

Personal Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

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Written Testimony

By

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**SB 1283: RELATING TO CERTIFICATION OF PRINCIPALS AND VICE-
PRINCIPALS**

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

As Dean of the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa's College of Education, I support the intent of this bill, which is to work proactively with DOE on issues related to the Race to the Top Grant. However, I believe that principals and other school leaders should meet national standards for licensure or certification that are assessed by an agency independent of the employer.

Adhering to national licensing requirements will aid in Hawaii's educational system's continued improvement, by providing quality educators in all levels of teaching and administration. All education professionals should be held to high standards, and setting criteria for licensing associated with current national standards for school administrators would indicate such a commitment. Nearly every other state in the nation licenses its school leaders and has approved school leadership licensure programs through both traditional and alternative routes.

However, it is important to maintain an agency independent from the DOE to oversee licensing of educators. Having an agency which hires educators be the same that provides certification and oversight creates a conflict of interest. Such a relationship leads to potential lowering of professional standards when employment needs increase, and opens the door to potential abuse by administrators. In addition, holding a certification or license is, in essence, a way to indicate that an individual has the requisite knowledge, skills, and dispositions to practice a particular profession, regardless of the employing agency.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.