

# SB 2855

Measure Title: RELATING TO TEACHER HOUSING.

Report Title: Housing Voucher Program; Full-time Teachers; Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corporation

Description: Authorizes the Hawaii housing finance and development corporation to develop and implement a housing voucher program for full-time teachers employed by the department of education or at a public charter school.

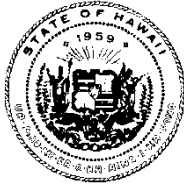
Companion:

Package: None

Current Referral: HOU/EDU, WAM

Introducer(s): S. CHANG

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

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION**

February 8, 2018 at 2:45 p.m.  
State Capitol, Room 225

In consideration of  
**S.B. 2855**  
**RELATING TO TEACHER HOUSING.**

HHFDC ***appreciates the intent*** of S.B. 2855, 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.



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

**Date:** 02/08/2018  
**Time:** 02:45 PM  
**Location:** 225  
**Committee:** Senate Housing  
Senate Education

**Department:** Education

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

**Title of Bill:** SB 2855 RELATING TO TEACHER HOUSING.

**Purpose of Bill:** Authorizes the Hawaii housing finance and development corporation to develop and implement a housing voucher program for full-time teachers employed by the department of education or at a public charter school.

**Department's Position:**

The Department of Education (Department) supports the intent of SB 2855, but defers to the Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corporation for implementation concerns. Should the committee proceed with this measure, the Department would appreciate consideration for an appropriation to fund the housing voucher program.

This bill aligns with Goal 2 of the Department's Strategic Plan of focusing on increasing the pipeline of new teachers coming into the profession, and 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. 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. According to a 2016 report by the Learning Policy Institute, housing incentives was one factor that had teachers who left the profession consider returning.

Lastly, the Department offers comment to the Legislature that the Department also employs half-time teachers. Based on the proposed language, only those individuals working as full-time (1.0 FTE) teachers would be eligible for the housing voucher program.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony.

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).

**SB-2855**

Submitted on: 2/6/2018 3:09:11 PM

Testimony for HOU on 2/8/2018 2:45:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Lynn Hammonds	Hawaii Teacher Standards Board	Support	No

Comments:

Thank you for the opportunity to support SB2855. Lynn Hammonds

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR



CATHERINE PAYNE  
CHAIRPERSON

STATE OF HAWAII  
**STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION**  
**(‘AHA KULA HO‘ĀMANA)**

<http://CharterCommission.Hawaii.Gov>  
1111 Bishop Street, Suite 516, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813  
Tel: (808) 586-3775 Fax: (808) 586-3776

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FOR: SB 2855 Relating to Teacher Housing  
DATE: February 8, 2018  
TIME: 2:45 P.M.  
COMMITTEE: Committee on Education and Committee on Housing  
ROOM: Conference Room 225  
FROM: Sione Thompson, Executive Director  
State Public Charter School Commission

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Chair Kidani, Chair Espero, and members of the Committees:

The State Public Charter School Commission (“Commission”) appreciates the opportunity to submit this testimony in **SUPPORT of SB 2855**, which establishes a housing voucher program for full-time teachers who are employed by the Department of Education and in public charter schools.

The Commission appreciates the Legislature’s efforts and willingness to support teachers and their commitment to serving our public school students. The Commission looks forward to collaborating with this committee, other affected stakeholders, and public charter schools in moving this legislation forward.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

**SB-2855**

Submitted on: 2/5/2018 2:45:09 PM

Testimony for HOU on 2/8/2018 2:45:00 PM

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

Comments:

**SB-2855**

Submitted on: 2/7/2018 11:12:15 AM

Testimony for HOU on 2/8/2018 2:45:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
anne rehart	Kamaile academy PCS	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I work at Kamaile Academy PCS as a special education . I strongly support this bill as a way to retain teachers in Hawaii and make help fill the hundreds of vacancies every year. I plan on leaving the island myself in 2 years because of the economic hardship that my family faces living here. Waianae is our home yet, unless there is a change in my income,we will have to leave when my oldest daughter starts college. I currently work 2 other jobs weekends and after school and make approximately 62,000.00 per year which supports my family of 5. We struggle every month to pay our bills and do not go out to dinner or spend money on recreation, yet still fall behind with credit card debt trying to keep up with our rent and food bill. I am not alone in this financial struggle and think that assistance with rent would make enough difference that we could possibly stay here in Hawaii.





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

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## TESTIMONY FOR SENATE BILL 2855, RELATING TO TEACHER HOUSING

**Senate Committee on Housing**  
**Hon. Will Espero, Chair**  
**Hon. Breene Harimoto, Vice Chair**

**Senate Committee on Education**  
**Hon. Michelle N. Kidani, Chair**  
**Hon. Kaiali'i Kahele, Vice Chair**

**Thursday, February 8, 2018, 2:45 PM**  
**State Capitol, Conference Room 225**

Honorable Chair Espero, Chair Kidani, 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 support of, with proposed amendments for Senate Bill 2855, relating to teacher housing.

Hawai'i residents face the highest housing costs in the nation, at more than twice the national average. Researchers who authored the National Low Income Housing Coalition's *Out of Reach 2017* report found that a full-time worker would need to earn \$35.20/hour to afford a two-bedroom apartment at fair market value in our state, with Honolulu experiencing a 67 percent increase in fair market rent between 2005 and 2015. Average rent for a two-bedroom unit surpassed \$2,000 in recent years, with minimum wage workers needing to log 116 hours per week to afford a modest one-bedroom apartment at fair market value and 139 hours per week to afford a two-bedroom—a number that is equivalent to working 20 hours a day with no days off year-round. In the past three years alone, Honolulu rent has increased by more than 25 percent. While 43 percent of Hawai'i residents are renters (a number that does not include individuals and families renting outside of the regulated rental market), they earn an average wage of \$15.64/hour, scarcely enough to meet their basic needs. One out of every four households in Hawai'i report that they are “doubling up” or are three paychecks or less away from being homeless, per the Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice. Additionally, 54 percent of households are cost-burdened, meaning that they pay more than 30 percent of their income for housing costs, a number that rises to 83 percent of extremely low-income households. Homelessness is directly tied to our state's

exorbitant cost of living and penchant for catering to people who use the islands as their own private Monopoly board. We beseech you to seek innovative ways of making Hawai'i more affordable for our economically disadvantaged neighbors, too many of whom are teachers.

Our state's cost of housing has skyrocketed over the last decade, leaving many families searching for affordable alternatives, in shelters, or on the streets. For context, the median price of condominiums on O'ahu increased 6 percent in the summer of 2017 to a record \$425,000, while the median price for single-family homes increased by 3 percent to \$795,000, according to the Honolulu Board of Realtors, a number that they expect to increase by at least another 5 percent in 2018. Average fair market rent for two-bedroom apartments in *outlying* communities in the City and County of Honolulu now exceeds \$2,000, with the cost of a four-bedroom home in urban Honolulu now exceeding \$1.1 million. At least 43 percent of residences in Hawai'i are owner unoccupied, according to the National Low-Income Housing Coalition, meaning that nearly 50 percent—and by some estimates over half—of Hawai'i's homes are likely investment properties.

At the same time, for the 2017-2018 school year, the Hawai'i State Department of Education report 1,011 teacher vacancies. The number of new teachers hired who have not completed a state approved teacher education program has increased from 125 for the 2011-2012 school year to 294 for the 2016-2017 school year. Over the same period, the number of teacher resignations has increased from 624 in 2011-2012 to 850 in 2015-2016, while the total number of voluntary teacher separations has increased from 934 in 2011-2012 to 1,170 in 2016-2017. In short, hundreds of teachers are leaving the workforce each year at an accelerating pace, while the DOE does not have enough trained and licensed teachers in waiting to fill the holes they leave. The culprit for our state's escalating teacher shortage crisis? Primarily, Hawai'i's last-in-the-nation teacher pay (adjusted for cost of living). Inasmuch as a teacher housing program provides a financial benefit tantamount to raising teacher pay, it is worth noting that studies have shown that as teacher pay increases, so, too, does student achievement. A Stanford University study found that "raising teacher wages by 10 percent reduces high school dropout rates by 3 percent to 4 percent," while a Florida study showed that pay raises reduced teacher attrition by as much as 25 percent for hard-to-fill subject areas, with children's learning growth gaining from more exposure to experienced educators. Recently, the Hawai'i State Teachers Association performed a study of teacher compensation in comparison with mainland peer districts. HSTA discovered that teachers' wages are \$4,000 to \$26,000 below that of their mainland peers. Put simply, to reduce teacher turnover, we must pay educators what they're worth. When we don't, they simply can't afford to create a life in the islands.

The time for deliberation is over. It's time to act. Experts at DBEDT now estimate that Hawai'i needs 66,000 new housing units by the year 2025 to keep up with demand, more than 80 percent of which is needed to meet the demand of people who qualify for affordable housing—which the many of Hawai'i's teachers do, even at the 80 percent of area median income threshold articulated in this proposal. **In Honolulu, 80 percent of AMI for a single person equates to**

**\$58,640, according to the Hawai'i Housing Finance and Development Corporation, which is almost exactly equivalent to the average salary of Hawai'i's public school teachers.** Yet, for every 100 extremely low-income renters on O'ahu, there exist only 40 affordable rentals, according to the Urban Institute, of which only 11 are "naturally affordable," meaning they are affordable without federal subsidies. Though our state is committed to a goal of building 22,500 affordable rental housing units in the next 10 years, figures from the Hawai'i Housing Finance and Development Corporation show that in 2015 and 2016, we added only approximately 1,000 affordable rental units to our state's inventory, with further plans finalized for a mere 3,240 more affordable rentals by 2022, not nearly enough to meet the needs of our state's hardworking families.

That said, we note that this measure creates a distinction between classroom and non-classroom teachers, applying the proposed housing program only to classroom teachers. Such a distinction is not found in state law. Instead, under HRS §302A-101, teacher "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." Moreover, all teachers included under the definition in HRS §302A-101 are members of bargaining unit (5) and subject to the same salary scale. Therefore, **we urge your committee to amend this measure by eliminating the distinction between classroom and non-classroom teachers and, in turn, applying the proposed housing program to all teachers included under HRS §302A-101.**

Teachers need housing now. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

Sincerely,  
Kris Coffield  
*Executive Director*  
IMUAlliance

**SB-2855**

Submitted on: 2/7/2018 1:55:15 PM

Testimony for HOU on 2/8/2018 2:45:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Melodie Aduja	OCC Legislative Priorities	Support	No

Comments:

**PRESENTATION OF THE  
OAHU COUNTY COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES  
DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF HAWAII  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING  
AND  
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION  
THE SENATE  
TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE  
REGULAR SESSION OF 2018  
Thursday, February 8, 2018  
2:45 p.m.**

Hawaii State Capitol, Conference Room 225

**RE: Testimony in Support** of SB 2855, RELATING TO TEACHER HOUSING

To the Honorable Will Espero, Chair; the Honorable Breene Harimoto, Vice-Chair, and Members of the Committee on Housing:

To the Honorable Michelle N. Kidani, Chair; the Honorable Kaiali'i Kahele, Vice-Chair, and Members of the Committee on Education:

Good afternoon. My name is Melodie Aduja. I serve as Chair of the Oahu County Committee ("OCC") Legislative Priorities Committee of the Democratic Party of

Hawaii ("DPH"). Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony on Senate Bill No. 2855 relating to the Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corporation's administration of the Housing Voucher Program for Full-time Teachers.

The OCC Legislative Priorities Committee is in support of Senate Bill No. 2855 and is in favor of its passage.

Senate Bill No.2855 is in accord with the Platform of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i ("DPH"), 2016, as it authorizes the Hawaii housing finance and development corporation to develop and implement a housing voucher program for full-time teachers employed by the department of education or at a public charter school.

Specifically, the DPH Platform provides that "[e]ducation shall be respected as a valuable resource and those pursuing a profession in education shall be compensated with a competitive wage based on national standards while taking into consideration the state's cost of living. We support hiring the most qualified individuals to be teachers and administrators for our educational system. We also support the value the universities and colleges that prepare educators and provide advanced degrees." (Platform of the DPH, P. 6, Lines 310-316 (2016)).

Given that Senate Bill No.2855 establishes the Housing Voucher Program for Full-time Teachers, it is the position of the OCC Legislative Priorities Committee to support this measure.

Thank you very much for your kind consideration.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ **Melodie Aduja**

Melodie Aduja, Chair, OCC Legislative Priorities Committee

Email: [legislativepriorities@gmail.com](mailto:legislativepriorities@gmail.com), Tel.: (808) 258-8889

**SB-2855**

Submitted on: 2/5/2018 2:51:05 PM

Testimony for HOU on 2/8/2018 2:45:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
cheryl		Support	No

Comments:

SUPPORT SUPPORT SUPPORT! This bill will probably get the same ol' opposition that teachers always get BUT please remain focused on what will assist us to help them and thus ensure that people who want to teach here and live here can stay and do so. I WOULD so have loved to have a bit of additional support when I was teaching. C. Burghardt, retired educator

**SB-2855**

Submitted on: 2/5/2018 3:31:18 PM

Testimony for HOU on 2/8/2018 2:45:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Shirley David		Support	No

Comments:

As a long time volunteer in elementary school classrooms, I see the revolving door of teachers who come from the mainland and cannot afford rent on a teacher's salary. We need to do something to keep them here.

**SB-2855**

Submitted on: 2/7/2018 10:42:12 AM

Testimony for HOU on 2/8/2018 2:45:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Nicole Suzuki		Support	No

Comments:

Aloha! As a teacher at Kamaile Academy Public Charter School, I am writing to SUPPORT SB 2855 – Relating to Teacher Housing

As a lifelong resident in Hawaii, teacher at a hard-to-fill school for nearly a decade, and advocate for education, teacher housing, passage of this bill and the development and implementation of a housing voucher program for full-time teachers employed by the department of education or at a public charter school will not only directly benefit my own family, but will have a significant positive impact on the school at which I teach and the students and community that we serve.

When adjusted for cost of living, a Hawai`i teacher's average salary is the lowest when compared to all the states in the nation (Sources: National Center for Education Statistics and Missouri Economic Research and Information Center). SB 2855 will help recruit and retain our teachers by making it more affordable to live and work in our beautiful, but expensive state. Kamaile Academy PCS is located in Wai`anae and is designated a hard-to-fill area. With voucher programs, the likelihood of attracting stronger teacher candidates to teach in our community increases; thus, bettering the education for our children. Also, the chances of having teachers stay increase; therefore, creating stability in the teaching staff, improving upon the professional development invested in our teachers, and overall lifting the quality of education in a community that needs it the most.

I strongly support SB 2855 as it will not just help my family, but it will help all schools in Hawai`i and especially schools like Kamaile in hard-to-fill locations be competitive with attracting and retaining teachers for our poorest communities.



**SB-2855**

Submitted on: 2/7/2018 1:02:54 PM

Testimony for HOU on 2/8/2018 2:45:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Margaret Maupin		Support	No

Comments:

**SB-2855**

Submitted on: 2/7/2018 2:18:36 PM

Testimony for HOU on 2/8/2018 2:45:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
pat gegen		Support	No

Comments: