



LATE TESTIMONY

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

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND HOUSING

RE: SB 1308 Relating to Education

Friday, February 6, 2009

DR. JONATHAN GILLENLINE, CHAIRPERSON
Hawaii Teacher Standards Board

Chairman Sakamoto and Members of the Committee:

The members of the Hawaii Teacher Standards Board are extremely disheartened by SB 1308 Relating to Education. It took at least 20 years of hard work by Hawaii's teachers starting in the 1970's through 1995 before we were finally granted a self-governing board like other professions had had for decades and, in some cases, even centuries earlier. It took another 6 years before our board was empowered with the same authority assigned to other boards. All appearance of a conflict of interest for the Employer as also licensing gatekeeper has been removed.

In the 6 years that we have had full authority of a licensing board, we believe we have contributed greatly to teacher quality in Hawaii.

We raised standards for teachers by developing the Hawaii's first Teacher Performance Standards and then aligned them to national standards. We promoted National Board Certification for highly accomplished teachers, supported incentives for teachers pursuing board certification, and now provide support sessions for any teacher going through the process. We aligned the standards used for the State Approval of Teacher Education to the standards used by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education.

We promote the continued quality of licensed teachers through our license renewal process and through enforcement of our Code of Ethics. We also promote quality in Hawaii's teacher preparation programs by offering ongoing training for faculty in our local programs. We acknowledge the professional growth of teachers through our Advanced License, recruitment of National Board Certification candidates, allowing teachers to add fields to their license.

We have strongly advocated for matters related to teacher quality. We conducted the first and only inventory of State policies impacting teacher quality, made recommendations for improvement and partnered with others to push for legislation that supported or enhanced teacher

quality. The Hawaii Educator Loan program, Professional Development Schools funding, National Board Certification incentives and support, and establishment of a statewide mentoring and induction program are examples of bills we helped to draft. We have sponsored Teacher Quality Symposia so that interested stakeholders could lend their voices to the discussion.

While we have accomplished much, there is still more to be done. SB 1308 diminishes the accomplishments of the Hawaii Teacher Standards Board and reading through SB 1308, it is difficult to discern its motivation. Is its purpose to take away from teachers an important hallmark of all professions—self-governance? If so, it successfully accomplishes this by returning the authority to set standards and issue licenses back to the Employer and by removing all representation by teachers in these functions. Is its purpose to get rid of standards for teachers? It clearly does this by deleting all references to the establishment of standards in §302A-802. Is its purpose to minimize the importance of a teaching license by removing all penalties against those who purport to have a license, but who do not? If so, Sec. 18 of the bill successfully does this. Or is its purpose to make teachers' license fees help pay for Board of Education expenses? This is cleverly accomplished in Sec. 9 of the bill.

In view of what is proposed in SB 1308, my colleagues and I strongly oppose this bill and urge you not to pass it out.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.