

HB2639 HD1

Relating to Higher
Education; College Credit
Equivalency for United
States Armed Forces
EDU/PGM



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Education &
Senate Committee on Public Safety, Government Operations, and Military Affairs
March 15, 2012 at 2:46PM
by
John Morton
Vice President for Community Colleges, University of Hawai'i

HB 2639, HD2 – RELATING TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Chairs Tokuda and Espero, Vice Chair Kidani and Members of the Committee:

The University of Hawai'i Community Colleges supports HB2639, HD2 which amends the University of Hawai'i college-credit equivalency program to include service in the United States armed forces. This bill provides another path for adults to get college credits for work or other experiences that align skills with college course learning outcomes. For military personnel, we could award equivalent college credits for their professional experience gained through service in the United States armed forces. An assessment or other criteria will be used to determine college-level learning gained during service in the United States armed forces.

The community colleges' college-credit equivalency program is updating its approach by aligning itself with the latest national best practices on awarding credit for skills acquired outside the traditional classroom. According to the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL),

“When people receive college credit for what they know from life and work experiences, they earn their degrees and credentials faster, saving money on tuition. They also learn the value of their experience, which gives them confidence to complete their degrees.”

This act can take effect on July 1, 2012; however, the assessment process and procedures must be developed and reviewed by colleges before implementation.

Senator Jill Tokuda, Chair, Senate Committee on Education
Senator Will Espero, Chair, Senate Committee on Public Safety, Government Operations and
Military Affairs
March 14, 2012

Testimony of
Laurie Crehan, Ed.D.
Quality of Life Regional Liaison
Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense, Military Community & Family Policy
DoD-State Liaison Office

HB 2639 Relating to Higher Education; College-Credit Equivalency Program

Testimony

Chair Tokuda and Chair Espero and members of the Senate EDU and PGM Committees, on behalf of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony today on HB 2639, a bill relating Professional and Vocational Licensing; Military Training, Education, and Service. My name is Laurie Crehan. I am with the Department of Defense State Liaison Office which operates under the direction of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, and the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Military Community and Family Policy. A top priority issue this year is to facilitate Service members receiving academic credit for Military Education, Training, and Experience. The policy in HB 2639 will certainly help our transitioning Service members in obtaining academic credit in order to more quickly enter the workforce.

Separating Service members are frequently delayed getting post-Service employment even though they have applicable military education, training and experience which can qualify them for academic credit towards degree requirements. Transitioning Service members leave the military with documented training and experience that can prepare them for civilian employment; however, this documentation is not always used by higher education institutions to qualify them for academic credit. Reported unemployment rates of separating Service members that are higher than national averages have brought attention to supporting issues such as academic credit for service to alleviate this problem.

As of June 2011, one million Veterans were unemployed and the jobless rate for post-9/11 veterans was 13.3 %, with young male Veterans (ages 18 to 24) experiencing an unemployment rate of 21.9%. This number appears to be rising as so many of our troops are returning home from combat. In 2010, according to Defense Manpower Data Center, 2,239 Service members separated or retired back to Hawaii, calling Hawaii home. Many will pursue higher education and training in Hawaii, using their tuition assistance benefits.

The Department of Defense recognizes that if we are going to ask academic institutions to evaluate military training and experience, we have to make it easier for them to do so, minimizing any fiscal impact. In this regard, we are evaluating how we make that information more meaningful and available to the academic institutions.

- DoD and the Military Services provide each Service member a transcript of their experience and training which can be used by civilian institutions to assess for possible academic credit:
 - The DoD Verification of Military Experience and Training (VMET);
 - Army/American Council On Education Registry Transcript System (AARTS);
 - Sailor and Marine Council On Education Registry Transcript System (SMART); and
 - The Community College of the Air Force Transcript.
- The American Council on Education (ACE) has established college credit recommendations for the learning experiences, which are published in the *ACE Guide to the Evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Armed Services*. Institutions can consider ACE comparability and applicability of the credit in relation to the student's selected program of study.
- Finally, a key aspect of providing accrediting and credentialing agencies the ability to assess military training is making the training programs of instruction (POIs) available to them for review. Currently, the Services each have their own policies and procedures related to development and maintenance of POIs and there is no centralized location for agencies to access them. Ensuring POIs have some degree of standardization and are more easily accessible to accrediting and credentialing agencies and educational institutions will make it easier for them to assess whether the military training courses meet their criteria. DoD is in the process of doing just that.

The policy, as proposed in HB 2639, will establish a more uniformed approach toward awarding academic credit and save time and money for the Service members trying to complete their education.

Another consideration is that the more credit given to a veteran towards a degree or certification, the more classroom space that can be made available to other students, especially in this time of cutbacks.

We look forward to Hawaii's leadership in adopting these requirements to assist our Veterans and thank the members of the committee for your consideration. We appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Dr. Laurie Crehan
State Liaison
DoD State Liaison Office
858-361-1731



March 13, 2012

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HOUSE BILL 2639HD2
RELATING TO HIGHER EDUCATION**

**SENATE COMMITTEES ON EDUCATION, AND PUBLIC SAFETY,
GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS AND MILITARY AFFAIRS**

**HEARING ON THURSDAY, MARCH 15TH, AT 2:46 PM, IN CONFERENCE
ROOM 224**

Aloha Chair Tokuda and Espero: The Oahu Veterans Council's delegates are deeply honored to represent the interests of our veterans and their families. Our Legislative Committee voted unanimously to support House Bill 2639 HD2.

We are extremely grateful for your efforts to amend the University of Hawaii college-credit equivalency program to include service in the United States armed forces, and require the program to develop a learning assessment to determine eligibility, effective 1 July 2012.

With the nation's largest per-capita, military community to be proud of, Hawaii is doing the right thing for those who serve so selflessly and ask only for the same recognition and respect we would expect for ourselves.

The Oahu Veterans Council respectfully urges your committee to consider passing House Bill 2639HD2 as written; mahalo for allowing us to testify, regarding this extremely important issue.

Dennis Egge

Dennis Egge; Chairman, Legislative Committee



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Erin Conner

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, March 14, 2012 12:25 PM
To: EDU Testimony
Cc: jeraul.pladera@mpd.net
Subject: Testimony for HB2639 on 3/15/2012 2:46:00 PM

Testimony for EDU/PGM 3/15/2012 2:46:00 PM HB2639

Conference room: 224
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Jeraul S. Pladera
Organization: Individual
E-mail: jeraul.pladera@mpd.net
Submitted on: 3/14/2012

Comments:

I support the intent of this measure. As a former member of the armed forces who had the opportunity to attend college, I too have had issues of military training not transferring into the UH system. The time and money saved by current and former armed service people by not having to take a class because they had taken an equivalent can mean the difference for those on a tight budget and starting out in life. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.