIN

HB 2486

Status

RELATING TO EDUCATION.

Establishes a minimum number of instructional hours per school year for each grade.

EDN/LAB, FIN

Calvin Endo

Waianae High School's PTSA President and Hawaii State PTSA Board Member