



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

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Testimony presented before the  
House Committee on Higher Education  
February 3, 2011 at 2:30 p.m.

By Linda K. Johnsrud  
Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost, University of Hawai'i

### HB 1329: RELATING TO EDUCATION

Chair Nishimoto, Vice Chair Nakashima and members of the House Committee on Higher Education:

Thank you very much for this opportunity to testify on House Bill 1329 that directs the Legislative Reference Bureau to examine the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended, and regulations pursuant to that Act, to determine in consultation with the University of Hawai'i and the Department of Education what changes are required for the state to comply with various provisions of the federal law.

The University supports the direction of this bill and its proposal to request from the Legislative Reference Bureau a review of the state's options for compliance with the federal Higher Education Act.

Respectfully, we offer two observations regarding the language of HB 1329:

- 1) Page 4 (line 22) and page 5 (lines 1-2) states: "federal laws and regulations relating to the authorization of institutions to operate educational programs beyond secondary education"
  - a. For clarification, we would like to note that the new federal regulations regarding state authorization apply to private, not public higher education institutions. The University of Hawai'i campuses would be exempt.
- 2) Page 6 (line 14): "veterans affairs" should be deleted, and replaced with, "State Approving Agency for veterans benefits" and "the administrations of the Federal Leveraging Educational Assistance Program (LEAP)."

We appreciate the chance to provide testimony and comment on HB 1329.

**Date:** 02/03/2011

**Committee:** House Higher Education

**Department:** Education

**Person Testifying:** Kathryn Matayoshi, Superintendent of Education

**Title of Bill:** HB 1329 RELATING TO EDUCATION.

**Purpose of Bill:** Directs the legislative reference bureau to examine the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended, and regulations pursuant to that Act, make recommendations to ensure the State's compliance with provisions relating to the state authorization of institutions that offer educational programs beyond secondary education, and make recommendations as to whether existing functions relating to the licensing or authorization of any educational institutions in the State, and administrators and instructors thereof, should be consolidated and tasked to one state agency that would be responsible for the licensing and authorization of all educational institutions in the State and their related operations.

**Department's Position:** The Department supports efforts that improve the quality of public education. An examination of the existing organization and processes for teacher and educational administrator licensure that seeks to align the changing needs of the public education system, with legal requirements, as well as creating more opportunities for people to enter the teaching and educational administrator ranks while maintaining or improving existing standards is welcome.

# NIESBA

National Independent Educator Standards Boards Association

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February 2, 2011

## COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Rep. Scott Y. Nishimoto, Chair

Rep. Mark M. Nakashima, Vice Chair

RE: HB 1329

Dear Committee Members:

The National Independent Educator Standards Boards Association (NIESBA) strongly supports state independent standards boards such as the Hawaii Teacher Standards Board. Thirteen states, including Hawaii have independent educator standards boards and in all states, educators are the majority of board members. One hallmark of a profession is for the professional to regulate itself and independent boards serve that purpose.

Studies have shown that the teacher is the single most important factor in student learning in a classroom. Independent standards boards whole focus is on the preparation of educators consequently the boards can focus on teacher quality.

In a report titled "What Matters Most: Teaching for America's Future," the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (NCTAF) discussed the need for states to establish professional standards boards in every state. The report stated that "Developing coherent standards for teacher education, licensing, professional development, and practice requires a governing partnership between the public and the profession that is not vulnerable to constantly changing politics and priorities."

The report further states that "Such boards are the conscience of each profession; they develop and enforce ethical codes as well as technical standards of practice." Standards boards bring greater expertise to bear on the process of setting teaching standards and do so in a more focused and steady fashion, as standards must be continually updated and reevaluated in light of growing professional knowledge. Second, boards allow the creation of a more coherent set of standards across teacher education, licensing, and ongoing professional development, since they would all be considered by the same body. Finally, they create a firewall between the political system and the standard-setting process, allowing higher standards that are more connected to the

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Member states – California, Delaware, Georgia, Hawaii, Iowa, Kentucky, Minnesota, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, Vermont, Washington and Wyoming

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# NIESBA

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professional knowledge base to be set and maintained. States with standards boards have shown that they enact and maintain more rigorous, professionally current standards than they had been able to do before the standards board was in place.

If NIESBA can provide more information for your proposed study, we are ready and willing to help.

Sincerely,



Dale A. Janssen  
Chair

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION**

**Re: HB1329: Relating to Education**

**Hearing Date: February 3, 2011**

**Terry Lynn Holck, Chairperson, Hawaii Teacher Standards Board**

**Chairperson Nishimoto and Members of the Committee:**

The Hawaii Teacher Standards Board (HTSB) strongly encourages the Committee to allow the HTSB to continue its work as an independent teacher standards board for the licensing of PK-12 teachers. The Board has acknowledged and rectified problematic issues of the past. In 2010, the Board deployed its online licensing system, implemented the license renewal process, became fully staffed, addressed operational issues and focused on its core mission to license teachers. Teacher membership on the HTSB allows the profession to regulate itself, the same as other professions such as law and medicine, and holds the profession accountable to performance standards through the licensing process.

To return that authority to the Department of Education raises the concern of a conflict of interest when a teacher's employer is also responsible for issuing their license. The HTSB also issues licenses to teachers employed in non-DOE schools; placing licensure back under the DOE could pose potential challenges when these teachers seek a license.

To fold HTSB into a new "umbrella" agency focused on post-secondary institutions would cause a loss of momentum for the profession after the Board has made significant changes and improvements in teacher licensing and renewal.

Dr. Linda Darling-Hammond, Stanford University professor and one of the most well-known and influential researchers in the field of education, encourages each state to establish a professional standards board:

*• Establish professional standards boards in every state. Developing coherent standards for teacher education, licensing, professional development, and practice requires a governing partnership between the public and the profession that is not vulnerable to constantly changing politics and priorities. Twelve states have already created boards for teaching like those that govern standard setting in other professions on the conviction that these boards are the best way to maintain rigorous standards and protect the public interest. Such boards are the conscience of each profession; they develop and enforce ethical codes as well as technical standards of practice.*

*They should include accomplished teachers—ultimately, those who are National Board Certified—as well as teacher educators, administrators, and representatives of the public. In other professions, a national confederation of state boards develops common standards, high-quality assessments, and reciprocity agreements. Such a confederation*

*in teaching should help develop common licensing assessments with professionally recommended cut-off scores, so that teachers command comparable skills and can move more easily from state to state. How would a standards board help solve current problems? First, it would bring greater expertise to bear on the process of setting teaching standards and would do so in a more focused and steady fashion, as standards must be continually updated and reevaluated in light of growing professional knowledge.*

*Second, it would allow the creation of a more coherent set of standards across teacher education, licensing, and ongoing professional development, since they would all be considered by the same body. Finally, it would create a firewall between the political system and the standard-setting process, allowing higher standards that are more connected to the professional knowledge base to be set and maintained. States with standards boards have shown that they enact and maintain more rigorous, professionally current standards than they had been able to do before the standards board was in place.”*

“What Matters Most: Teaching for America's Future”, P. 69

Much progress has been made over the last year and the board continues to make progressive policies, such as proposing statute revision to include a ten year advanced license and criteria for a Career and Technical Education license for those with an associate's degree. The Board has also broadened the requirement for state approved teacher education program approval process, and at its February 28 meeting, will consider comprehensive reciprocity policies with the other 49 states. Any public board will always have its share of detractors and those who would prefer not to be held to a professional standard. Unfortunately, those voices are often the only ones heard. The board asks the Legislature to support its efforts to regulate and enforce quality standards and ethical conduct for teachers, and to recognize the vast improvements it has made since the last Legislative session. We ask you, as Dr. Darling-Hammond suggests, to become our partner and help us protect the public interest. Your committee can be assured that the HTSB will uphold the profession of teaching for Hawaii's keiki.

In a related issue, HB1329 also requires the Legislative Reference Bureau to consider whether it would be appropriate to consolidate the licensing of teachers with that of administrators. HTSB looks forward to future conversation and the LRB's examination of this matter.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.