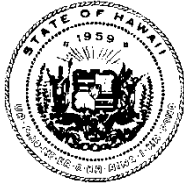


DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR



CRAIG K. HIRAI  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**STATE OF HAWAII**

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

IN REPLY REFER TO:

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

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING**

February 1, 2018 at 9:00 a.m.  
State Capitol, Room 423

In consideration of  
**H.B. 2166**  
**RELATING TO HOUSING VOUCHERS.**

HHFDC *appreciates the intent* of H.B. 2166, but defers to the Department of Education on the extent of the demand for the proposed housing voucher program and funding for the program.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



**LATE**

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

**Date:** 02/01/2018  
**Time:** 09:00 AM  
**Location:** 423  
**Committee:** House Housing

**Department:** Education

**Person Testifying:** Dr. Christina M. Kishimoto, Superintendent of Education

**Title of Bill:** HB 2166 RELATING TO HOUSING VOUCHERS.

**Purpose of Bill:** Authorizes the Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corporation to establish a housing voucher program for full-time classroom teachers employed by the Department of Education or by a public charter school.

**Department's Position:**

The Hawaii State Department of Education is in support HB 2166. In addition, HB 2166 should include an appropriation to fund the housing voucher program.

The Department is focusing on increasing the pipeline of new teachers coming into the profession, but is also concentrating on increasing teacher retention rates. If teachers stayed longer in the profession there would be less vacancies to fill. Housing subsidy vouchers can be a tool to increase the Department's teacher retention, especially in hard-to-fill geographic areas. According to a 2016 report by the Learning Policy Institute housing incentives was one factor that had teacher's who left the profession consider returning.

The bill aligns with Goal 2 of the Department's Strategic Plan in that this program would help with improving teacher recruitment and retention. The financial assistance provided through the voucher program would help to ease some of the financial burden due to the high cost of living in the state.

The Hawaii State Department of Education seeks to advance the goals of the Strategic Plan which is focused on student success, staff success, and successful systems of support. This is achieved through targeted work around three impact strategies: school design, student voice, and teacher collaboration. Detailed information is available at [www.hawaiipublicschools.org](http://www.hawaiipublicschools.org).



49 South Hotel Street, Room 314 | Honolulu, HI 96813  
www.lwv-hawaii.com | 808.531.7448 | voters@lwv-hawaii.com

## COMMITTEE ON HOUSING

Thursday, February 1, 2018, 9:00 am, Conference Room 423  
HB 2166, RELATING TO HOUSING VOUCHERS

### TESTIMONY

Ann Shaver, Legislative Committee, League of Women Voters of Hawaii

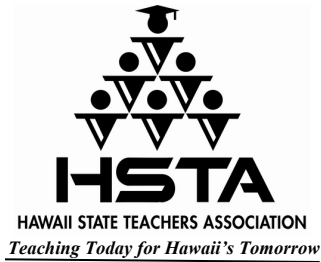
Chair Tom Brower, Vice-Chair Nadine K. Nakamura and Committee Members:

**The League of Women Voters of Hawaii opposes HB 2166 that would authorize the Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corporation to establish a housing voucher program for full-time classroom teachers employed by the Department of Education or by a public charter school.**

The League respectfully offers the following comments. We agree that teachers are often unable to meet the high cost of living in Hawaii. We understand as well that there is a teacher shortage and support taking measures to hire and retain quality teachers for Hawaii's keiki. However, Hawaii's teachers have a union whose stated mission is to advocate for them. This process is accomplished through collective bargaining and we believe that what amounts to an annual bonus of \$6,000 per year per full time teacher, as described in HB2166, should be achieved.

League is also concerned that the housing voucher funding source is not identified in the bill. We assume that the money will come from the public, and this means that the entire public, including other public employees, would be paying for vouchers being issued to a favored group. Since other public employees are not receiving a housing voucher, this would imply inequitable treatment for all public employees. It adds to the discrimination when public employees are forced to pay for a benefit or bonus for which they are not entitled. Other public employees are faced with the same high cost of living as the teacher pool, and entitled to a share of this kind of public money should it become available.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.



**LATE**

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

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

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON  
HOUSING

RE: HB 2166 - RELATING TO HOUSING VOUCHERS

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2018

COREY ROSENLEE, PRESIDENT  
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Chair Brower and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association **supports and suggests amendments for HB 2166**, relating to housing vouchers.

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.

Financial incentives are a key strategy for the recruitment and retention of teachers, particularly given that Hawai'i's teacher salaries continue to trail the nation when adjusted for cost of living. To recruit and retain effective educators, policymakers must find ways to lessen the financial burden of being a public school teacher. Establishing a housing voucher program is a good first step. In the islands, where new housing rarely becomes available, the percentage of renters who face

cost burdens—financial handicaps incurred by people spending over 30 percent of their income on housing—is roughly 57 percent, according to the National Low Income Housing Coalition. Many of those cash-strapped renters are state educators, who are chronically underpaid. To make ends meet, many teachers are forced to pick up second and third jobs, live in cramped studio apartments, and cut back on necessities like medical care. Thus, a housing voucher program would assist teachers in attaining sustainable and stable residency, while staving off crushing debt burdens. It would also make the teaching profession more attractive by increasing educators’ purchasing power through the subsidization of rent and mortgages in the state with the nation’s highest housing costs.

That said, we urge your committee to amend this measure’s applicability. Currently, the housing voucher program imagined by this bill applies to “classroom teachers,” which is not a legal term. "Teachers," as defined in HRS §302A-101, means “a person whose duties in the public educational system are primarily teaching or instruction of students or related activities centered primarily on students and who is in close and continuous contact with students, and shall include but not be limited to classroom teachers, school librarians, counselors, registrars, and special education teachers.” We oppose the codification of any distinction between classroom teachers and non-classroom teachers in state law and urge you to amend the measure to include all teachers, who are all covered by the same salary scale.

To take care of the needs of Hawai’i’s hardworking teachers, the Hawaii State Teachers Association asks your committee to **support** this bill.

**HB-2166**

Submitted on: 1/29/2018 4:34:19 PM

Testimony for HSG on 2/1/2018 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Randall Francisco	County of Kauai	Support	No

Comments:

Thank you for thinking about teachers, especially, the new and younger teachers just starting their career and oftentimes, at the lower level of the salary scale. This also is a demonstration of the state's commitment to support teachers and removing some of the difficulty of attracting teachers in an inequitable situation from an economic standpoint. Randy Francisco, Hanapepe, Kauai, HI.