

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

January 24, 2018

TESTIMONY TO THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT
For Hearing on Thursday, January 25, 2018
9:00 a.m., Conference Room 309

By

RYKER WADA
OFFICE OF COLLECTIVE BARGAINING, CHIEF NEGOTIATOR

**House Bill No. 1651
Relating to Collective Bargaining**

(WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY)

CHAIRPERSON JOHANSON, VICE CHAIR HOLT AND MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE
COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT:

House Bill No. 1651 proposes to establish a collective bargaining unit for
graduate student assistants employed by the University of Hawaii.

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

- Unlike other public employees, who are career, long term employees engaged in collective bargaining, a graduate student employment is temporary and is not a career or profession. However, the OCB defers to the University of Hawaii on the definition of employee versus graduate students.

- 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, condition of employment, and fringe benefits.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify on this measure.



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Labor and Public Employment
January 25, 2018 at 9:00 a.m.

By
Donald O. Straney
Vice President for Academic Planning and Policy
University of Hawai'i System

HB 1651 – RELATING TO COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Chair Johanson, Vice Chair Holt, and members of the Committee:

On behalf of the University of Hawai'i, I am submitting testimony regarding House Bill 1651 – Relating to Collective Bargaining – which proposes to amend HRS §89-6, to allow graduate student assistants employed at the University of Hawai'i to organize for collective bargaining purposes and to form a new bargaining unit. In addition, this bill proposes to amend HRS 89-11 and provide the Hawai'i Labor Relations Board the requisite authority to assist in the resolution of impasse.

The University of Hawai'i opposes the passage of this measure.

As we explained in prior testimony submitted in response to similar bills introduced in the 2015, 2016 and 2017 legislative sessions, there are several issues associated with allowing University-employed graduate student assistants to be included in collective bargaining that the Legislature should seriously consider.

First, graduate students are primarily students first and are only secondarily employees. They attend the University to learn about their chosen fields of study and prepare for careers; they do not enroll at the University to obtain a job. These graduate students are mentored and supervised by our rank 3, 4, and 5 faculty members who hold PhDs or other terminal level degrees, with many years of proven professional competence and experience including evidence of proficiency in teaching and/or research.

Although a large part of our efforts as University mentors is aimed at teaching graduate assistants the actual subject matter, a similar large part is devoted to developing graduate student assistants as professionals prepared for careers in research, teaching, or public service. Graduate assistants learn essential skills for their careers while in their graduate assistant positions under the guidance and supervision of our current faculty employees. The purpose of a graduate assistantship is to train and mentor a graduate student in specific skills with the explicit goal of increasing their competitiveness as the graduate student enters a professional academic career. Graduate assistantships are a component of graduate student education and training designed to help them prepare for their future careers.

Second, “graduate student assistant” is not a career position, but instead is temporary and limited. There are no long-term career opportunities for graduate student assistant positions at the University. The transitory status of a graduate teaching assistant is thus different from the forms of employment represented by the collective bargaining units established under HRS §89-6. An important purpose of these collective bargaining units is to ensure sustainable, long-term careers in local government service in Hawai‘i for teachers, fire fighters, police officers, corrections officers, clerical support staff, custodial and grounds staff and trades employees. Graduate teaching assistants differ substantially from this purpose as there are no long-term careers possible for this category.

Third, establishing a collective bargaining unit for graduate assistants will create a financial burden for the state and, potentially, for graduate students. Currently, the University manages the compensation for graduate assistants, including tuition waivers, stipends and other benefits. But under the proposed legislation, these would become “cost items” subject to mandatory collective bargaining. The associated costs would be extended to include membership in the State Employees’ Retirement System as provided to employees in Chapter 88, HRS, which would add pension contribution costs to the State. In addition, any increased enrollment in the Employer-Union Trust Fund for health insurance benefits would also add increased expenses to the University and State for contributions to the system.

All compensation collectively bargained for may be treated as wages that will be subject to employment and income taxes. Currently, graduate student assistants’ tuition waivers are not taxed as income. However, this fall, the US House of Representatives passed legislation that would make tuition waivers taxable, which would have had a large, negative economic impact on graduate student assistants. Fortunately, the final tax legislation excluded this provision, but there is continuing concern that Congress may pursue policies that will further tax the benefits of graduate student assistantship compensation.

Finally, graduate student assistants of the University are already compensated via a package that includes a variety of benefits. The University enacted Executive Policy EP5.223 to provide graduate student assistants with the right to file employment related grievances. This policy also clarified that outside employment and calling in sick are not prohibited, and it also provides graduate assistants with a 9 or 11 month pay schedule ranging from Steps 1 to 20. Moreover, our graduate assistants who work at least 20 hours per week are eligible to enroll in the same health and benefit plans (medical, prescription drugs, dental, vision and life insurance) as our career employees who are members of bargaining units. Further, our graduate assistants who are full-time students are also exempt from the FICA tax.

The current level of compensation is a considerable cost to the University and constitutes a significant amount of the financial assistance provided to graduate student

assistants. In addition, graduate student assistants receive tuition waivers so they can concentrate on being first-rate students and achieve degree completion in timely manner. At UH Mānoa, for example, general resident graduate student tuition currently ranges is \$637 per credit hour and most GAs take 9 credits which equates to \$5733 per semester (\$11,466 annually), while non-resident tuition is \$1532 per credit hour, typically \$13,788 per semester (\$27,576 per year on average). Graduate student assistants may also receive monetary stipends that can vary by the educational program in which they are enrolled. During the 2016-17 academic year, depending on residency, educational program, and schedule, the value of tuition waivers and stipends was estimated to typically range between \$28,958 (9-month GAs at the minimum stipend level taking 9 credits per semester) and \$50,604 annually (11-month GAs at the minimum stipend level taking 9 credits per semester), with a *potential* maximum value as high as \$58,663 annually (professional school tuition rates [Nursing] taking 12 credits, with a 11-month GAship at the top of the salary range). We note the University did request funding in its budget request to provide increases to graduate student compensation.

In summary, this measure would create a bargaining unit that is unique in the State, comprised of transitory members who remain students first with the intention of learning skills to increase their competitiveness when they graduate and begin a professional career. The University believes this measure could negatively impact our ability to train graduate students and ensure timely degree completion, while increasing expenses to the University and the state, and above all else, blurring the lines between students and employees.

Based on the above, we request that this measure be deferred.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



HAWAII GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION

AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO

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

The Twenty-Ninth Legislature, State of Hawaii
House of Representatives
Committee on Labor and Public Employment

Testimony by
Hawaii Government Employees Association

January 25, 2018

H.B. 1651 – RELATING
TO COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

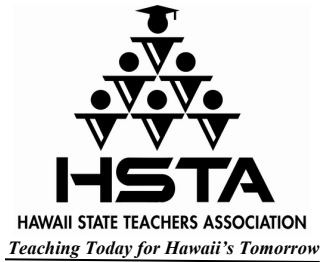
The Hawaii Government Employees Association, AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO strongly supports the concept of allowing graduate student assistants employed by the University of Hawaii to be included in an appropriate collective bargaining unit, as proposed in H.B. 1651.

Graduate student assistants continue to encounter work related issues, including budgetary set backs and increases in class size and workload, which would be most fairly resolved via the bargaining process. The language proposed in H.B. 1651 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 contract negotiations.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of H.B. 1651.

Respectfully submitted,

Randy Perreira
Executive Director



1200 Ala Kapuna Street ♦ Honolulu, Hawaii 96819
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Corey Rosenlee
President
Justin Hughey
Vice President
Amy Perruso
Secretary-Treasurer
Wilbert Holck
Executive Director

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
LABOR

RE: HB 1651 - RELATING TO COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

THURSDAY, JANUARY 25, 2018

COREY ROSENLEE, PRESIDENT
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Chair Johanson and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association **supports HB 1651**, relating to collective bargaining.

Collective bargaining is a human right. According to Article 23(4) of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted in 1948, “everyone has the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.” Likewise, the International Labor Organization, the UN agency responsible for safeguarding international labor standards, states in its Constitution and Declaration of Principles that the freedoms to associate and bargain collectively are fundamental rights of workers worldwide.

Graduate student assistants at the University of Hawai‘i must no longer be denied their fundamental human rights. Besieged by budget cuts over the past decade, graduate students have borne increased class sizes and workloads, while suffering the same low pay of \$17,500 since the 2003-2004 academic year. Like educators throughout Hawai‘i, they have seen their purchasing power crushed beneath our state’s highest-in-the-nation cost of living.

Graduate student assistants are vital to the university community, performing instruction, research, and administrative work. Their labor, like all labor, should be publicly recognized by guaranteeing the right to bargain for fair wages and work conditions. To give graduate student assistants the ability to protect their interests and promote higher education, the Hawaii State Teachers Association asks your committee to **support** this bill.



46-063 Emepela Pl. #U101 Kaneohe, HI 96744 · (808) 679-7454 · Kris Coffield · Co-founder/Executive Director

TESTIMONY FOR HOUSE BILL 1651, RELATING TO COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

**House Committee on Labor
Hon. Aaron Johanson, Chair
Hon. Daniel Holt, Vice Chair**

**Thursday, January 25, 2018, 9:00 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 309**

Honorable Chair Johanson and committee members:

I am Kris Coffield, representing IMUAlliance, a nonpartisan political advocacy organization that currently boasts over 400 members. On behalf of our members, we offer this testimony in strong support of House Bill 1651, relating to collective bargaining.

There is a power in a union.

Today, political pundits prognosticate about the possible onslaught of austerity facing our nation. Many of these same pundits believe that labor unions are an impediment to economic prosperity, arguing that collective bargaining sets wages and work conditions above what the free market demands.

They couldn't be more wrong. Collective bargaining is a civil right. Unionized employees' compensation and work protections, moreover, are essential to creating an upwardly mobile middle class and continually increasing economic prosperity. As economist Paula Voos of Rutgers University School of Management and Labor Relations notes, "It is no accident that the prosperity and consumer boom of the 1950s—a period of unprecedented middle-class expansion, broad business growth, increased home ownership, rising consumer spending, and the shared expectation that a college education was within the reach of everyone and that the lives of our children would be better than our own—followed the greatest sustained expansion of unionization in American history."

Unsurprisingly, decreasing American middle-class incomes and the rapidly widening wealth gap in our country parallel a significant decline in union membership. It is imperative, then, that we promote higher productivity by strengthening labor-management relations. Through a union, employees have a means to engage with management about workplace problems, inefficient processes, unfair work conditions, and unsupportive compensation. Unions also reduce employee

turnover and increase the retention of highly experienced employees, creating circumstances that favor professional development and mutual trust in the workplace.

Graduate student assistants at the University of Hawai'i have earned the right to demand respect from university management. In providing instruction to students and research that expands our society's knowledge base, graduate students tirelessly toil on behalf of the university community, often under fear of retaliation because of a lack of organizing power in resisting exploitation. Graduate student assistants are short-term positions. Yet, the duration of graduate positions only heightens the urgency of establishing collective bargaining protections, as temporary employees too often fall prey to employers who exploit the precarious nature of these positions and assume student workers will simply "deal with the pain and move on," as one graduate assistant member of IMUAlliance maintains. Most startlingly, UH graduate assistants currently earn an average of \$18,256 per year, according to Glassdoor.com, a number that has not significantly increased since the 2003-2004 academic year. At the sunrise of 2018, that amount carries nearly \$6,000 less purchasing power than it did fourteen years ago *before* adjusting for Hawai'i's high cost of living. Even for students, it is nowhere near a livable wage.

Thomas Jefferson wrote, "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty." The same is true with basic civil rights, including the rights to freely associate and bargain for fair pay and work conditions, which are constantly under assault by a corporate mindset that puts dollars before democracy. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in strong support of this bill.

Sincerely,
Kris Coffield
Executive Director
IMUAlliance



The House Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Thursday, January 25, 2018
9:00 AM, Conference Room 309

RE: **HB 1651, Relating to Collective Bargaining**

Attention: Chair Aaron Johanson, Vice Chair Daniel Holt and members of the Committee

The University of Hawaii Professional Assembly (UHPA) urges the committee to **support passage of HB 1651** that amends Section 89-6 of the Hawai'i Revised Statute to create bargaining unit 15, allowing full-time graduate students employed at the University of Hawai'i to collectively bargain.

Graduate students are essential to instruction, research and mentoring undergraduate students that contributes to the overall success of the University of Hawai'i. They are in the full sense of the term, employees, with continuing access to positions based on job and academic performance.

When representing faculty, UHPA has worked with graduates students, and on occasion, have provided guidance. The current University of Hawai'i policy governing Graduate Students does not provide the proper protections of this group of employees. Collective Bargaining would allow this group the following:

- Negotiation of grievance procedures with access to arbitration
- Protection from arbitrary and capricious behavior
- Negotiation of salary, wages and benefits

While UHPA is unable to represent Graduate Students, our experience indicates this group of student employees needs the ability to advance its interests in establishing appropriate conditions of employment and treatment in the workplace.

UHPA supports the passage of HB 1651.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristeen Hanselman
Executive Director

University of Hawaii
Professional Assembly

1017 Palm Drive ♦ Honolulu, Hawaii 96814-1928
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Website: www.uhpa.org



HAWAII

AMERICANS FOR DEMOCRATIC ACTION

OFFICERS	DIRECTORS			MAILING ADDRESS
John Bickel, President 23404	Guy Archer	Jan Lubin	Cameron Sato	PO. Box
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Karin Gill, Secretary	Chuck Huxel			

January 24 , 2018

TO: Honorable Chair Johanson and Members of the Labor and Public Employment Committee

RE: HB 1651 Relating to Collective Bargaining
Support for hearing on Jan 25

Americans for Democratic Action is an organization founded in the 1950s by leading supporters of the New Deal and led by Patsy Mink in the 1970s. We are devoted to the promotion of progressive public policies.

We support HB 1651as it would establish a collective bargaining unit for full-time graduate student assistants employed by the University of Hawaii. The history of the betterment of workers is the history of unionization. Unionization of graduate students gives them a voice and some collective power to improve their status and thereby improve the university experience for themselves as well as the professors and students they serve. Graduate students are being exploited by a system that is giving them sub-minimum wages that grew out of prior practices in which grad students previously did occasional work that might justifiably allow for less than optimum compensation. It is time to give them a path to justice.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

John Bickel
President

IBEW1260

‘A‘OHE HANA NUI KE ALU ‘IA

January 25, 2018

The Twenty-Ninth Legislature
Hawaii State House of Representatives
Committee on Labor and
Public Employment

HB1651 - RELATING TO COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Chair Johanson, Vice Chair Holt and Members of the Committee,

The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local Union 1260, AFL-CIO (IBEW1260), represents more than 3500 members, has advocated for all workers in the State of Hawaii for over seventy-five years and respectfully offers the following testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** of House Bill 1651

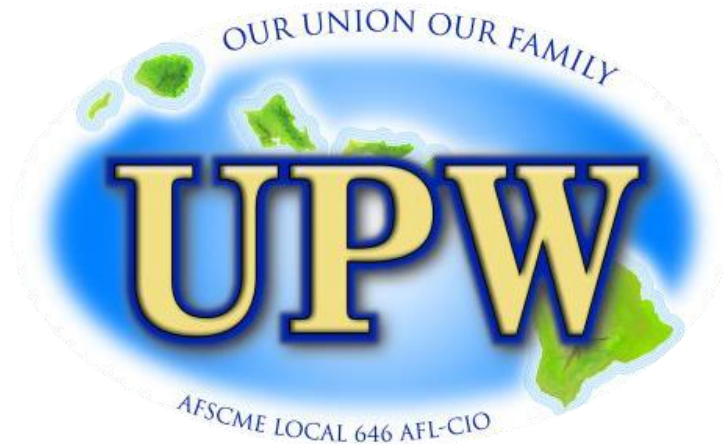
Graduate Student Assistants are essential to the success of the University of Hawaii system and should be extended the same collective bargaining rights as all other workers to address wages, benefits and work rules. For this reason, IBEW1260 respectfully ask the Committee to support HB1277 guaranteeing graduate students a voice in the workplace and the ability to work collectively for workplace dignity.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this issue.

Respectfully,



Michael M. Brittain
Asst. Business Manager
IBEW1260 / AFL-CIO



The Hawaii State House of Representatives
The Twenty-Ninth Legislature
Regular Session of 2018

Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Representative Aaron Ling Johanson, Chair
Representative Daniel Holt, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee

Date of Hearing: Thursday, January 25, 2018
Time of Hearing: 9:00 a.m.
Place of Hearing: Conference room 309, State Capitol

Testimony In Support of HB1651 Relating to Collective Bargaining

By Dayton M. Nakanelua,
State Director of the United Public Workers,
AFSCME, Local 646, AFL-CIO

My name is Dayton M. Nakanelua, State Director of the United Public Workers, AFSCME, Local 646, AFL-CIO. The UPW is the exclusive representative for approximately 12,000 public employees, which include blue collar, non-supervisory employees in Bargaining Unit 01 and institutional, health and correctional employees in Bargaining Unit 10, in the State of Hawaii and the four counties.

The UPW strongly supports HB1651 that proposes to establish a collective bargaining unit for graduate student assistants employed by the University of Hawaii. The Hawaii State Constitution establishes the right to organize for collective bargaining as provided by law, and importantly, HRS 89 collective bargaining policy recognizes that shared decision making affecting wages, and working conditions “is the best way to harness and direct the energies of public employees eager to have a voice in determining their conditions of work...”

Our graduate student assistants perform an integral part in Hawaii’s higher educational system. They deserve to be treated accordingly in recognition of their contribution.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony.



Randy Perreira
President

HAWAII STATE AFL-CIO

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The Twenty-Ninth Legislature, State of Hawaii
Hawaii State House of Representatives
Committee on Labor & Public Employment

Testimony by
Hawaii State AFL-CIO
January 25, 2018

H.B. 1651 – RELATING TO
COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

The Hawaii State AFL-CIO strongly supports H.B. 1651 which establishes a collective bargaining unit for graduate student assistants employed by the University of Hawaii.

Having the ability to collectively bargain will give University of Hawaii graduate assistants 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 H.B. 1651.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Randy Perreira
President

HB-1651

Submitted on: 1/23/2018 7:47:30 AM

Testimony for LAB on 1/25/2018 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Nathan Yuen		Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support HB 1651 which gives graduate assistants the right to unionize and collectively bargain.

Unionization is a right for nearly all public workers, including faculty and other university staff. However, under Hawai'i state law, a clause from 1970 specifies that certain classes of people are not eligible for collective bargaining, including inmates, wards of the state, and "student help." In the past, the administration and government has interpreted this in such a way as to prevent graduate assistants from unionizing.

Graduate assistants perform important roles at the University of Hawaii including teaching, research, and administrative duties. To deny this class of workers merely because they are students is fundamentally unfair and creates opportunities for their exploitation. The wages paid to Graduate students has stagnated over the decades while other employees at the University who are unionized have received negotiated raises. The current pay to graduate assistants falls below a living wage.

Unionization would also provide a mechanism for addressing abuse, harassment, and other issues in the work place which we know happens more often when those who are exploited are controlled by those whose power is unchecked.

HB 1651 creates a new public sector bargaining unit for graduate assistants. The ability to collectively bargain over compensation, benefits, and working conditions is fundamental and long overdue. I strongly urge you to pass HB 1651.

HB-1651

Submitted on: 1/23/2018 10:52:05 AM

Testimony for LAB on 1/25/2018 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Nanea Lo		Support	No

Comments:

In support of HB1651: Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. I write in strong support of HB1651. HB1651, if passed, will create a new bargaining unit, 15, for graduate assistants in Hawaii. At some point every undergraduate student is taught by a graduate teaching assistant; graduate research assistants advance scientific frontiers; and graduate administrative assistants run key facilities on campus. The university increasingly relies on graduate labor to run. Graduate assistants deserve a seat at the table when decisions are made that affect their lives, those of their students, and the broader community. Unfortunately, graduate assistants are poorly compensated, with wages that are far below a living wage and far below competitive standards of other universities. Graduate assistant compensation has neither kept up with inflation, the cost of living, or rising productivity. Additionally, graduate assistants are vulnerable to capricious and arbitrary decisions from management without a proper mechanism for pursuing grievances. In 2016, the National Labor Relations Board reversed the decades-long ban on private university graduate unions at places such as the University of Chicago, Harvard, and Yale, declaring that graduate assistants are workers that deserve the right to unionize. There are currently dozens of graduate unions across the country at public and private institutions, in states such as California, Oregon, Washington, New York, Illinois, Montana, Massachusetts, Iowa, and many more. Graduate assistant unions have existed for 50 years, and all scholarly research has shown that unionized graduate assistants report higher levels of personal/professional support and higher pay that improves educational outcomes, and that faculty report that unionization does not inhibit their ability to advise, instruct, or mentor. Hawaii led the way in breaking ground in supporting public sector unions. For the cutting-edge research and instruction graduate assistants do, the ability to collectively bargain over compensation, benefits, and the conditions of our work and workplace is essential and long overdue. I urge you to pass HB1651.

HB-1651

Submitted on: 1/23/2018 11:56:50 AM

Testimony for LAB on 1/25/2018 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jun Shin		Support	No

Comments:

Chair Johanson, Vice Chair Holt,

Members of the House Labor & Public Employment Committee. My name is Jun Shin, and I am a Freshman at the University of Hawaii at Mānoa. I am writing this in strong support of HB1651, relating to collective bargaining, which is due for a hearing on Thursday, January 25, 2018 at 9:00 AM for the following reasons.

In my classes this semester, I am being taught by several graduate students. I have found graduate students to be amazing instructors, not only because they are fellow students who understand that unique struggle, but because of how passionate they are in what they teach, as shown by the fact that they are furthering their education in the subjects they instruct us in. That is why, I support the unionization of these individuals who work hard and show us their dedication in not only teaching students like me, but doing research and taking on administrative duties for the university. I want to see them keep showing us their passion, doing what they love and following their dreams and goals while having both the opportunity and the mechanisms necessary in order to improve their livelihoods and be better equipped to deal with the stagnation of wages and high cost of living.

Unionizing graduate students will not only help give a morale boost to our amazing graduate students and the university community, but it will also have the opportunity to serve as an important venue to address issues that affect the workplace such as sexual harassment, equal pay, and abuse. It is my personal hope that through this legislation, not only will it improve the lives and working conditions of graduate students, but that it's success will bring in a new generation of university students ready to become citizen advocates after seeing the hard work of their colleagues and instructors come to fruition.

Thank you for your hard work and deliberation on this issue,

Jun Shin,

1561 Kanunu St. Honolulu, HI 96814

Cell: 8082556663

Email: junshinbusiness729@gmail.com

HB-1651

Submitted on: 1/23/2018 4:33:28 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/25/2018 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Eomailani	Hookulaiwi	Support	No

Comments:

As a faculty member of the University of Hawaii at Manoa, I have seen first hand the vital role that graduate assistants play. I am in strong support of this bill which will create a bargaining unit for GAs. This will allow them to have voice in the decisions that are implemented on their behalf as wages, health care and intelluectual property.

As we have historically seen the power of collective bargaining in Hawaii. I urge your support of this bill. Mahalo.

HB-1651

Submitted on: 1/23/2018 5:58:31 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/25/2018 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Daniel Flores		Support	No

Comments:

REPRESENTATIVE AARON JOHANSON
COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT

Daniel Flores
(336)407-3813
Current Address:
2531 Kapiolani Blvd
Honolulu, HI 96826

Former Address:
1050 Kinau St.
Honolulu, HI 96814

Thursday, January 25, 2018

Support for H.B. No. 1651, Relating to Collective Bargaining

I am writing in strong support of HB1651, which would allow graduate students in Hawai'i to create a collective bargaining unit.

Living in Hawai'i is beautiful, amazing, gorgeous and expensive. Currently the base salary for UH graduate assistants is \$17,500. This is slightly more than HALF of the calculated living wage for a single adult in Hawai'i. Many graduate students have to hold down second jobs in addition to their studies, research, and classroom duties.

I personally have the GI Bill to supplement my income, but honestly without this addition funds I have no idea how I would survive. I also have no idea how I will survive during my last year of the PhD program when my funds run out.

Your graduate students here at UH are dedicated hard workers. We're the ones teaching and grading the lower level math classes and other entry level courses which helps give free time for professors to concentrate on their essential research. We love UH, we love Hawai'i and we love the people, but many of your graduate students are just barely getting by here. Good healthy eating is not cheap on this island. Rental prices are through the roof. The added stress of where our next meal is going to come

from does not make for a healthy learning environment nor does it make for a good teacher. Please help.

Thank you for your time and I hope you take my words into consideration.

-Daniel Flores
Graduate Assistant
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

HB-1651

Submitted on: 1/23/2018 6:38:05 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/25/2018 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Randy Ching		Support	No

Comments:

Chair Johanson, Vice Chair Holt and members of the committee,

Graduate students need a collective bargaining unit. They do a lot of work and are not paid very well. They are doing much of the work that used to be done by professors. Grad students deserve to be treated fairly and equitably. Please pass HB 1651. Mahalo for your consideration.

REPRESENTATIVE AARON JOHANSON
COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT

Kauahi Perez
3190 Maile Way, St. John 102
(808) 230-9391

Thursday, January 25, 2018

Support for H.B. No. 1651, Relating to Collective Bargaining

I am writing in strong support of HB1651, which would allow graduate students in Hawai'i to create a collective bargaining unit.

[LIST/DESCRIBE YOUR REASONS WHY]

- What are your experiences at UH Mānoa or in the UH System as a graduate assistant or as a graduate student who desires an assistantship?
- How does the lack of union affect you or your department?
- How would the presence of a union impact you or your department?

The current base salary for UH graduate assistants is \$17,500. This is a little more than half of the calculated living wage for a **single adult** in Hawai'i. The high cost of living here combined with low compensation has contributed to declining enrollment of the graduate student population at UH. With only \$17,500 to live off from, it is no wonder there is so much homelessness and food insecurity, even here on UH Manoa campus!

Graduate assistants (GAs) face many financial burdens, including high rental fees, high cost of health insurance, taxing of tuition exemptions by the federal government, etc. that many GAs face. This leaves us graduate students extremely vulnerable! We simply do not have representation or a formal mechanism to pursue grievances. Further, a salary increase for GAs was simply not enough to support them.

Establishing a collective bargaining unit for GAs is not just a good idea for current graduate assistants. It provides the foundation for a supportive environment for all current and prospective graduate students. It further allows for research to flourish and not be pushed to the side because of the stress of trying to make ends meet.

Again, I'd like to reiterate that this is a letter in **strong support of HB151**, which will allow graduate students in Hawai'i to create a collective bargaining unit.

Sincerely,
Kauahi Perez

HB-1651

Submitted on: 1/23/2018 6:54:33 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/25/2018 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jonina Rivera		Support	No

Comments:

REPRESENTATIVE AARON JOHANSON

COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT

JoNina Rivera

808-479-3698

Jonina4@hawaii.edu

Thursday, January 25, 2018 @ 9:00am

Support for H.B. No. 1651, Relating to Collective Bargaining

Aloha Chair Representative Aaron Ling Johanson, Vice Chair Representative Daniel Holt, and members of the committee. My name is JoNina Rivera, and I am writing in strong support of HB1651, which would allow graduate students in HawaiË»i to create a collective bargaining unit.

I am currently a graduate student at the University of Hawaii at Manoa apart of the Myron B. Thompson School of Social Work. I expect to graduate this May. I am born and raised in Hawaii, and for many, living in Hawaii is a dream come true. But like everywhere else, it has its downfalls. With high cost of living, harsh regressive taxes, high cost for education and low wages, it makes difficult for many resident's and even college students to survive, living paycheck to paycheck and barely being able to afford daily necessities. Because of this struggle for survival, it motivates college students, such as myself, to pursue an education that will provide a better quality of life for myself and my family.

I am in strong support for HB 1651, because this bill would establish a collective bargaining unit for graduate student assistants in Hawaii. The current salary for UH graduate assistants is \$17,500. As a student, dealing with the high cost of living and receiving low compensation has contributed to the decline in enrollment of the graduate

student population. As a graduate student myself, I am very much interested in enrolling as a graduate student assistant, but the salary just does not seem feasible when combined with other expenses that I face as a college student and a resident of Hawaii. I support HB 1651 because establishing a collective bargaining unit for GA's will provide the foundation for a supportive environment for all current and prospective graduate students.

Thank you for your time.

Respectfully, JoNina Rivera.

HB-1651

Submitted on: 1/23/2018 8:22:34 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/25/2018 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kalawai'a Goo		Support	No

Comments:

I support the position of UHM GSO.

HB-1651

Submitted on: 1/23/2018 8:25:31 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/25/2018 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Justin Keliipaakaua		Support	No

Comments:

HB-1651

Submitted on: 1/23/2018 8:32:20 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/25/2018 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Theresa Chen		Support	No

Comments:

I am currently a graduate student at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, in the final semester of my Master's of Social Work program at the Myron B. Thompson School of Social Work. While I myself am not a graduate assistant, many of my friends are. Many of them would not be able to afford a graduate education without the tuition waiver many graduate assistantships offer.

Because of their status as students, it is often easy to forget that graduate students are in fact cheap labor. Currently, the base salary for graduate assistants University of Hawai'i at Mānoa is \$17,500, just over half of the calculated living wage for a single adult in Hawai'i. At this time, UH Mānoa has over 1,200 graduate student assistants who labor as research, administrative, and of course, teaching assistants.

The work these graduate assistants do is invaluable. At some point in their undergraduate careers, every UH student is taught by a graduate student; even at the graduate level, I have had instructors who were graduate teaching assistants. Many of the departments are run with the help of administrative assistants, and research assistants provide the university with valuable research that cannot be replicated elsewhere. The university flourishes on the backs of graduate student assistants. It cannot thrive without them.

Even so, graduate student assistants at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa do not have representation or a formal mechanism to pursue grievances should they need to do so. These deficiencies leave graduate student assistants vulnerable to abuse, for which they have no legal recourse.

For these reasons, I support HB1651, which seeks to allow graduate student assistants in Hawai'i to form a collective bargaining unit. Graduate students should have the right to represent and advocate for themselves. Research has shown that unionized graduate assistants report higher levels of personal and professional support and of higher pay, resulting in improved educational outcomes. Faculty report that unionization at their institutions does not hinder their ability to instruct, advise, or mentor. In the last 50 years, more than 30 officially recognized graduate student unions have been established at both private and public universities in states such as California, Oregon, Washington, New York, Illinois, Montana, Massachusetts, and Iowa. This list should

include Hawai'i. I urge you to support the rights of graduate student assistants and to pass HB1651.

HB-1651

Submitted on: 1/23/2018 9:03:26 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/25/2018 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jennifer Kimiko LaHaela Walter		Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Johanson, Vice Chair Holt, and members of the committee,

I am writing this in strong support of HB1651, relating to collective bargaining.

I support the unionization of graduate students as I believe they work very hard and are incredibly dedicated in not only their research responsibilities, but also the administrative duties in which they are tasked. They must be provided the mechanisms necessary sustain and/or improve their livelihoods, as well as be better equipped to deal with insufficient wages provided and high cost of living.

There are several additional outcomes to unionizing graduate students:

- morale boost to our amazing graduate students and the university community,
- important mechanism to address issues that affect the workplace (e.g., sexual harassment, equal pay)
- bring in a new generation of university students ready to become citizen advocates after seeing the hard work of their colleagues and instructors come to fruition.

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

Kimiko LaHaela Walter

Mo'ili'ili-McCully

REPRESENTATIVE AARON JOHANSON
COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT

Taylor Lewis
Graduate Student Organization (University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa)
301-219-0244

Thursday, January 25, 2018

Support for H.B. No. 1651, Relating to Collective Bargaining

I am writing in strong support of HB1651, which would allow graduate students in Hawai‘i to create a collective bargaining unit.

My work with the Graduate Student Organization at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa has always been centered around listening to and supporting students. Often those conversations start with the stress that we are facing and end with us running off to some duty, or to recover from a busy day. While we might have not known exactly what graduate school would be like before enrolling, we knew that there would be a lot of work. What most of us did not expect was that the act of surviving would be one of those burdens.

For most of my life, I saw graduate school as something too complicated and intangible to be a reality. That changed after seeing the kind of research students were doing, and realizing that one could get paid and have tuition covered through a graduate assistantship. The former uncomplicated graduate school for me, while the latter made it tangible. I could go back to school without adding to my \$30,000 of debt from my undergraduate experience.

I have been fortunate enough to be supported by my department at UH-Mānoa. But though my department may have good intentions, my salary must be supplemented in so many diverse ways that I cannot give a clear number on how many jobs I maintain. I have been fortunate enough to work in a supportive environment, but it seems not a day has gone by without hearing about another student’s mistreatment.

Allowing unionization for graduate student assistants is not just so that we can get paid more—though the cost of living in Hawai‘i and declining graduate student enrollment at UH-Mānoa suggests that we should. Most of us are used to scrapping to get by. But there is always a sense of shock from students when they tell me about having to fight for the compensation they were promised, or to not be punished for not working because of a health emergency, or having to endure an abusive supervisor for the sake of their education.

Collective bargaining for graduate student assistants is beneficial not just for us students. We advertise and advocate for this university whenever we talk to our families and friends—some of whom are considering enrolling here. Through empowering its students, the university empowers itself. Because of my love for what this university has given me, I urge the committee to pass HB1651. Thank you for accepting my testimony.

HB-1651

Submitted on: 1/23/2018 9:05:29 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/25/2018 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
yusraa		Support	No

Comments:

REPRESENTATIVE AARON JOHANSON

COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT

Yusraa Tadj

Contact information:

201. 790.7375

yusraat@hawaii.edu

Thursday, January 25, 2018

Support for H.B. No. 1651, Relating to Collective Bargaining

I am writing in strong support of HB1651, which would allow graduate students in Hawai'i to create a collective bargaining unit.

Without a graduate assistantship, I would not have been able to move to Hawai'i and be a student at UH Mānoa. The assistantship not only covers most of my tuition but also allows me to pay for rent which are essential to me being a student and living here. Without a union, I do not have representation or a formal mechanism to pursue grievances, including compensation, health care, paid leave or any other matter that may arise.

Thank you for your time.

Yusraa Tadj

HB-1651

Submitted on: 1/23/2018 9:21:00 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/25/2018 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
dennis boyd miller	Shiatsu & Massage Center, Inc	Support	No

Comments:

Personal testimony of Dennis B Miller

To the Chair of Labor and Public Employment

Bill scheduled to be heard by LAB on Thursday, 01-25-18 9:00AM in House conference room 309.

Please approve this bill.

Graduate students are being abused by a University system which forces them to work for unfairly low wages.

Thank you,

Dennis B Miller

Singlepayerhawaii@gmail.com

226 Lewers Street Ste L209 Honolulu, HI 96815

HB-1651

Submitted on: 1/24/2018 8:05:06 AM

Testimony for LAB on 1/25/2018 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Amy McKee		Support	No

Comments:

Graduate assistants at the University of Hawaii should be given the right to bargain. As a former graduate assistant and one who has tried to work with the university to improve the employment situation of graduate assistants, nothing is working. The university does not work with the students in good faith. A bargaining relationship will be good for the university, the employees, and the state.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. I write in strong support of HB1651. HB1651, if passed, will create a new bargaining unit, 15, for graduate assistants in Hawai'i. At some point every undergraduate student is taught by a graduate teaching assistant; graduate research assistants advance scientific frontiers; and graduate administrative assistants run key facilities on campus. The university increasingly relies on graduate labor to run. Graduate assistants deserve a seat at the table when decisions are made that affect their lives, those of their students, and the broader community. Unfortunately, graduate assistants are poorly compensated, with wages that are far below a living wage and far below competitive standards of other universities. Graduate assistant compensation has neither kept up with inflation, the cost of living, or rising productivity. Additionally, graduate assistants are vulnerable to capricious and arbitrary decisions from management without a proper mechanism for pursuing grievances. This precarious situation of graduate assistants was made all the more clear during last year's debate over proposed tax reforms made by the Trump administration that would have drastically reduced graduate assistants' take-home pay.

In 2016, the National Labor Relations Board reversed the decades-long ban on private university graduate unions at places such as the University of Chicago, Harvard, and Yale, declaring that graduate assistants are workers that deserve the right to unionize. There are currently dozens of graduate unions across the country at public and private institutions, in states such as California, Oregon, Washington, New York, Illinois, Montana, Massachusetts, Iowa, and many more. Graduate assistant unions have existed for 50 years, and all scholarly research has shown that unionized graduate assistants report higher levels of personal/professional support and higher pay that improves educational outcomes, and that faculty report that unionization does not inhibit their ability to advise, instruct, or mentor.

On a personal level, I have worked as a teaching assistant and research assistant at UH Mānoa for the past three years, and in that time I have had the great pleasure of teaching and working with many of UH Mānoa's bright and promising students. It is work that I have found highly rewarding. Unfortunately, the low pay has meant that I struggle to support my family of three, including paying for my son's preschool tuition. Fortunately, we have been able to keep our son in preschool, but I know many other graduate assistant parents who, when faced with the difficult choice of either paying tuition or paying the month's rent, have had to withdraw their keiki from preschool. Moreover, the fact that it is very difficult for graduate assistants to take time off from work means that parents struggle to find affordable childcare during times when schools are on break. I believe that, through collective bargaining, a graduate assistant union would be able to greatly improve the lives of parents like myself.

Hawai'i has led the way in breaking ground in supporting public sector unions, and it is my sincere hope that Hawai'i continues to show its strong support for unions and working people. For the cutting-edge research and instruction graduate assistants do, the ability to collectively bargain over compensation, benefits, and working conditions is essential and long overdue. I urge you to pass HB1651.

Respectfully yours,

Keith Scott

holt1 - Scott

From: Squarespace <no-reply@squarespace.info>
Sent: Monday, January 22, 2018 10:22 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Form Submission - Submit Testimony in Support

Name: Timothy Zhu

Position/Organization: ALU

Committee on Labor and Public Employment - Thursday, January 25, 2018 at 9:00 am:

Measure: HB1651:

Message: Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. I write in strong support of HB1651. HB1651, if passed, will create a new bargaining unit, 15, for graduate assistants in Hawaii. At some point every undergraduate student is taught by a graduate teaching assistant; graduate research assistants advance scientific frontiers; and graduate administrative assistants run key facilities on campus. The university increasingly relies on graduate labor to run. Graduate assistants deserve a seat at the table when decisions are made that affect their lives, those of their students, and the broader community. Unfortunately, graduate assistants are poorly compensated, with wages that are far below a living wage and far below competitive standards of other universities. Graduate assistant compensation has neither kept up with inflation, the cost of living, or rising productivity. Additionally, graduate assistants are vulnerable to capricious and arbitrary decisions from management without a proper mechanism for pursuing grievances. In 2016, the National Labor Relations Board reversed the decades-long ban on private university graduate unions at places such as the University of Chicago, Harvard, and Yale, declaring that graduate assistants are workers that deserve the right to unionize. There are currently dozens of graduate unions across the country at public and private institutions, in states such as California, Oregon, Washington, New York, Illinois, Montana, Massachusetts, Iowa, and many more. Graduate assistant unions have existed for 50 years, and all scholarly research has shown that unionized graduate assistants report higher levels of personal/professional support and higher pay that improves educational outcomes, and that faculty report that unionization does not inhibit their ability to advise, instruct, or mentor. Hawaii led the way in breaking ground in supporting public sector unions. For the cutting-edge research and instruction graduate assistants do, the ability to collectively bargain over compensation, benefits, and the conditions of our work and workplace is essential and long overdue. I urge you to pass HB1651.:

(Sent via [Academic Labor United](#))

Names of Testifiers

Amy Perruso
Nick Chagnon
Kevin Landers
Justin Jansen
Kornelia Thomas
Erika Ruppelius
Shannon Cristobal
Katherine Burke
Mallory Klaunig
Kahala Johnson
Nanea Lo
Eric Tong
Tithothy Zhu
Jana-Nicole Laborte
Jamaica
Veerle Van Wijk
Mike Hinchman
Alex Miller
Lucie Knor
Mary Baker
Gabrielle Weiss
Michael Hoban
Jacob Henery
Mel Lorenzo Accad
Maxwell Bendes
George Smith
Cameron Mahealani
David Webb
Max Pinsonneault
Nadine Ortega
Mariam Doliashvili
Rachael Wade
Kisha
Anela Akiona
Chantell
J. Bradley Reil
James Anderson
Vania Filipa Lima
Elizabeth Monaghan
Julie Zill
Laura Damiani
Akta Kaushal
Diane Leslie
Eric Dilley
Amanda Ziegler
Kate Feloy
Katherine Achcoso

Nathaniel Wehr
Kristan McDonald
Jessica Schaefer
Christina Ayson
McLean Worsham
Malia Purdy
Patricia Sendao
Megan McElligott
Adrian Gajigan
Joy Lehualani
Elaine Luo
Don Krasky
Niegel Rozet
Alealani Dudoit
Emily Young
Van Wishingrad
Halena
Isabella Tobin
Austin L. Greene
Brian Crow
Alexandria Barkman
Camilla Tognacchini
Kristen Harmon
Georgia Fredeluces
Angeles Gallego
Kelley Pearson-Potts
Penn Pantumsinchai
Kyle Dahlin
Elise Dela Cruz-Talbert
Nathalie Rita
Maria Dieza Ortega
Michael D. Schainfwld
Sang-hyoun Pahk
Jill Adams
William Kinney
Kawelau Wright
Helen Sung
Mazumi Mahgoub
Michelle Brown
Valerie Shaindin
LLeana Ruelas
Inji Kim
Shreya Yadav
Noam
Brenda McDaniel
Kawehi Kina
Andrew Meyer
Jasmine Tyson

Kepo'o Keli'ipa'akaua
Ikaika Hussey
Steven Heisey
Jill Paulino
Dawn Nalani
Ya-chu Chang
Amali Wedagedara
Kelsey Jorgensen
Kawena Elkington
Aleta Corpuz
Katie Taladay
Benjamin Schrager
Chantrelle Wai'ale
Ellen Cachola
Kathrine Kazlauskas
Regina K. Hilo
Keira Yau
Ls Lys
Jee Young Vera Lee
Jason Ellinwood
Mandy Chen
Christine Weingarten
Richard Barnes
Liat Portner
Matthew Lorentz
Kerry Long
Taylor Twadelle
Wendan Li
Hunter Heavilin
Casey McGrath
Vera Hanaoka
Brett Walker
Aurora
Lauren Ward
Joshua Lazarus
Jesse Adams
Erin Fitch
Alyssa Anderson
Trista McKenzie
Christopher Shuler
Kellie K. Dinwiddie

holt1 - Scott

From: Squarespace <no-reply@squarespace.info>
Sent: Monday, January 22, 2018 10:22 PM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Form Submission - Submit Testimony in Support

Name: Timothy Zhu

Position/Organization: ALU

Committee on Labor and Public Employment - Thursday, January 25, 2018 at 9:00 am:

Measure: HB1651:

Message: Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. I write in strong support of HB1651. HB1651, if passed, will create a new bargaining unit, 15, for graduate assistants in Hawaii. At some point every undergraduate student is taught by a graduate teaching assistant; graduate research assistants advance scientific frontiers; and graduate administrative assistants run key facilities on campus. The university increasingly relies on graduate labor to run. Graduate assistants deserve a seat at the table when decisions are made that affect their lives, those of their students, and the broader community. Unfortunately, graduate assistants are poorly compensated, with wages that are far below a living wage and far below competitive standards of other universities. Graduate assistant compensation has neither kept up with inflation, the cost of living, or rising productivity. Additionally, graduate assistants are vulnerable to capricious and arbitrary decisions from management without a proper mechanism for pursuing grievances. In 2016, the National Labor Relations Board reversed the decades-long ban on private university graduate unions at places such as the University of Chicago, Harvard, and Yale, declaring that graduate assistants are workers that deserve the right to unionize. There are currently dozens of graduate unions across the country at public and private institutions, in states such as California, Oregon, Washington, New York, Illinois, Montana, Massachusetts, Iowa, and many more. Graduate assistant unions have existed for 50 years, and all scholarly research has shown that unionized graduate assistants report higher levels of personal/professional support and higher pay that improves educational outcomes, and that faculty report that unionization does not inhibit their ability to advise, instruct, or mentor. Hawaii led the way in breaking ground in supporting public sector unions. For the cutting-edge research and instruction graduate assistants do, the ability to collectively bargain over compensation, benefits, and the conditions of our work and workplace is essential and long overdue. I urge you to pass HB1651.:

(Sent via [Academic Labor United](#))

holt1 - Scott

From: YPDA Hawai'i <action@ypdahawaii.org>
Sent: Wednesday, January 24, 2018 8:53 AM
To: LABtestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HB1651

Aloha Chair Johanson and members of the House Labor committee,

On behalf of the nearly 600 registered members of the Hawaii chapter of the Young Progressives Demanding Action (YPDA) I would like to express my **strong support** for this bill. YPDA supports the basic human right of all workers to unionize. While graduate assistants are still technically students, it is undeniable that they labor in production of vital research, teaching outcomes and administrative duties.

In the past few years, an increasing amount of work previously performed by unionized faculty is being performed by graduate labor instead, for lower pay and less freedom. As wages have stagnated and the cost of living continues to rise, they have formed Academic Labor United as an organizing vehicle, but it's time for the state to recognize their basic human right to unionize.

Article 23 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights states:

- Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment.
- Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work.
- Everyone who works has the right to just and favourable remuneration ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection.
- **Everyone has the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.**

The privatization of our public university institutions has resulted in a declining cycle of budget cuts and rising tuition that puts more strain on graduate student workers by simultaneously requiring more labor from them for stagnating wages, while also costing them more out of pocket to obtain their degree. It is high time we afford these hardworking young people the right to collectively bargain for better pay, benefits and working conditions.

YPDA stands with Academic Labor United, DSA Honolulu, and the members of Common Good Hawaii in support of HB1651.

Please support this bill and continue to advocate for it throughout the session.

Mahalo,

Will Caron
Social Justice Action Committee Chair
8083874920

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YPDA Hawai'i
Energize. Organize. Mobilize.



HB-1651

Submitted on: 1/24/2018 10:38:23 AM

Testimony for LAB on 1/25/2018 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
christopher shuler	university of hawaii	Support	No

Comments:

It is unbelievable to me as a current graduate student at University of Hawaii that the legislators of the State of Hawaii have repeatedly denied similar bills intended to provide fair treatment to a historically under paid group. Supporting graduate education not only supports the hardworking students themselves but also supports Hawaii's future, as individuals with higher education degrees are better poised to provide positive impacts on their communities. Denying graduate students collective bargaining rights only shows us how little the state cares about higher education and about us as people, which contributes to the "brain drain" in Hawaii, where capable educated individuals decide to leave the island for better paying jobs and more supportive environments. If Hawaii truly wants to be a leader in anything except pretty beaches, I would implore you to support the people who are getting the education necessary to make our growth as a state happen.

LATE

HB-1651

Submitted on: 1/24/2018 11:01:54 AM

Testimony for LAB on 1/25/2018 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Javier Mendez-Alvarez		Support	No

Comments:

LATE



Academic Labor United

www.academiclaborunited.org

House Committee on Labor and Public Employment
Thursday, January 25th, 2018
9:00AM, Room 309

LATE

Attention: Representative Aaron Ling Johanson, Chair
Representative Daniel Holt, Vice Chair

Re: **Support for HB1651 Relating to Collective Bargaining**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. Academic Labor United (ALU) stands in **strong support** of this bill. ALU is working to improve the lives of the 1250+ graduate assistants employed at the University of Hawaii and gain recognition for the work we do.

HB1651 will amend HRS 89-6 to create bargaining unit 15 for graduate assistants and provide a conflict resolution mechanism for said bargaining unit that is consistent with other units representing workers employed at the University of Hawaii. This will enable graduate assistants to organize for the purposes of collective bargaining.

The majority of teaching assistants (GTA) are in charge of teaching their own classes. They do all the grading and lecturing, as well as design the syllabus and manage the classroom. Our research assistants (GRA) are often working on multiple independent projects, performing cutting-edge research, at the direction of an assigned supervisor. Other graduate assistants (GA) are working in administrative offices and running key facilities, performing the same duties as any administrative office worker. Many GAs in fact work as replacements for positions that were once performed by better-paid, unionized faculty.

Article 13 Section 2 of the Hawaii State Constitution states “Persons in public employment shall have the right to organize for the purpose of collective bargaining as provided by law.” Graduate assistants in every role meet the common-law test’s criteria for employment as well as the so-called ABC test’s criteria. Graduate Assistants do not control their own hours and have employment taxes withheld from their State of Hawaii issued paychecks. graduate assistants are required to attend trainings and undergo periodic evaluations. A graduate assistant’s supervisor, often a University recognized employee, controls the means and manner in which a graduate assistant carries out their work. Graduate assistants further qualify as employees under HRS 377-1 and HRS 377-4.6(C). They are recognized as employees by National Labor Relations Board, the State of Hawaii, and the University of Hawaii. It is clear that graduate assistants have a constitutionally guaranteed civil right to organize for the purposes of collective bargaining. (Hawaii. Const. art XIII, sex. 2)

In August 2016, the National Labor Relations Board reversed a Bush-era decision that had prevented graduate assistants at private universities from engaging in collective bargaining. They found that it “deprived an entire category of workers of the protections of the Act without



Academic Labor United

www.academiclaborunited.org

a convincing justification.” (National Labor Relations Board, 2016) We are now seeing unions form at private universities such as Columbia University, Harvard University, and many more.

There are currently 33 graduate assistant unions at public universities in the United States. They include the University of California System, the University of Iowa, University of Washington, University of Illinois Chicago, and many more. (CGEU, 2018) Graduate assistant unions have existed for 50 years. We are not seeking to depart from the norm. Collective bargaining for graduate assistants has become the norm.

While executive management has argued that they are better at handling workplace issues than organized workers, they have consistently failed to obtain any wage increases for graduate assistants while organized workers represented by a union have received wage increases. The combination of stagnant wages well below the minimum cost of living, zero job security, and the absence of basic benefits like sick, medical, and parental leave, make the University of Hawaii uncompetitive when it comes to recruiting and retaining graduate students.

Graduate assistants are denied paid sick days, medical leave, and parental leave. (University of Hawaii, 2016) According to a recent campus climate survey one in six graduate students experiences sexual harassment. (Loui et al. 36) Additionally, their harassers were significantly more likely to be employees at the university in positions of greater authority than others surveyed. (Loui et al. 38) Graduate assistants have not received a pay raise since 2004 while executive management have continued to see raises. Graduate assistants lack recourse when faced with administrative decisions that jeopardize their wellbeing and safety. They have no formal protection guaranteeing their right to free inquiry and expression. These are issues that unions have had success resolving.

Graduate assistants are an integral part of the UH system and the local economy. While attending UH, we constitute a committed learning community, conduct important research, and perform a substantial proportion of teaching and administrative duties. Unfortunately, we are poorly compensated and are vulnerable to capricious and arbitrary behavior by our employer. 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 best hope for improving our own situations, then, is to come together and collectively bargain for a better university. **For these reasons, we strongly urge you to support HB1277.**

Sources:

1. Hawaii. Const. art. XIII. sec. 2
2. "NLRB.gov" *Board: Student Assistants Covered by the NLRA / NLRB*. N.p.,n.d, Web. 23 Jan. 2018.
3. "Coalition of Graduate Employee Unions." *United States- Coalition of Graduate Employee Unions*. www.thecgeu.org/wiki/United_States.
4. "Executive Policy EP 5.223, Graduate Assistants." University of Hawaii. <https://www.hawaii.edu/policy/index.php?action=viewPolicy&policySection=ep&policyChapter=5&policyNumber=223&menuView=closed>. n.d. Web Jan 23 2018
5. Loui, Patricia, et al. *REPORT ON UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I STUDENT CAMPUS CLIMATE SURVEY ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE*. Omni Trak Group, 2018.

House Committee on Labor and Public Employment
Thursday, January 25th, 2018
9:00AM, Room 309

Attention: Representative Aaron Ling Johanson, Chair
Representative Daniel Holt, Vice Chair

Re: **Support for HB1651 Relating to Collective Bargaining**

The Labor Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawaii stands in **strong support of HB1651**. HB1651 establishes bargaining unit 15 for graduate assistants employed at the university of Hawaii enabling them the ability to exercise their constitutionally guaranteed right to organize for the purposes of collective bargaining.

Collective bargaining provides a way a means to resolve workplace disputes, improve working conditions, and create a more harmonious and ethical society. The right of workers to engage in collective bargaining is a core principle of the labor movement and must not be infringed upon. For these reasons the Labor Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawaii strongly **urges passage of this bill**.

LATE

HB-1651

Submitted on: 1/24/2018 7:00:49 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/25/2018 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Luke Sarvis		Support	No

Comments:

As a graduate student at UH Manoa, I strongly support this measure and encourage the committee to pass it.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

LATE

HB-1651

Submitted on: 1/24/2018 1:07:50 PM

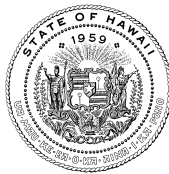
Testimony for LAB on 1/25/2018 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Margaret Pulver		Support	No

Comments:

Graduate students deserve the ability to negotiate and bargain on their own behalf, and form groups.

LATE



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

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

WRITTEN ONLY

TESTIMONY BY LAUREL A. JOHNSTON
ACTING DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT
ON
HOUSE BILL NO. 1651

LATE

**January 25, 2018
9:00 a.m.
Room 309**

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 student assistants employed by the UH and authorizing a new Bargaining Unit 15.

The Department of Budget and Finance has concerns with this measure. The cost implications of allowing graduate student assistants to collectively bargain are a special concern, for both the state budget and for UH's current fiscal situation. Negotiation of pay increases for graduate students needs to be weighed against the foregone revenue from tuition waivers and other fees that graduate students do not pay as part of their assistantships. Further, their work hours and work conditions would all need to be part of collective bargaining negotiations that might not fit the flexible schedules that graduate students require to complete their academic program.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

HB-1651

Submitted on: 1/24/2018 3:02:04 PM

Testimony for LAB on 1/25/2018 9:00:00 AM



Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Diliaur Tellei		Support	Yes

Comments:

My name is Diliaur Tellei and I'm here to testify in support of HB1651. I'm a grad student and I work as a graduate assistant at UH. I believe that for the value grad student workers provide to the university, we deserve a living wage. Unionization is the best means to that end. I can speak a little bit about my own story. During my time as a grad student I've been lucky enough to be in a very affordable housing situation. Last semester, I was notified that that might change, and I had to start looking for an alternative housing solution. I won't be the first to tell you that there's not much you can do on a graduate assistant salary. It was a stressful time and I was blessed that I was eventually able to stay on in my original situation. Not all graduate assistants are that lucky. As people who contribute new knowledge to the world, who educate Hawaii's workforce, who form the backbone of the university — we deserve more than a subsistence wage. We deserve to pursue our studies without having to worry about whether we can pay all the bills this month. We shouldn't have to fight for scraps — we deserve a place at the table. This is why I support unionization.

HB-1651

Submitted on: 1/25/2018 8:19:01 AM

Testimony for LAB on 1/25/2018 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
cheryl		Support	No

Comments:

In accordance with what is fair and right, I support collective bargaining for these people.

LATE