



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Higher Education
Thursday, January 31, 2013
2:00 p.m.

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

HB 1146 RELATING TO COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Chair Choy, Vice Chair Ichiyama, and Members of House Committee on Higher Education, I am submitting written testimony on behalf of the University of Hawai'i regarding House Bill 1146 – Relating to Collective Bargaining which proposes to amend HRS, §89-6, to not exclude from collective bargaining “...students of a state institution that are not employed by the State” and “...graduate students employed by the University of Hawai'i”.

The University of Hawai'i has reservations regarding the impact of the proposed legislation if enacted.

The University's graduate assistants are unlike any other employees. They are students first, and employees second. The graduate assistantship is, first and foremost, part of a financial aid package. Graduate Assistants are at the university to learn as much about their fields of study as their time and talents will allow. These graduate assistants are mentored and supervised by our rank 3, 4, and 5 faculty members who all hold Ph.D.'s and have many years of proven professional competence and experience, including evidence of proficiency in teaching. Part of our efforts as university mentors is to teach graduate assistants the subject matter. An equal or large part of our efforts is devoted to turning them out as academic professionals with real job skills in research techniques, teaching expertise, database management, etc. They learn these essential skill sets while in their graduate assistant positions under the guidance and supervision of our current faculty employees. A graduate assistant is similar to an on-the-job training or apprenticeship program. It is not a career or a profession, but the beginning stages most faculty must complete to pursue a career in higher education.

As graduate assistants, their duties and work assignments differ significantly from that of faculty employees. Our Faculty members in ranks 3, 4, and 5 who mentor graduate assistants are required to teach classes and/or develop research programs with no supervision or oversight. There are at times consultation and interaction with other faculty members depending on the department's teaching needs or research focus, but

there is not supervision *per se*. A graduate assistant does not step into a classroom, laboratory, or field exercise without supervision of some kind. Senior Teaching Assistants may be capable of teaching a lecture section with little or no supervision because they have been mentored and trained to take on that type of assignment. Similarly, senior Research Assistants will undertake more complex roles without strict supervision or even have the capacity to develop new techniques as they grow into their roles. Our goal is to train and mentor these graduate assistants to get them to that point where they can function as professionals and begin their careers.

From a collective bargaining perspective, it does not appear that the proposed amended group-- students "not employed by the state"--would fall within any of the existing categories under HRS, §89-6(a). Therefore, either the current categories will need to be expanded or additional bargaining units created. The issue of expanding the number and type of collective bargaining units has been a long standing issue by various employee groups and will likely lead to extensive debate and discussions with representatives of the existing bargaining units and advocates of other various employee groups. Included among the issues that would need to be addressed are the definition of the employer and the dispute resolution or impasse procedure (i.e., right to strike or subject to interest arbitration).

If collective bargaining were extended to students not employed by a State institution, among the mandatory subject of negotiations would be wages, hours, conditions of employment and fringe benefits. Wage and fringe benefits would have cost implications to both the State and the individual employer. In addition to the stipends that graduate student workers earn, the University also provides them full tuition waivers which may range from \$483.00 to \$763.00 per credit hour for residents; tuition waivers for non-resident tuition can range from \$1,173.00 to \$1,453.00 per credit hour. A full-time graduate student resident tuition ranges from \$5,796.00 to \$9,156.00 per semester while non-resident tuition ranges from \$14,076.00 to \$17,436 per semester (Academic Year 2012-13). Such benefits will become negotiable subjects and may or may not be included in the negotiated compensation package.

Moreover, in the current fiscal climate, all UH employees have had their salaries reduced to deal with the funding shortfalls; some, but not all of those salaries have been restored. Not only have we been able to protect graduate students serving as teaching or research assistants from these reductions, but, beginning Fall 2013, the minimum stipend has been raised from Step 1 to Step 8, or \$17,496 for a 9-month appointment and \$20,466 for an 11-month appointment. Under this proposal their stipends would be negotiable. Similarly, all students are eligible to enroll in student health insurance plans; under this proposal, medical coverage would be negotiable.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



HAWAII GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION

AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO

RANDY PERREIRA, Executive Director • Tel: 808.543.0011 • Fax: 808.528.0922

The Twenty-Seventh Legislature, State of Hawaii
House of Representatives
Committee on Higher Education

Testimony by
Hawaii Government Employees Association
January 31, 2013

H.B. 1146 – RELATING TO
COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

The Hawaii Government Employees Association, AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO strongly supports the concept of allowing graduate students employed by the University of Hawaii to be included in an appropriate collective bargaining unit, as proposed in H.B. 1146.

Graduate students employed by the University have encountered numerous work related issues in the past; including budget set backs and increases in class size and workload, in addition to the high cost of living in Hawaii. Despite these issues, graduate student employees have not received a salary increase since 2004. Amending Ch. 89-6, Hawaii Revised Statutes by removing the exclusion of this group from collectively bargaining is the first necessary step in allowing them to unionize and will ensure their rights as state workers.

Respectfully submitted,

Randy Perreira
Executive Director



House Committee on Higher Education
Thursday, January 31, 2013
2:00 p.m.

HB 1146, Relating to Collective Bargaining.

Dear Chairman Choy and Committee Members:

On behalf of the University of Hawaii Professional Assembly's Board of Directors, I urge the committee to support the amendments to Hawaii Revised Statutes Chapter 89 that will advance the interests of graduate assistants. As an essential part of the University's operations, these positions support instruction and research contributing to the overall success of the institution. They are employees in the fullest sense of the term, with continuing access to these graduate assistant positions based on job and academic performance.

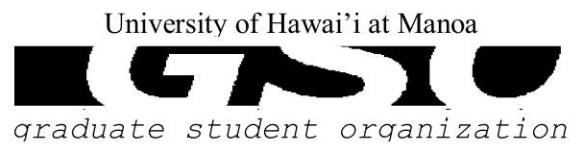
UHPA has long supported the rights of graduate assistants to organize and collectively bargain with the University of Hawaii. Such a right is consistent with the labor tradition in our state and is compatible with an academic environment whereby the majority of employees have access to representation.

Respectively submitted,

Kristeen Hanselman
Associate Executive Director

UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII
PROFESSIONAL ASSEMBLY

1017 Palm Drive · Honolulu, Hawaii 96814-1928
Telephone: (808) 593-2157 · Facsimile: (808) 593-2160
Web Page: <http://www.uhpa.org>



To: House Committee on Higher Education

From: Shahin Rahman (shahinur@hawaii.edu)

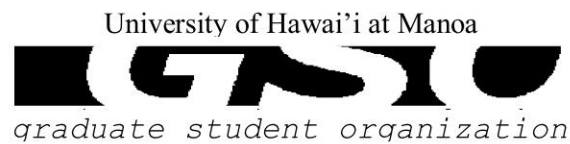
Testimony for HB1146— VERY STRONG SUPPORT

My name is Shahin Rahman. I am a PhD candidate in the department of urban and regional planning at UH Manoa. I'm an international student from Bangladesh. I have been working as Graduate Assistant (GA) since 2008. Over this four year period, my GA salary has remained almost stagnant. I only received one pay increase during the entire five years. Even though, there is a vague rule that states "After two semesters of satisfactory service, GAs may receive a step increase."¹ I worked for 3 years in the same organization and there was no complain from my boss that my performance was unsatisfactory. Rather, I was working on different components of the project that was beyond the job description. Moreover, the project I was involved had substantial funding to provide me a step increase as the rule suggest. I repeatedly asked my employer to give me a raise by citing the above mentioned rule. However, I was denied my hardly earned step increase. To add insult to injury, my job contract was not renewed after the summer of 2011. I have strong conviction that my boss was not particularly happy when I raised my voice regarding salary and other job place issues. Since, there is no oversight to check whether the early mentioned rule is getting implemented, principal investigators like my boss very often violate this salary increase provision thus exploit graduate student workers.

Partially driven by my frustration with my boss regarding salary increase and work place condition, I joined Graduate Student Organization (GSO) to see if I can do anything about this. Since summer of 2011, I have been working in GSO executive committee as "Employment and Compensation" chair. As the title of the position suggests, one of the main responsibilities of this position is to "investigate concerns of students regarding employment and compensation."² Since the fall of 2011, I have been looking into different issues regarding employment and compensation. During middle of

¹ <http://manoa.hawaii.edu/graduate/content/compensation-tax-withholding>

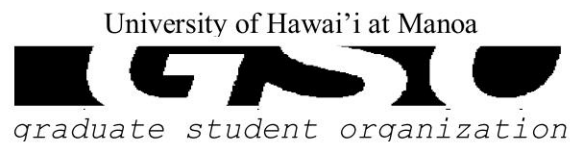
² http://gso.hawaii.edu/page/?page_id=44



fall semester I went to Graduate Division office at UH Manoa to seek some demographic, admission and other information about graduate student population. I was also trying to find out since when the existing graduate assistant salary rate has been in place³. I ran into a graduate division official and received a document which shows graduate assistant salary rate since the academic year of 1987-88. The stunning revelation that I discovered from this document was that the current graduate assistant salary package has been effective since the academic year 2003-04. In another words, there has been no salary increase since 2003-04. To put this matter into perspective, from academic year 1987-88 to 1992-93, there has always been a modest salary increase in every academic year. During the academic year 1993-94 and 2002-03, the salary increase occurred in every 3 to 4 years as opposed to the previous trend when salary raise happened in every academic year. This regressive trend brought us to the current situation whereby graduate student workers have not seen a dime increase in their pay check for almost about a decade. In December 2012 chancellor Apple has proposed a salary increase that will be effective from fall 2013. It is a positive move by the chancellor but it does not address the structural problems with wage, grievance, work place environment related problems. Even though my job description with GSO suggests I am entitled to investigate compensation related issues, I cannot do much given as a graduate student we do not have the right to collectively bargain to negotiate our salary or other rights due to the existing state law that prohibits students to unionize. It is imperative to change the existing law.

I would like to finish this testimony with a personal story. As I have mentioned earlier, I'm an international student from Bangladesh. I have been living in Honolulu and attending UH Manoa since 2005. After completion of my MA degree I have started doctoral program in 2008. I have chosen to continue my graduate study at UH Manoa for couple of reasons. I have fallen in love with this land of Aloha and I was not quite ready to leave right after I received my MA degree. At the same time, I was able to build a rapport among my classmates and faculties in my department and the community I was living. In retrospective, sometime I ponder how rational was it for me to continue my

³ For current graduate assistant pay steps, please see: <http://manoa.hawaii.edu/graduate/content/compensation-tax-withholding>



doctoral program at UH Manoa. This feeling of ambivalence has nothing to do with my feeling about this island. Neither has it had anything to do with my personal relation with my fellow classmates, friends and professors. This indifference grew partially due to the reason that I was not able to visit my family back home in Bangladesh since I started my doctoral program in 2008. It costs about my 3 months graduate assistant salary to buy a two-way air ticket to Bangladesh and to cover other travel related expenditures⁴. With a stagnant graduate assistant salary and ever increasing living costs in this expensive place, my monthly check is getting smaller and smaller. Particularly, the cost of modest housing somewhere near the campus costs about two third of total monthly pay check. Furthermore, since summer of 2011, we as graduate student workers are paying 50% of our health insurance cost as opposed to previous rate of 40%. Not to mention ever increasing rise of tuition and other fees associated with attending the university. This financial predicament ultimately force many graduate students like me to spend substantially longer time to finish graduate study.

As a result, it is important to pass this HB1146 bill that will eliminate the barrier for students to unionize which in the long run will enable graduate student workers to bargain for their salary and other work place rights. Ultimately, this change will improve graduate student experience while attending UH Manoa.

Mahalo!

Shahin Rahman

PhD Candidate, Dept. of Urban and Regional Planning

Employment and Compensation Executive Committee chair, GSO, UH Manoa

⁴ 20% of graduate student population is international. I am pretty sure many of them also struggle to save enough money to visit their home countries.

ichiyama3 - Malia

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, January 29, 2013 11:12 AM
To: HEDtestimony
Cc: cachoy@hawaii.edu
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB1146 on Jan 31, 2013 14:00PM

HB1146

Submitted on: 1/29/2013

Testimony for HED on Jan 31, 2013 14:00PM in Conference Room 309

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Anela Choy	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I am writing in full support of HB1146. Graduate students have an immense responsibility as educational professionals whether they are a first-year MA student serving as a teaching assistant or an advanced PhD candidate conducting original research. Since 2004, graduate assistants (GAs) at the University of Hawaii at Manoa (UHM) have received zero compensation adjustments, while the cost of living in the islands has progressively risen. In December 2012, Chancellor Tom Apple released a memo stating, "Effective Fall 2013, all GAs currently assigned to Step 7 or lower will be moved to Step 8." While this does impact a number of GAs, this gesture does not technically constitute a "raise" as there are no standardized and continuous budgetary increases to go along with this mandatory adjustment. This stop-gap measure will effectively reduce the number of graduate assistantships offered and adversely impact the health of many programs and the vitality of the university. In hopes of remediating this issue, along with concerns over equal representation, graduate students are seeking the capacity to bargain collectively. Passing HB1146 serves as a critical first step in giving graduate students the opportunity to start the process of unionizing. Other universities across the United States enjoy positive working relationships with graduate student unions that fairly advocate for graduate student workers, including both peer and benchmark institutions. At the University of Hawaii at Manoa, the total number of graduate students is estimated to be 5722 (Fall 2012), and 22.7% (1308) of those students have graduate student on-campus employment either as a research assistant or teaching assistant. Disparities exist between actual salaries and benefits provided to graduate student workers at UHM and comparable institutions. At the University of Oregon (UO), the university covers 100% of the medical plan costs for graduate students whereas UHM's administration covers merely 50%. Factoring in health care, students at UO can make more money than at UHM, and these two communities have vastly different costs of living. In fact, with rising health care costs and no pay increases, graduate students progressively make less money each year when their health care costs are raised. A recent survey conducted by Graduate Student Organization (GSO) found that 90% of graduate students feel that current salary scales do not account for the cost of living in the islands. Recent budget cutbacks with a campus-wide impact at UHM have eliminated offices and administrative positions crucial to the successful employment and academic experiences of graduate students. In particular, the Ombuds Office at the University of Hawaii at Manoa, which provided an accessible grievance process for troubleshooting issues related to the experience of attending and working at UHM, has been eliminated. This office addressed and adjudicated 359 (2006-2007), 387 (2007-2008), and 338 (2008-2009) disputations brought to the fore by the students, faculty, and staff. According to a GSO survey, 65% of respondents were in favor of re-opening the Ombuds Office. Considering the above, I believe that graduate student workers, as state employees, should have the right to bargain collectively. 85% of the respondents to GSO's

survey agreed that graduate students should have collective bargaining rights. I am in full support of HB1146, which grants graduate students the ability to take the first steps to provide for the protection of graduate student workers' rights and education by permitting the inclusion of graduate students employed by the University of Hawaii system in any appropriate collective bargaining unit. Mahalo nui for your efforts to ensure the health and well being of our state's flagship institution of higher education!

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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Committee on Higher Education
Hawai'i State Legislature

Re: HB 1146 concerning graduate student collective bargaining rights

January 29, 2013

Dear honorable members of the House Committee on Higher Education,

As a University of Hawai'i faculty member, I strongly support this bill. The intent of the bill is to strengthen higher education in the state, a critical sector to focus on for our future in the islands. I was a graduate student myself at a doctoral institution (the University of Iowa) which had a union of graduate student employees, and I can testify that this organization (which formed while I was a student) increased productivity and collegiality. When students do not have to work extra jobs to stay in school, they are better educators and researchers. When students have access to affordable and higher quality health care, they are healthier and more productive. When students can avail of a union's ability to advocate their grievances, they will be more fulfilled and dedicated workers. When students have secure and satisfactory contracts and working conditions, they will be more efficient. By seeking to improve the working environment for graduate students, this bill would strengthen higher education and help this sector contribute even more positively to our state's educational and economic futures.

While the University might claim that graduate students are students first and workers second, this is a disingenuous argument. The truth is that they are both workers and students, and we can separate out their labor from their education. Many elite public flagship universities across the nation agree, as do the country's courts. I teach world history classes and, as part of that assignment, I supervise graduate student workers as teaching assistants. They work hard and well, and their labor – in addition to educating the students of this state – also saves the University significant amounts of money because it is cheaper than having a faculty member do the same teaching.

Denying graduate student workers the ability to collectively bargain is a violation of their rights. Furthermore, it damages the University and the state. If graduate students were enabled to negotiate their contracts collectively, they would be more productive workers in their duties of educating students, conducting research, and assisting faculty members, thereby making the University – a crucial economic engine in our state – run more efficiently. The UH works because graduate students do. They deserve the same rights as all workers. Please support this bill.

Respectfully submitted,

Ned Bertz
Assistant Professor
Department of History
University of Hawai'i-Mānoa

ichiyama3 - Malia

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, January 29, 2013 1:31 PM
To: HEDtestimony
Cc: bisaki@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB1146 on Jan 31, 2013 14:00PM

HB1146

Submitted on: 1/29/2013

Testimony for HED on Jan 31, 2013 14:00PM in Conference Room 309

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Bianca Isaki	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I am writing in full support of HB1146 and SB1365. Graduate students have an immense responsibility as educational professionals whether they are a first-year MA student serving as a teaching assistant or an advanced PhD candidate conducting original research. Since 2004, graduate assistants (GAs) at the University of Hawaii at Manoa (UHM) have received zero compensation adjustments, while the cost of living in the islands has progressively risen. In December 2012, Chancellor Tom Apple released a memo stating, "Effective Fall 2013, all GAs currently assigned to Step 7 or lower will be moved to Step 8." While this does impact a number of GAs, this gesture does not technically constitute a "raise" as there are no standardized and continuous budgetary increases to go along with this mandatory adjustment. This stop-gap measure will effectively reduce the number of graduate assistantships offered and adversely impact the health of many programs and the vitality of the university. In hopes of remediating this issue, along with concerns over equal representation, graduate students are seeking the capacity to bargain collectively. Passing HB1146 and SB1365 serves as a critical first step in giving graduate students the opportunity to start the process of unionizing. Other universities across the United States enjoy positive working relationships with graduate student unions that fairly advocate for graduate student workers, including both peer and benchmark institutions. At the University of Hawaii at Manoa, the total number of graduate students is estimated to be 5722 (Fall 2012), and 22.7% (1308) of those students have graduate student on-campus employment either as a research assistant or teaching assistant. Disparities exist between actual salaries and benefits provided to graduate student workers at UHM and comparable institutions. At the University of Oregon (UO), the university covers 100% of the medical plan costs for graduate students whereas UHM's administration covers merely 50%. Factoring in health care, students at UO can make more money than at UHM, and these two communities have vastly different costs of living. In fact, with rising health care costs and no pay increases, graduate students progressively make less money each year when their health care costs are raised. A recent survey conducted by Graduate Student Organization (GSO) found that 90% of graduate students feel that current salary scales do not account for the cost of living in the islands. Recent budget cutbacks with a campus-wide impact at UHM have eliminated offices and administrative positions crucial to the successful employment and academic experiences of graduate students. In particular, the Ombuds Office at the University of Hawaii at Manoa, which provided an accessible grievance process for troubleshooting issues related to the experience of attending and working at UHM, has been eliminated. This office addressed and adjudicated 359 (2006-2007), 387 (2007-2008), and 338 (2008-2009) disputations brought to the fore by the students, faculty, and staff. According to a GSO survey, 65% of respondents were in favor of re-opening the Ombuds Office. Considering the above, I believe that graduate student workers, as state employees, should have the right to bargain collectively. 85%

of the respondents to GSO's survey agreed that graduate students should have collective bargaining rights. I am in full support of HB1146 and SB1365, which grants graduate students the ability to take the first steps to provide for the protection of graduate student workers' rights and education by permitting the inclusion of graduate students employed by the University of Hawaii system in any appropriate collective bargaining unit. Mahalo nui for your efforts to ensure the health and well being of our state's flagship institution of higher education! Bianca Kai Isaki, Ph.D.

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ichiyama3 - Malia

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, January 29, 2013 1:43 PM
To: HEDtestimony
Cc: kishore@hawaii.edu
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB1146 on Jan 31, 2013 14:00PM

HB1146

Submitted on: 1/29/2013

Testimony for HED on Jan 31, 2013 14:00PM in Conference Room 309

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kishore Dey	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I think we need the collective bargain to get the voices of graduate students concern addressed.

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CAROLYN MARTINEZ GOLOJUCH, MSW

92-954 Makakilo Drive #71 • Makakilo, Hawai`i 96707-1340
cell: 808 779-9078 • fax: 808 672-6347 • e-mail: gomama808@gmail.com

Tuesday, January 29, 2013

RE: **HB1146** COLLECTIVE BARGAINING In Support

TO: Chair, Vice Chair and members of Higher Education Committee

I strongly support HB1146. It is important that all workers are treated with respect and dignity. This is true for Graduate Students and all employees. Graduate Students should not be treated like Second Class workers. No worker should be treated so shabbily.

I have been in situations where I worked alongside other workers with all the benefits and yet my position required that I perform the same quality of employment yet, I worked with no benefits. This unfair situation is demeaning and disgraceful. No one should be treated with such disrespect.

I urge that you bring parity to working conditions for Graduate Students. Please pass HB1146.

Aloha members of the Committee on Higher Education,

As a third-year graduate student at the University of Hawaii at Manoa (UHM), I am writing to express my full support for HB1146.

Currently, the total number of graduate students at UHM is expected to be approximately 5700, roughly 23% of which are employed on-campus as Research Assistants and Teaching Assistants. These students play a vital role within the university, as they are (partially) responsible for teaching UHM's undergraduate classes, and perform part of the original research that makes UHM a world-renowned research university. However, the decisions that the UH administration has made in recent years regarding graduate students' rights and compensation do not adequately reflect this important role.

For instance, since 2004, graduate assistants (GAs) at UHM have not received any compensation adjustments, while the cost of living in the islands has progressively risen. GA salaries at UHM are low when compared against those at our peer and benchmark institutions, especially when relative cost of living is taken into account. In addition, disparities exist between actual salaries and benefits provided to graduate student workers at UHM and comparable institutions. At the University of Oregon for example, university covers 100% of the medical plan costs for graduate students while UHM's administration covers merely 50%.

Recently, several offices and administrative positions at UHM, such as the Ombuds Office, have been eliminated due to budget cuts. The Ombuds Office provided an accessible grievance process to the students, staff and faculty of UHM. Between 2006 and 2009, the Ombuds Office addressed and adjudicated more than 1,000 disputations. Without it, graduate students at UH Manoa have little to no place to go if they experience any (academic) grievances.

In December 2012, our new Chancellor Tom Apple finally tried to improve the situation by releasing a memo, stating: "Effective Fall 2013, all GAs currently assigned to Step 7 or lower will be moved to Step 8." Although this is a welcome step in the right direction, this gesture does not technically constitute a "raise" as there are no standardized and continuous budgetary increases to go along with it. This stopgap measure will effectively reduce the number of graduate assistantships offered and will adversely impact the health of many programs. The Chancellor has also not been able to make any promises regarding the reopening of the Ombuds Office, a measure strongly supported by the entire graduate student community.

In order to remediate the issue, along with concerns over equal representation, the graduate students of UHM are seeking the capacity to bargain collectively, something which currently seems to be prohibited by law. Other universities across the United States enjoy positive working relationships with graduate student unions that fairly advocate for graduate student workers. Passing HB1146 serves as a

critical first step in giving graduate students at UH Manoa the opportunity to form such a union.

I believe that graduate students, as state employees, should have the right to bargain collectively, and am therefore in full support of HB1146. Mahalo nui for your efforts to ensure the quality and well being of Hawaii's flagship institution of higher education!

ichiyama3 - Malia

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, January 30, 2013 11:26 AM
To: HEDtestimony
Cc: arlove@hawaii.edu
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB1146 on Jan 31, 2013 14:00PM

HB1146

Submitted on: 1/30/2013

Testimony for HED on Jan 31, 2013 14:00PM in Conference Room 309

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Allison Love	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Dear Members, I am writing today in full support of HB1146, which grants graduate students the ability to take the first steps to provide for the protection of graduate student workers' rights and education by permitting the inclusion of graduate students employed by the University of Hawaii system in any appropriate collective bargaining unit. Graduate students have an immense responsibility as educational professionals for years on end, yet are subject to student-faculty power differentials that disadvantage them from being able to self-advocate for better working conditions and pay. Since 2004, graduate assistants (GAs) at the University of Hawaii at Manoa (UHM) have not received pay adjustments commensurate with the increasing cost of living in Hawai'i. With rising health care costs and no pay increases, graduate students progressively make less money each year. A recent survey conducted by Graduate Student Organization (GSO) found that 90% of graduate students feel that current salary scales do not account for the cost of living in the islands. While GAs have recently been informed that will be recognized as moving from a Step 7 to Step 8 pay grade, this action is not a "raise" because it was not accompanied by corresponding increases to the budget from which these salaries are paid. Thus, while employed graduate assistants will receive a slightly higher wage, but there will be a fewer number of positions available. In turn, the programs at UH will be able to recruit and support fewer graduate students, which adversely impacts the vitality of the programs and the status of our University. Recent budget cutbacks at UHM have eliminated offices, such as the Ombuds Office, crucial to graduate students' ability to pursue recourse in cases of grievances and for troubleshooting issues related to attending and working at UHM. To highlight, the Ombuds Office addressed and adjudicated an average of 361 disputations by the students, faculty, and staff per year from 2006 to 2009. Since 2009, there has been no effective way for those 300+ student disputes to be voiced and addressed and we have effectively been silenced. Ignoring the needs and concerns of the graduate student body is not an acceptable way to address the problems UHM is facing, and doing so comes at a tremendous cost to the long-term viability of UHM's graduate programs in terms of attracting, recruiting, and retaining quality students and faculty. In hopes of remediating this issue, along with concerns over equal representation, graduate students are seeking the capacity to bargain collectively. Passing HB1146 serves as a critical first step in giving graduate students the opportunity to start the process of unionizing. Other Universities across the United States enjoy positive working relationships with graduate student unions that fairly advocate for graduate student workers, including both peer and benchmark institutions. I believe that graduate student workers, as state employees, should have the right to bargain collectively. I am in full support of HB1146, and hope you will be too. Mahalo nui for your efforts to ensure the health and well being of our state's flagship institution of higher education, Allison Love, M. A.

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In hopes of remediating this issue, along with concerns over equal representation, graduate students are seeking the capacity to bargain collectively. Passing HB1146 and SB1365 serves as a critical first step in giving graduate students the opportunity to start the process of unionizing. Other universities across the United States enjoy positive working relationships with graduate student unions that fairly advocate for graduate student workers, including both peer and benchmark institutions.

At the University of Hawaii at Manoa, the total number of graduate students is estimated to be 5722 (Fall 2012), and 22.7% (1308) of those students have graduate student on-campus employment either as a research assistant or teaching assistant. Disparities exist between actual salaries and benefits provided to graduate student workers at UHM and comparable institutions. At the University of Oregon (UO), the university covers 100% of the medical plan costs for graduate students whereas UHM's administration covers merely 50%.

Factoring in health care, students at UO can make more money than at UHM, and these two communities have vastly different costs of living. In fact, with rising health care costs and no pay increases, graduate students progressively make less money each year when their health care costs are raised. A recent survey conducted by Graduate Student Organization (GSO) found that 90% of graduate students feel that current salary scales do not account for the cost of living in the islands.

Recent budget cutbacks with a campus-wide impact at UHM have eliminated offices and administrative positions crucial to the

successful employment and academic experiences of graduate students. In particular, the Ombuds Office at the University of Hawaii at Manoa, which provided an accessible grievance process for troubleshooting issues related to the experience of attending and working at UHM, has been eliminated. This office addressed and adjudicated 359 (2006-2007), 387 (2007-2008), and 338 (2008-2009) disputations brought to the fore by the students, faculty, and staff. According to a GSO survey, 65% of respondents were in favor of re-opening the Ombuds Office.

Considering the above, I believe that graduate student workers, as state employees, should have the right to bargain collectively. 85% of the respondents to GSO's survey agreed that graduate students should have collective bargaining rights. I am in full support of HB1146 and SB1365, which grants graduate students the ability to take the first steps to provide for the protection of graduate student workers' rights and education by permitting the inclusion of graduate students employed by the University of Hawaii system in any appropriate collective bargaining unit.

Mahalo nui for your efforts to ensure the health and well being of our state's flagship institution of higher education!

ichiyama3 - Malia

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, January 30, 2013 10:51 AM
To: HEDtestimony
Cc: teresa.parsons@hawaii.edu
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB1146 on Jan 31, 2013 14:00PM

HB1146

Submitted on: 1/30/2013

Testimony for HED on Jan 31, 2013 14:00PM in Conference Room 309

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Teresa Parsons	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments: The process of managing the business of the University of Hawaii is cumbersome already due to UHPA involvement in Department and College affairs, and little is done by the collective bargaining unit representatives other than claiming a part of University employee's salaries. I strongly object to including Graduate Assistants in the bargaining unit. There are other avenues to address issues within the student services system. I urge you to let this measure die without consideration. Teresa Parsons, Graduate Student, Doctoral Program, University of Hawai'i

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing , improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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Dear Legislator,

I am writing to lend my support to the proposed HB1146 that would remove graduate students from the list of state employees barred from collective bargaining. As a former undergraduate and graduate student at UH Manoa, I am convinced that this bill is in the best interests not only of current and future graduate students at the University of Hawaii, but also of the vast majority of undergraduate students who receive a substantial proportion of their education from graduate teaching assistants. It therefore follows that this bill is in the best interests of the University at large, the people of the Hawai'i, the nation and the larger world.

In recent years, various members of the University administration have opposed initiatives that would give graduate students collective bargaining rights, arguing that this would create an oppositional relationship between graduate students, faculty and administration, undermining the collaborative spirit essential for the cultivation of a successful University. Opponents of collective bargaining for graduate students argue that it is incorrect for graduate assistants, who are essentially trainees, to regard themselves as employees. Others have pointed out that in times of economic difficulty (when the cost of living in Hawaii has increased but graduate student wages and benefits have remained dormant) we cannot afford to negotiate wages and conditions with graduate students! Such arguments are disingenuous and seek to obscure the fact that a significant proportion of undergraduate education at UH Manoa is delivered by graduate teaching assistants. They are also shortsighted in that they fail to recognize that unfair exploitation of the most vulnerable members of the academic community compromises the standards of the institution as a whole. The fundamental weakening of our premier institution of higher learning that is the inevitable result of such short-sighted exploitation is in the best interests of nobody.

Graduate research and teaching assistantships are certainly a necessary and important aspect of training future generations of scholars. Graduate students can clearly play a positive role in undergraduate education and as "apprentices" in the research process. However, graduate students who are unprotected by collective bargaining agreements are highly vulnerable to economic exploitation. Dependent on the goodwill of academic supervisors and senior faculty members for their future career prospects, it is practically impossible for an individual graduate student to negotiate their terms of service in an academic department on anything like an equal playing field. Therefore, collective bargaining is the most just and universally advantageous solution.

Were it only graduate students who were negatively impacted by their current bar to collective bargaining, we might more readily accept that graduate student assistants should simply "pay their dues" and accept whatever terms are offered. However, the undesirable consequences of this situation flow onward, negatively impacting not only graduate student assistants themselves but the entire university system, and therefore the wider community. By relying on underpaid, unprotected, overworked graduate students to deliver a substantial proportion of undergraduate instruction, for instance, we effectively reduce the quality of education we offer at the University of Hawaii. The larger consequences of this scenario are perhaps incalculable, but we are clearly undermining the competitiveness of our economy and perhaps more importantly our general capacity as a people to rise to the challenges of an uncertain future.

A graduate student who is undervalued financially, and therefore struggles to make ends meet while pursuing their own goals of higher education, is unlikely to approach their role as a

teaching assistant with the commitment and dedication that the position deserves and demands. The result is that as a society we are squandering our greatest resource, that is, our human potential.

Thank you for considering this testimony. I urge you to make time to seriously consider this bill.

Sincerely,
Richard Forster

Aloha HED Committee members,

I am Tom Robinson, the President of the Graduate Student Organization. I am hopeful that you will support HB 1146. Since I have started as a graduate assistant at UH, my pay has gone down each year because my health insurance costs have gone way up without any warning or explanation. Graduate students as a whole have had very little say when it comes to our compensation, fees, health care, and expectations. We only ask for rights similar to all other groups of government employees. We would like to have open conversations with the administration of the university instead of having to go through a lengthy bureaucracy that ultimately ends in our collective requests for reasonable pay, affordable health care, and a fair third party grievance process being ignored.

Sincerely,

Thomas Robinson

ichiyama3 - Malia

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, January 30, 2013 12:18 PM
To: HEDtestimony
Cc: jandberg@hawaii.edu
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB1146 on Jan 31, 2013 14:00PM

HB1146

Submitted on: 1/30/2013

Testimony for HED on Jan 31, 2013 14:00PM in Conference Room 309

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jaclyn Andberg	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I strongly support HB1146.

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I am writing in full support of HB1146 and SB1365. Graduate students have an immense responsibility as educational professionals whether they are a first-year MA student serving as a teaching assistant or an advanced PhD candidate conducting original research. Since 2004, graduate assistants (GAs) at the University of Hawaii at Manoa (UHM) have received zero compensation adjustments, while the cost of living in the islands has progressively risen. In December 2012, Chancellor Tom Apple released a memo stating, "Effective Fall 2013, all GAs currently assigned to Step 7 or lower will be moved to Step 8."

While this does impact a number of GAs, this gesture does not technically constitute a "raise" as there are no standardized and continuous budgetary increases to go along with this mandatory adjustment. This stop-gap measure will effectively reduce the number of graduate assistantships offered and adversely impact the health of many programs and the vitality of the university.

In hopes of remediating this issue, along with concerns over equal representation, graduate students are seeking the capacity to bargain collectively. Passing HB1146 and SB1365 serves as a critical first step in giving graduate students the opportunity to start the process of unionizing. Other universities across the United States enjoy positive working relationships with graduate student unions that fairly advocate for graduate student workers, including both peer and benchmark institutions.

At the University of Hawaii at Manoa, the total number of graduate students is estimated to be 5722 (Fall 2012), and 22.7% (1308) of those students have graduate student on-campus employment either as a research assistant or teaching assistant. Disparities exist between actual salaries and benefits provided to graduate student workers at UHM and comparable institutions. At the University of Oregon (UO), the university covers 100% of the medical plan costs for graduate students whereas UHM's administration covers merely 50%.

Factoring in health care, students at UO can make more money than at UHM, and these two communities have vastly different costs of living. In fact, with rising health care costs and no pay increases, graduate students progressively make less money each year when their health care costs are raised. A recent survey conducted by Graduate Student Organization (GSO) found that 90% of graduate students feel that current salary scales do not account for the cost of living in the islands.

Recent budget cutbacks with a campus-wide impact at UHM have eliminated offices and administrative positions crucial to the successful employment and academic experiences of graduate students. In particular, the Ombuds Office at the University of Hawaii at Manoa, which provided an accessible grievance process for troubleshooting

issues related to the experience of attending and working at UHM, has been eliminated. This office addressed and adjudicated 359 (2006-2007), 387 (2007-2008), and 338 (2008-2009) disputations brought to the fore by the students, faculty, and staff. According to a GSO survey, 65% of respondents were in favor of re-opening the Ombuds Office.

Considering the above, I believe that graduate student workers, as state employees, should have the right to bargain collectively. 85% of the respondents to GSO's survey agreed that graduate students should have collective bargaining rights. I am in full support of HB1146 and SB1365, which grants graduate students the ability to take the first steps to provide for the protection of graduate student workers' rights and education by permitting the inclusion of graduate students employed by the University of Hawaii system in any appropriate collective bargaining unit.

Mahalo nui for your efforts to ensure the health and well being of our state's flagship institution of higher education!

I am a teaching assistant at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. I am strongly in support of creating a pathway for the unionization of the graduate assistants. This state has a long and proud union history, so there is no reason that we should prevent a distinct group of workers a right properly extended to the rest of our community. Further, graduate student workers greatly contribute to the quality of the university system, and we should encourage their participation in decisions affecting terms and conditions of work. Mahalo.



House Committee on High Education

Dear Committee members

I would like to issue this testimony in support of House Bill 2859. Currently, based on Hawaii state statute, it is illegal for the graduate assistants to form a union. This bill would make the necessary changes to the law to allow graduate assistants to the right to form a union. The budget cuts through out the state have also affected the University of Hawaii at Manoa, however, unlike other state employees, who were able to negotiate how much, who and when the budget cuts would take affect, graduate assistants had these terms dictated to them. While, graduate assistants did not receive a pay cut, additional fees were added to all students, most of which the decision to add on nominally included the students, in addition to a planned tuition increase are effectively the same thing as a pay cut. This is on top of the fact that graduate assistants went without a pay increase from 2004-2012 while cost of living has continued to increase. These issues have conspired to create a situation where it is difficult to impossible for many graduate students to live without acquiring a second or even third job. This extra work takes time away from their studies and retards their advancement towards their degree, and thus is directly at odds with the mission of the University in educating these graduate students.

I would also like to point out that one of the priorities for the institution and the state sponsorship of it, is that the University of Hawaii at Manoa remain a tier 1 research institution. Graduate assistants are an important part of this process. Of particular importance should be the ability to be competitive with other universities in hiring the best graduate students available. To that end, I have included three tables, which demonstrate the barriers to this based on current graduate assistant pay rates at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. These tables have graduate student stipends from different universities considered by the Manoa Institutional Research Office to be our peer and benchmark institutions based on research qualifications. University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill has been excluded from these tables because they do not have standardized stipend levels. The first table contains the actual compensation granted by these institutions. Just like UH, all of these institutions included full tuition remission with an assistantship and most included full health care benefits as well. Many of the schools additionally included a schedule of when raises from one step to the next takes place. For brevity, I have included on the lowest five steps at all institutions, as well as teaching assistants when they are listed separately from research assistants. Higher steps are included in the maximum column. This information is found online on the respective schools' websites. Citations are included at the bottom of the testimony.

Table 1

School	TA	RA1	RA2	RA3	RA4	RA5	Min	Max
UH-M		15552	16176	16824	17496	18198	13296	25902
UC Berekely	17309	16698	17999	19956	21558	22992	16697	32730
UC Davis	17309	16698	17999	19956	21558	22992	16698	32730
UCLA	17309	16698	17999	19956	21558	22992	16699	32730
UCSD	16969.5						16212	31776
Pitt	15830						12920	18100
U. Washington		16775		18029		19371	16775	25212

Tables 2 and 3 include the same information, but transformed using two different methods to take into account the difference in the cost of living between these places and Honolulu. The first in Table 2 is normalized by the living wage as determined by Penn State University and then multiplied by that value for Honolulu. Table 3 uses a calculation from cnnmoney.com. It is less complete due to lack of appropriate options for some of the included universities.

Table 2

School	TA	RA1	RA2	RA3	RA4	RA5	Min	Max
UH-M		\$0.00	\$15,552.00	\$16,176.00	\$16,824.00	\$17,496.00	\$18,198.00	\$25,902.00
UC Berekely	\$20,052.55	\$19,344.70	\$20,851.91	\$23,119.11	\$24,975.03	\$26,636.32	\$19,343.54	\$37,917.84
UC Davis	\$22,885.17	\$22,077.34	\$23,797.46	\$26,384.91	\$28,503.01	\$30,398.98	\$22,077.34	\$43,274.12
UCLA	\$20,106.26	\$19,396.52	\$20,907.77	\$23,181.03	\$25,041.93	\$26,707.67	\$19,397.68	\$38,019.40
UCSD	\$18,901.81	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$18,058.06	\$35,394.33
Pitt	26677.24	0	0	0	0	0	21773.21	30502.72
U. Washington	0	24744.08	0	26593.8	0	28573.32	24744.08	37189.13

Table 3

UH-M		15552	16176	16824	17496	18198	13296	25902
UC Berekely	21356	20602	22207	24622	26598	28368	20601	40383
UC Davis								
UCLA	21870	21098	22742	25215	27239	29051	21100	41356
UCSD	21802						20829	40827
Pitt	28019						22868	32037
U. Washington		24037		25834		27757	24037	36127

As is evident from these tables, graduate assistants from UH-Manoa are significantly under paid with respect to our peers.

Thank you for your consideration

Aaron Levine

GSO Parliamentarian

Graduate Research Assistant, Department of Meteorology

Citations

<http://www.grad.washington.edu/students/fa/salaries/ta2011-12variable.pdf>

<http://hrweb.berkeley.edu/labor/contracts/BX/current-rates>

<http://www.gradstudies.ucdavis.edu/employment/index.html>

<http://www.gdnet.ucla.edu/gss/appm/aaprate.pdf>

<http://www.gdnet.ucla.edu/asis/entsup/ta-rashp.htm>

http://ogs.ucsd.edu/_files/financial/prospective-financial-support/jobopportunities.pdf

<http://www.pitt.edu/~graduate/stipends.html>

<http://www.livingwage.geog.psu.edu/>

<http://cgi.money.cnn.com/tools/costofliving/costofliving.html>



From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, January 30, 2013 8:44 PM
To: HEDtestimony
Cc: shaglund@hotmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB1146 on Jan 31, 2013 14:00PM

HB1146

Submitted on: 1/30/2013

Testimony for HED on Jan 31, 2013 14:00PM in Conference Room 309

Table with 4 columns: Submitted By, Organization, Testifier Position, Present at Hearing. Row 1: Sue Haglund, Individual, Support, No

Comments: My name is Sue Haglund and I am a doctoral candidate in the Department of Political Science at the University of Hawaii-Manoa. I strongly support HB1146. Under current state law in the Hawaii Revised Statutes, Section 89-6, (f), 14-15 non-collective bargaining unit employees (for example, graduate assistants, teaching assistants, and research assistants) are excluded from any and/or all collective bargaining negotiation(s) because current state law lists them as "a student of a state institution" and "student help" entities that are prohibited from collective bargaining. Under the current statute, only collective bargaining unit employees (UH faculty-staff for example) have representation to negotiate on their behalf for better working conditions, salary increases, grievance procedures, and healthcare coverage. As graduate assistants, teaching assistants, and research assistants, in a state where we are considered state employees, we do not have any inclusion for negotiations for better working conditions, grievance procedures, salary increases etc. In the past years, University of Hawaii's graduate student employees have been in vulnerable positions that leave room for cheap labor exploitation The educational setting of University of Hawaii has changed and waned over the years—most recently due to major budget cuts. During uncertain economic times, graduate student employees without collective bargaining rights are left to carry the burden of teaching classes with double the class size of students and working beyond the required maximum hours—thus, leading to unfair labor practices and labor exploitation of graduate student employees. The University of Hawaii at Manoa's budget cuts during Fall 2009 increased in larger class sizes and increasing faculty workload, which led the faculty union to file a complaint to Hawaii State Labor Board against UH administration for unfair increase of faculty workload. The University of Hawaii's faculty and staff not satisfied with the double class sizes, through their union, may file a grievance and complain to the state labor board. However, graduate student employees who are teaching assistants teach large class sizes, are also affected by the unfair increase of graduate assistantship workload, but they have no place to go to file a grievance or complaint. The impact of UH budget cuts and the elimination of the Ombuds office took away the only impartial, confidential option to access a grievance process for graduate student employees, thus leaving graduate student employees more vulnerable to labor exploitation. This office addressed and adjudicated 359 (2006-2007), 387 (2007-2008), and 338 (2008-2009) disputations brought to the fore by the students, faculty, and staff. According to a GSO survey, 65% of respondents were in favor of re-opening the Ombuds Office. Graduate students have an immense responsibility as educational professionals whether they are a first-year MA student serving as a teaching assistant or an advanced PhD candidate conducting original research. Since 2004,graduate assistants (GAs) at the University of Hawaii at Manoa (UHM) have received zero compensation adjustments, while the cost of living in the islands has progressively risen. In December 2012, Chancellor Tom Apple released a memo stating, "Effective

Fall 2013, all GAs currently assigned to Step 7 or lower will be moved to Step 8.” While this does impact a number of GAs, this gesture does not technically constitute a “raise” as there are no standardized and continuous budgetary increases to go along with this mandatory adjustment. This stop-gap measure will effectively reduce the number of graduate assistantships offered and adversely impact the health of many programs and the vitality of the university. In hopes of re-mediating this issue, along with concerns over equal representation, as graduate students, we are seeking the capacity to bargain collectively. Passing HB1146 serves as a critical first step in giving graduate students the opportunity to start the process of unionizing. Please pass HB1146. Thank you. Sue Haglund

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