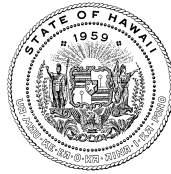


DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



LAUREL A. JOHNSTON
DIRECTOR

KEN N. KITAMURA
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)

WRITTEN ONLY

TESTIMONY BY LAUREL A. JOHNSTON
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
ON
SENATE BILL NO. 2585, S.D. 1

**February 21, 2018
10:10 a.m.
Room 211**

LATE

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 opposes 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 your consideration of our comments.



HAWAII GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION

AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO

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

LATE

The Twenty-Ninth Legislature, State of Hawaii
The Senate
Committee on Ways and Means

Testimony by
Hawaii Government Employees Association

February 21, 2018

S.B. 2585, S.D. 1 – 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. 2585, S.D. 1.

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 S.B. 2585 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 S.B. 2585, S.D. 1.

Respectfully submitted,

Randy Perreira
Executive Director



UNIVERSITY OF
HAWAII
STUDENT CAUCUS



To: Senate Committee on Ways and Means (WAM)
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

Date: Wednesday, February 21, 2018
Time: 10:10 AM
Place: Conference Room 211

Re: SUPPORTING SB 2585 - RELATING TO COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

My name is Jannah Lyn Dela Cruz, and I am the Chairperson of the UH Student Caucus, the UH system wide association of all campus student governments. We represent over 50,000 students in the University of Hawaii System. The UH Student Caucus is in **support of SB 2585**, that establishes a collective bargaining unit for graduate student assistants employed by the University of Hawaii.

Graduate student assistants are still students. Undergraduate or graduate, all students need the support services and opportunities that will support the academic success of all. The current status of the Graduate Student Assistant positions does not have room for our Graduate Student Assistants to take the time necessary to address matters important to their well-being, such as medical or family emergencies without the potential risk of losing of their Student Assistant positions. Graduate Student Assistant jobs provides some assistance with graduate student tuition and fees. Graduate tuition is costly, therefore there are students who take on a graduate student assistant position in order to help alleviate those costs. Support for the well-being of graduate students who are Graduate Student Assistants is an issue that must be addressed. While the UHSC understands that there are ways other than unionization, ones that are cost-effective, that can be worked to support the well-being of our Graduate Student Assistants, we recognize that the right to collective bargaining will allow our Graduate Student Assistants the same opportunity. Therefore, the UHSC affirms support for efforts that address the concerns of our Graduate Student Assistants that are assumed to potentially be resolved through collective bargaining, and for these reasons, support SB 2585. The UH Student Caucus thanks you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted by,

Jannah Lyn Dela Cruz
Chairperson
UH Student Caucus
jldc2@hawaii.edu



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-Ninth Legislature, State of Hawaii
Hawaii State Senate
Committee on Ways and Means

Testimony by
Hawaii State AFL-CIO

February 21, 2018

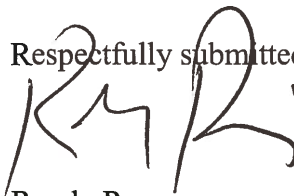
LATE

S.B. 2585, S.D.1 – RELATING TO
COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

The Hawaii State AFL-CIO strongly supports S.B. 2585, S.D.1 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 S.B. 2585, S.D.1.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Randy Perreira
President

LATE

SB-2585-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/20/2018 6:40:48 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/21/2018 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jonathan Valdez	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments:

Aloha Senators, My name is Jonathan Valdez, and I currently live in Manoa. I am a doctoral graduate student in the department of American studies. I am testifying today in strong support of SB 2585.

I was a graduate assistant for two and a half years for my department. During that time, I served as both a teaching assistant and solo instructor. I am thankful for those opportunities and funding, but as is the case today in education it pales in comparison to help students meet the standard of living, protect them in the face of abuse, and in some cases hinder their progress from finishing on time, if not finishing at all.

Being a graduate student is not glamorous. The running gag of graduate students voraciously eating free food at university functions is hilarious, but it should give you pause to remember that for some it because some can't make ends meet and that may be their only meal. It's also been popularized in the animated series Simpsons as making bad life decisions. I beg to differ. My decision to go to graduate school lies in what has been one of my life's maxims, "To be a listener and teller of stories."

As a scholar in the humanities, I don't think it is a bad life decision to dedicate myself to teaching. Moreover, I believe it is through exposing students to different stories from people from all walks of life that we begin to change the world. One example was when a student last semester in my pop culture class made the connection between the mining of coltan, the minerals found in our phones and computers was mined in the same conditions as diamonds in Sierra Leone. The "blood coltan of Congo," as he put it, opened his eyes to the fact exploitation of children was integral to the creation of technology that we now believe we can't live without.

Senators, my fellow graduate students and I are asking for more because of the material and immaterial labor of what we contribute to the reputation and the prestige of the University of Hawaii. We travel all over the world for conferences, contribute to pushing the boundaries of what we know across all disciplines. We publish articles and books. And like myself, we are teachers. My time teaching sometimes takes more than 4 hours to lesson planning and preparation to teach a 1 hour and 15 minutes of class so that I can be ready to discuss any questions that come up. When you are paying for the

cognitive labor of teachers, you have to remember there's more than what you see us do in the classroom.

At my previous institution San Diego State University, the graduate assistants there are unionized and can collectively bargain through UAW, particularly UAW local 4123. I only knew this because my brother was a part of this union as a teaching assistant and this was when he was an undergraduate. The examples are there to follow from the United States' largest public university system. The University of Hawaii system can benefit from learning what CSU does best and move to implement it here at UH. Also to respond to the University of Hawaii's representative's remarks on Michigan State University, their graduate assistants are also unionized through the Graduate Employees Union and the American Federation of Teachers. If there is a lesson to be learned, UH can learn from MSU as well on how to implement a graduate assistant union at UH.

As a scholar of popular culture, I leave you with a quote from Jon Jonz, the enigmatic Martian superhero from DC comics

"There isn't much justice in the world, perhaps that's why it is so satisfying to occasionally make some." (Justice League Task Force #1)

Just as the graduate students of UH Manoa encourage students to make Hawaii and the world a better place I ask that you stand with the women and men who make UH a dynamic university system through their service.

I ask you to stand in support of SB 2585.

Mahalo.

LATE

SB-2585-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/20/2018 10:08:23 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/21/2018 10:10:00 AM

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

Comments:

Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Conference Room 211



Chair: Sen. Donovan M. Dela Cruz
Vice Chair: Sen. Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran
Wednesday, February 21, 2018 at 10:10 am

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. I write in strong support of SB2585. SB2585, 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 and attacks from management, including sexual harassment, 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 working conditions is essential and long overdue. I urge you to pass SB2585.

Florybeth La Valle	Amanda Vincent	Kim Compoc	Elise Dela Cruz-Talbert	Nanea Lo
Genelle Watkins	Justin Keliipaakaua	Christi Trask	Kaitlin Hill	Rebecca Goldschmidt
Katherine Burke	Kaleonani Hurley	Erik Brush	Sayaka Sakuma	Megan McElligott