

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



RYKER WADA
INTERIM DIRECTOR

DEPUTY DIRECTOR
JASON MINAMI

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT
235 S. BERETANIA STREET
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-2437

February 12, 2018

**TESTIMONY TO THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION**

For Hearing on Tuesday, February 13, 2018
2:10 p.m., Conference Room 309

BY
RYKER WADA
INTERIM DIRECTOR

**House Bill No. 2113, HD1
Relating to Education**

(WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY)

TO CHAIRPERSON MCKELVEY, VICE CHAIR HASHEM AND MEMBERS OF THE
COMMITTEE:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide **comments** on H.B. 2113, H.D. 1

The purpose of H.B. 2113, H.D. 1 is to provide tuition grants for certain individuals to attend post-secondary education programs at the University of Hawaii system in exchange for commitments to public service.

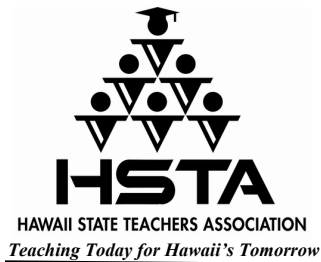
While the Department of Human Resources Development (DHRD) appreciates the intent of the bill, we note comments on some of the ambiguities and absences in the bill.

In the current draft, there is no provision for funding or positions for DHRD to administer the program or enforce the collection of funds should and individual not complete their education program or fail to work the entirety of their commitment.

Depending on the scope of a program such as this, current staffing at DHRD would likely not be able to administer such a program. Aside from the day-to-day work involved with such an endeavor, staffing would likely be needed for administrative review, the internal complaint process and decision making regarding who qualifies for the program. Additionally, there is no guidance regarding how many people this may be offered to or if there is any cap on the amount of funding individually or collectively for the program. This may lead to an unexpected number of individuals qualifying for the program that the State may not be able to find appropriate employment positions for. On a related note, if a reduction-in-force were to occur and grantees were identified, there are no provisions in the measure to guide how this may affect their commitment to State service.

As drafted, if we are pre-selecting individuals for jobs because of their status as grantees, there may be conflicts with the merit principle as defined in HRS 76-1. In short, the merit principle in HRS 76-1 dictates the establishment and maintenance of a civil service system where selection and retention of persons is based upon their fitness and ability for public employment. Statutorily mandating employment based upon enrollment and completion of this program, may have the unintended consequence of conflicting with the merit principle.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this measure.



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

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

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: HB 2113, HD 1 - RELATING TO EDUCATION

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2018

COREY ROSENLEE, PRESIDENT
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Chair McKelvey and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association **supports HB 2113, HD 1**, relating to education.

Hawai'i continues to suffer from a shortage of qualified teachers. According to the DOE's STRIVE HI accountability reports, for the 2017-2018 school year, the state saw 1,011 SATEP vacancies, up from 920 SATEP vacancies in 2016-2017, including a slight increase in SPED SATEP vacancies, from 290 in 2016-2017 to 311 in 2017-2018. As we have noted to the Board of Education at previous hearings, SPED teacher attrition has led to a situation in which 1 out of every 6 SPED teachers have not completed a state-sanctioned teacher training program.

Our teacher shortage problem is further clarified in the DOE's 2016-2017 Employment Report, which shows that teacher resignations increased from 781 in 2015-2016 to 850 in 2016-2017. Similarly in-state SATEP hires decreased from 404 to 387 over that time span, while out-of-state SATEP hires increased from 508 to 572. Teacher attrition is worse in high-poverty areas. In the Nanakuli-Waianae Complex Area, for example, an astounding 18 out of 19 SPED teachers hired for the 2017-2018 school year do not have a special education license.

Thus, we support this measure's attempt to subsidize the education of future state employees. To ensure our children are taught by quality educators, the Hawaii State Teachers Association asks your committee to **support** this bill.



HAWAII GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION

AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO

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

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

Testimony by
Hawaii Government Employees Association

February 13, 2018

H.B. 2113, H.D. 1 – RELATING TO EDUCATION

The Hawaii Government Employees Association, AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO supports the purpose and intent of H.B. 2113, which creates tuition grants to state employees who commit to continued employment with the State after graduating.

We appreciate the spirit and intent of creating additional opportunities for employees to further their education by obtaining 2-year or 4-year degrees, graduate degrees, and professional degrees at the University of Hawaii in exchange for an employment commitment. This add-on benefit will assist both individual employees by creating additional paths to prosperity, as well as the state by filling highly specialized but challenging to recruit positions and cultivating a committed workforce. We strongly support dedicating more resources and financial opportunities to the state's most valuable asset – its employees.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of H.B. 2113, H.D. 1.

Respectfully submitted,

Randy Perreira
Executive Director