

I WRITE IN STRONG OPPOSITION TO

HCR13 Requesting the Hawai'i Congressional Delegation to Support the Teach for America Program

HR14 Requesting the Hawai'i Congressional Delegation to Support the Teach for America Program

When Teach for America (TFA) arrived on our shores five years ago, it came promising bright corps members from universities on the continent who would fill "hard to fill" positions in schools of high need (the majority of which are in Native Hawaiian communities, particularly Hawaiian homestead communities).

In order to do this, the TFA Administrators scooped millions of dollars from private and public trusts, the DOE, the legislature, and other places. UH Mānoa kicked in resident tuition—to this day it is unconscionable that Mānoa funds out of state residents when so many of our local tax paying students (particularly Native Hawaiians) struggled to pay their tuition.

TFA is NOT a teacher education program, it is an extremely expensive and extremely worthless recruitment agency--it recruits people in its name and uses local colleges of education to do its grunt work. AND, it does this with little recognition that these local institutions do ALL the work. It is a money-making business that contributes nothing to teacher education, nothing to the Hawai'i community, nothing to Hawaiian children, nothing to anyone. Yet, it vacuums off huge funds for its own coffers (taking away desperately needed funds from local teacher education institutions).

The data on TFA teacher retention from Hawai'i Department of Education Office of Human Resources (as of September 10, 2010) shows that of the 52 TFA-recruited corps members that started the program in 2006, ONLY 13 remain teaching in Hawai'i. This is an attrition rate of 75%. All the other TFA cohorts following the 2006 recruitment are showing the same attrition rates.

In other words, Hawai'i is contributing millions of dollars of taxpayers monies to the careers of people from the continent, many of whom go back to their homes to enjoy lucrative careers in law, medicine, business (but not teaching). In the meantime, Hawaiian children are left to deal with the TFA teacher sleight of hand--now you see them, now you don't!

In comparison, cohorts recruited by UHM College of Education faculty have a **retention rate of around 80%** (for the same time period noted above)--many of these locally recruited teachers have high commitments to teaching in high need schools. Our teachers stay for the long haul because many of them are Native Hawaiians from the communities in which they teach!

Quite frankly, the plug needs to be pulled on the Teach for America "partnership" with UH, the DOE and any other state funded agencies. All the cultural, pedagogical, epistemological, ethical arguments aside, the retention data speaks for itself. **This program is a monumental failure that does not live up to its promise to fill "hard to fill" positions in schools of highest need.**

We have whipped this dead horse for too long. Now it is time to bury it. **PLEASE DO NOT SUPPORT HCR13 AND HR14.**

Mahalo,

Margaret J. Maaka, PhD
Co-Chair, Sovereign Councils of the Hawaiian Homelands Assembly Committee
on Education

belatti4-Joal

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, March 30, 2011 7:53 AM
To: EDNtestimony
Cc: kcashman@hawaii.edu
Subject: Testimony for HCR13 on 3/30/2011 9:00:00 AM

LATE TESTIMONY

Testimony for EDN 3/30/2011 9:00:00 AM HCR13

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Kimo Cashman
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Submitted on: 3/30/2011

Comments: