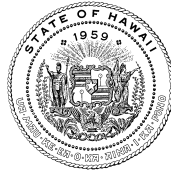


DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR



WRITTEN ONLY

WESLEY K. MACHIDA  
DIRECTOR

RODERICK K. BECKER  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM  
HAWAII EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH BENEFITS TRUST FUND  
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

**STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE**

P.O. BOX 150  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96810-0150

ADMINISTRATIVE AND RESEARCH OFFICE  
BUDGET, PROGRAM PLANNING AND  
MANAGEMENT DIVISION  
FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION DIVISION  
OFFICE OF FEDERAL AWARDS MANAGEMENT (OFAM)

**TESTIMONY BY WESLEY K. MACHIDA  
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE  
TO THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON JUDICIARY AND LABOR AND  
HIGHER EDUCATION AND THE ARTS  
ON  
SENATE BILL NO. 2398**

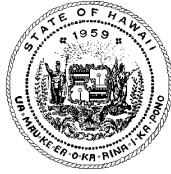
February 11, 2016  
1:15 p.m.

**RELATING TO COLLECTIVE BARGAINING**

This measure allows graduate students employed by the University of Hawaii (UH) to collectively bargain by amending Chapter 89-6, HRS, to remove the exemption from collective bargaining for graduate students employed by UH and authorizing a new Bargaining Unit 15.

The Department of Budget and Finance opposes this measure. UH has outlined several reasons why it is best to keep collective bargaining out of the management of these student-employees in their testimony. The cost implications of allowing graduate students to collectively bargain are a special concern, especially in UH's current fiscal situation.

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR



JAMES K. NISHIMOTO  
DIRECTOR

CINDY S. INOUE  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

**STATE OF HAWAII  
OFFICE OF COLLECTIVE BARGAINING  
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR**  
235 S. BERETANIA STREET, SUITE 1201  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-2437

February 8, 2016

TESTIMONY TO THE  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND LABOR  
AND  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION AND THE ARTS  
For Hearing on Thursday, February 11, 2016  
1:15 p.m., Conference Room 224

By

JAMES K. NISHIMOTO  
OFFICE OF COLLECTIVE BARGAINING, CHIEF NEGOTIATOR

**Senate Bill No. 2398  
Relating to Collective Bargaining**

CHAIRPERSON KEITH-AGARAN, VICE-CHAIR SHIMABUKURO AND MEMBERS OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND LABOR, AND CHAIRPERSON TANIGUCHI AND MEMBERS OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION AND THE ARTS:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important measure.

S.B. No. 2398 would establish a collective bargaining unit for graduate student assistants employed at the University of Hawai'i (UH).

The Office of Collective Bargaining **DOES NOT SUPPORT** this bill for the following reasons:

- Unlike other employees, a graduate student's employment is temporary and is not a career or profession.
- Establishing UH graduate students as collective bargaining unit 15 could have

significant cost increases for both the UH and the State since mandatory subjects of collective bargaining cover wages, hours, conditions of employment, and fringe benefits.

Based upon the above, OCB respectfully requests that this measure **be held**.



**HAWAII GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION**  
AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO

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

The Twenty-Eighth Legislature, State of Hawaii  
The Senate  
Committee on Judiciary and Labor  
Committee on Higher Education and the Arts

Testimony by  
Hawaii Government Employees Association

February 11, 2016

**S.B. 2398 – RELATING TO COLLECTIVE BARGAINING**

The Hawaii Government Employees Association, AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO strongly supports the concept of allowing graduate student assistants employed by the University of Hawaii to be included in an appropriate collective bargaining unit, as proposed in S.B. 2398.

Graduate assistants 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. The language proposed in S.B. 2398 is the most viable legislation as it not only removes the current exclusion of this group from collectively bargaining but also creates a unique bargaining unit with a dispute mechanism to resolve differences in negotiations.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of S.B. 2398.

Respectfully submitted,

  
for Randy Perreira  
Executive Director



Randy Perreira  
President

# HAWAII STATE AFL-CIO

345 Queen Street, Suite 500 • Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Telephone: (808) 597-1441

Fax: (808) 593-2149

The Twenty-Eighth Legislature, State of Hawaii  
Hawaii State Senate  
Committee on Judiciary and Labor  
&  
Committee on Higher Education and the Arts

Testimony by  
Hawaii State AFL-CIO  
February 11, 2016

S.B. 2398 – RELATING TO  
COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

The Hawaii State AFL-CIO strongly supports S.B. 2398 which establishes a collective bargaining unit for graduate student assistants employed at the University of Hawaii.

Having the ability to collectively bargain will give University of Hawaii graduate students a unified voice to discuss their working conditions, wages, and a number of other benefits to help improve their quality of life and work environment. Collective bargaining will help solve workplace problems and provide a grievance process to ensure each situation is handled appropriately and fairly. The Hawaii State AFL-CIO strongly urges the passage of S.B. 2398.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Randy Perreira".

Randy Perreira  
President



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

---

Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committees on Judiciary and Labor  
and

Higher Education and the Arts  
February 11, 2016 at 1:15 pm

By

Risa E. Dickson, Vice President for Academic Affairs  
University of Hawai'i System

### SB 2398 – RELATING TO COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Chairs Keith-Agaran and Taniguchi, Vice Chair Shimabukuro, and members of the committees:

We hereby provide the following testimony on Senate Bill 2398 – Relating to Collective Bargaining which proposes to amend Hawai'i Revised Statutes §89-6, to create a new bargaining unit 15 entitled "Graduate student assistants employed by the University of Hawaii."

The University opposes this measure.

"...graduate student assistants are students first and employees second." This statement, from Governor's Message No. 1328, dated July 13, 2015 articulates one of the concerns and issues raised in Governor David Ige's Statement of Objections to House Bill 553 which he vetoed in 2015. The current bill continues to be objectionable because it is still incomplete and potentially causes legal and administrative problems. A student graduate assistantship is not a career position within government service, unlike all other employees in the established fourteen (14) collective bargaining units under HRS, §89-6. There will be significant cost increases to both the University and the State of Hawai'i should graduate student assistants become employees with the right to collectively bargain. These costs could extend to include, but would not be limited to additional pension contribution costs and possible increases in health benefit costs. The current levels of compensation for graduate student assistants are competitive when tuition waivers, monetary stipends, and other benefits are taken into account. Graduate student assistants with 50% appointments are eligible for the same health and benefit plans (medical, prescription drugs, dental, vision and life insurance) as state employees. Graduate assistants who are full-time students are exempt from the FICA tax.

As noted in prior testimonies, the legislature, University of Hawai'i, and state tax payers must consider several issues when deliberating on the approach to allow university employed graduate student assistants to be included in collective bargaining.

First, from an employment perspective, the University's graduate student assistants are unlike any other employees of the State. Graduate student assistants are students employed as part of their education and training. Graduate student assistants are mentored and supervised by rank 3, 4, and 5 faculty members who hold a terminal degree such as a Ph.D. and have professional mastery in teaching and/or professional work in their respective academic disciplines. The role of a University faculty mentor is to teach graduate assistants how to engage the disciplinary subject matter with the goal of preparing them to find employment as academic professionals with competitive knowledge and skills in the discipline subject matter, and to position them to make contributions in their disciplines at national and international levels. A graduate student assistantship is a form of on-the-job training or apprenticeship training program with the purpose of mentoring a student with the explicit goal of increasing their competitiveness as they enter their professional academic career. A graduate assistantship is a time bound activity, lasting only as long as a student is enrolled in a graduate program.

Second, the State of Hawai'i and the University of Hawai'i must somberly consider the financial implications of including student employees such as graduate student assistants in the State's public sector collective bargaining law. There will be significant cost increases for both the University and the State of Hawai'i should the Legislature decide that graduate student assistants are indeed employees with a right to collectively bargain. Graduate student assistants of the University are currently compensated via a package that includes a variety of benefits. University graduate student assistants receive tuition waivers valued between \$593 to \$1,770 per credit hour, per semester, depending upon if they are a Hawai'i resident or an out of state student. For example, UH Mānoa full time resident graduate student tuition ranges between \$7,116 and \$11,196 per semester while non-resident tuition ranges between \$17,160 and \$21,240 per semester. Graduate student assistants may also receive a monetary stipend that varies by the educational program in which they are enrolled. The current level of compensation is a significant cost to the University and a significant amount of the financial assistance provided to graduate student assistants.

Third, because mandatory subjects of bargaining covers wages, hours, conditions of employment and fringe benefits, all such subjects shall now become "cost items" subject to legislative appropriations pursuant to HRS, §89-10(b). For example, membership in the State Employees' Retirement System as provided to employees in Chapter 88, HRS, will add pension contribution costs to the State and the employee. An increase in enrollment in the Employer-Union Trust Fund for health insurance benefits will increase expenses for the University for contributions, and to the State for total liability of the system. Additionally, all collectively bargained compensation may be treated as wages that will be subject to employment and income taxes – an issue graduate assistants may not be considering as it relates to the value of tuition waivers. The Legislature must consider the additional expenses incurred above the current operational costs in the creation of a 15th bargaining unit. Adding collective bargaining components to graduate student assistants, who are first and foremost students and employed as an extension of their student experience at the University, will increase State general fund demand while simultaneously increasing University operational expenses.

Finally, since last legislative session, University of Hawai'i President Lassner met with representatives of the UH Mānoa Graduate Student Organization (GSO) in both July and October 2015. To address the GSO concerns, the administration has been working with the chief academic officers and the UH Mānoa Office Graduate Education on a proposed revision to the procedures that addresses the GSO concerns. Among the items up for consideration are one year appointments and renewals instead of semester appointments as appropriate, earlier renewal date notifications, reminding supervisors to consider advance to next step on salary schedule for exemplary performance, recognition of the need for outside employment for many students, and work schedule adjustments for illness or emergency situations.

The Legislature must consider the current tuition waivers and compensation paid to graduate student assistants who are first and foremost students and employed as an extension of their student experience at the University. The proposed bill will increase expenses above the current operational expenses.

In summary, the University of Hawai'i opposes SB 2398 because graduate student assistants are students first and because of the significant cost implications for the State, the University, and the state's taxpayers.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.





Date: February 11th, 2016  
Time: 1:15PM  
Place: Conference Room 224

To: Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor  
Senator Keith-Agaran, Chair  
Senator Maile Shimabukuro, Vice Chair

Senate Committee on Higher Education and the Arts  
Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair

Re: Support for SB 2398 Relating to Collective Bargaining

Dear Chair Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair Shimabukuro, Chair Taniguchi, Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor and Members of the Senate Committee on Higher Education and the Arts,

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony. My name is Jonathan Dial, and I am writing on behalf and as the President of the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UHM) Graduate Student Organization (GSO), which represents the approximately 5,000 graduate students at the UHM campus. I am writing in strong support of SB 2398, which seeks to secure collective bargaining rights for graduate assistants at UH.

As you know, the role of graduate assistants is integral to the university's operation. They teach, research, and perform administrative work, but they are unfairly compensated for their labor and are vulnerable to exploitation and poor treatment. Regardless of the elimination of the bottom steps of the pay scale for graduate assistants in 2013, the pay rate for any of the steps has not increased since 2003/2004. The current base pay (\$17,500/year) is just fifty-one percent of the cost of living in Honolulu for graduate students, declared by the University to be nearly \$34,000/year in 2012. Given that these positions are intended to serve as means through which students can earn a living wage while pursuing their education, this is a major problem for graduate students. Furthermore, the relatively short duration of these positions, while sometimes pointed to by critics as a rationale for graduate assistants not needing collective bargaining rights, actually make these employees more vulnerable to exploitation. We also find that a climate of fear of retaliation amongst many graduate assistants leads them to refuse to speak out, especially in the forms of formal grievances or Congressional testimony.

These circumstances deter potential students and are also likely responsible for many students' decisions to leave UH and the state. Indeed, graduate student enrollment has significantly declined in recent years. Attempts by the GSO to improve these circumstances, especially pertaining to compensation, have been flatly denied by administration. Even a one-time adjustment in pay would not guarantee that similar problems would not continue to arise in the future. Through collective bargaining, this vulnerable population would be able to protect and promote its own interests, while simultaneously protecting the future of post graduate higher education for the state. Based on these reasons, we strongly support SB 2398.

Thank you,

Jonathan Dial  
UH Mānoa Graduate Student Organization, President

Email: [jdial@hawaii.edu](mailto:jdial@hawaii.edu)

Graduate Student Organization • University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

Hemenway Hall 212 • 2445 Campus Road • Honolulu, HI 96822



The Committee on Judiciary and Labor  
and  
The Committee on Higher Education and The Arts  
Thursday, February 11, 2016  
1:15 p.m., Room 224

**RE: SB 2398, Relating to Collective Bargaining**

Attention: Chairs Gilbert Keith-Agaran and Brian Taniguchi,  
Vice Chairs Maile Shimabukuro and Lorraine Inouye and  
Members of the Committees

The University of Hawaii Professional Assembly (UHPA) urges the committees to **support passage of SB2398** that amends Section 89-6 of the Hawai'i Revised Statute to advance the interests of graduate assistants. These employees are essential to instruction and research that contributes to the overall success of the University of Hawai'i. Graduate Assistants are employees in the full sense of the term with continuing access to positions based on job and academic performance.

UHPA supports the rights of graduate assistants to organize and collectively bargain. 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.

**UHPA supports the passage of SB2398.**

Respectively submitted,

Kristeen Hanselman  
Executive Director

**University of Hawaii  
Professional Assembly**

Date: Tuesday, February 11, 2016  
Time: 1:15 PM

To: Senate Committee on Higher Education and the Arts  
Sen. Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair

Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor  
Sen. Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Chair  
Sen. Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair

Re: Support for SB2398 Relating to Collective Bargaining

My name is Benton Rodden, and I am a graduate student at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UHM) and the Employment and Compensation Chair for the Graduate Student Organization at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa. I am writing in strong support of SB2398 to grant collective bargaining rights to graduate students employed by the University of Hawai'i (UH).

In my capacity as Employment and Compensation Chair for the Graduate Student Organization (GSO), I have spoken with numerous graduate students about the grievances they have with the University. They fall into the following categories:

- Graduate Assistants are not provided guaranteed sick days and have been threatened with termination for calling in sick.
- Graduate Assistants are not provided paid sick leave and have threatened with unpaid sick leave if they do not check out of the hospital earlier than advisable.
- Graduate Assistants are routinely pressured to work overtime hours that they are not paid for.
- Graduate Assistants are, on average, paid two to six weeks late.
- Graduate Assistants are not permitted any paid parental leave.
- Graduate Assistants are not compensated enough to afford the minimum cost of living.
- Graduate Assistants are hired for short terms without the security of being rehired and with the knowledge that they may have their assistantship terminated midway through the academic year.

We seek collective bargaining simply because the above list of grievances represents the very issues labor unions have addressed for countless workers. For us, this is a very pragmatic decision.

Graduate Assistants have not received a pay increase since 2004, during which time the cost of living according to the consumer price index (CPI) has increased 74%. The current pay amounts to 43% of the minimum living wage for a single person. Compared to the University's peer and benchmark institutions, this leaves UH at second to the bottom. UH is only able to compete with the University of Mississippi,

which happens to be in a right to work state.

Some have taken issue with the idea that graduate students are employees of the University. The majority of teaching assistants (TA) are in charge of teaching their own classes. They do all the grading and lecturing, as well as design the syllabus and maintain decorum in the classroom. Our research assistants are often working on independent projects of their own. Others are working in administrative offices performing the same duties as any administrative office worker. It is misleading to refer to us as anything other than a critical part of the UH workforce.

Some have taken issue with the temporary nature of our positions. I want to make clear that we are here not in spite of this, but precisely because the temporary nature of our jobs places us in a position of particular vulnerability. Negotiating longer terms of employment would be a priority of any union that should form. Guarding against the exploitation of temporary workers ought to be a goal of this body as well.

Graduate students are an integral part of the UH system and the local economy. While attending UH, we constitute a committed learning community, do important research, and perform a substantial proportion of the teaching duties. Unfortunately, we are poorly compensated and are vulnerable to exploitation and poor treatment. As individuals, we stand little chance of success in demanding better treatment and compensation, and the long history of failed attempts at improvements proves this to be true. Our only hope for improving our own situations, then, is to collectively bargain with the University administration. For these reasons, I strongly urge you to support SB2398.

This concerns everyone.

Thank you for your time and the opportunity to express my opinion.

Respectfully submitted,

Benton Rodden

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area.

**From:** [mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov)  
**To:** [JDLTestimony](#)  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for SB2398 on Feb 11, 2016 13:15PM  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 10, 2016 7:18:15 PM

---

**SB2398**

Submitted on: 2/10/2016

Testimony for JDL/HEA on Feb 11, 2016 13:15PM in Conference Room 224

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Bret Polopolus-Meredith	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments: Aloha Chair Taniguchi and committee members, I was a graduate assistant (GA) for four years at the University of Hawaii (UH). I support this bill but it's too late to help me. My wife and I had a child in December. We have decided to leave Hawaii after this semester. The cost of living premium had been up to \$8000 a year for us before our son was born. Our expenses will only increase. Graduate education in Hawaii is not feasible for us and UH's reputation is simply not worth the premium. Transferring will delay my graduation but I will no longer have the differential between salary and living expenses. I believe I am not alone. The graduate student population at UH has declined in recent years. I have heard the number of applications is declining. If the problem of affordable graduate education in Hawaii is not addressed soon, then graduate programs will no longer be sustainable.

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.

Do not reply to this email. This inbox is not monitored. For assistance please email [webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov)

Re: Support for HB 1940 Relating to Collective Bargaining

My name is Gitte du Plessis and I am a graduate student at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UHM). I am writing in strong support of HB 1940 to grant collective bargaining rights to graduate students employed by the University of Hawai'i (UH).

As a graduate student, my task is to teach one course each semester. I do everything by myself from designing the syllabus, which means deciding what material the students will read in order to fulfill the goals of the class, to teaching it, to grading. I love being a PhD student here, and I love to teach. The pay is absurd. I earn \$1400 a month. It's not a living wage. I am fortunate that my partner does earn a living wage that he shares with our son and I, because it enables me to pursue PhD work here.

I also taught the semester I had my son. I didn't get any maternity leave. I was at home with my son for 4 weeks while helpful colleagues in my department taught my class. After that, I was back in the classroom. During the first year of his life, I often brought my son to campus with me, as the UH preschool doesn't accept children until they've turned two. After he turned one, my son is going to a preschool in Kahala, which stretches our budget! I grew up in Denmark. There, it is a right for everyone to have one year of maternity leave. My niece is the same age as my son, and while my sister-in-law had a year off, I did everything as usual, with an infant. I was not the best mother I could be, because I was stressed. I didn't feel acknowledged and supported as a valuable employee to the university.

Graduate students are an integral part of the UH system and the local economy. While attending UH, we constitute a committed learning community, do important research, and perform a substantial proportion of the teaching duties. Unfortunately, we are poorly compensated and are vulnerable to exploitation and poor treatment. As individuals, we stand little chance of success in demanding better treatment and compensation, and the long history of failed attempts at improvements proves this to be true. Our only hope for improving our own situations, then, is to collectively bargain with the University administration. For these reasons, I strongly urge you to support HB 1940.

Thank you for your time and the opportunity to express my opinion.

Respectfully submitted,

Gitte du Plessis



**From:** [mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov)  
**To:** [JDLTestimony](#)  
**Cc:** [kyle.kajihiro@gmail.com](mailto:kyle.kajihiro@gmail.com)  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for SB2398 on Feb 11, 2016 13:15PM  
**Date:** Thursday, February 11, 2016 12:50:25 AM

---

**SB2398**

Submitted on: 2/11/2016

Testimony for JDL/HEA on Feb 11, 2016 13:15PM in Conference Room 224

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Kyle Kajihiro	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Graduate Assistants are vital to the operations of the University of Hawai'i. We teach classes, lead labs and discussion sections, grade papers and tests, conduct research, and perform many kinds of service to the institution. Yet many graduate assistants are forced to depend on public assistance in order to survive. We are effectively employees in every way except for the right to collective bargaining for better conditions. Thank you for supporting collective bargaining for graduate students in the past. And thank you for supporting it again so that it can finally pass into law. Mahalo.

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.

Do not reply to this email. This inbox is not monitored. For assistance please email [webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov)

Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair  
Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Vice Chair  
Committee on Higher Education and the Arts

Senator Gil S.C. Keith-Agaran, Chair  
Senator Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair  
Committee on the Judiciary and Labor

Senate of the State of Hawai'i

Lance D. Collins, Ph.D  
Law Office of Lance D Collins

Thursday, February 11, 2016  
Support S.B. 2398, Relating to Collective Bargaining

My name is Lance D. Collins. I am an attorney in private practice. I strongly support this bill.

Graduate students perform the same work as other public employees who work for the University of Hawai'i. In most instances, this work is done with the same level of supervision or less as other public employees at the University of Hawai'i. The only difference between graduate student employees and others is that the graduate students have no protection from arbitrary and capricious employment decisions and often must suffer poor and sometimes illegal working conditions to maintain their employment.

Over the years, the University has stated that its purpose for graduate assistantships is to train and mentor graduate students for their professional careers. Taking collective action for the betterment of working conditions and collective bargaining should be included in that training. Being subject to arbitrary and capricious employment decisions and poor and abusive working conditions only trains graduate students to accept that such harmful conduct is a necessary component to academic life – when it, in fact, is not.

In 1968, the people of Hawai'i amended the Hawai'i State Constitution to provide public employees the right to collectively bargain. Article XIII, Section 2 of the Hawai'i State Constitution. Nevertheless, the implementing statute has been interpreted to exclude graduate students from the ambit of the public employee collective bargaining statute.

That interpretation exceeds the powers of the legislature and violates such a right. “[T]he framers [of the constitution] were not in favor of granting the legislature the ultimate power to deny the right to organize for the purpose of collectively bargaining.” *UPW v. Yogi*, 101 Haw. 46, 52 (2002)

SB 2398 will amend Chapter 89, HRS, to properly include graduate students in the express ambit of collective bargaining so that they may exercise their constitutional right to organize and collectively bargain for better working conditions.

Mahalo.

//



Date: Thursday, February 11, 2016  
Time: 1:15 PM  
Place: Conference Room 309

To: Senate Committee on Higher Education and the Arts  
Sen. Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair

Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor  
Sen. Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Chair  
Sen. Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair

Re: Support for SB2398 Relating to Collective Bargaining

My name is Mary Baker, and I am a graduate student at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UHM). I am writing in strong support of SB2398 to grant collective bargaining rights to graduate students employed by the University of Hawai'i (UH).

Graduate students are an integral part of the UH system and the local economy. While attending UH, we constitute a committed learning community, do important research, and perform a substantial proportion of the teaching duties. Unfortunately, we are poorly compensated and are vulnerable to exploitation and poor treatment. As individuals, we stand little chance of success in demanding better treatment and compensation, and the long history of failed attempts at improvements proves this to be true. Our only hope for improving our own situations, then, is to collectively bargain with the University administration. For these reasons, I strongly urge you to support HB 1940.

Thank you for your time and the opportunity to express my opinion.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Baker

[Redacted signature block]

Date: Thursday, February 11, 2016

Time: 1:15 pm

To: Senate Committee on Higher Education and the Arts

Sen. Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair

Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor

Sen. Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Chair

Sen. Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair

Re: Support for SB2398 Relating to Collective Bargaining

My name is Michelle Brown, I am a graduate student at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UHM). I am writing in strong support of SB2398 to grant collective bargaining rights to graduate students employed by the University of Hawai'i (UH).

As a graduate student and single parent, my GA income and benefits are crucial to making ends meet. I have witnessed significant discrepancies in pay, benefits, etc. among GAs that collective bargaining abilities could rectify. I have been a GA and TA in two different colleges for the past three years.

Graduate students are an integral part of the UH system and the local economy. While attending UH, we constitute a committed learning community, do important research, and perform a substantial proportion of the teaching duties. Unfortunately, we are poorly compensated and are vulnerable to exploitation and poor treatment. Despite testimony by UHM administration to the contrary, we often work unsupervised and have to make important decisions/complete important tasks weekly without direct supervision. As individuals, we stand little chance of success in demanding better treatment and compensation, and the long history of failed attempts at improvements proves this to be true. Our only hope for improving our own situations, then, is to collectively bargain with the University administration. For these reasons, I strongly urge you to support HB 1940.

Thank you for your time and the opportunity to express my opinion.

Respectfully submitted,

XXX  
Email and/or  
Phone

**From:** [mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov)  
**To:** [JDLTestimony](#)  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for SB2398 on Feb 11, 2016 13:15PM  
**Date:** Monday, February 08, 2016 10:14:51 PM

---

**SB2398**

Submitted on: 2/8/2016

Testimony for JDL/HEA on Feb 11, 2016 13:15PM in Conference Room 224

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Mike Golojuch	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I strongly support allowing graduate student assistants employed at the University of Hawaii to establish a collective bargaining unit. Although I am only speaking for myself, I am a member of the Labor Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawaii, which passed a motion supporting the graduate student assistants in efforts to establish a collective bargaining unit. Please move the bill forward. Thank you for allowing me to express my support for SB 2398.

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.

Do not reply to this email. This inbox is not monitored. For assistance please email [webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov)

Date: Thursday, February 11, 2016  
Time: 1:15 PM  
Place: Room 224

To: Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor  
Senate Committee on Higher Education  
Senator. Gilbert Keith-Agaran, Chair  
Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair

Re: Support for SB 2398 Relating to Collective Bargaining

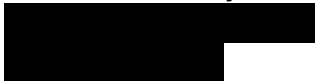
My name is Robert Cooney and I am a professor in the Department of Public Health Sciences at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. I have been on the faculty at Manoa for over thirty years and I wish to express my strong support of SB 2398 to grant collective bargaining rights to graduate students employed by the University of Hawaii.

Faculty, students and staff of the University of Hawaii all contribute significantly to the economic and cultural health of Hawaii. The laws regarding collective bargaining, such as Chapter 89, were drafted to create a system that guarantees equity for those with the least power. While faculty and staff currently enjoy the protections afforded by these laws, graduate students do not. It is vital that we end the discriminatory exclusion of graduate students from the basic protection of Hawaii's labor laws and allow them to organize, if they so choose, to gain their rights as Hawaii citizens. It is time to stop their exploitation within the UH system. I urge you to adopt SB 2398 in support of the right of graduate students to unionize.

Thank you for your time and the opportunity to express my opinion.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert V. Cooney, PhD



Date: Tuesday, February 9, 2016  
Time: 2:00 PM  
Place: Conference Room 309

To: Senate Committee on Higher Education and the Arts  
Sen. Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair

Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor  
Sen. Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Chair  
Sen. Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair

Re: Support for SB2398 Relating to Collective Bargaining

My name is Yeonhee Kim and I am a graduate student at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UHM) and a Graduate Student representative of the Political Science Department at UHM. I am writing in strong support of SB2398 to grant collective bargaining rights to graduate students employed by the University of Hawai'i (UH).

I am currently a second-year doctoral student in the Political Science Department at UHM and I receive a \$17,502 stipend for a 9-month assignment to teaching undergraduate level courses. I find it impossible to support myself without also teaching summer classes at UHM. All the organization of my undergraduate courses in Political Science, including the curriculum design, syllabus construction, teaching, lecturing, grading are done without external assistance or guidance. I find it critically important to pursue collective bargaining in order to have the right to contest with a shared interest group of graduate students on a wage that is difficult to sustain a "minimum standard" of living in Hawaii. This pressure to produce better teaching results, alongside high-quality graduate research for publication, application for funding (both outside and inside the UHM institution), and productivity both as a single instructor and an academic is immense.

Graduate students are an integral part of the UH system and the local economy. While attending UH, we constitute a committed learning community, do important research, and perform a substantial proportion of the teaching duties. Unfortunately, we are poorly compensated and are vulnerable to exploitation and poor treatment. As individuals, we stand little chance of success in demanding better treatment and compensation, and the long history of failed attempts at improvements proves this to be true. Our only hope for improving our own situations, then, is to collectively bargain with the University administration. For these reasons, I strongly urge you to support HB 1940.

Thank you for your time and the opportunity to express my opinion.

Respectfully submitted,

Yeonhee Kim

