

SB2435

Date: 02/03/2010

Committee: Senate Education and Housing

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Kathryn Matayoshi, Interim Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: SB 2435 RELATING TO EDUCATION.

Purpose of Bill: Appropriates a portion of the department of education's annual operating budget to support Teach For America in Hawaii to train, sustain, and prepare outstanding college graduates in order to become teachers in the Hawaii department of education.

Department's Position: The Teach for America (TFA) program is a recruiting partnership the Department is utilizing to address teacher shortage areas currently on Oahu and the Big Island of Hawaii. The program provides recruits from a variety of backgrounds to teach in Hawaii public schools, focusing especially on schools receiving Title I funds. While the Teach for America program is a valuable partnership, the level of budget reductions already sustained by the Department's existing programs has been severe. If \$3 million of the funds remaining in the department's budget by the end of the 2010 Legislative session is required to be diverted from other programs to the TFA program, the impact could directly affect school level programs. For example, if the funds were taken from the weighted student formula, schools may be forced to reduce the number of teachers in their academic and financial plans and thereby affecting the quality of instruction to students. The impact statewide could mean reducing 53 full-time, 10-month teaching staff. The Department respectfully asks that the legislature defer this bill or if passed, to appropriate funds accordingly.



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Education and Housing

Wednesday, February 3, 2010 at 1:15 p.m.
Conference Room 225

Written Testimony
By
Christine K. Sorensen
Dean, College of Education
University of Hawaii at Mānoa

SB 2435: RELATING TO EDUCATION (TFA)

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

The University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, College of Education commends the intent of this bill to provide assistance in having an adequate pool of highly qualified teachers to meet the needs of the state. The College of Education has participated in the partnership with Teach for America and the Hawai'i Department of Education. In fact, the bulk of TFA candidates in Hawaii are prepared through the Master of Education in Teaching (MEdT) program and the post-baccalaureate and masters program in Special Education delivered by the UHM College of Education. Our experience with these candidates has been very good. And we are committed to continuing to work collaboratively with the Department of Education to ensure that there are qualified teachers in Hawai'i's schools. However, we cannot support this bill for several reasons.

First, in light of the current budget context and severe levels of restriction from DOE's budget, we believe that there is clear reason for hesitation, anticipating the impact of an additional \$3M reduction upon current levels of educational services, upon schools and most immediately, upon students. Although TFA is a worthy program that is successful in recruiting teacher candidates to Hawai'i, a further reduction to DOE's budget at this time gives us pause.

Second, we believe that alternative routes to certification, including programs such as TFA and other efforts, must be evaluated before a single route is specified for additional funding.

We appreciate the legislative support for meeting Hawai'i's teacher workforce needs with high quality teachers. We applaud the Senate for its attention to education issues.

However, we believe that a better approach would be to direct the DOE to review its own resources and to prioritize teacher recruitment and placement within their budget. Then allow them to determine how best to support teacher recruitment and preparation efforts, whether that be through TFA, local programs, or a combination of both.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



1200 Ala Kapuna Street λ Honolulu, Hawaii 96819
Tel: (808) 833-2711 λ Fax: (808) 839-7106 λ Web: www.hsta.org

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TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON
EDUCATION & HOUSING

RE: SB 2435 – RELATING TO EDUCATION.

February 3, 2010

WIL OKABE, PRESIDENT
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Chair Sakamoto and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association opposes Senate Bill 2435.

In 2008 the HSTA testified in favor of a legislative appropriation to hire recent college graduates recruited by Teach for America. We believe that the program has helped with our teacher shortage. It has introduced teaching to graduates who may not have otherwise considered entering the profession.

This bill mandates the department to expend three million dollars from a budget that is cut to almost bare bone. There are predictions that the next fiscal year will bring even further cuts and will put the department even further in the hole.

We urge the committee to hold this bill and let the Board of Education determine the funding level for this program.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

February 3, 2010 at 1:15pm
Testimony to the
Senate Committee on Education
Conference Room 225

**SB 2435 TEACH FOR AMERICA; DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION;
APPROPRIATION**

Chairman Sakamoto, Vice-Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Jill Murakami Baldemor, Executive Director of Teach For America • Hawaii. I appreciate the introduction of Senate Bill 2435 and testify in support of this Bill.

Teach For America is a corps of outstanding recent college graduates of all academic majors who commit two years to teach in underserved urban and rural schools and become lifelong advocates working for systemic educational reform from all sectors. Our mission is to build the movement to eliminate educational inequity by enlisting our most promising future leaders in the effort. Nationally, there are 7,300 corps members teaching in 35 regions across the country while 17,000 Teach For America alumni continue working from inside and outside the field of education for the fundamental changes necessary to ensure educational excellence for all students.

For the 13 million children growing up in poverty in America, the reality is that by the time they are in 4th grade, they will be, on average, three years behind their peers from more affluent communities. Only half will graduate from high school, and those who do will perform, on average, at the level of eighth graders in higher-income communities. Here in Hawai'i, too many of our children living in poverty are falling behind in similar ways. But it doesn't have to be that way. I have seen teachers demonstrate in their classrooms every day that this achievement gap can be closed – that all of our children, even low income children, can achieve the skills they need to be successful in life.

Let me share just a few stories.

Sheri Saluto is a 2008 corps member, who teaches 4th grade at Kamaile Academy in Waianae. The majority of her students are classified as free and reduced lunch under the Federal Title I program and report Native Hawaiian ancestry. With Sheri's hard work, encouragement, and creativity in instruction, her class collectively made an impressive 1.9 years of reading growth, as measured by a national assessment, Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA), in just one year's time.

At the secondary level, Sarah Park is a 2008 corps member who teaches 8th grade Pre-Algebra and Algebra at Wheeler Middle School. In addition to being a Title I school, many of Sarah's students are from military families, where student transiency is an issue. Nevertheless, last year, Sarah helped her students to grow an average of 1.8 years of growth in one year, as measured by NWEA. Her success is continuing this year, with students scoring 85% and 83% on the Hawai'i Quarterly Assessment for

Quarters 1 and 2 respectively, which were the highest scores in her grade. In order to achieve these results, Sarah works hard to invest her students, celebrate their successes, and problem solve around areas for improvement. Importantly, she also constantly reflects and adjusts her own teaching practices.

Finally, Sarah Firman is a 2009 corps member and special educator for eight students with moderate cognitive disabilities at Nanakuli Intermediate School. Although they are in 7th and 8th grade, they read on average at a 1st grade level. Ms. Firman does not let that disparity discourage her. When she was told that her student “D”, who is classified with Traumatic Brain Injury, “does not talk and can not do math,” Ms. Firman made it her mission to prove that individual wrong. Today, “D”, along with the rest of her class, is mastering lower elementary math material at over an 80 percent proficient level. In addition, “D” now will give answers to math problems out loud and even read her journal in the front of the class. Under the guidance of Ms. Firman, her kids are breaking the mold and proving that they are students who can succeed and grow.

Sheri, Sarah P., and Sarah F., are extraordinary teachers, but they are not alone. Our program directors manage all 120 Hawai'i corps members to producing results that will close the achievement gap for our students in Hawaii. These 120 teachers, including 13 Kama'āina corps members who returned home to give back to their Hawai'i community through Teach For America, are impacting 9,000 of our island keiki. They are going above and beyond to close the achievement gap for their students. Their principals are pleased to have them on staff. At the end of last year, principals in Hawai'i were surveyed. 100% of responding principals reported that Teach For America teachers were as effective, if not more effective, than other first year teachers, with 76% of those principals rating our teachers as above or much above average. Dr. Gail Awakuni, principal of Campbell High School and National Principal of the Year (2005), presently has 15 Teach For America teachers at Campbell High School. She endorses our program and teachers, and her letter of recommendation is attached for your review and reference.

Independent research has also shown that these stories are not exceptions but are typical. In 2004, Mathematica (*The Effects of Teach For America on Students*) found that students taught by Teach For America teachers make more progress in both reading and math in a year than would typically be expected. It also found that these students attain significantly greater gains in math than students of the other teachers in the study, even veteran and certified teachers. These results were supported in a 2008 study by the Urban Institute (*Making a Difference? The Effects of Teach for America in High School*), which found that Teach For America corps members have a positive impact on student achievement relative to other teachers, including those who are fully certified in their subject areas.

Significantly, however, Teach For America's impact extends beyond corps members' two year commitment as 66 percent of alumni nation-wide continue to work or study full time in the education field after their corps experience. In regions where Teach For America has been established for many years, alumni play significant roles in

educational leadership. For example, approximately 325 alumni remain in the Greater New Orleans area, including 185 of whom remain teaching full time. Sixteen of these alumni are school leaders, including four of the top-performing charter schools, and several have founded or hold leadership roles in a number of other organizations, including New Schools for New Orleans, the Recovery School District, KIPP, TeachNOLA, Communities in Schools, the Youth Empowerment Project, and Teach For America.

Here in Hawai'i, we hope to be able to similarly grow our alumni movement and leadership pipeline. Last year, of our 44 Teach For America teachers who completed their two-year commitment, 27 or 61% decided to stay to teach a third year in Hawai'i. They join a handful of alumni who were here before Teach For America opened in Hawai'i, including Stephen Schatz, a 1994 Teach For America alumnus, who is currently a Complex Area Superintendent for the Honolulu District, Petra Schatz, a 1995 Teach For America alumna, who is currently a Language Arts Specialist with the Department of Education, and Patricia Halagao, a 1992 Teach For America alumna, who is currently a Professor in the Education Department at the University of Hawaii. These alums came to Hawaii before we had a Teach For America • Hawaii site. Now, with a Hawaii region established, it is exciting to imagine the possibilities as our alumni base grows.

Growing our impact starts with growing our corps size. We have an unbelievable opportunity to increase this number as over 50,000 of our nation's top college graduates will compete for 4,500 slots in Teach For America next year. With the help of Senate Bill 2435, which will enable us to continue to recruit, train, and support Teach For America teachers for Hawai'i, we would be able to grow our incoming corps size by 50% this coming year, impacting an additional 2,000 students in Hawai'i. The benefits of an increased corps size would extend beyond corps members' two year commitment as they join our alumni base. While we know you are facing incredible budget challenges, this outpouring of interest in Teach For America is one silver lining to this recession. We would love to work with you to seize this opportunity to bring even more great teachers and leaders to serve Hawaii's children, and even more of our Kama'āina leaders back home through Teach For America.

My Teach For America experience began as a 1995 corps member and second grade teacher in Washington Heights, New York City. The experience had a profound affect on me and, though I left teaching and took a 10 year path into the legal profession, I returned to Teach For America in 2007 to help establish this organization in Hawaii – my home – because I know the teachers our program brings will make an incredible difference in the education of our keiki and in our Hawaii community.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

LINDA LINGLE
GOVERNORPATRICIA HAMAMOTO
SUPERINTENDENT

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
JAMES CAMPBELL HIGH SCHOOL
91-980 North Road
Ewa Beach, Hawaii 96706

January 29, 2010

Jill Baldemor
Teach for America-Hawaii
500 Ala Moana Blvd. Suite 3-400
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Director Jill Baldemor:

As Principal of James Campbell High School, I am writing to express my support for the Teach for America Program (TFA) in Hawaii. Students in our school district and at James Campbell High School benefit from the TFA teachers. At James Campbell High School, the TFA teachers volunteer for leadership positions, serve as advisors and coaches, teach after school SAT Prep classes and Saturday Credit Club, work beyond the contracted workday, as well as teach effectively and passionately.

James Campbell High School is the largest public school in the State of Hawaii. We employ at least one-third of our faculty from TFA and we have the most "Highly Not-Qualified" teachers in the State of Hawaii. However, we have out-performed many schools with higher percentages of "Highly Qualified" and "Certified" teachers in the State of Hawaii. James Campbell High School and Waialua Intermediate and High School are the ONLY Title I (poverty) public high schools to ever meet Adequate Yearly Progress on the Hawaii State Test. Being that we have a large enrollment of 2,700, it is a miracle that our students have achieved AYP on the Hawaii State Test, administer the most Advanced Placement tests, and earn one of the highest amounts of scholarships. Recently, I have been informed that our special education students collectively have the highest test scores in the Department of Education on the Hawaii State Test. Additionally, we have one of the lowest (or lowest) and one of the highest graduation rates in the state and nation. All of this is possible because of the highly effective teachers at our school and the TFA teachers have been instrumental in our transformation - in academic and social literacy. They have contributed positively in changing our school culture to one of high achievement, high expectations and standards, and high moral responsibility.

Our TFA teachers have won local and state competitions for the school and students, volunteered to conduct staff training in technology, literacy, as well as, "Traveling Abroad (Europe) with Students." A corps member has agreed to renew her contract for a fourth year and serves as our School Community Chairperson and Co-Facilitator of the Ninth Grade Academy. Another has been invited to demonstrate how the Promethean Boards can engage students in the classroom to the joint

AN AFFIRMATIVE ACTION AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

Venture Educational Forum (JVEF) military schools and "It's All About Kids" Literacy inservice. One parent complained about her child's present math teacher, who is Highly Qualified and Certified, and compared him to her former TFA teacher, who she regarded as "Outstanding." Like this teacher, the corps teachers resonate the belief that all students can learn and do whatever it takes for our students to achieve and grow.

The children of our EWA community are sure to benefit from the talented, dedicated, and committed TFA teachers. We have evidence in their effectiveness in our students' and TFA teachers' performance results. I am pleased to lend my support to the Teach for America Program because I can rest assured that my vacancies will be filled by highly competent, highly effective, intelligent, inspiring, and innovative individuals. They share my vision of providing all students with an excellent education that is second to none, that is rigorous, competitive, and comprehensive.

They are dream makers NOT dream breakers.

Sincerely,



Gail Awakuni
Principal



Wednesday, February 3, 2010
1:15 p.m.
Conference Room 225

TESTIMONY TO
THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND HOUSING

RE: SB 2435 – RELATING TO EDUCATION

Dear Chair Sakamoto, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Robert Witt and I am executive director of the Hawaii Association of Independent Schools (HAIS), which represents 99 private and independent schools in Hawaii and educates over 33,000 students statewide.

The Association is in **strong support of Senate Bill 2435 – Relating to Education**, which will appropriate a portion of the department of education's annual operating budget to support **Teach For America** (TFA) in Hawaii. Funds are urgently needed to train, sustain, and prepare outstanding college graduates in order to become teachers in the Hawaii department of education.

HAIS is encouraged by this proposal by which further funding for Teach For America will supply outstanding recent college graduates to the Hawaii department of education; help alleviate the state's chronic teacher shortage; and help schools make significant academic progress by introducing new ideas and teaching styles into classrooms.

Nationally, there are 7,300 corps members teaching in 35 regions across the country while 66 percent of TFA alumni continue working from inside and outside the field of education to bring about the fundamental changes necessary to ensure educational excellence for all students.

This measure also proposes to enhance the recruitment, selection, professional development, and pre-service training of Teach For America corps members for Hawaii Schools as well as local program administration and development.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify in support of this measure.



HAWAI‘I EDUCATIONAL POLICY CENTER

Informing the Education Community

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Education and Housing

February 3, 2010, 1:15 pm, Room 225

by
Donald B. Young, Director
Hawai‘i Educational Policy Center

SB 2435: Relating to Education

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

The Hawaii Educational Policy Center (HEPC) opposes SB 2435, which appropriates a portion of the Department of Education’s annual operating budget to support Teach for America Hawai‘i.

HEPC supports the intent of SB 2435 to increase the number of highly qualified teachers. However we do have concerns about retaining appropriate authority over hiring highly qualified teachers, determining teacher qualifications, the priority of support for local teachers, and the involvement of the Legislature in directing the HIDOE budgeting.

The discretion as to who the Department should hire to meet its highly qualified teacher needs lies with the Department, which needs to evaluate all candidates, rather than assuming that Teach for America teachers are indeed highly qualified, or more qualified than other candidates.

While TFA has been successful in recruiting teachers to Hawai‘i, there is a continuing problem of retention. The data on retention are not good. The table below shows number of TFA teachers hired each year. For school year 2006-07, 52 were hired; of those, 50 remained in SY 07-08; by SY 08-09 the number had decreased to 24; and by SY 09-10, only 16 are still teaching.

Table 1. TFA Students Hired and Retained by School Year

	06-07 SY	07-08 SY	08-09 SY	09-10 SY (as of 09/10/2009)
06-07 CORPS	52	50	24	16
07-08 CORPS	---	52	44	26
08-09 CORPS	---	---	63	61
09-10 CORPS	---	---	---	61

To be fair, by intent, TFA recruits teachers for a two-year service period. But the data are clear. The majority of those hired do not stay in teaching positions in Hawai‘i. TFA has not been able to address the long-term problem of recruiting and retaining highly qualified teachers.

Contrast the data in Table 1 with retention data from the UH College of Education Hookulaiwi MEdT program shown in Table 2. Like Teach for America, the MEdT is a post-baccalaureate program that prepares individuals to obtain a teaching license.

Table 2. UH College of Education Hookulaiwi MEdT Students Hired and Retained by School Year

	06-07 SY	07-08 SY	08-09 SY	09-10 SY (as of 01/31/2010)
07-08 Cohort	---	12	12	10
08-09 Cohort	---	---	21	21
09-10 Cohort	---	---	---	19

An additional issue is the preference implied in the bill for new arrivals over our own local students who are graduating as highly qualified teachers from our Hawai‘i Institutions of Higher Education. A more effective policy strategy would be to provide support for highly qualified local students to enter and remain in the teacher workforce.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

February 3, 2010 at 1:15pm
Testimony to the
Senate Committee on Education
Conference Room 225

**SB 2435 TEACH FOR AMERICA; DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION;
 APPROPRIATION**

Dear Chair Sakamoto, Vice-Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Gary Kai, Executive Director of the Hawaii Business Roundtable. I appreciate the introduction of Senate Bill 2435 and testify in support of this Bill.

The Hawai'i Business Roundtable has been a supporter of the Teach for America Program since it was first brought to Hawaii, and many of its members have made significant financial contributions to its ongoing success. Expansion of the program will require public support as well as private support.

We understand that these teachers are making a difference in their schools and in the lives of their students.

The Teach for America program has been able to assist with getting more quality teachers into high needs schools. We understand that the contract between Teach for America and the Department of Education includes data collection and evaluation. This information and evaluation is also an important factor in ongoing improvement and accountability, particularly as the DOE moves forward with its Race to The Top application.

The Teach for America program continues to grow in Hawaii and we understand that the principals who have members on their staff are extremely pleased with the results and support the expansion of the program. Not only are the members of the program achieving the goal of improving education in Hawaii but a majority of the teachers stay beyond their 2 year commitments. As we continue to focus on Education, recruiting and retaining qualified teachers is significant cornerstone in our efforts to raise the quality of our Public Education system.

The Hawaii Business Roundtable continues to be a strong supporter of Teach for America.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Gary K. Kai, Executive Director
Hawaii Business Roundtable
1003 Bishop Street, Suite 2630
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Sanford W. Friedman,D.M.
3717 Old Pali Road, Honolulu, Hawaii 96817
Ph: (808) 595-8866; Fax: (808) 595-8867;
email: friedman@lava.net

Dear Senator Members of Senate Education Committee,

Re: Support for SB2435

I strongly support SB2435 which appropriates a portion of the department of education's annual operating budget to support Teach For America(TFA) in Hawaii to train, sustain, and prepare outstanding college graduates in order to become teachers in the Hawaii department of education.

TFA's mission is to build the movement to eliminate educational inequity by enlisting our nation's most promising future leaders in the effort. TFA recruits, selects, and trains a diverse, highly selective national corps of outstanding recent college graduates of all academic majors, backgrounds, and career interests who commit two years to teach in urban and rural public schools in our nation's lowest-income communities, and who become lifelong advocates working for systemic educational reform from all sectors.

TFA is nearing its 20th anniversary in America. Of its 17,000 alumni, 63 percent remain in the field of education and 31 percent remain in the classroom. Last year, 35,000 people applied to Teach for America, 42 percent more than

in 2008. Further, at more than 20 colleges and universities, TFA was the top recruiter. At Harvard, 13 percent of graduating seniors applied. At Spelman College, in Atlanta, 25 percent did.

Beginning in 2006, in order to help address the need for highly effective teachers in Hawai'i's highest need schools and to help alleviate the teacher shortage, the non-profit organization, Teach For America supplied 49 outstanding recent college graduates to the Hawaii department of education. These 49 corps members reached approximately 4,165 students in the Central and Leeward complex areas. Four of the 49 corps members were from Hawaii.

In 2007, TFA had a collective corps of 96 teachers and expanded into the Honolulu complex area by placing 5 corps members at Kalakaua Middle School.

In 2008-2009, there was a total of 105 corps members impacting over 9,000 keiki in all three districts. TFA also placed 10 corps members in Kamaile Academy a public elementary charter school on the Waianae coast.

This year, over 120 TFA corps members, including 20 corps members who are making the organization's first presence on the Big Island, are teaching approximately 10,000 students in underserved schools in Hawaii. Over 70

Teach For America alumni are pursuing professional careers and impacting educational reform from every sector in Hawaii.

There is strong evidence that TFA teachers are successful in the classroom. Independent research by Mathematica in 2004 (The Effects of Teach For America on Students) found that students taught by TFA teachers make more progress in both reading and math in a year than would typically be expected. It also found that these students attain significantly greater gains in math than students of the other teachers in the study, even veteran and certified teachers. These results were supported in a 2008 study by the Urban Institute (Making a Difference? The Effects of Teach for America in High School), which found that TFA corps members have a positive impact on student achievement relative to other teachers, including those who are fully certified in their subject areas. The incremental impact of having a TFA corps member was three times the incremental impact of having a teacher with three or more years of experience.

In a study conducted at the end of the 2006-2007 school year, TFA had 81% of Hawaii principals who had TFA corps members in their school respond to a survey. Of these, 100% of principals reported that TFA teachers made a

difference in the school environment, and 100% of principals reported that TFA teachers were as effective, if not more effective, than other first year teachers, with 69% of principals rating TFA teachers "above average" or "well above average".

TFA is making a significant positive difference in public school education in Hawaii. It can do much more if it had more corps members and that means more money. It is up to the community at large, by way of committing Hawaii Department of Education funds, for the support of this highly acclaimed program. If you support educational reform in Hawaii, you should be supporting Teach for America in Hawaii.

Mahalo,

Dr. Sanford W. Friedman, Executive Director
Global Education Trust and
former teacher, Hawaii public schools