

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



CRAIG K. HIRAI
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII

DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM
HAWAII HOUSING FINANCE AND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
677 QUEEN STREET, SUITE 300
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
FAX: (808) 587-0600

IN REPLY REFER TO:

Statement of
Craig K. Hirai
Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corporation
Before the

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

February 25, 2016 at 11:00 a.m.
State Capitol, Room 308

In consideration of
H.B. 2510, H.D. 1
RELATING TO HOUSING VOUCHERS.

HHFDC *supports the intent* of H.B. 2510, H.D. 1, but defers to the Department of Education on the extent of the demand for the proposed housing voucher program and the fiscal impact on the Department's operating budget with respect to funding for the vouchers and administration of the program.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
P.O. BOX 2360
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

Date: 02/25/2016
Time: 11:00 AM
Location: 308
Committee: House Finance

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Kathryn S. Matayoshi, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: HB 2510, HD1 RELATING TO HOUSING VOUCHERS.

Purpose of Bill: Authorizes the Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corporation to establish a housing voucher program for full-time classroom teachers employed by the Department of Education, including classroom teachers at public charter schools. (HB2510 HD1)

Department's Position:

The Department of Education supports HB 2510, HD1. There is a need for affordable housing for teachers given the high cost of living in Hawaii.

However, it is important to note that since public charter school teachers are not employed by the Department of Education, the Department would not be able to verify the status of all public charter school teachers who apply for the voucher program. The Department recommends revising the language of proposed subsection (b) to include the Public Charter School Commission in the employment verification process.

We respectfully defer to the Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corporation as to the funding implications and appropriate implementation of this housing voucher program.

RE: HB 2510 HD1 - RELATING TO HOUSING VOUCHERS.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE HEARING

DATE: Thursday, February 25, 2016 TIME: 11:00 A.M.

PLACE: Conference Room 308 State Capitol 415 South Beretania Street

Honorable Chair Luke and Members of the Committee:

My name is Debbie Anderson. I support HB 2510, relating to housing vouchers that may be used toward rent or mortgage payments for a classroom teacher's primary residence.

In our state teacher turnover is extremely high. Approximately 10 percent of Hawaii's teachers switch schools, relocate, or leave the profession each year. Only 50 to 60 percent of current teachers have been at their school for five years or more. Chronic teacher turnover, in turn, forces the department of education to rely on emergency hires and long-term substitute teachers to fill vacancies. Not being able to provide enough highly qualified teachers for our students is a problem we need to solve now. Year after year, studies, such as the annual WalletHub salary comparison, rank Hawai'i fifty-first out of fifty states and the District of Columbia for starting and median teacher salary adjusted for cost of living.

Teacher recruitment and retention is difficult extremely for hard-to-staff communities, where as few as 56 percent of teachers are highly qualified. Comparatively, 93 per cent of teachers statewide are highly qualified. Nationwide, 56 per cent of teachers have an advanced degree, while only 36 per cent of Hawaii's teachers have an advanced degree.

I was recruited to teach with a Master's degree in Special Education. On my teacher's salary, I could not afford to buy my own home in Windward O'ahu. As an after school athletic coach for 18 years, travelling far wasn't easy, so we chose to rent near our teams.

As a team of technology trainers, my Real Estate agent and I taught classes at Laupahoehoe. Afterwards, he showed me Big Island opportunities for land purchases. After my second Master's degree in Library Science, I moved my family to the Big Island, and stayed in the Waimea Teachers' Cottages for one year. As WEIS Technology Coordinator, I facilitated e-rate funding, wired the campus for the internet, and taught credit classes which incorporated the NETS Standards. For this I was awarded Hawaii Technology Educator of the Year and given a trip to the NECC. The next year I transferred to Honoka'a. Teacher Housing there didn't have space for us, so we lived in a yurt with a fireplace on which the walls grew mold. For safety reasons, we moved to a rental with another teacher. As a teacher of a quarter century, after 20 years in Hawai'i, I can live in my own home near where I work as Waiakea Intermediate School Librarian. This is too hard for many.

The passing of this bill will help support teachers with the high cost of living by providing them with housing so they will be able to stay in the profession they love, teaching. We hope we can count on you for your support for HB2510 HD1.

Thank you,
Debbie Anderson, M.Ed., M.L.I.S., NBCT
Hilo homeowner

From: Ashley Olson <ms.a.olson@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 24, 2016 5:17 PM
To: FINTestimony
Subject: RE: HB 2510 HD1 - RELATING TO HOUSING VOUCHERS.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE HEARING

DATE:

Thursday, February 25, 2016

TIME:

11:00 A.M.

PLACE:

Conference Room 308

State Capitol

415 South Beretania Street



Honorable Chair Luke and Members of the Committee:

My name is Ashley Olson. I am a teacher at Lahainaluna High School on the island of Maui where I have taught for over 23 years.

I have done all that I can in order to increase my salary, and for the last several years have been in Class VII. After more than 20 years of teaching, my base salary is \$68,482, or, with the additional 21 training hours, it is \$69,433. Contrast my salary with the cost of housing in West Maui, where the least expensive 2-bedroom, 1-bath condominium (a 20-30 minute drive from my school) is currently listed at \$199,000, with a maintenance fee of \$929.00/month. After more than 20 years of teaching, I rent a room in a home that I share with two other housemates.

I support HB 2510 HD1, relating to housing vouchers that may be used toward rent or mortgage payments for a classroom teacher's primary residence.

In our state teacher turnover is extremely high. Approximately 10 percent of Hawaii's teachers switch schools, relocate, or leave the profession each year. Only 50 to 60 percent of current teachers have been at their school for five years or more. Chronic teacher turnover, in turn, forces the department of education to rely on emergency hires and long-term substitute teachers to fill vacancies. Not being able to provide enough highly qualified teachers for our students is a problem we need to solve now. Year after year, studies, such as the annual WalltHub salary comparison, rank Hawai'i fifty-first out of fifty states and the District of Columbia for starting and median teacher salary adjusted for cost of living.

Teacher recruitment and retention is extremely difficult for poor and hard-to- staff communities, where as few as 56 percent of teachers are highly qualified. Comparatively, 93 per cent of teachers statewide are highly qualified. Nationwide, 56 per cent of teachers have an advanced degree, while only 36 per cent of Hawaii's teachers have an advanced degree.

The passing of this bill will help support teachers with the high cost of living by providing them with housing so they will be able to stay in the profession they love, teaching. We hope we can count on you for your support for HB2510 HD1.

Thank you,

Ashley Olson
Lahainaluna High School
ms.a.olson@gmail.com

From: Mireille Ellsworth <mireilleellsworth@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 24, 2016 5:51 PM
To: FINTestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HB2510 HD1



RE: HB 2510 HD1 - RELATING TO HOUSING VOUCHERS.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE HEARING

DATE:

Thursday, February 25, 2016

TIME: 11:00 A.M.

PLACE: Conference Room 308, State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

Honorable Chair Luke and Members of the Committee:

My name is Mireille Ellsworth. I am a teacher at Waiakea High School on the Big Island. As a teacher of nearly 12 years in Hawai'i, I support HB 2510, relating to housing vouchers that may be used toward rent or mortgage payments for a classroom teacher's primary residence.

Since moving to Hawaii in 2004, I have always had to have roommates to afford to stay here, and I live in one of the places with some of the cheapest housing in the state, East Hawaii, Big Island. As a woman in my fifties with 18 years in my profession, I feel embarrassed and disenfranchised that I am not able to own a place to live, no matter how meager. It is a constant temptation year to year to move out of state where prices are lower and teacher salaries higher. There is a shortage of teachers in MANY communities throughout the U.S.

I have also seen many teachers leave because of housing costs and other costs of living in Hawaii. As a result, the teacher shortage is definitely taking its toll on my students. Some have huge gaps in their skills because of a lack of certified teachers in their school careers, especially my students with learning disabilities. The students are being cheated from a good education because a lack of qualified teachers.

Providing housing vouchers would definitely be an incentive for teachers to come to Hawaii and stay in Hawaii. As for myself, I would be much more likely to stay with such assistance. I may even be able to afford the groceries that I buy. Actually, right now, everything is going on my credit card, food included. It's a degrading feeling paying for my master's degree (student loans) with 18 years of experience as a professional, but I'm not even affording the food that I eat or the gas in my vehicle. It is not sustainable.

Please support this wonderful incentive to offset the cost of living encouraging me and many of my colleagues to stay in the profession. For teachers, it's not about making money. It's about survival.

Thank you for your consideration,

Mireille Ellsworth,
English and Acting Teacher,
Waiakea High School,
Hilo, Hawaii

From: Jennie Yee <ah.no.yee@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 24, 2016 5:10 PM
To: FINTestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HB2510 HD1



CALL TO ACTION: We need your testimony right away to support HB2510 HD1 Regarding Housing Vouchers for classroom teachers. We have submitted testimony before, but now it is being heard by the Finance Committee in the House tomorrow, Thursday, Feb.25.

We encourage you to spread the word and have as many teachers as possible submit testimony on HB2510 HD1. Submit testimony a.s.a.p., so that it will be printed and counted before the hearing.

To read more about the bill, click on this link.

http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/measure_indiv.aspxbilltype=HB&billnumber=2510&year=2016

Here is the bill.

http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/session2016/bills/HB2510_HD1_.HTM

Directions for submitting this for HB2510 HD1 testimony:

1. Email your testimony directly to the committee testimony email address FINtestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov
2. In the heading, please write,

Testimony in support of HB2510 HD1
3. Use the body below. (copy and paste)
4. [Optional], add to your testimony using your own experiences

RE: HB 2510 HD1 - RELATING TO HOUSING VOUCHERS.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE HEARING

DATE:

Thursday, February 25, 2016

TIME:

11:00 A.M.

PLACE:

Conference Room 308

State Capitol

415 South Beretania Street

Honorable Chair Luke and Members of the Committee:

My name is Jennie Yee. I am a teacher at Castle High School on the island of Oahu, and have worked at our Department of Education for over 20 years.

I support HB 2510, relating to housing vouchers that may be used toward rent or mortgage payments for a classroom teacher's primary residence.

Please understand the plight of teachers who wish to serve their communities by teaching in the public school system. The large majority of new teachers enter the profession full of aspirations and hopes to make a positive contribution to society. These dreams get dashed when reality sets in, and the cost of living in Hawaii makes it clear that being a teacher means living so close to poverty. The biggest monthly payment teachers make is to cover the cost of housing. In speaking with new teachers, it is often clear that little money is left for food, and almost no money is left for frivolous spending on fast food or an occasional movie. Yet, they are grateful for the opportunity to enjoy a nice hike or visit to the beach.

Sadly, many teachers leave our school system within a five year period. I worry because there is a very small pool, if any, of young teachers wanting to fill slots of teachers like me who want to retire soon. If we can assist teachers with funds to help with their housing expenses, it might entice young teachers to continue working in our department because it might be affordable. Perhaps, our teachers might even be able to consider parenthood if they can financially swing that luxury.

The passing of this bill will help support teachers with the high cost of living by providing them with housing so they will be able to stay in the profession they love, teaching. We hope we can count on you for your support for HB2510 HD1.

Thank you,

Jennie Yee

Castle High School

Email: ah.no.yee@gmail.com

From: Wendy Nickl <wendyfivec@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 24, 2016 4:39 PM
To: FINTestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HB2510 HD1



Honorable Chair Luke and Members of the Committee:

My name is Wendy Nickl. I am a teacher at Kohala Middle School on the island of Hawaii. As a teacher of 30 years in Hawai'i, I support HB 2510, relating to housing vouchers that may be used toward rent or mortgage payments for a classroom teacher's primary residence.

As a young teacher in the 1980's, I benefited from the Hawaii Housing Authority's Teacher Cottages program, which offered affordable rental rates to teachers in housing units located on rural campuses. However, that program only exists in a few rural communities, and in urban areas, rents and mortgages costs are skyrocketing.

In our state teacher turnover is extremely high. Approximately 10 percent of Hawaii's teachers switch schools, relocate, or leave the profession each year. **Only 50 to 60 percent of current teachers have been at their school for five years or more. Chronic teacher turnover, in turn, forces the department of e ducation to rely on emergency hires and long-term substitute teachers to fill vacancies.** Not being able to provide enough highly qualified teachers for our students is a problem we need to solve now. Year after year, studies, such the annual WalltetHub salary comparison, rank Hawai'i fifty- first out of fifty states and the District of Columbia for starting and median teacher salary adjusted for cost of living.

Teacher recruitment and retention is extremely difficult for poor and hard-to-staff communities, where as few as 56 percent of teachers are highly qualified. Comparatively, 93 per cent of teachers statewide are highly qualified. Nationwide, 56 per cent of teachers have an advanced degree, while only 36 per cent of Hawaii's teachers have an advanced degree.

The passing of this bill will help support teachers with the high cost of living by providing them with housing so they will be able to stay in the profession they love, teaching.

We hope we can count on you for your support for HB2510 HD1.

Thank you,

WendyAnn H. Nickl
Kohala Middle School
wendyfivec@gmail.com

From: Iolani Kuoha <peepuhala@hotmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 24, 2016 9:10 PM
To: FINTestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HB2510 HD1

LATE

Aloha my name is 'Iolani Kuoha. I am a teacher at Moloka'i Middle School on the Island of Moloka'i. As a teacher of 15 years in Hawai'i.

I support HB 2510, relating to housing vouchers that may be used toward rent or mortgage payments for a classroom teacher's primary residence.

In our state teacher turnover is extremely high. Approximately 10 percent of Hawaii's teachers switch schools, relocate, or leave the profession each year. Only 50 to 60 percent of current teachers have been at their school for five years or more. Chronic teacher turnover, in turn, forces the department of education to rely on emergency hires and long-term substitute teachers to fill vacancies. Not being able to provide enough highly qualified teachers for our students is a problem we need to solve now. Year after year, studies, such the annual WalltetHub salary comparison, rank Hawai'i fifty-first out of fifty states and the District of Columbia for starting and median teacher salary adjusted for cost of living.

Teacher recruitment and retention is extremely difficult for poor and hard-to-staff communities, where as few as 56 percent of teachers are highly qualified. Comparatively , 93 per cent of

teachers statewide are highly qualified. Nationwide, 56 per cent of teachers have an advanced degree, while only 36 per cent of Hawaii's teachers have an advanced degree.

The passing of this bill will help support teachers with the high cost of living by providing them with housing so they will be able to stay in the profession they love, teaching. We hope we can count on you for your support for HB2510 HD1.

Mahalo,

'Iolani Ku'oha

Ke Kula Waena, 'O Hina i Ka Malama

Molokai Middle School, Hawaiian Language Immersion Program

peepuhala@hotmail.com

LATE

February 24, 2016

Honorable Chair Takumi and Committee Members,

As a veteran high school social studies teacher in Hawaii public schools, I support HB 2510, which will provide vouchers that may be used toward rent or mortgage payments for a classroom teacher's primary residence.

In our state, teacher turnover is extremely high. Approximately 10 percent of Hawaii's teachers switch schools, relocate, or leave the profession each year. Only 50 to 60 percent of current teachers have been at their school for five years or more. Chronic teacher turnover, in turn, forces the department of education to rely on emergency hires and long-term substitute teachers to fill vacancies.

Not being able to provide enough highly qualified teachers for our students is a problem we need to solve now. Year after year, studies Hawaii's fifty-first out of fifty states and the District of Columbia for starting and median teacher salary adjusted for cost of living. Teacher recruitment and retention is extremely difficult in Hawaii, and even more so in our poor and hard-to-staff communities.

The passage of this bill will help support teachers with the high cost of living by providing them with housing so they will be able to continue to work in their chosen profession. We hope we can count on you for your support for HB2510 HD1.

Thank you,

Dr. Amy Perruso
Mililani High School
amyathomas@hotmail.com

From: Ann Anusewicz <aanusewicz@aol.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 24, 2016 9:57 PM
To: FINTestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HB2510 HD1



Committee on Finance Hearing
Thursday, February 25, 2016
11:00 AM

Honorable Chair Luke and Members of the Committee:

My name is Ann Anusewicz. This is my 30th year as a public school teacher on the island of Maui. I am writing in support of HB2510 HD1.

This bill can help to retain highly qualified teachers in our schools. Teacher turnover is very high. Every year, approximately 10% of of Hawaii teachers switch schools, relocate, or leave the profession. Not being able to retain enough highly qualified teachers for our students is a problem that we need to solve now.

Teacher salaries are low. Many teachers work a second and third job in order to meet their monthly rent or mortgage payment. We must do better to keep our highly qualified teachers in our schools, without the distraction of working a second or third job. Providing housing vouchers to classroom teachers will support teachers with the high cost of living.

Please support HB2510 HD1.



HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION
Teaching Today for Hawaii's Tomorrow

LATE

1200 Ala Kapuna Street ♦ Honolulu, Hawaii 96819
Tel: (808) 833-2711 ♦ Fax: (808) 839-7106 ♦ Web: www.hsta.org

Corey Rosenlee
President
Justin Hughey
Vice President
Amy Perruso
Secretary-Treasurer
Wilbert Holck
Executive Director

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
FINANCE

RE: HB 2510, HD1 - RELATING TO HOUSING VOUCHERS.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2016

COREY ROSENLEE, PRESIDENT
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Chair Luke and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association **supports HB 2510, HD1**, relating to housing vouchers.

In the islands, teacher turnover is rife. Approximately 10 percent of Hawaii's teachers switch schools, relocate, or leave the profession each year. Only 50 to 60 percent of current teachers have been at their school for five years or more. Chronic teacher turnover, in turn, forces the department of education to rely on emergency hires and long-term substitute teachers to fill vacancies.

Teacher recruitment and retention is especially difficult for poor and hard-to-staff communities, where as few as 56 percent of teachers are highly qualified. Comparatively, 93 per cent of teachers statewide are highly qualified. Nationwide, 56 per cent of teachers have an advanced degree, while only 36 per cent of Hawaii's teachers have an advanced degree.

Hawaii's high cost of living serves as the primary catalyst for our state's lackluster teacher recruitment and retention results. Year after year, studies, such the annual WalltHub salary comparison, rank Hawai'i fifty-first out of fifty states and the District of Columbia for starting and median teacher salary adjusted for cost of living.



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To recruit and retain effective educators, policymakers must find ways to lessen the financial burden of being a public school teacher. Establishing a housing voucher program is a good first step. In the islands, where new housing rarely becomes available, the percentage of renters who face cost burdens—financial handicaps incurred by people spending over 30 percent of their income on housing—rose from 53 percent in 2007 to nearly 58 percent in 2014, according to an analysis performed by the website ApartmentList.

Many of those cash-strapped renters are state educators, who are chronically underpaid. On a state-by-state basis, Hawaii's average annual teacher salaries are 19 percent less than California, 20 percent less than Massachusetts, and 25 percent less than New York *before* cost of living adjustments are made. To make ends meet, many teachers are forced to pick up second and third jobs, live in cramped studio apartments, and cut back on necessities like medical care. Thus, a housing voucher program would assist teachers in attaining sustainable and stable residency, while staving off crushing debt burdens. It would also make the teaching profession more attractive by increasing educators' purchasing power through the subsidization of rent and mortgages in the state with the nation's highest housing costs.

We must do more to boost our state teachers' quality of life. Accordingly, the Hawaii State Teachers Association asks your committee to **support** this bill.