



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

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Testimony Presented Before the  
House Committees on Lower & Higher Education  
and

Labor & Public Employment  
Tuesday, February 12, 2019 at 2:10 p.m.

By

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

### HB 919 – RELATING TO COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Chairs Woodson and Johanson, Vice Chairs Hashem, Perruso and Eli, and members of the committees:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on HB 919, 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 passage of this measure.

As we have previously testified in response to similar bills introduced in prior 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. 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.

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 is \$650 per credit hour and most GAs take 9 credits which equates to \$5850 per semester (\$11,700 annually), while non-resident tuition is \$1545 per credit hour, typically \$13,905 per semester (\$27,810 per year on average). Graduate student assistants may also receive monetary stipends that can vary by the educational program in which they are

enrolled. Beginning Fall 2019, the minimum stipend level is Step 8 (\$18,930 for 9-month appointees, \$22,140 for 11-month GAs. Depending on residency, graduate program, and stipend level, the value of tuition waivers and stipends is estimated to typically range between \$30,630 (9-month GAs at the minimum stipend level taking 9 resident-rate credits per semester) and \$49,950 annually (11-month GAs at the minimum stipend level taking 9 non-resident rate credits per semester), with a *potential* maximum value as high as \$80,964 annually (professional school tuition rates [Nursing] taking 12 credits, with an 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.



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TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON  
LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION AND THE COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND  
PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT

RE: HB 919 - RELATING TO COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2019

COREY ROSENLEE, PRESIDENT  
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Chair Woodson, Chair Johanson and Members of the Committees:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association **supports HB 919**, relating to collective bargaining.

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 workers 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.





## HAWAII GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION

AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO

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

The Thirtieth Legislature, State of Hawaii  
House of Representatives  
Committee on Lower and Higher Education  
Committee on Labor and Public Employment

Testimony by  
Hawaii Government Employees Association

February 12, 2019

### H.B. 919 – RELATING TO COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

The Hawaii Government Employees Association, AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO 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. 919.

We represent 42,000 public sector employees, retirees, and associate members across the state, counties, judiciary, Department of Education, and the University of Hawaii system. 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 collective bargaining process. The language proposed in this measure 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 support of H.B. 919.

Respectfully submitted,

  
for Randy Perreira  
Executive Director



The House Committee on Lower and Higher Education  
The House Committee on Labor and Public Employment  
February 12, 2019  
2:10 PM, Conference Room 309

**RE: HB 919 RELATING TO COLLECTIVE BARGAINING**

Attention: Chairs Justin Woodson and Aaron Ling Johanson, Vice Chairs Amy Perruso and Stacelynn Eli and Members of the Joint Committees

The University of Hawaii Professional Assembly (UHPA) urges the joint committees to **support passage of HB 919** that amends Section 89-6 of the Hawai'i Revised Statute creating a bargaining unit for the graduate assistants to help advance the interests of a group of public employees that currently do not have the right to collectively bargain.

UHPA represents the faculty across the ten campus University of Hawai'i System, and on occasion, have provided guidance to graduate assistants. The current University of Hawai'i policy governing graduate assistants does not provide the proper protections for representation for this group of public 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

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

While UHPA is unable to represent graduate assistants, UHPA supports the rights of graduate assistants to organize and collectively bargain. Such a right is consistent with the labor tradition in our state and is compatible with an academic environment whereby the majority of employees have access to representation.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in **support of HB 919**.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kristeen Hanselman  
Executive Director

University of Hawaii  
Professional Assembly

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The Thirtieth Legislature  
Regular Session of 2019

THE HOUSE

Committee on Lower & Higher Education  
Representative Justin H. Woodson, Chair  
Representative Amy A. Perruso, Vice Chair

Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Representative Aaron Ling Johanson, Chair  
Representative Stacelynn K.M. Eli, Vice Chair

State Capitol, Conference Room 309  
Tuesday, February 12, 2019; 2:10 p.m.

**STATEMENT OF THE ILWU LOCAL 142 ON H.B. 919  
RELATING TO COLLECTIVE BARGAINING**

The ILWU Local 142 **strongly supports** H.B. 919, which establishes a collective bargaining unit for graduate student assistants employed by the University of Hawaii.

H.B. 919 is not complicated – it simply grants collective bargaining rights by establishing bargaining unit 15 for graduate student assistants employed by the University of Hawaii - a right graduate students have been seeking for over a decade.

Our State Constitution specifically proclaims persons in private and public employment shall have the right to organize for the purpose of collective bargaining – a clause that has held strong in our Constitution for over four decades. Graduate student assistants are employed by the University of Hawaii as **employees** and perform numerous duties and tasks such as teaching classes, grading assignments, developing curriculum in addition to other responsibilities that may be assigned by the professor and/or university. Many graduate student assistants often work over 40 hours per week on a salary that is nearly equal to Hawaii’s minimum wage resulting in many having to obtain two or three jobs simply to afford Hawaii’s high cost of living all while attending classes to obtain their own degree(s).

Having the right to collectively bargaining will provide graduate student assistants with a unified voice, improved work conditions, better workplace safety and overall a better quality of life. As current at-will employees, termination can occur at any time for nearly any reason leaving many fearful to speak up, unsure of what the recourse may be. With representation, the situation is handled fairly and appropriately – graduate student assistants can file grievances while being protected without any fear of retaliation. Further, having collective bargaining rights not only helps secure a better financial outlook including an improved work environment but also ensures proper justice occurs when an abject situation arises.

As **employees** of the University of Hawaii, graduate student assistants have every right to seek representation – they have terms of employment which includes responsibilities, work days, and work hours. The University also describes graduate student assistants as professionals that are **employed** at the school. In addition, Hawaii’s Constitution grants them those rights just like other workers employed at the University of Hawaii or at other state departments and agencies.

Additionally, nearly 40 public and private graduate student unions have been formed across the country – including at prestigious universities such as Harvard, Columbia, and Brown. The fact is, collective bargaining rights for graduate student unions are not new or unheard of, but rather popular and continue to gain popularity each year. In truth, every worker deserves the right to organize allowing them to have the protections and financial security they deserve. While graduate student assistants employed at the University of Hawaii fall under the Hawaii Labor Relations Board (HLRB) it should be noted that in August 2016, a ruling by the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) found that “student teaching assistants” and “student research assistants” are **employees** at private universities and therefore have the right to unionize under the National Labor Relations Act.

The ILWU believes all workers deserve the right to organize and strongly urges the passage of H.B. 919. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



Tuesday, February 12, 2019

House Bill 919  
Testifying in Support

Aloha, Chairs Woodson and Johanson, Vice Chairs Hashem, Perruso, and Eli, and Members of the Committee on Lower and Higher Education and Labor and Public Employment,

The Democratic Party of Hawai'i (The Party) **support HB919 Relating to Collective Bargaining**, which establishes bargaining unit 15 for graduate student assistants employed by the University of Hawaii.

This bill would enable Graduate Assistants to exercise their constitutionally guaranteed right to organize for the purposes collective bargaining.

Collective bargaining provides a means by which to resolve workplace disputes, improving working conditions, and create a more harmonious and ethical society. The right of workers to engage in collective bargaining is the core principle of the labor movement and the Democratic Party of Hawaii. When workers have the ability to collectively bargain wages, benefits, protections, etc. everyone benefits.

Generally speaking, as the decline in union membership has declined across the country, so too have wages, benefits, and protections for all workers.

While the University of Hawaii has repeatedly said they would make changes to address the legitimate concerns of the Graduate Assistants, they have yet to do so. The time has long since passed to allow this integral group of employees the ability to collectively bargain. Graduate Assistants are underpaid and receive no health, sick or family leave benefits. Additionally, Graduate Assistants face high rates of sexual harassment and currently have no recourse when faced with threatening and derogatory statements made by students in their classes.

The legislature sent a similar bill to the Governor's desk in 2015. While the Governor did veto that bill, the Party notes that this bill includes improvements which directly address the concerns identified in the Governor's Veto Message:

- Lacked a bargaining unit: HB919 assigns graduate assistants to bargaining unit 15.
- Failed to identify the appropriate employer group: HB919 identifies the employer group as the Governor, President of the University of Hawaii, and the Board of Regents.
- Did not contain an impasse resolution mechanism: HB919 includes an impasse resolution mechanism consistent with bargaining units 5 and 7.

For all these reasons, we urge you to pass this bill.

Mahalo for the opportunity to offer these comments,



Josh Frost  
Co-Chair, Legislation Committee  
Democratic Party of Hawai'i



Zahava Zaidoff  
Co-Chair, Legislation Committee  
Democratic Party of Hawai'i

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON  
LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION AND THE COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND  
PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT

RE: HB 919 - RELATING TO COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2019

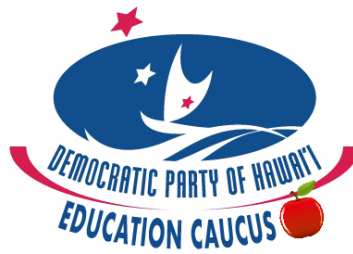
MITZIE HIGA, LEGISLATIVE CHAIR  
DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF HAWAII LABOR CAUCUS  
Chair Woodson, Chair Johanson, and Members of the Committees:

The Democratic Party of Hawaii Labor Caucus **supports SB 1368**, relating to collective bargaining.

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 workers’ 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 Democratic Party of Hawaii Labor Caucus asks your committee to **support** this bill.



## HOUSE BILL 919, RELATING TO COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

FEBRUARY 12, 2019 · HOUSE EDUCATION AND  
LABOR COMMITTEES · CHAIRS REP. JUSTIN H.  
WOODSON AND REP. AARON LING JOHANSON

**POSITION:** Support.

**RATIONALE:** The Democratic Party of Hawai'i Education Caucus supports HB 919, relating to collective bargaining, which establishes a collective bargaining unit for graduate student assistants employed by the University of Hawaii.

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 DPH Education Caucus 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 2019, that amount carries over \$6,000 less purchasing power than it did fourteen years ago *before* adjusting for Hawai'i's high cost of living. Even for graduate 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.



AMERICANS FOR DEMOCRATIC ACTION

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Feb. 11 , 2019

TO: Honorable Chairs Woodson & Johanson & LHE/LAB Committee Members

RE: HB 919 Relating to Collective Bargaining

Support for hearing on Feb. 12

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 919 as 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 favorable consideration.

Sincerely,

John Bickel President





# Academic Labor United

www.academiclaborunited.org

## Testimony from Academic Labor United

Attention: House Committee on Lower and Higher Education  
Representative Justin H. Woodson, Chair for Lower and Higher Education  
Representative Amy A. Perruso, Vice Chair for Higher Education  
Representative Mark J. Hashem, Vice Chair for Lower Education

House Committee on Labor and Public Employment  
Representative Aaron Ling Johanson, Chair  
Representative Stacelynn K.M. Eli, Vice Chair

Re: **Strong Support for HB919 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.

HB919 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. **This bill does not seek or require any additional appropriations. It offers public employees the opportunity to negotiate a collective bargaining agreement.**

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. Other graduate assistants (GA) are working in administrative offices and running key facilities, performing the same duties as any administrative office worker.

**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” (Hawaii. Const. art XIII, sec. 2).** 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 the 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, sec. 2).



# Academic Labor United

www.academiclaborunited.org

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 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 made an annual pledge to turn over a new leaf and 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 regular 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.

In the Governor’s 2015 Veto Message, he stated the three flaws with the bill produced were that it 1) lacked a bargaining unit, 2) failed to identify the appropriate employer group, and 3) did not contain an impasse resolution mechanism. HB919 assigns graduate assistants to bargaining unit 15, identifies the employer group as the Governor, the President of the University of Hawai’i, and the Board of Regents in a manner consistent with bargaining units 7 and 8. Additionally HB919 includes an impasse resolution mechanism consistent with bargaining units 5 and 7. Revisions to the structure of the bill address all of the governors substantive concerns and are consistent with concepts of collective bargaining as practiced in Hawai’i.

The governor had additionally expressed concerns about the fiscal implications of workers gaining the ability to bargain for a better standard of living. He specifically mentioned the impact on the Employee Retirement System (ERS). **It is our understanding that that Graduate Assistants are already excluded from the ERS.**

**Graduate assistants are denied paid sick days, medical leave, and parental leave** (University of Hawaii, 2016). According to a recent campus climate survey **1 out of 6 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). **Sexual harassment at these levels is not the result of a few bad apples, but rather the result of extreme power imbalances between faculty, administrators, and graduate assistants.** Faculty and administrators not only have complete control over a graduate assistants’ current employment, but also control their academic work, and whether or not a graduate receives a positive recommendation from their supervisor plays a significant role in their future employment prospects as well.



# Academic Labor United

www.academiclaborunited.org

Graduate assistants start at \$18,300 for a 9 month contract at UH Manoa and \$14,382 for a 9 month contract at UH Hilo (University of Hawaii, 2016).

Graduate assistants lack recourse when faced with administrative decisions that jeopardize their well-being and safety in the workplace. They have no formal protection guaranteeing their right to free inquiry and expression. These are issues 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 that HB919 be passed.**

Respectfully submitted,

Benton Rodden  
Academic Labor United

#### 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](http://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 HAWAII STUDENT CAMPUS CLIMATE SURVEY ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE*. Omni Trak Group, 2018.



## Frequently Asked Questions at the Legislature

Aloha, we understand that while some in the legislature have had a chance to learn about this bill over the past 10 years, there are many new faces in today's legislature. In an effort to provide the legislature with the most information we can, we have compiled a list of questions and answers that have been frequently asked by legislators over the years. We hope you find this useful.

### **Q: Doesn't the Tuition Waiver provided by the university constitute an expensive benefit and bring the cost of your compensation package up to a living wage?**

A:

Not paying tuition is the industry standard, because universities need graduate work to run. What we do is valuable and necessary. This would be like asking medical residents (who, incidentally, have the right to unionize) to pay the hospital for the right to train there.

The IRS does not consider a tuition waiver that is included as part of a graduate assistantship to be a form of compensation and does not tax graduate assistant tuition waivers. This is unique to this class of workers. (See IRS Memorandum 20103901F for more information)

Tuition waivers vary wildly - for example, a student employed as a graduate assistant taking one thesis credit is receiving nothing, literally nothing, from the university but still pays the university for the credit (oftentimes through outside funding) and also thousands of dollars in fees.

With in-state tuition set at \$16,190 and out of state tuition set at \$37,670 the university cannot reasonably assert that tuition is based on cost of attendance. If management considers tuition waivers as a form of monetary compensation, then they are systemically compensating local students at significantly lower rates than students coming from elsewhere.

Graduate assistants actually bring in more money for the university, through grants (which the university skims off) and through output such as teaching, publications, technology transfers, discoveries, etc. For example, the university skims off 41-55% of the grants that researchers bring in from outside grants as an "overhead fee".

Tuition waivers, at the encouragement of management, are often written into external grants sponsored. In these cases, the university see a **revenue increase** resulting from tuition waivers.

The logic behind this argument is flawed. It assumes that tuition waivers are lost revenue and that eliminating tuition waivers would increase revenue. With compensation and funding concerns being a significant factor when prospective graduate students consider where to enroll, we argue that removing tuition waivers would not result in more revenue, but rather a steep decrease in enrollment and retention.





**Graduate Assistants are only here for a short time. Should people who leave their jobs after a short duration be subject to collective bargaining?**

A: The median length of time for PhD completion is 8 years. Across all types of work outside of higher education, the median length of time any employee has been employed at their workplace is 4.6 years according to data available from the Bureau of Labor and Statistics. Moreover, the length of employment obviously should not be what determines if a worker is deserving of basic rights like unionization and collective bargaining.

**Q: Most Graduate Assistants aren't local and won't be here forever, so why should we care?**

A: 60% of graduate students at UH are from in-state.

**Q: Do Graduate Assistants actually provide value to the university? Isn't this just a way to provide a little help to people while they study?**

A: Undergraduates typically perceive graduate student instructors as more approachable than faculty, better in touch with the academic demands placed on students and more accessible both online and in person (Muzaka 2009).

Undergraduates report that learning from graduate instructors is easier than from faculty, due to the graduate students' interpersonal skills and relatability (Muzaka 2009).

"At Clemson University, for example, 40% of named inventors on patents issued to the university were graduate students." - can we find similar stats for UH?

50% of published papers rely on graduate student data / 30% of published papers have graduate students as first authors - citation needed

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR



RODERICK K. BECKER  
DIRECTOR

ROBERT YU  
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)

**TESTIMONY BY RODERICK K. BECKER  
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE  
TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEES ON LOWER AND HIGHER EDUCATION  
AND LABOR AND PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT**

**ON  
HOUSE BILL NO. 919**

**February 12, 2019  
2:10 p.m.  
Room 309**

**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 has concerns with this measure. The cost implications of allowing graduate student assistants to collectively bargain are a 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.





KAMEHAMEHA SCHOOLS  
FACULTY ASSOCIATION

**LATE**

11 February 2019

House Committee on Lower and Higher Education

Chair: Rep. Justin H. Woodson

Vice Chair: Rep. Mark J. Hashem

Vice Chair: Rep. Amy A. Perruso

House Committee on Labor and Public Employment

Chair: Rep. Aaron Ling Johanson

Vice Chair: Rep. Stacelynn K.M. Eli

I would first like to mahalo the members of the various committees present in the room, from Representatives Woodson, Hashem, and Perruso from the House Committee on Lower and Higher Education, and Representatives Johanson and Eli from the House Committee on Labor and Public Employment. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. As the President of the Kamehameha Schools Faculty Association, I write in strong support of HB919 and the unionization of graduate assistants in the University of Hawaii.

As a former undergraduate student and graduate assistant at the University of Hawaii at Mānoa, I have experienced firsthand the impact of graduate assistant labor. Graduate assistants are generally at the forefront of teaching numerous 100 and 200 level courses that are essential for students to advance in their studies and graduate on time. They not only provide instructional services for undergraduate students but also mentoring services as well. Graduate research assistants are the linchpin of many labs, conducting key research that contributes to bringing in grant monies that are critical to the long-term functioning of various university departments.

To be frank, the university relies on graduate labor to run; however, graduate assistants are not fairly compensated. For example, the English 100 Mentoring Program that I was a part of as a graduate assistant at the University of Hawaii at Mānoa was tasked with not only sharing the duties of teaching a freshman college composition class with a professor, but conferencing with students after class hours to assist them with everything from their coursework to their transition into the university community as freshmen. Although the projected workload was to be no more than 10 hours a week, I regularly worked over 25 hours a week providing services to my students. Some of my colleagues worked even longer hours than that while at the same time, assisting various professors in their research on English composition mentoring programs.

Although I appreciate the teaching experience and the relationships I forged with both the professors I worked under and the students I mentored, my total compensation package at the time during the 2012-2013 school year was a half-tuition waiver and approximately \$600/month, forcing me to balance my graduate assistantship, my coursework, and additional jobs teaching



KAMEHAMEHA SCHOOLS  
FACULTY ASSOCIATION

**LATE**

part time at a local high school and my service with the Hawaii Air National Guard, in order to make ends meet. My story is by no means unique not only in the University of Hawaii system, but in universities all around the nation, and it is a story that is still happening today.

In addition, although graduate assistants perform similar academic labor as professors, graduate assistants do not enjoy the same protections against potential capricious and arbitrary decisions and attacks from management through an appropriate grievance mechanism that professors enjoy through the University of Hawaii Professional Assembly. Clearly, graduate assistants belong in the same community of interest as professors, and as such, to deny graduate assistants the right to unionize would have the effect of creating a permanent underclass of exploited academic laborers and could make the University of Hawaii system a less attractive destination for budding scholars and graduate researchers.

Hawaii has led the way in breaking ground for labor unions. A recent study published by The Center for Economic Policy revealed that although union membership nation-wide is dropping, Hawaii is defying that national trend by leading the nation in union membership gains. Hawaii has a rich labor legacy since the sugar and pineapple plantation days and the Big 5, and clearly, the right of workers to freely associate is enshrined in the very history of our state. Graduate assistants create immense value for the University of Hawaii system, and their ability to collectively bargain and have a seat at the table is long overdue. I urge you to pass HB919.

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Abraham Yi'.

Abraham Yi  
President, Kamehameha Schools Faculty Association

**From:** Kathleen Tatem <noreply@jotform.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, February 8, 2019 7:48 PM  
**To:** academiclaborunited@gmail.com; LHEtestimony  
**Subject:** In Support of HB919



**Testimony in support of HB919**

Name	Kathleen Tatem
Position/Organization	Graduate Research Assistant
I am a graduate assistant:	Yes
Email	ktatem@hawaii.edu
Address	Street Address: 23 Kaiea Place City: Paia State / Province: HI Postal / Zip Code: 96779
Testimony Message	<p>House Committee on Lower and Higher Education Chair: Rep. Justin H. Woodson Vice Chair: Rep. Mark J. Hashem Vice Chair: Rep. Amy A. Perruso</p> <p>House Committee on Labor and Public Employment Chair: Rep. Aaron Ling Johanson Vice Chair: Rep. Stacelynn K.M. Eli</p> <p>Conference Room 309 Tuesday, February 12, 2019 at 2:10 pm</p> <p>Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. I write in strong support of HB919. HB919, if passed, will create a new bargaining unit for graduate assistants in Hawaii. Every undergraduate student is taught and mentored by a graduate teaching assistant; graduate research assistants advance scientific frontiers and make new discoveries; and graduate administrative assistants run key facilities and labs on campus. The university 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.</p> <p>Unfortunately, graduate assistants are poorly compensated, with wages that are far below a living</p>

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. To remedy these issues and more, what we are asking for are our basic human rights as workers - to be able to form a legally-recognized union.

It is important to emphasize that this is fundamentally about more than just compensation or grievances. This bill asks for no extra appropriations. It simply creates a pathway for graduate assistants in Hawaii to exercise their basic right to join a union.

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, including many of our peer and benchmark institutions. 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 has led the way in breaking ground for labor unions. For the cutting-edge research and instruction graduate assistants do, the ability to collectively bargain and have a seat at the table is essential and long overdue. I urge you to pass HB919.

In my time at UH I have experienced gender-based harassment and sexual harassment in my workplace, but received no due process from the Title IX Office. My story outraged Honolulu lawyers to the point that three of them have been helping me free of charge. A union would have been able to

pressure the university to give me due process, give me my rights to work in a safe environment, and uphold the law in a timely manner. Graduate workers are unlawfully abused and exploited, in part because the unionized faculty know that graduate assistants have no union and are vulnerable to abuse. The lawyers helping me applaud me for pursuing my legal rights. Most other women in my degree program left UH without their degrees that year, leaving me the only woman in my department pursuing a graduate degree in my field. I have a story that would make me sound like an 82-year-old woman who entered the workforce before civil rights laws were in place, but I am only 28. This is a disgrace largely because UH knows that it is easy to abuse graduate assistants, and that more often than not, those who are abused will leave rather than stand up for themselves and pursue their legal rights. Allow us to unionize so that I don't have to stand alone and so that a case like this never happens again. A union might have been able to support all the women who left without degrees; it would help me now. My HR representatives have been unresponsive to my questions about my rights under the Family and Medical Leave Act. A union would help me to know my rights and could pressure HR to give me an answer to my questions. The systematic effects of the lack of a union at UH has pervasive affects that will ripple for generations throughout our society.

Attending Hearing?	No
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You can [edit this submission](#) and [view all your submissions](#) easily.

**From:** Taylor Lewis <noreply@jotform.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 10, 2019 2:00 PM  
**To:** academiclaborunited@gmail.com; LHEtestimony  
**Subject:** In Support of HB919



**Testimony in support of HB919/SB1368**

Name	Taylor Lewis
I am a graduate assistant:	Yes
Email	tlewis24@hawaii.edu
Testimony Message	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. I write in strong support of this bill, which if passed, will create a new bargaining unit for graduate assistants in Hawai'i. Every undergraduate student is taught and mentored by a graduate teaching assistant; graduate research assistants advance scientific and social frontiers and make new discoveries; and graduate administrative assistants run key facilities and labs on campus. The university 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.</p> <p>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. To remedy these issues and more, what we are asking for are our basic human rights as workers - to be able to form a legally-recognized union.</p> <p>It is important to emphasize that this is fundamentally about more than just compensation or grievances. This bill asks for no extra appropriations. It simply creates a pathway for graduate assistants in Hawai'i to exercise their basic right to join a union.</p>

The University of Hawai'i will argue that they can amend and create policies and offices to address graduate assistant concerns. But the past has proven these efforts to be reactionary to legislative concerns and shallow. While they respectfully bring issues to the unions for professors and staff, graduate assistants must go through student organizations designed to work on other important concerns. As a result, the reputation of the university suffers both externally and internally. For all the headlines the university likes to promote about itself, you would be hard-pressed to find a graduate student that would have made the decision to come here had they known the conditions, or would encourage others to enroll. The only saving grace for the university is the local people who have built a strong community that can resist.

Hawai'i has led the way in breaking ground for labor unions. For the cutting-edge research and instruction graduate assistants do, the ability to collectively bargain and have a seat at the table is essential and long overdue. I strongly urge you to pass this bill.

Attending Hearing?	No
Optional	I permit ALU to use excerpts of my testimony on social media.

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## hashem2 - Michael

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**From:** Nate Hix <noreply@jotform.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 10, 2019 2:02 PM  
**To:** academiclaborunited@gmail.com; LHEtestimony  
**Subject:** In Support of HB919



### Testimony in support of HB919/SB1368

Name	Nate Hix
I am a graduate assistant:	No
Email	nate.hix@gmail.com
Testimony Message	Why should we deny any workers the right to collectively bargain?
Attending Hearing?	No
Optional	I permit ALU to use excerpts of my testimony on social media.

You can [edit this submission](#) and [view all your submissions](#) easily.



**From:** 'Iwakeli'i Tong <noreply@jotform.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, February 8, 2019 7:57 PM  
**To:** academiclaborunited@gmail.com; LHEtestimony  
**Subject:** In Support of HB919



Testimony in support of HB919

Name 'Iwakeli'i Tong  
Position/Organization Oceanography  
I am a graduate assistant: No  
Email iwakelii.t@gmail.com  
Testimony Message House Committee on Lower and Higher Education  
Chair: Rep. Justin H. Woodson  
Vice Chair: Rep. Mark J. Hashem  
Vice Chair: Rep. Amy A. Perruso

House Committee on Labor and Public Employment  
Chair: Rep. Aaron Ling Johanson  
Vice Chair: Rep. Stacelynn K.M. Eli

Conference Room 309  
Tuesday, February 12, 2019 at 2:10 pm

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. I write in strong support of HB919. HB919, if passed, will create a new bargaining unit for graduate assistants in Hawaii. Every undergraduate student is taught and mentored by a graduate teaching assistant; graduate research assistants advance scientific frontiers and make new discoveries; and graduate administrative assistants run key facilities and labs on campus. The university 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. To remedy these issues and more, what we are asking for are our basic human rights as workers - to be able to form a legally-recognized union.

It is important to emphasize that this is fundamentally about more than just compensation or grievances. This bill asks for no extra appropriations. It simply creates a pathway for graduate assistants in Hawaii to exercise their basic right to join a union.

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, including many of our peer and benchmark institutions. 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 has led the way in breaking ground for labor unions. For the cutting-edge research and instruction graduate assistants do, the ability to collectively bargain and have a seat at the table is essential and long overdue. I urge you to pass HB919.

Attending Hearing?

Yes

You can [edit this submission](#) and [view all your submissions](#) easily.

HB919

LHE Hearing 021219 210PM On-time

Relating to Collective Bargaining

The following **170** individuals have submitted testimony in support using the same form letter and position as Iwakeli'I Tong:

Kerry Long

Alex Miller

Ava Fedorov

Vânia Filipa Lima Fernandes

Foad Najafi

KH Ahammad Uz Zaman

Emily Costello

Airlia Shonkwiler

Ross Villiger

Daniel Wilkie

Cindy Aban

Aida Arik

Steven Heisey

Sean Forte

Amanda Silliman

HANNAH MOON

Hunter Heavilin

Taylor Stacy

Noam Altman-Kurosaki

David Stupplebeen

Leslie Lopez

Eric Dilley

Will Caron

Dylan Oates

Janet Graham Graham

Yuki Asahina

Nenita Cabanilla

Jamaica Osorio

Shreya Yadav

Thomas Smith

Amali Wedagedara

dayea shim  
Diliaur Tellei  
Tetsuya Idota  
Randy Ching  
Soksamphoas Im  
Sindhu Vasireddy  
Lucie Knor  
Timothy Zhu  
Tamara Swift\  
Kevin Landers  
Olivia Uchima  
Paumalu Cassiday  
Katherine Kazlauskas  
Mark Willingham  
Lenny Linsky  
Justin Jansen  
Brett Jones  
Md Samiul Atanu  
Sitara Palecanda  
Kimiko LaHaela Walter  
Tyler Greenhill  
Austen Conlon  
Miaochan Li  
Mireya Inga  
Ting-Tsen Yeh  
James McDonough  
Yeonhee Kim  
Hazel Hotchandani  
cassandra matsushige  
Liat Portner  
Scott Van De Verg  
Hannah Liebreich  
Otis Aisek  
Zachary Slater  
MICHAEL MIRANDA  
Presley Ah Mook Sang  
Kelly Klocker

Nora Pollard  
Souang Tellei  
Joy Enomoto  
Michael Hoban  
Justine Jumalon  
Kehau Lyons  
Randy Gonce  
Mykie Ozoa  
Nanea Lo  
Alexandra Balgos  
Ryan Jones  
Jacob Noa  
Kainoa Lee  
Bjarne Bartlett  
Paola Rodelas  
Dain Christensen  
Lisa Grandinetti  
Sebastian Mosur  
Andrew M Meyer Meyer  
Solange Saxby  
Harrison Togia  
Maria Diez Ortega  
Jason Ellinwood  
Mariam Doliashvil  
Egle Ortega  
leilani portillo  
Valentina Alvarez  
Megan McElligott  
Nicholas Groves  
Nicole Grove  
Nicholas Chagnon  
Bonnie Fox  
Raniele Reyes  
Jesse Black  
Megan Floyd  
Lynn Robinson-Onderko  
Kawehi Goto

Changwon Yang  
Rdiall Tellei  
Chelsie Counsell  
Ida Peric  
Nomi Carmona  
Brian Dawson  
Kamuella Napoleon  
Justin Keliipaakaua  
Jessica Perelman  
Kimberley Jones  
Axel Defngin  
Katrina Obleada  
Keola Diaz  
Brooke Bennett  
Nicole Woo  
Charlene Ongelungel  
Cody Anderson  
Smrity Ramavarapu  
Ludwig Mayerlen  
Sean Hildebrandt  
Kyle Kajihiro  
Philios Uruman  
Katherine Achacoso  
Jessica Schaefer  
Virginia Tellei  
Maya Uemoto  
Benjamin Sadoski  
Alexandria Barkman  
Uahikea Maile  
Peter Greenhill  
Daniel Flores  
Kirsten Poff  
Maria Costantini  
Marisa McDonald  
Silvia Sulis  
Jasmine Samiere  
Muzamil Mohamed

Carolyn Hadfield  
Anton Nikolaev  
Sean Harrington  
Luke Campillo  
Keith Scott  
Petra Byl  
Claire Lewis  
Kyle Berney  
Mishka Sulva  
Emily Steward  
Maxwell Breen  
Emily Conklin  
Maxwell Bendes  
Kathryn Feloy  
Vania Filipa Lima Fernandes  
Sam Pilgrim  
Nathan Yuen  
Holly Chung  
Iana Weingrad  
Thomas Iwanicki  
Marcus Daniel Daniel  
Achyut Adhikari  
Lance Nunes  
Melissa Atkins  
Evan Barba  
Sarah Way  
Chris Freeman  
Amy Markel

**HB-919**

Submitted on: 2/8/2019 7:51:23 PM

Testimony for LHE on 2/12/2019 2:10:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Mike Golojuch	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support HB919 to allow UH graduate student assistants to officially organize, and be covered by collective bargaining. As a member of the Labor Caucus, Democratic Party of Hawaii, this is one of the measures that we strongly support. Please pass HB919.

Mike Golojuch, Sr.



**Chair Woodson**  
**Vice Chair Hashem**  
**Vice Chair Perruso**  
**House Committee on Lower & Higher Education**

**Chair Johanson**  
**Vice Chair Eli**  
**House Committee on Labor & Public Employment**

**Tuesday, February 12, 2019**  
**2:10 PM**

**TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF HB919 RELATING TO COLLECTIVE  
BARGAINING**

Aloha Chair Woodson, Vice Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Perruso, Members of the House Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Chair Johanson, Vice Chair Eli, Members of the House Committee on Labor & Public Employment,

My name is Jun Shin. I am a freshman at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, currently serving as the Environmental Justice Action Committee Chair for the Young Progressives Demanding Action (YPDA). I am testifying as an individual **in strong support of HB919 relating to collective bargaining**.

As a young person who has decided to expand my involvement in the legislative process and a Freshman Ethnic Studies major at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, this has remained a very important issue to me since 2018 when I first learned about it. I have seen amazing energy from graduate students who have continued to step up, organize, have meetings, and tell the broader community why graduate student unionization is important.

They have honestly been inspirational. In a time of cynicism and apathy, graduate students who are working hard to unionize have broken this mold, by going the distance to seek to improve their conditions and unionize, through both outside and inside of our political process. I also have to add that Graduate student assistants are really passionate about the fields of study they are in, as exemplified by the fact that they are seeking higher education in these subjects, they are dedicated in the work they do. I know this personally due to several of my instructors during my three semesters at the university being graduate students. They have given me new perspectives, new insights on issues, history, literature, etc that I have taken with me in both life and the advocacy work that I do and have frankly been some of my favorite instructors. So I have a personal stake in seeing graduate students have the ability to collectively bargain.

Even beyond personal feelings, graduate students are workers. Just like musicians, hotel workers, construction workers, and the many fields that are represented by unions, graduate students are workers who should not be denied their human rights. Article 23, Section 4 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, a document that the United States took part in creating and ratifying lays this out very clearly,

“Everyone has the right to form and to join trade unions for the protections of his interests”. In terms of “interest”, it is really more than getting paid. The workers should be able to have a say in their workplace, how it’s run and have a venue to address and find solutions to issues that are very important to them and their success such as equal pay, sexual harassment, abuse of authority, and discrimination against non binary individuals.

As the backbone of our universities through instructing, administrative work, tutoring, and so much more in the line of work that shapes the futures of so many, I want to conclude with this. When graduate students succeed, Hawai‘i succeeds. **I urge you to pass HB919 out of your committees.**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify,

Jun Shin  
Environmental Justice Action Committee Chair  
Young Progressives Demanding Action (YPDA)  
1561 Kanunu St.  
Cell: 808-255-6663  
Email: junshinbusiness729@gmail.com

**HB-919**

Submitted on: 2/10/2019 9:24:52 PM

Testimony for LHE on 2/12/2019 2:10:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Justin Keliipaakaua	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. I write in strong support of this bill, which if passed, will create a new bargaining unit for graduate assistants in Hawaii. Every undergraduate student is taught and mentored by a graduate teaching assistant; graduate research assistants advance scientific frontiers and make new discoveries; and graduate administrative assistants run key facilities and labs on campus. The university 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. To remedy these issues and more, what we are asking for are our basic human rights as workers - to be able to form a legally-recognized union.

It is important to emphasize that this is fundamentally about more than just compensation or grievances. This bill asks for no extra appropriations. It simply creates a pathway for graduate assistants in Hawaii to exercise their basic right to join a union.

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, including many of our peer and benchmark institutions. 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 has led the way in breaking ground for labor unions. For the cutting-edge

research and instruction graduate assistants do, the ability to collectively bargain and have a seat at the table is essential and long overdue. I urge you to pass this bill.

**HB-919**

Submitted on: 2/11/2019 10:33:20 AM

Testimony for LHE on 2/12/2019 2:10:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Antya Miller	Individual	Support	No

Comments:



**From:** Carrie Bach <noreply@jotform.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 10, 2019 10:18 PM  
**To:** academiclaborunited@gmail.com; LHEtestimony  
**Subject:** In Support of HB919



**Testimony in support of HB919/SB1368**

Name	Carrie Bach
Position/Organization	PhD student
I am a graduate assistant:	No
Email	carriekb@hawaii.edu
Phone Number	(206) 5652425
Testimony Message	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. I write in strong support of this bill, which if passed, will create a new bargaining unit for graduate assistants in Hawaii. Every undergraduate student is taught and mentored by a graduate teaching assistant; graduate research assistants advance scientific frontiers and make new discoveries; and graduate administrative assistants run key facilities and labs on campus. The university 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.</p> <p>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. To remedy these issues and more, what we are asking for are our basic human rights as workers - to be able to form a legally-recognized union.</p> <p>Personally, I was a graduate assistant at UH Manoa for 3 years (2 as an MA and 1 as a PhD) before deciding that continuing to do so was unfeasible.</p>

For two of my three years as a graduate assistant, I was asked to illegally pay for substitute teachers under the table when attending conferences necessary for my degree. Because of this illegal substitute teacher policy, I was forced to lose an entire paycheck's worth of pay, which is quite significant when I was at the time expected to live on less than \$18,000 in a year in one of the most expensive places in the US. Without a union to support me, my efforts to address this illegal policy were largely covered up by my boss, and true resolution or compensation was never reached.

Because of the extreme difference between GA wages and the cost of living in Hawaii, I had to take on an extra job beyond my GAship. This impacted my ability to do my required academic work and led me to the decision this semester to not renew my position. I find it highly ironic that while the university recruited me with four years of guaranteed funding, I find that it makes better financial sense to reject their offer.

I highly considered not pursuing a PhD at UH Manoa because the state legislature has not allowed the students to exercise their right to unionize. I currently regret my decision to attend here, and will likely not finish my degree. The university's lack of support for students is a large part of that decision. The state government's lack of support is another large part.

The state government's decision on this issue last year was one of the key factor's in the way that I voted in the last election and was an issue I encouraged other voters to consider as well. It will continue to be a major issue to me until the legislature does the right thing and stops suppressing the right to unionize. I find it surprising and disappointing that a progressive state like Hawaii would choose to be anti-union.

It is important to emphasize that this is fundamentally about more than just compensation or grievances. This bill asks for no extra appropriations. It simply creates a pathway for graduate assistants in Hawaii to exercise their basic right to join a union.

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, including many of our peer and benchmark institutions. 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 has led the way in breaking ground for labor unions. For the cutting-edge research and instruction graduate assistants do, the ability to collectively bargain and have a seat at the table is essential and long overdue. I urge you to pass this bill.

Attending Hearing?	No
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**From:** Mireille Ellsworth <noreply@jotform.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 11, 2019 6:43 AM  
**To:** LHEtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in SUPPORT of HB 723, Relating to Education



**HB 723, Relating to Education**

Name	Mireille Ellsworth
Email	mireilleellsworth@yahoo.com
Subject	In SUPPORT of HB 723, Relating to Education
Sample testimony. Edit the text as much as you'd like, then click to submit.	Whole child education would expand access to arts, cultural, and Hawaiian curricula, ensuring that students are provided with a rich, place-based education that connects classroom content with real-world problem-solving. Our students with special needs and students living in poverty thrive with this kind of instructional design and methodology. This bill would empower teachers to use their expertise and knowledge of their particular students to design enriching learning experiences. It would also provide additional resources to implement these practices. Please support what is best for our keiki.  Mahalo, Mireille Ellsworth, English and Acting Teacher for 14 years, Waiakea High School
Attending Hearing?	No

You can [edit this submission](#) and [view all your submissions](#) easily.

**From:** Carolyn Hadfield <noreply@jotform.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 11, 2019 9:41 AM  
**To:** academiclaborunited@gmail.com; LHEtestimony  
**Subject:** In Support of HB919



**Testimony in support of HB919**

Name	Carolyn Hadfield
Position/Organization	Alumnus
I am a graduate assistant:	No
Email	carolina@lava.net
Address	Street Address: 1656 Kanalui Street City: Honolulu State / Province: HI Postal / Zip Code: 96816 Country: United States
Testimony Message	<p>House Committee on Lower and Higher Education Chair: Rep. Justin H. Woodson Vice Chair: Rep. Mark J. Hashem Vice Chair: Rep. Amy A. Perruso</p> <p>House Committee on Labor and Public Employment Chair: Rep. Aaron Ling Johanson Vice Chair: Rep. Stacelynn K.M. Eli</p> <p>Conference Room 309 Tuesday, February 12, 2019 at 2:10 pm</p> <p>I write in strong support of HB919 because, if passed, HB919 will create a new bargaining unit for graduate assistants in Hawaii.</p> <p>I am an alumnus and have worked closely with the University of Hawai'i, in many capacities, for more than 40 years. For decades I have witnessed the trend to employ graduate students to perform the teaching and research duties previously performed by tenured faculty. The graduate students receive meager wages with few benefits.</p> <p>I have worked with dozens of graduate students who have had to quit college or move from already-substandard housing because their compensation</p>

does not cover their most basic expenses. Many are teaching as many classes as fully-tenured faculty as they attempt pursue their graduate degree. It is not uncommon for graduate students to be assigned to teach classes that are then cancelled due to low attendance at the last minute - after they have spent days of uncompensated work preparing for the semester's classes.

At the same time, because of my daily contact with hundreds of undergraduate students, I know that many graduate students provide excellent instruction. As a bookseller providing texts for students, I often have the opportunity to ask students about their favorite professors and most stimulating classes, and have found that many students name a "teaching assistant." Yet these "assistants" (who plan class curricula, teach classes with little assistance from the department, and do not have any form of redress to pursue grievances when they are mistreated), are compensated poorly, do not have a "seat at the table" and have no power within the department or the university when they need assistance. As a result, I have personally known brilliant graduate students who have felt deep despair, have suffered severe mental breakdowns, and have had to abandon their dreams of a better career because they have no mechanism to pursue grievances.

HB919 is not a panacea. It will not, in itself, begin to address the inadequate compensation. Neither does it provide an immediate pathway to redress grievances. It simply provides graduate students with the basic right to join a union and seek a place at the table.

I urge you to pass HB919.

Carolyn A Hadfield

Attending Hearing?

No

Optional

I permit ALU to use excerpts of my testimony on social media.

You can [edit this submission](#) and [view all your submissions](#) easily.

**From:** Nathan Yuen <noreply@jotform.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 11, 2019 12:06 PM  
**To:** academiclaborunited@gmail.com; LHEtestimony  
**Subject:** In Support of HB919



**Testimony in support of HB919/SB1368**

Name	Nathan Yuen
Position/Organization	InSynergy Engineering
I am a graduate assistant:	No
Email	808nateyuen@gmail.com
Phone Number	(808) 2653283
Address	Street Address: 91-233 Hanapouli Cir #29T City: Ewa Beach State / Province: HI Postal / Zip Code: 96706
Testimony Message	<p>I strongly support HB919/SB1368 which creates a new bargaining unit for graduate assistants at the University of Hawaii.</p> <p>Graduate assistants are poorly compensated -- their wages far below a living wage and far below competitive standards of other universities. Graduate assistant compensation has not kept up with inflation, the cost of living, or rising productivity. More importantly, graduate assistants are vulnerable to arbitrary decisions and from management, including sexual harassment, without a proper mechanism for pursuing grievances. To remedy these issues and more, what we are asking for are our basic human rights as workers - to be able to form a legally-recognized union.</p> <p>Undergraduate students are taught and mentored by a graduate teaching assistant. Others work as research assistants who advance scientific frontiers and make new discoveries. Graduate administrative assistants are important to running key facilities and labs on campus. The university 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.</p>

This bill creates a pathway for graduate assistants in Hawaii to exercise their basic right to join a union. In 2016, the National Labor Relations Board reversed a 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, including many of our peer and benchmark institutions. 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 has led the way in breaking ground for labor unions. For the cutting-edge research and instruction graduate assistants do, the ability to collectively bargain and have a seat at the table is essential and long overdue. I urge you to pass this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Attending Hearing?	No
Optional	I permit ALU to use excerpts of my testimony on social media.

You can [edit this submission](#) and [view all your submissions](#) easily.

**From:** Marcus Daniel Daniel <noreply@jotform.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 11, 2019 12:31 PM  
**To:** academiclaborunited@gmail.com; LHEtestimony  
**Subject:** In Support of HB919



**Testimony in support of HB919/SB1368**

Name	Marcus Daniel Daniel
Position/Organization	Professor UH Manoa
I am a graduate assistant:	No
Email	marcusdaniel62@gmail.com
Phone Number	(808) 383-7778
Address	Street Address: 3782 Anuheha St City: Honolulu State / Province: HI Postal / Zip Code: 96816
Testimony Message	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.</p> <p>I fully endorse the statement below produced by advocates of a bill to permit graduate students to collectively organize. But I want to add a further comment of my own. As an American historian, we should all remember the debt we owe collectively to labor organizing efforts in the past. The graduate students who are campaigning for a union at UH, stand in the very best traditions of a labor movement that literally built modern America, and provided its people with the opportunities and protections - from work safety to an 8 hour day, from higher pay to pensions and unemployment compensation, from social security to the GI Bill - that they enjoy right up to the present day. Nowhere was this more true than in Hawaii, where labor unions helped end the exploitative conditions of a plantation economy, and the oligarchic character of Hawaiian politics. The erosion of union membership in the past generation or so has put much of this legacy at risk, and the signs of this decay are all around us in Trump's America. By organizing, these students are not only doing their best to protect the future of public higher education in Hawaii for all of us, they are doing their best to rebuild the American labor movement at a critical</p>

moment in our history. They are demonstrating in their ideas and actions what is often discussed in the corridors of power and the halls of the academy but rarely enacted: true civic engagement and a commitment to the public good. They are already teaching us all a lesson, and I hope you will recognize their inspiring contribution, and give them every means of support and assistance that you can in realizing their right to organize.

Every undergraduate student is taught and mentored by a graduate teaching assistant; graduate research assistants advance scientific frontiers and make new discoveries; and graduate administrative assistants run key facilities and labs on campus. The university 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. To remedy these issues and more, what we are asking for are our basic human rights as workers - to be able to form a legally-recognized union.

It is important to emphasize that this is fundamentally about more than just compensation or grievances. This bill asks for no extra appropriations. It simply creates a pathway for graduate assistants in Hawaii to exercise their basic right to join a union.

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, including



many of our peer and benchmark institutions. 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 has led the way in breaking ground for labor unions. For the cutting-edge research and instruction graduate assistants do, the ability to collectively bargain and have a seat at the table is essential and long overdue. I urge you to pass this bill.

Attending Hearing?	No
Optional	I permit ALU to use excerpts of my testimony on social media.

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**HB-919**

Submitted on: 2/11/2019 10:56:07 AM

Testimony for LHE on 2/12/2019 2:10:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Michelle Kerr	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I oppose collective bargaining for any group in the State. Collective bargaining has resulted in billions in unfunded liabilities for all the counties & the State and we should not be adding to that burden.

Graduate student assistants are temporary positions and should not be subject to collective bargaining. A graduate assistant is a person who serves in a support role (assistantship) at a university, usually while completing post-graduate education.

I strongly oppose HB919

**HB-919**

Submitted on: 2/11/2019 8:12:11 AM

Testimony for LHE on 2/12/2019 2:10:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Dr Marion Ceruti	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

As a former graduate student assistant, I oppose HB919.

To establish a collective-bargaining unit for graduate student assistants employed by the University of Hawai'i is a foolish idea that will hurt those it purports to help. It will increase the cost of higher education and decrease the availability of funding opportunities for students.

Graduate student assistantships are temporary positions and should not be subject to collective bargaining. A graduate assistant serves in a support role (assistantship) at a university, usually while completing post-graduate education. This bill will increase the cost of hiring an assistant to the point where it will decrease the number of assistantships available and keep many qualified students out of graduate school.

**HB-919**

Submitted on: 2/10/2019 8:13:10 PM

Testimony for LHE on 2/12/2019 2:10:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Bianca Mintz	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I was a graduate student at the University of Hawaii at Manoa from 2015 through 2017 and I am completely opposed to establishing collective bargaining power for graduate students. Being a graduate student is the easiest job I have ever had (and I have worked many jobs in my life). Graduate students work as an assistant to a professor, often this comes with free tuition, and a living stipend. The value of tuition plus the stipend together means that graduate students are earning well above minimum wage. In addition, the hours are often flexible (with set hours only being during class time when the professor may require assistance in the classroom) and are often less than 20 hours a week. This leaves plenty of time to work on a thesis or graduate degree work, with time to spare. In fact graduate students have plenty of time to earn additional money (if needed) with another part time job. I worked another job (20 hours per week) while I was a graduate student and I still finished my master's degree a few months short of the expected 2 years. All of the graduate students I worked with rolled into work around 10 or 11am after a long night of drinking. Lunch breaks (often also spent drinking) could last as long as two hours. Most graduate students would complain about working until 6pm but when you start your work day at 11am and take a 2 hour lunch break you still are not working a full 8 hours by staying until 6pm. Many graduate students would leave work at 3pm. Some never came back from lunch. Being a graduate student is a great gig and the graduate students today are just trying to find more ways to get the state to pay them to slack off.

**HB-919**

Submitted on: 2/11/2019 2:06:12 PM

Testimony for LHE on 2/12/2019 2:10:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Melodie Aduja	O`ahu County Committee on Legislative Priorities of the Democratic Party of Hawai`i	Support	No

Comments:

**LATE**

**HB-919**

Submitted on: 2/11/2019 3:59:34 PM

Testimony for LHE on 2/12/2019 2:10:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Jeremy Young	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I myself am currently a graduate student at the University of Hawaii. While I agree that it is difficult to get by on the typical GA salary given here, I do not think unionizing is the answer. I strongly oppose this bill.

I do not believe that colleges or departments are underpaying their GAs and TAs maliciously. We get tuition waivers, and medical insurance in addition to our stipends. I believe our pay and benefits are on par with other Universities nationwide-- it is just the cost of living in Hawaii is much higher than the mainland. Also as a counter point, you can look at the average salary for a lecturer (teaches a class but is not a professor); it is considerably less than a GA makes.

I do not feel like we are being taken advantage of. Sure we do a lot of work, and it is difficult, but that is what graduate school is supposed to be. I think the source of the problem, is that there is a lack of funding in general, because of this, our pay cannot be increased. Unionizing would only add additional bureaucracy and more fees for graduate students to deal with. We are already busy working on our research and trying to graduate.

Finding a way to increase funds for the University over all I think is what is needed. We cannot create money out of nowhere. Alternatively, we can look for ways to reduce the cost of living in Hawaii for everyone.

**From:** Kirsten Moy <noreply@jotform.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 11, 2019 2:22 PM  
**To:** academiclaborunited@gmail.com; LHEtestimony  
**Subject:** In Support of HB919



**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed



**Testimony in support of HB919/SB1368**

Name	Kirsten Moy
I am a graduate assistant:	Yes
Email	kmoy@hawaii.edu
Phone Number	(919) 9281851
Address	Postal / Zip Code: 96744 Country: United States
Testimony Message	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. I write in strong support of this bill, which if passed, will create a new bargaining unit for graduate assistants in Hawaii. Every undergraduate student is taught and mentored by a graduate teaching assistant; graduate research assistants advance scientific frontiers and make new discoveries; and graduate administrative assistants run key facilities and labs on campus. The university 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.</p> <p>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. To remedy these issues and more, what we are asking for are our basic human rights as workers - to be able to form a legally-recognized union.</p>

It is important to emphasize that this is fundamentally about more than just compensation or grievances. This bill asks for no extra appropriations. It simply creates a pathway for graduate assistants in Hawaii to exercise their basic right to join a union.

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, including many of our peer and benchmark institutions. 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 has led the way in breaking ground for labor unions. For the cutting-edge research and instruction graduate assistants do, the ability to collectively bargain and have a seat at the table is essential and long overdue. I urge you to pass this bill.

Attending Hearing?	No
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**From:** Noelani Goodyear-Ka'ōpua <noreply@jotform.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 11, 2019 2:53 PM  
**To:** academiclaborunited@gmail.com; LHEtestimony  
**Subject:** In Support of HB919



**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed



**Testimony in support of HB919/SB1368**

Name	Noelani Goodyear-Ka'ōpua
Position/Organization	Associate Professor
I am a graduate assistant:	No
Email	noegoodyearkaopua@gmail.com
Phone Number	(808) 221-4220
Address	Postal / Zip Code: 96816
Testimony Message	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. I write in strong support of this bill, which if passed, will create a new bargaining unit for graduate assistants in Hawaii. I am a professor who works closely with many graduate students who juggle their own studies with teaching at the University, and I see firsthand how much the university relies on their labor.</p> <p>Almost every undergraduate student at UH is taught and mentored by a graduate teaching assistant at one time or another. Sometimes undergraduates at UHM have more classes with graduate student instructors and lecturers than they do with tenured professors. Graduate research assistants advance scientific frontiers and make new discoveries. Graduate administrative assistants run key facilities, programs and labs on campus. The university 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.</p> <p>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</p>

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. To remedy these issues and more, what we are asking for are our basic human rights as workers - to be able to form a legally-recognized union.

It is important to emphasize that this is fundamentally about more than just compensation or grievances. This bill asks for no extra appropriations. It simply creates a pathway for graduate assistants in Hawaii to exercise their basic right to join a union.

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, including many of our peer and benchmark institutions. 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 has led the way in breaking ground for labor unions. For the cutting-edge research and instruction graduate assistants do, the ability to collectively bargain and have a seat at the table is essential and long overdue. I urge you to pass this bill.

Attending Hearing?

No

Optional

I permit ALU to use excerpts of my testimony on social media.

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**From:** Heidi Needham <noreply@jotform.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 11, 2019 3:13 PM  
**To:** academiclaborunited@gmail.com; LHEtestimony  
**Subject:** In Support of HB919



**Testimony in support of HB919/SB1368**

Name	Heidi Needham
Position/Organization	GA/Geography
I am a graduate assistant:	No
Email	hneedham@hawaii.edu
Phone Number	(808) 2659824
Address	Postal / Zip Code: 96795 Country: United States
Testimony Message	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. I write in strong support of this bill, which if passed, will create a new bargaining unit for graduate assistants in Hawaii.</p> <p>I am currently a masters student who has held 2 different GA's while a graduate student. I am now working full time while completing the final semester of my degree. Throughout my graduate experience each undergraduate student is taught and mentored by a graduate teaching assistant; graduate research assistants advance scientific frontiers and make new discoveries; and graduate administrative assistants run key facilities and labs on campus. The university 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.</p> <p>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 often non-traditional students, completing their education while taking care of family responsibilities. This is especially true in my case, as</p>

graduate student I have also been raising 3 children in 3 different schools. I was also a live-in caregiver for my elderly in laws who both had advance dementia and were unable to afford out-of-home medical care. Despite these external hardships, I am an extremely hard and responsible worker for the university who maintained a GAship and a 3.8 gpa (or above) throughout my graduate studies. As a earlier career climate scientist I worked on a groundbreaking project in partnership with the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR) to create high resolution climate data sets for the State of Hawaii. Once complete the products of my research will be used to generate high resolution downscale climate predictions for the state. Government, public, and private agencies will then utilized the climate predictions to make informed decisions on climate adaptation actions for the state. Decisions that are directly tied to a graduate students research.

It is important to emphasize that this is fundamentally about more than just compensation or grievances. This bill asks for no extra appropriations. It simply creates a pathway for graduate assistants in Hawaii to exercise their basic right to join a union.

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, including many of our peer and benchmark institutions. 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 has led the way in breaking ground for labor unions. For the cutting-edge research and instruction graduate assistants do, the ability to collectively bargain and have a seat at the table is

essential and long overdue. I urge you to pass this bill.

Attending Hearing?

No

Optional

I permit ALU to use excerpts of my testimony on social media.

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**From:** Will Caron <noreply@jotform.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 11, 2019 3:34 PM  
**To:** academiclaborunited@gmail.com; LHEtestimony  
**Subject:** In Support of HB919



**Testimony in support of HB919/SB1368**

Name	Will Caron
Position/Organization	Alumni, UH Manoa
I am a graduate assistant:	No
Email	willcaronforhawaii@gmail.com
Phone Number	(808) 3874920
Address	Postal / Zip Code: 2054 9th Ave., Honolulu, HI 96816

**Testimony Message**

I strongly support this bill which, if passed, will create a new bargaining unit for graduate assistants in Hawaii. There can be absolutely no doubt that graduate students provide invaluable labor to the University. They mentor undergraduate students; graduate research assistants advance scientific frontiers and make new discoveries; and graduate administrative assistants run key facilities and labs on campus. The university relies on graduate labor to function. To deny them a basic labor right like the ability to collectively bargain for benefits and protect themselves from exploitation—which routinely occurs at the University of Hawaii—is a horrible crime and the UH administration should be ashamed of its stance in opposition. Graduate assistants deserve a seat at the table when decisions are made that affect their lives, those of their students, and the broader community.

This is about more than compensation or grievances. This bill asks for no extra appropriations. It simply creates a pathway for graduate assistants in Hawaii to exercise their basic right to join a union.

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, including many of our peer and benchmark institutions. 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 has led the way in breaking ground for labor unions. For the cutting-edge research and instruction graduate assistants do, the ability to collectively bargain and have a seat at the table is essential and long overdue. I urge you to pass this bill.

Attending Hearing?	No
Optional	I permit ALU to use excerpts of my testimony on social media.

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**From:** Kenneth Choi <noreply@jotform.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 11, 2019 3:38 PM  
**To:** academiclaborunited@gmail.com; LHEtestimony  
**Subject:** In Support of HB919



	<b>Testimony in support of HB919/SB1368</b>
Name	Kenneth Choi
I am a graduate assistant:	No
Email	ksfcho@gmail.com
Phone Number	(808) 7288547
Attending Hearing?	No

You can [edit this submission](#) and [view all your submissions](#) easily.



**From:** Tatiana Young <noreply@jotform.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 11, 2019 3:46 PM  
**To:** academiclaborunited@gmail.com; LHEtestimony  
**Subject:** In Support of HB919



**Testimony in support of HB919/SB1368**

Name	Tatiana Young
Position/Organization	Lecturer
I am a graduate assistant:	No
Email	youngtk@hawaii.edu
Phone Number	(206) 2261165
Address	Postal / Zip Code: 96792
Testimony Message	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. I write in strong support of this bill, which if passed, will create a new bargaining unit for graduate assistants in Hawaii. Every undergraduate student is taught and mentored by a graduate teaching assistant; graduate research assistants advance scientific frontiers and make new discoveries; and graduate administrative assistants run key facilities and labs on campus. The university 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.</p> <p>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. To remedy these issues and more, what we are asking for are our basic human rights as workers - to be able to form a legally-recognized union.</p> <p>It is important to emphasize that this is fundamentally about more than just compensation</p>

or grievances. This bill asks for no extra appropriations. It simply creates a pathway for graduate assistants in Hawaii to exercise their basic right to join a union.

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, including many of our peer and benchmark institutions. 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 has led the way in breaking ground for labor unions. For the cutting-edge research and instruction graduate assistants do, the ability to collectively bargain and have a seat at the table is essential and long overdue. I urge you to pass this bill.

Attending Hearing?	No
Optional	I permit ALU to use excerpts of my testimony on social media.

You can [edit this submission](#) and [view all your submissions](#) easily.

**From:** Jacob Henry <noreply@jotform.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 11, 2019 3:52 PM  
**To:** academiclaborunited@gmail.com; LHEtestimony  
**Subject:** In Support of HB919



**Testimony in support of HB919/SB1368**

Name	Jacob Henry
Position/Organization	Teaching Assistant/University of Hawaii at Manoa
I am a graduate assistant:	Yes
Email	jacoblh@hawaii.edu
Phone Number	(331) 6420482
Address	Postal / Zip Code: 96816
Testimony Message	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. I write in strong support of this bill, which if passed, will create a new bargaining unit for graduate assistants in Hawaii. Every undergraduate student is taught and mentored by a graduate teaching assistant; graduate research assistants advance scientific frontiers and make new discoveries; and graduate administrative assistants run key facilities and labs on campus. The university 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.</p> <p>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. To remedy these issues and more, what we are asking for are our basic human rights as workers - to be able to form a legally-recognized union.</p> <p>It is important to emphasize that this is fundamentally about more than just compensation</p>

or grievances. This bill asks for no extra appropriations. It simply creates a pathway for graduate assistants in Hawaii to exercise their basic right to join a union.

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, including many of our peer and benchmark institutions. 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 has led the way in breaking ground for labor unions. For the cutting-edge research and instruction graduate assistants do, the ability to collectively bargain and have a seat at the table is essential and long overdue. I urge you to pass this bill.

Attending Hearing?

No

You can [edit this submission](#) and [view all your submissions](#) easily.

**From:** Noah Simon <noreply@jotform.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 11, 2019 4:14 PM  
**To:** academiclaborunited@gmail.com; LHEtestimony  
**Subject:** In Support of HB919



**Testimony in support of HB919/SB1368**

Name	Noah Simon
I am a graduate assistant:	No
Email	noahms@hawaii.edu
Phone Number	(808) 2050635
Address	Postal / Zip Code: 96822 Country: United States
Testimony Message	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. I write in strong support of this bill, which if passed, will create a new bargaining unit for graduate assistants in Hawaii. Every undergraduate student is taught and mentored by a graduate teaching assistant; graduate research assistants advance scientific frontiers and make new discoveries; and graduate administrative assistants run key facilities and labs on campus. The university 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.</p> <p>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. To remedy these issues and more, what we are asking for are our basic human rights as workers - to be able to form a legally-recognized union.</p> <p>It is important to emphasize that this is fundamentally about more than just compensation</p>

or grievances. This bill asks for no extra appropriations. It simply creates a pathway for graduate assistants in Hawaii to exercise their basic right to join a union.

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, including many of our peer and benchmark institutions. 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 has led the way in breaking ground for labor unions. For the cutting-edge research and instruction graduate assistants do, the ability to collectively bargain and have a seat at the table is essential and long overdue. I urge you to pass this bill.

Attending Hearing?	No
Optional	I permit ALU to use excerpts of my testimony on social media.

You can [edit this submission](#) and [view all your submissions](#) easily.

**From:** Banyar Aung <noreply@jotform.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 11, 2019 4:17 PM  
**To:** academiclaborunited@gmail.com; LHEtestimony  
**Subject:** In Support of HB919



**Testimony in support of HB919/SB1368**

Name	Banyar Aung
Position/Organization	Graduate Research Assistant/UH Mānoa
I am a graduate assistant:	Yes
Email	banyara@hawaii.edu
Phone Number	(808) 2232147
Address	Postal / Zip Code: 1711 East-West Road, Hale Mānoa, Room 1211H
Testimony Message	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. I write in strong support of this bill, which if passed, will create a new bargaining unit for graduate assistants in Hawaii. Every undergraduate student is taught and mentored by a graduate teaching assistant; graduate research assistants advance scientific frontiers and make new discoveries; and graduate administrative assistants run key facilities and labs on campus. The university 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.</p> <p>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. To remedy these issues and more, what we are asking for are our basic human rights as workers - to be able to form a legally-recognized union.</p> <p>It is important to emphasize that this is</p>

fundamentally about more than just compensation or grievances. This bill asks for no extra appropriations. It simply creates a pathway for graduate assistants in Hawaii to exercise their basic right to join a union.

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, including many of our peer and benchmark institutions. 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 has led the way in breaking ground for labor unions. For the cutting-edge research and instruction graduate assistants do, the ability to collectively bargain and have a seat at the table is essential and long overdue. I urge you to pass this bill.

Attending Hearing?	No
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You can [edit this submission](#) and [view all your submissions](#) easily.



**From:** Ariana Huffmyer <noreply@jotform.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 11, 2019 4:25 PM  
**To:** academiclaborunited@gmail.com; LHEtestimony  
**Subject:** In Support of HB919

**LATE**



**Testimony in support of HB919**

Name	Ariana Huffmyer
Position/Organization	Hawaii Institute of Marine Biology
I am a graduate assistant:	Yes
Email	ashuff@hawaii.edu
Address	Street Address: 46-007 Lilipuna Road City: Kaneohe State / Province: Hawaii Postal / Zip Code: 96734 Country: United States
Testimony Message	<p>House Committee on Lower and Higher Education Chair: Rep. Justin H. Woodson Vice Chair: Rep. Mark J. Hashem Vice Chair: Rep. Amy A. Perruso</p> <p>House Committee on Labor and Public Employment Chair: Rep. Aaron Ling Johanson Vice Chair: Rep. Stacelynn K.M. Eli</p> <p>Conference Room 309 Tuesday, February 12, 2019 at 2:10 pm</p> <p>Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. I write in strong support of HB919. HB919, if passed, will create a new bargaining unit for graduate assistants in Hawaii. Every undergraduate student is taught and mentored by a graduate teaching assistant; graduate research assistants advance scientific frontiers and make new discoveries; and graduate administrative assistants run key facilities and labs on campus. The university 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.</p> <p>Unfortunately, graduate assistants are poorly</p>

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. To remedy these issues and more, what we are asking for are our basic human rights as workers - to be able to form a legally-recognized union.

It is important to emphasize that this is fundamentally about more than just compensation or grievances. This bill asks for no extra appropriations. It simply creates a pathway for graduate assistants in Hawaii to exercise their basic right to join a union.

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, including many of our peer and benchmark institutions. 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 has led the way in breaking ground for labor unions. For the cutting-edge research and instruction graduate assistants do, the ability to collectively bargain and have a seat at the table is essential and long overdue. I urge you to pass HB919.

Attending Hearing?

No

Optional

I permit ALU to use excerpts of my testimony on social media.



**From:** Ruben Campos <noreply@jotform.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 11, 2019 5:23 PM  
**To:** academiclaborunited@gmail.com; LHEtestimony  
**Subject:** In Support of HB919



**Testimony in support of HB919/SB1368**

Name	Ruben Campos
Position/Organization	Ethnic Studies Student Association
I am a graduate assistant:	Yes
Email	recampos@hawaii.edu
Phone Number	(949) 2872909
Address	Postal / Zip Code: 96816
Testimony Message	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. I write in strong support of this bill, which if passed, will create a new bargaining unit for graduate assistants in Hawaii. Every undergraduate student is taught and mentored by a graduate teaching assistant; graduate research assistants advance scientific frontiers and make new discoveries; and graduate administrative assistants run key facilities and labs on campus. The university 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.</p> <p>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. To remedy these issues and more, what we are asking for are our basic human rights as workers - to be able to form a legally-recognized union.</p> <p>It is important to emphasize that this is fundamentally about more than just compensation</p>

or grievances. This bill asks for no extra appropriations. It simply creates a pathway for graduate assistants in Hawaii to exercise their basic right to join a union.

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, including many of our peer and benchmark institutions. 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 has led the way in breaking ground for labor unions. For the cutting-edge research and instruction graduate assistants do, the ability to collectively bargain and have a seat at the table is essential and long overdue. I urge you to pass this bill.

Attending Hearing?

Yes

You can [edit this submission](#) and [view all your submissions](#) easily.

**From:** Dylan Dane <noreply@jotform.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 11, 2019 5:41 PM  
**To:** academiclaborunited@gmail.com; LHEtestimony  
**Subject:** In Support of HB919



**Testimony in support of HB919**

Name	Dylan Dane
I am a graduate assistant:	No
Email	dyIndane@yahoo.com
Address	Street Address: 41-859 Oluolu st City: Waimanalo State / Province: HI Postal / Zip Code: 96795
Testimony Message	<p>House Committee on Lower and Higher Education Chair: Rep. Justin H. Woodson Vice Chair: Rep. Mark J. Hashem Vice Chair: Rep. Amy A. Perruso</p> <p>House Committee on Labor and Public Employment Chair: Rep. Aaron Ling Johanson Vice Chair: Rep. Stacelynn K.M. Eli</p> <p>Conference Room 309 Tuesday, February 12, 2019 at 2:10 pm</p> <p>Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. I write in strong support of HB919. HB919, if passed, will create a new bargaining unit for graduate assistants in Hawaii. Every undergraduate student is taught and mentored by a graduate teaching assistant; graduate research assistants advance scientific frontiers and make new discoveries; and graduate administrative assistants run key facilities and labs on campus. The university 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.</p> <p>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</p>

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. To remedy these issues and more, what we are asking for are our basic human rights as workers - to be able to form a legally-recognized union.

It is important to emphasize that this is fundamentally about more than just compensation or grievances. This bill asks for no extra appropriations. It simply creates a pathway for graduate assistants in Hawaii to exercise their basic right to join a union.

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, including many of our peer and benchmark institutions. 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 has led the way in breaking ground for labor unions. For the cutting-edge research and instruction graduate assistants do, the ability to collectively bargain and have a seat at the table is essential and long overdue. I urge you to pass HB919.

Attending Hearing?

No

Optional

I permit ALU to use excerpts of my testimony on social media.

You can [edit this submission](#) and [view all your submissions](#) easily.

**From:** Erik Brush <noreply@jotform.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 11, 2019 5:49 PM  
**To:** academiclaborunited@gmail.com; LHEtestimony  
**Subject:** In Support of HB919



**Testimony in support of HB919/SB1368**

Name	Erik Brush
Position/Organization	Teaching Assistant, UH Mānoa Department of Biology
I am a graduate assistant:	Yes
Email	erikg.brush@gmail.com
Phone Number	(404) 4011267
Address	Postal / Zip Code: 96816
Testimony Message	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. I write in strong support of this bill, which if passed, will create a new bargaining unit for graduate assistants in Hawaii. Every undergraduate student is taught and mentored by a graduate teaching assistant; graduate research assistants advance scientific frontiers and make new discoveries; and graduate administrative assistants run key facilities and labs on campus. The university 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.</p> <p>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. To remedy these issues and more, what we are asking for are our basic human rights as workers - to be able to form a legally-recognized union.</p> <p>It is important to emphasize that this is</p>



fundamentally about more than just compensation or grievances. This bill asks for no extra appropriations. It simply creates a pathway for graduate assistants in Hawaii to exercise their basic right to join a union.

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, including many of our peer and benchmark institutions. 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 has led the way in breaking ground for labor unions. For the cutting-edge research and instruction graduate assistants do, the ability to collectively bargain and have a seat at the table is essential and long overdue. I urge you to pass this bill.

Attending Hearing?	No
Optional	I permit ALU to use excerpts of my testimony on social media.

You can [edit this submission](#) and [view all your submissions](#) easily.

**From:** Alyssa Derrickson <noreply@jotform.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 11, 2019 6:20 PM  
**To:** academiclaborunited@gmail.com; LHEtestimony  
**Subject:** In Support of HB919



**Testimony in support of HB919/SB1368**

Name	Alyssa Derrickson
I am a graduate assistant:	Yes
Email	kainanid@hawaii.edu
Phone Number	(808) 220-8852
Address	Postal / Zip Code: 580 Kawaiiloa Road
Testimony Message	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. I write in strong support of this bill, which if passed, will create a new bargaining unit for graduate assistants in Hawaii. Every undergraduate student is taught and mentored by a graduate teaching assistant; graduate research assistants advance scientific frontiers and make new discoveries; and graduate administrative assistants run key facilities and labs on campus. The university 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.</p> <p>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. To remedy these issues and more, what we are asking for are our basic human rights as workers - to be able to form a legally-recognized union.</p> <p>It is important to emphasize that this is fundamentally about more than just compensation or grievances. This bill asks for no extra</p>

appropriations. It simply creates a pathway for graduate assistants in Hawaii to exercise their basic right to join a union.

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, including many of our peer and benchmark institutions. 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 has led the way in breaking ground for labor unions. For the cutting-edge research and instruction graduate assistants do, the ability to collectively bargain and have a seat at the table is essential and long overdue. I urge you to pass this bill.

Attending Hearing?

No

Optional

I permit ALU to use excerpts of my testimony on social media.

You can [edit this submission](#) and [view all your submissions](#) easily.

**From:** Kristina Theam <noreply@jotform.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 11, 2019 6:28 PM  
**To:** academiclaborunited@gmail.com; LHEtestimony  
**Subject:** In Support of HB919



**Testimony in support of HB919/SB1368**

Name	Kristina Theam
Position/Organization	Porter Lab Undergraduate Researcher
I am a graduate assistant:	No
Email	kctheam@hawaii.edu
Phone Number	(562) 8222640
Address	Postal / Zip Code: 2579 Dole St., Honolulu, HI 96822

**Testimony Message**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. I write in strong support of this bill, which if passed, will create a new bargaining unit for graduate assistants in Hawaii. Every undergraduate student is taught and mentored by a graduate teaching assistant; graduate research assistants advance scientific frontiers and make new discoveries; and graduate administrative assistants run key facilities and labs on campus. The university 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. To remedy these issues and more, what we are asking for are our basic human rights as workers - to be able to form a legally-recognized union.

It is important to emphasize that this is fundamentally about more than just compensation

or grievances. This bill asks for no extra appropriations. It simply creates a pathway for graduate assistants in Hawaii to exercise their basic right to join a union.

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, including many of our peer and benchmark institutions. 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 has led the way in breaking ground for labor unions. For the cutting-edge research and instruction graduate assistants do, the ability to collectively bargain and have a seat at the table is essential and long overdue. I urge you to pass this bill.

Attending Hearing?	No
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You can [edit this submission](#) and [view all your submissions](#) easily.

**From:** Holly Arthur <noreply@jotform.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 11, 2019 6:32 PM  
**To:** academiclaborunited@gmail.com; LHEtestimony  
**Subject:** In Support of HB919



 <b>Testimony in support of HB919/SB1368</b>	
Name	Holly Arthur
Position/Organization	Registered Nurse
I am a graduate assistant:	No
Email	hollyarthur5@gmail.com
Phone Number	(808) 3588564
Address	Postal / Zip Code: 96816
Testimony Message	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. I write in strong support of this bill, which if passed, will create a new bargaining unit for graduate assistants in Hawaii. Every undergraduate student is taught and mentored by a graduate teaching assistant; graduate research assistants advance scientific frontiers and make new discoveries; and graduate administrative assistants run key facilities and labs on campus. The university 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.</p> <p>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. To remedy these issues and more, what we are asking for are our basic human rights as workers - to be able to form a legally-recognized union.</p> <p>It is important to emphasize that this is fundamentally about more than just compensation</p>

or grievances. This bill asks for no extra appropriations. It simply creates a pathway for graduate assistants in Hawaii to exercise their basic right to join a union.

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, including many of our peer and benchmark institutions. 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 has led the way in breaking ground for labor unions. For the cutting-edge research and instruction graduate assistants do, the ability to collectively bargain and have a seat at the table is essential and long overdue. I urge you to pass this bill.

Attending Hearing?

No

You can [edit this submission](#) and [view all your submissions](#) easily.

**From:** Mark Hixon <noreply@jotform.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 11, 2019 6:34 PM  
**To:** academiclaborunited@gmail.com; LHEtestimony  
**Subject:** In Support of HB919



**Testimony in support of HB919/SB1368**

Name	Mark Hixon
Position/Organization	UH professor
I am a graduate assistant:	No
Email	hixonm@hawaii.edu
Phone Number	(808) 9566427
Address	Postal / Zip Code: 96822

**Testimony Message** Aloha Hawai'i State Legislature:

I write in strong support of HB919/SB1368, which if passed, will create a new bargaining unit for graduate assistants in Hawai'i. Every undergraduate student is taught and mentored by a graduate teaching assistant, graduate research assistants advance scientific frontiers and make new discoveries, and graduate administrative assistants run key facilities and labs on campus. The university relies on graduate labor to operate. Graduate assistants deserve a seat at the table when decisions are made that affect their lives, those of their students, and the broader community. Indeed, they are the only public employees denied collective bargaining right.

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 not matched 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. To remedy these issues and more, graduate students are justifiably asking for our basic human rights as workers: to be able to form a legally-recognized union.



It is important to emphasize that this is fundamentally about more than just compensation or grievances. This bill asks for no extra appropriations. It simply creates a pathway for graduate assistants in Hawai'i to exercise their basic right to join a union.

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, including many of our peer and benchmark institutions. 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.


Hawai'i has led the way in breaking ground for labor unions. For the cutting-edge research and instruction graduate assistants do, the ability to collectively bargain and have a seat at the table is essential and long overdue. I urge you to pass this bill.

Attending Hearing?	No
Optional	I permit ALU to use excerpts of my testimony on social media.

You can [edit this submission](#) and [view all your submissions](#) easily.

**From:** Trina Bashem <noreply@jotform.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 11, 2019 7:19 PM  
**To:** academiclaborunited@gmail.com; LHEtestimony  
**Subject:** In Support of HB919



 <b>Testimony in support of HB919/SB1368</b>	
Name	Trina Bashem
Position/Organization	Student at Leeward Community Moku Campus
I am a graduate assistant:	No
Email	makanani9999@gmail.com
Phone Number	(562) 4803382
Address	Postal / Zip Code: 96706
Testimony Message	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. I write in strong support of this bill, which if passed, will create a new bargaining unit for graduate assistants in Hawaii. Every undergraduate student is taught and mentored by a graduate teaching assistant; graduate research assistants advance scientific frontiers and make new discoveries; and graduate administrative assistants run key facilities and labs on campus. The university 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.</p> <p>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. To remedy these issues and more, what we are asking for are our basic human rights as workers - to be able to form a legally-recognized union.</p> <p>It is important to emphasize that this is fundamentally about more than just compensation</p>

or grievances. This bill asks for no extra appropriations. It simply creates a pathway for graduate assistants in Hawaii to exercise their basic right to join a union.

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, including many of our peer and benchmark institutions. 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 has led the way in breaking ground for labor unions. For the cutting-edge research and instruction graduate assistants do, the ability to collectively bargain and have a seat at the table is essential and long overdue. I urge you to pass this bill.

Attending Hearing?	No
Optional	I permit ALU to use excerpts of my testimony on social media.

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**From:** Amanda Rothschild <noreply@jotform.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 11, 2019 7:49 PM  
**To:** academiclaborunited@gmail.com; LHEtestimony  
**Subject:** In Support of HB919



 <b>Testimony in support of HB919</b>	
Name	Amanda Rothschild
Position/Organization	UH Manoa
I am a graduate assistant:	Yes
Email	aroths@hawaii.edu
Address	Street Address: 1112 Second Ave Street Address Line 2: Apt B City: Honolulu State / Province: HI Postal / Zip Code: 96816 Country: United States
Testimony Message	<p>House Committee on Lower and Higher Education Chair: Rep. Justin H. Woodson Vice Chair: Rep. Mark J. Hashem Vice Chair: Rep. Amy A. Perruso</p> <p>House Committee on Labor and Public Employment Chair: Rep. Aaron Ling Johanson Vice Chair: Rep. Stacelynn K.M. Eli</p> <p>Conference Room 309 Tuesday, February 12, 2019 at 2:10 pm</p> <p>Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. I write in strong support of HB919, to include UH graduate assistants as a collective bargaining unit. In addition to the helpful background information you'll have received from other ALU member testimony, I wanted to share my own experience. For the last two years I've served as a graduate assistant at UH Manoa in the Urban and Regional Planning Department, working on the Hawaii Youth Services Directory. My work helps connect Hawaii's youth to needed services and also connect service providers with relevant partner organizations. Connecting underserved youth to the organizations and resources they need is important for their</p>

health and safety, and also helps fulfill the State's goal of preventing delinquency and reducing the incidence of recidivism for youth-at-risk. In short, the Youth Services Directory helps families thrive and helps the State save money on juvenile corrections. I say this to remind the legislature that UH graduate assistant research often provides direct and immediate benefits to the surrounding community.

It's an honor to do this work, but my ability to focus on it is hindered by the fact that I do not make enough money to pay for my basic necessities, even with a room in a shared home, carefully budgeting my groceries, getting all of my clothing either free or at thrift shops, etc. Graduate assistant wages at UH are low enough to qualify for food stamps, which help a bit, but it is still impossible to make ends meet without either an additional job or taking out more student loans. Having graduate students on welfare reflects poorly on the university, diverts focus on important research and service to the community, and costs the State money. This bill doesn't ask the legislature for more appropriations, just the opportunity to bargain fairly, as every other employee of the university has the right to do. Help us keep the University of Hawaii a competitive school that attracts great academic talent from within and from outside our beautiful state.

I thank you for your time and urge you to pass HB919.

Mahalo,  
Amanda Rothschild

Attending Hearing?	Yes
Optional	I permit ALU to use excerpts of my testimony on social media.

You can [edit this submission](#) and [view all your submissions](#) easily.

**From:** Anastasia Fiala-Watkins <noreply@jotform.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 11, 2019 9:00 PM  
**To:** academiclaborunited@gmail.com; LHEtestimony  
**Subject:** In Support of HB919



**Testimony in support of HB919/SB1368**

Name	Anastasia Fiala-Watkins
Position/Organization	GA for Theatre & Dance and ACM
I am a graduate assistant:	Yes
Email	alfw@hawaii.edu
Phone Number	(615) 4959080
Address	Postal / Zip Code: 96815
Testimony Message	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. I write in strong support of this bill, which if passed, will create a new bargaining unit for graduate assistants in Hawaii. Every undergraduate student is taught and mentored by a graduate teaching assistant; graduate research assistants advance scientific frontiers and make new discoveries; and graduate administrative assistants run key facilities and labs on campus. The university 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.</p> <p>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. To remedy these issues and more, what we are asking for are our basic human rights as workers - to be able to form a legally-recognized union.</p> <p>It is important to emphasize that this is fundamentally about more than just compensation</p>

or grievances. This bill asks for no extra appropriations. It simply creates a pathway for graduate assistants in Hawaii to exercise their basic right to join a union.

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, including many of our peer and benchmark institutions. 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 has led the way in breaking ground for labor unions. For the cutting-edge research and instruction graduate assistants do, the ability to collectively bargain and have a seat at the table is essential and long overdue. I urge you to pass this bill.

Attending Hearing?	No
Optional	I permit ALU to use excerpts of my testimony on social media.

You can [edit this submission](#) and [view all your submissions](#) easily.

**From:** Rosana Zenil-Ferguson <noreply@jotform.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 11, 2019 9:10 PM  
**To:** academiclaborunited@gmail.com; LHEtestimony  
**Subject:** In Support of HB919



 **Testimony in support of HB919/SB1368**

Name	Rosana Zenil-Ferguson
Position/Organization	Assistant Professor/University of Hawai'i Manoa
I am a graduate assistant:	No
Email	roszenil@hawaii.edu
Phone Number	(808) 956-4745
Testimony Message	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. I write in strong support of this bill, which if passed, will create a new bargaining unit for graduate assistants in Hawaii. Every undergraduate student is taught and mentored by a graduate teaching assistant; graduate research assistants advance scientific frontiers and make new discoveries; and graduate administrative assistants run key facilities and labs on campus. The university 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.</p> <p>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. To remedy these issues and more, what we are asking for are our basic human rights as workers - to be able to form a legally-recognized union.</p> <p>It is important to emphasize that this is fundamentally about more than just compensation or grievances. This bill asks for no extra</p>



appropriations. It simply creates a pathway for graduate assistants in Hawaii to exercise their basic right to join a union.

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, including many of our peer and benchmark institutions. 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 has led the way in breaking ground for labor unions. For the cutting-edge research and instruction graduate assistants do, the ability to collectively bargain and have a seat at the table is essential and long overdue. I urge you to pass this bill.

You can [edit this submission](#) and [view all your submissions](#) easily.

**From:** Maya Ward <noreply@jotform.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 11, 2019 9:16 PM  
**To:** academiclaborunited@gmail.com; LHEtestimony  
**Subject:** In Support of HB919



**Testimony in support of HB919**

Name	Maya Ward
Position/Organization	Graduate Researcher
I am a graduate assistant:	Yes
Email	mayalw@hawaii.edu
Testimony Message	<p>House Committee on Lower and Higher Education Chair: Rep. Justin H. Woodson Vice Chair: Rep. Mark J. Hashem Vice Chair: Rep. Amy A. Perruso</p> <p>House Committee on Labor and Public Employment Chair: Rep. Aaron Ling Johanson Vice Chair: Rep. Stacelynn K.M. Eli</p> <p>Conference Room 309 Tuesday, February 12, 2019 at 2:10 pm</p> <p>Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. I write in strong support of HB919. HB919, if passed, will create a new bargaining unit for graduate assistants in Hawaii. Every undergraduate student is taught and mentored by a graduate teaching assistant; graduate research assistants advance scientific frontiers and make new discoveries; and graduate administrative assistants run key facilities and labs on campus. The university 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.</p> <p>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</p>

and attacks from management, including sexual harassment, without a proper mechanism for pursuing grievances. To remedy these issues and more, what we are asking for are our basic human rights as workers - to be able to form a legally-recognized union.

It is important to emphasize that this is fundamentally about more than just compensation or grievances. This bill asks for no extra appropriations. It simply creates a pathway for graduate assistants in Hawaii to exercise their basic right to join a union.

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, including many of our peer and benchmark institutions. 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.

As a graduate student living in a state with one of the highest costs of living, I have two regular part-time jobs in addition to my school work and research, working an average of 30 hours on top of school. I also occasionally work a third job tutoring to make extra money as well. I was a master's student at Duke University in North Carolina, and had several friends in the PhD programs there as well. Their cost of living is a fraction of Hawaii, but their salary was still an average of \$10,000 higher--the average student got \$30,000 and was able to, with careful money management, place a downpayment on a house. That is just not feasible here. I would like to make my home in Hawaii, but cannot do so if I can barely afford my basic expenses every month. As a GA/TA in Hawaii, the "high" salaries are still barely over \$20,000. We provide at least 20 hours of work to the university, and yet are compensated as entry-level workers,

even when accounting for tuition reimbursements. We are graduate students, meaning all of us have AT LEAST four years of post-secondary education and work experience. We deserve to have a seat at the table. Many are trying to support families. If I, as a single woman, can barely afford my expenses, how are mothers supposed to support themselves and children?

Hawaii has led the way in breaking ground for labor unions. For the cutting-edge research and instruction graduate assistants do, the ability to collectively bargain and have a seat at the table is essential and long overdue. I urge you to pass HB919.

Attending Hearing?	No
Optional	I permit ALU to use excerpts of my testimony on social media.

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**From:** rebecca maria goldschmidt <noreply@jotform.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 11, 2019 10:39 PM  
**To:** academiclaborunited@gmail.com; LHEtestimony  
**Subject:** In Support of HB919



**Testimony in support of HB919**

Name	rebecca maria goldschmidt
Position/Organization	Graduate Student in Art/Art History UH Mānoa
I am a graduate assistant:	Yes
Email	rmgoldsc@hawaii.edu
Testimony Message	<p>House Committee on Lower and Higher Education Chair: Rep. Justin H. Woodson Vice Chair: Rep. Mark J. Hashem Vice Chair: Rep. Amy A. Perruso</p> <p>House Committee on Labor and Public Employment Chair: Rep. Aaron Ling Johanson Vice Chair: Rep. Stacelynn K.M. Eli</p> <p>Conference Room 309 Tuesday, February 12, 2019 at 2:10 pm</p> <p>Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. I write in strong support of HB919. HB919, if passed, will create a new bargaining unit for graduate assistants in Hawaii. Every undergraduate student is taught and mentored by a graduate teaching assistant; graduate research assistants advance scientific frontiers and make new discoveries; and graduate administrative assistants run key facilities and labs on campus. The university 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.</p> <p>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</p>

and attacks from management, including sexual harassment, without a proper mechanism for pursuing grievances. To remedy these issues and more, what we are asking for are our basic human rights as workers - to be able to form a legally-recognized union.

It is important to emphasize that this is fundamentally about more than just compensation or grievances. This bill asks for no extra appropriations. It simply creates a pathway for graduate assistants in Hawaii to exercise their basic right to join a union.

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, including many of our peer and benchmark institutions. 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 has led the way in breaking ground for labor unions. For the cutting-edge research and instruction graduate assistants do, the ability to collectively bargain and have a seat at the table is essential and long overdue. I urge you to pass HB919.

Attending Hearing?

No

You can [edit this submission](#) and [view all your submissions](#) easily.

**From:** Cameron Mahealani Ahia <noreply@jotform.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 11, 2019 11:06 PM  
**To:** academiclaborunited@gmail.com; LHEtestimony  
**Subject:** In Support of HB919



**Testimony in support of HB919/SB1368**

Name	Cameron Mahealani Ahia
Position/Organization	UH Manoa English PhD GA/Instructor
I am a graduate assistant:	Yes
Email	mahea9@hawaii.edu
Phone Number	(808) 3473383
Address	Postal / Zip Code: 96822 Country: United States
Testimony Message	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. I write in strong support of this bill, which if passed, will create a new bargaining unit for graduate assistants in Hawaii.</p> <p>I am a PhD student in the English Department at UH Manoa, and I specialize in Pacific Literatures. I am a Teaching Assistant responsible for teaching English 100 Composition, a course that all UH students are required to take. I also teach Pacific Indigenous literatures and Creative Writing Courses.</p> <p>As grad students, we carry a heavy load and without our labor, this university would not run well. My department is one of the few who requires their graduate instructors to teach 3 courses per year, usually 2 in the fall and one in the spring - for the same amount of money as other grad students who only teach one course per semester.</p> <p>Since we lack a grad union, most grad students are afraid to voice their concerns and risk losing their tuition wavers and stipends. Moreover, because of budget cuts, we no longer have a semester of shadowing to learn to be good instructors. Instead we have an intensive immersive week of training and immediately have our own classes to teach as first year PhD students. While teaching 2 classes, I'm expected to take a full load, attend conferences,</p>

and be active in my department and community.

Some statistics from last semester might help to show our value as teachers: out of 67 sections of Basic Composition and Intro Literature courses, 50 of those were taught by grad students. That's nearly 3/4 of the underdivision classes taught directly by us.

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. To remedy these issues and more, what we are asking for are our basic human rights as workers - to be able to form a legally-recognized union.

This past fall, we finally moved from step 7 to a step 8 rate at \$18,900 for teaching 3 classes a year. We are grateful to have 4 years of GA-ship but by the time we pay for our health insurance, tax withholdings, and parking passes, in addition to nearly \$500 in university fees, our monthly stipend is not nearly enough. Many of us require a second job to make ends meet. I, myself, freelance as a writer and also serve as editor on our UH literary magazine, The Hawai'i Review. As a graduate student instructor, I'm passionate about inspiring my students to think critically and become engaged members of our community. I'm only asking to exercise my right to collectively bargain for fair working conditions and wages.

It is important to emphasize that this is fundamentally about more than just compensation or grievances. This bill asks for no extra appropriations. It simply creates a pathway for graduate assistants in Hawaii to exercise their basic right to join a union.

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, including many of our peer and benchmark institutions. 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 has led the way in breaking ground for labor unions. For the cutting-edge research and instruction graduate assistants do, the ability to collectively bargain and have a seat at the table is essential and long overdue. I urge you to pass this bill.

Attending Hearing?	Yes
Optional	I permit ALU to use excerpts of my testimony on social media.

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**From:** Cody Lestelle <noreply@jotform.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 11, 2019 11:45 PM  
**To:** academiclaborunited@gmail.com; LHEtestimony  
**Subject:** In Support of HB919



**Testimony in support of HB919/SB1368**

Name	Cody Lestelle
Email	cslestelle@gmail.com
Phone Number	(425) 2445692
Testimony Message	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. I write in strong support of this bill, which if passed, will create a new bargaining unit for graduate assistants in Hawaii. Every undergraduate student is taught and mentored by a graduate teaching assistant; graduate research assistants advance scientific frontiers and make new discoveries; and graduate administrative assistants run key facilities and labs on campus. The university 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.</p> <p>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. To remedy these issues and more, what we are asking for are our basic human rights as workers - to be able to form a legally-recognized union.</p> <p>It is important to emphasize that this is fundamentally about more than just compensation or grievances. This bill asks for no extra appropriations. It simply creates a pathway for graduate assistants in Hawaii to exercise their basic right to join a union.</p>

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, including many of our peer and benchmark institutions. 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 has led the way in breaking ground for labor unions. For the cutting-edge research and instruction graduate assistants do, the ability to collectively bargain and have a seat at the table is essential and long overdue. I urge you to pass this bill.

Attending Hearing?	Yes
Optional	I permit ALU to use excerpts of my testimony on social media.

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**From:** Jake Ferguson <noreply@jotform.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 12, 2019 6:41 AM  
**To:** academiclaborunited@gmail.com; LHEtestimony  
**Subject:** In Support of HB919



**Testimony in support of HB919/SB1368**

Name	Jake Ferguson
Position/Organization	Assistant Professor at UH Manoa
I am a graduate assistant:	No
Email	jakeferg@hawaii.edu
Phone Number	(406) 5790723
Address	Country: United States

**Testimony Message**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. I write in strong support of this bill, which if passed, will create a new bargaining unit for graduate assistants in Hawaii. Every undergraduate student is taught and mentored by a graduate teaching assistant; graduate research assistants advance scientific frontiers and make new discoveries; and graduate administrative assistants run key facilities and labs on campus. The university 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. As a masters student in a non-unionized school, I saw students with broken bones that went into debt in order to get proper treatment, a student with severe mental health issues that weren't properly addressed, and many others who would go without treatment when sick. Many of the graduate students at UH will go on to serve in governmental positions on the islands and make important contributions to the quality of life in Hawai'i. It is up to us to ensure that we are taking care of these students and giving them the support they need to be successful.

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. To remedy these issues and more, what we are asking for are our basic human rights as workers - to be able to form a legally-recognized union.

It is important to emphasize that this is fundamentally about more than just compensation or grievances. This bill asks for no extra appropriations. It simply creates a pathway for graduate assistants in Hawaii to exercise their basic right to join a union.

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, including many of our peer and benchmark institutions. 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. As a former graduate student I am all too aware of the importance of having an organized voice.

Hawaii has led the way in breaking ground for labor unions. For the cutting-edge research and instruction graduate assistants do, the ability to collectively bargain and have a seat at the table is essential and long overdue. I urge you to pass this bill.

Attending Hearing?	No
Optional	I permit ALU to use excerpts of my testimony on social media.

You can [edit this submission](#) and [view all your submissions](#) easily.

**HB-919**

Submitted on: 2/11/2019 7:46:52 PM

Testimony for LHE on 2/12/2019 2:10:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha,

**LATE**

My name is Theresa Chen and I am a recent Master of Social Work graduate from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. I write in strong support of HB919, which if passed, will create a new bargaining unit for graduate assistants in Hawaii.

The work 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 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. 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. To remedy these issues and more, what we are asking for are our basic human rights as workers - to be able to form a legally-recognized union.

It is important to emphasize that this is fundamentally about more than just compensation or grievances. This bill asks for no extra appropriations. It simply creates a pathway for graduate assistants in Hawaii to exercise their basic right to join a union.

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, including many of our peer and benchmark institutions. 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 has led the way in breaking ground for labor unions. For the cutting-edge research and instruction graduate assistants do, the ability to collectively bargain and have a seat at the table is essential and long overdue. I urge you to pass HB919.

**HB-919**

Submitted on: 2/12/2019 5:43:01 AM

Testimony for LHE on 2/12/2019 2:10:00 PM

**LATE**

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Brett Kulbis	Honolulu County Republican Party	Oppose	No

Comments:



**LATE**

**HB-919**


Submitted on: 2/12/2019 7:37:43 AM  
Testimony for LHE on 2/12/2019 2:10:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Mericia Palma Elmore	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**From:** Jacqueline Pitts <noreply@jotform.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 12, 2019 8:45 AM  
**To:** academiclaborunited@gmail.com; LHEtestimony  
**Subject:** In Support of HB919



 <b>Testimony in support of HB919/SB1368</b>	
Name	Jacqueline Pitts
Position/Organization	Graduate Research Assitant/ University of Hawaii
I am a graduate assistant:	Yes
Email	pittsj@hawaii.edu
Phone Number	(772) 2630316
Address	Postal / Zip Code: 96734
Testimony Message	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. I write in strong support of this bill, which if passed, will create a new bargaining unit for graduate assistants in Hawaii. Every undergraduate student is taught and mentored by a graduate teaching assistant; graduate research assistants advance scientific frontiers and make new discoveries; and graduate administrative assistants run key facilities and labs on campus. The university 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.</p> <p>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. To remedy these issues and more, what we are asking for are our basic human rights as workers - to be able to form a legally-recognized union.</p> <p>It is important to emphasize that this is fundamentally about more than just compensation</p>

or grievances. This bill asks for no extra appropriations. It simply creates a pathway for graduate assistants in Hawaii to exercise their basic right to join a union.

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, including many of our peer and benchmark institutions. 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 has led the way in breaking ground for labor unions. For the cutting-edge research and instruction graduate assistants do, the ability to collectively bargain and have a seat at the table is essential and long overdue. I urge you to pass this bill.

Attending Hearing?

No

You can [edit this submission](#) and [view all your submissions](#) easily.

# Late Testimony

**HB-919**

Submitted on: 2/12/2019 10:46:14 AM

Testimony for LHE on 2/12/2019 2:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Michael Golojuch Jr	LGBT Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawaii	Support	Yes

Comments:

Aloha Representatives,

The LGBT Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawaii supports the passage of HB 919.

We view this measure as assuring economic and social justice for the Graduate Assistance at the University of Hawaii.

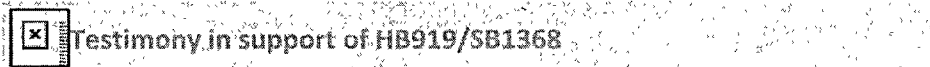
Mahalo for your consideration and for the opportunity to testify.

Mahalo,

Michael Golojuch, Jr.  
Chair  
LGBT Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawaii

**From:** Joy Agner <noreply@jotform.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 12, 2019 10:39 AM  
**To:** academiclaborunited@gmail.com; LHEtestimony  
**Subject:** In Support of HB919

# Late Testimony



**Name** Joy Agner

**I am a graduate assistant:** Yes

**Email** joyagner@hawaii.edu

**Phone Number** (503) 200-9221

**Address** Postal / Zip Code: 96822

**Testimony Message** This is crucial! I know several graduate students that have been homeless because of low pay, that have worked despite having cancer and seeking medical care, or that are juggling several jobs and suffering poor health as a result. Personally, I currently have 3 part time jobs in addition to my graduate assistantship, service to the university, coursework, and degree requirements. This is not the way to build an robust and educated citizenry.

Sincerely,  
Joy Agner


**Attending Hearing?** Yes

**Optional** I permit ALU to use excerpts of my testimony on social media.

You can [edit this submission](#) and [view all your submissions](#) easily.

**From:** Sabrina Diemert <noreply@jotform.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 12, 2019 10:39 AM  
**To:** academiclaborunited@gmail.com; LHEtestimony  
**Subject:** In Support of HB919

# Late Testimony

 Testimony in support of HB919/SB1368

Name Sabrina Diemert  
Position/Organization Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering  
I am a graduate assistant: Yes  
Email sdiemert@hawaii.edu  
Phone Number (808) 8246621  
Address Postal / Zip Code: 96822  
Country: United States

Testimony Message  
Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. I write in strong support of this bill, which if passed, will create a new bargaining unit for graduate assistants in Hawaii. Every undergraduate student is taught and mentored by a graduate teaching assistant; graduate research assistants advance scientific frontiers and make new discoveries; and graduate administrative assistants run key facilities and labs on campus. The university 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. To remedy these issues and more, what we are asking for are our basic human rights as workers - to be able to form a legally-recognized union.

It is important to emphasize that this is

fundamentally about more than just compensation or grievances. This bill asks for no extra appropriations. It simply creates a pathway for graduate assistants in Hawaii to exercise their basic right to join a union.

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, including many of our peer and benchmark institutions. 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 has led the way in breaking ground for labor unions. For the cutting-edge research and instruction graduate assistants do, the ability to collectively bargain and have a seat at the table is essential and long overdue. I urge you to pass this bill.

Attending Hearing?

No

You can [edit this submission](#) and [view all your submissions](#) easily.

**From:** Kyle Help <noreply@jotform.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 12, 2019 10:10 AM  
**To:** academiclaborunited@gmail.com; LHEtestimony  
**Subject:** In Support of HB919

# Late Testimony



Testimony in support of HB919/SB1368

Name Kyle Help  
Position/Organization CoCurricular Specialist  
I am a graduate assistant: No  
Email kylehelp@hawaii.edu  
Phone Number (801) 4553908  
Address Postal / Zip Code: 96816

Testimony Message  
Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. I write in strong support of this bill, which if passed, will create a new bargaining unit for graduate assistants in Hawaii. Every undergraduate student is taught and mentored by a graduate teaching assistant; graduate research assistants advance scientific frontiers and make new discoveries; and graduate administrative assistants run key facilities and labs on campus. The university 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. To remedy these issues and more, what we are asking for are our basic human rights as workers - to be able to form a legally-recognized union.

It is important to emphasize that this is fundamentally about more than just compensation



or grievances. This bill asks for no extra appropriations. It simply creates a pathway for graduate assistants in Hawaii to exercise their basic right to join a union.

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, including many of our peer and benchmark institutions. 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 has led the way in breaking ground for labor unions. For the cutting-edge research and instruction graduate assistants do, the ability to collectively bargain and have a seat at the table is essential and long overdue. I urge you to pass this bill.

Attending Hearing?

No

You can [edit this submission](#) and [view all your submissions](#) easily.

**From:** McLean Worsham <noreply@jotform.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 12, 2019 12:27 PM  
**To:** academiclaborunited@gmail.com; LHEtestimony  
**Subject:** In Support of HB919

## Late Testimony



Testimony in support of HB919/SB1368

Name	McLean Worsham
Position/Organization	TA
I am a graduate assistant:	Yes
Email	mcleanw@hawaii.edu
Phone Number	(406) 6005515
Address	Postal / Zip Code: 96826
Testimony Message	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. I write in strong support of this bill, which if passed, will create a new bargaining unit for graduate assistants in Hawaii. Every undergraduate student is taught and mentored by a graduate teaching assistant; graduate research assistants advance scientific frontiers and make new discoveries; and graduate administrative assistants run key facilities and labs on campus. The university 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.</p> <p>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. To remedy these issues and more, what we are asking for are our basic human rights as workers - to be able to form a legally-recognized union.</p> <p>It is important to emphasize that this is fundamentally about more than just compensation</p>

or grievances. This bill asks for no extra appropriations. It simply creates a pathway for graduate assistants in Hawaii to exercise their basic right to join a union.

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, including many of our peer and benchmark institutions. 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 has led the way in breaking ground for labor unions. For the cutting-edge research and instruction graduate assistants do, the ability to collectively bargain and have a seat at the table is essential and long overdue. I urge you to pass this bill.

On a more personal note, I currently have 120 students and I am amazed at how amazing this group of students are. I work extremely hard for these students because I see a lot in them but getting paid \$2200 a month for working 60 hrs a week hardly seems like fair compensation.

Attending Hearing?

No

Optional

I permit ALU to use excerpts of my testimony on social media.

You can [edit this submission](#) and [view all your submissions](#) easily.

**From:** Paulina Panek <noreply@jotform.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 12, 2019 10:47 AM  
**To:** academiclaborunited@gmail.com; LHEtestimony  
**Subject:** In Support of HB919

# Late Testimony

 Testimony in support of HB919/SB1368

**Name** Paulina Panek  
**Position/Organization** Chemistry Teaching Assistant  
**I am a graduate assistant:** Yes  
**Email** ppanek@hawaii.edu  
**Phone Number** (808) 6007321  
**Address** Postal / Zip Code: 96822

**Testimony Message** Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. I write in strong support of this bill, which if passed, will create a new bargaining unit for graduate assistants in Hawaii. Every undergraduate student is taught and mentored by a graduate teaching assistant; graduate research assistants advance scientific frontiers and make new discoveries; and graduate administrative assistants run key facilities and labs on campus. The university 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. To remedy these issues and more, what we are asking for are our basic human rights as workers - to be able to form a legally-recognized union.

It is important to emphasize that this is fundamentally about more than just compensation

or grievances. This bill asks for no extra appropriations. It simply creates a pathway for graduate assistants in Hawaii to exercise their basic right to join a union.

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, including many of our peer and benchmark institutions. 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 has led the way in breaking ground for labor unions. For the cutting-edge research and instruction graduate assistants do, the ability to collectively bargain and have a seat at the table is essential and long overdue. I urge you to pass this bill.

**Attending Hearing?**

No


**Optional**

I permit ALU to use excerpts of my testimony on social media.

You can [edit this submission](#) and [view all your submissions](#) easily.

**From:** Helen Sung <noreply@jotform.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 12, 2019 9:18 AM  
**To:** academiclaborunited@gmail.com; LHEtestimony  
**Subject:** In Support of HB919

# Late Testimony

 Testimony in support of HB919/SB1368

Name Helen Sung  
Position/Organization Ms student/UH  
Email helenwsung@gmail.com  
Phone Number (951) 2057879  
Address Postal / Zip Code: 96822  
Country: United States

**Testimony Message**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. I write in strong support of this bill, which if passed, will create a new bargaining unit for graduate assistants in Hawaii. Every undergraduate student is taught and mentored by a graduate teaching assistant; graduate research assistants advance scientific frontiers and make new discoveries; and graduate administrative assistants run key facilities and labs on campus. The university 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.

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Hawaii has led the way in breaking ground for labor unions. For the cutting-edge research and instruction graduate assistants do, the ability to collectively bargain and have a seat at the table is essential and long overdue. I urge you to pass this bill.

Attending Hearing?

No


Optional

I permit ALU to use excerpts of my testimony on social media.

You can [edit this submission](#) and [view all your submissions](#) easily.

**From:** Thomas Zeller <noreply@jotform.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 12, 2019 9:23 AM  
**To:** academiclaborunited@gmail.com; LHEtestimony  
**Subject:** In Support of HB919

## Late Testimony

 Testimony in support of HB919/SB1368

**Name** Thomas Zeller  
**I am a graduate assistant:** Yes  
**Email** trzeller@hawaii.edu  
**Phone Number** (303) 9182032  
**Address** Postal / Zip Code: 96822

**Testimony Message** Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. I write in strong support of this bill, which if passed, will create a new bargaining unit for graduate assistants in Hawaii. Every undergraduate student is taught and mentored by a graduate teaching assistant; graduate research assistants advance scientific frontiers and make new discoveries; and graduate administrative assistants run key facilities and labs on campus. The university 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. To remedy these issues and more, what we are asking for are our basic human rights as workers - to be able to form a legally-recognized union.

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appropriations. It simply creates a pathway for graduate assistants in Hawaii to exercise their basic right to join a union.

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, including many of our peer and benchmark institutions. 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.

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Attending Hearing?

No

You can [edit this submission](#) and [view all your submissions](#) easily.

Late  
Testimony

**HB-919**

Submitted on: 2/12/2019 11:16:03 AM

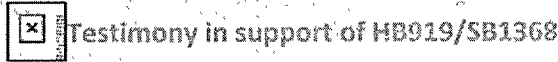
Testimony for LHE on 2/12/2019 2:10:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Jonathan Valdez	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**From:** Becca Lensing <noreply@jotform.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 12, 2019 12:15 PM  
**To:** academiclaborunited@gmail.com; LHEtestimony  
**Subject:** In Support of HB919

# Late Testimony



**Name** Becca Lensing  
**Position/Organization** GA/University of Hawaii Manoa  
**Email** blensing@hawaii.edu  
**Phone Number** (563) 3796162  
**Address** Postal / Zip Code: 96816  
Country: United States

**Testimony Message** Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. I write in strong support of this bill, which if passed, will create a new bargaining unit for graduate assistants in Hawaii. Every undergraduate student is taught and mentored by a graduate teaching assistant; graduate research assistants advance scientific frontiers and make new discoveries; and graduate administrative assistants run key facilities and labs on campus. The university 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. To remedy these issues and more, what we are asking for are our basic human rights as workers - to be able to form a legally-recognized union.

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Hawaii has led the way in breaking ground for labor unions. For the cutting-edge research and instruction graduate assistants do, the ability to collectively bargain and have a seat at the table is essential and long overdue. I urge you to pass this bill.

Attending Hearing?

No

Optional

I permit ALU to use excerpts of my testimony on social media.

You can [edit this submission](#) and [view all your submissions](#) easily.

**From:** Leora Kava <lkava@hawaii.edu>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 12, 2019 2:54 PM  
**To:** hashem2 - Michael; Kathy Kato  
**Subject:** LHE Hearing Testimony

Aloha,

Please find below testimony I gave at the February 12, 2019 at the 2:10pm hearing.

Sincerely,  
Leora Kava

Aloha Chair,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. My name is Leora Kava—I am a PhD candidate in the UH Mānoa department of English. I also lecture in Pacific Islands Studies and Ethnic Studies. I testify in strong support of this bill, which if passed, will create a new bargaining unit for graduate assistants in Hawai‘i.

For my testimony, I want to share a brief snapshot of the work I do as a graduate assistant in the English department, particularly, as an ENG 100 instructor. ENG 100 is a required course for all UH undergrads; they must pass this course in order to graduate. Last semester, I taught two, back-to-back sections ENG 100, and my course was titled “Writing Place in Hawai‘i and the Pacific.”

This is a snapshot of the preparation and lesson planning I did for Monday, November 19th, 2018:

I design a brief lecture on essay organization in order to go over the major elements of feedback I gave my students on their last paper. We still need more practice in correctly citing outside information and following up evidence with explication in a paragraph. By the end of class today, they’ll have language for their research paper introductions. To close us out and prepare them for Wednesday’s class, we’ll end on revisiting the major theme we’ve been discussing for weeks, which is place-based research ethics. By Friday, they’ll have crafted language and been prepared to turn in a 1,500 word draft of what they have researched so far.

Going into class today, I am concerned for one of my students who has had to miss class in order to take care of and support family as they evacuate from the California wildfires. I’ll meet with them several times this week during extended office hours to make sure they are ok, and to work through adjusted deadlines so they keep up with class while taking care of their loved ones in crisis. In addition, three of my students have family or community members who are hotel workers on strike on Maui and O‘ahu. During group discussions today, I’ll check in with them about their progress in connecting their personal narratives with their research on broader histories of labor justice in Hawai‘i.

I wanted to share this snapshot of a day in ENG 100 in hopes of showing how seriously we as graduate assistants take our teaching and how dedicated we are to ensuring that our students get the best of who we are. At the time that I was teaching two ENG 100 sections, I was also lecturing in Ethnic Studies and doing my own research; I also worked to successfully defend my dissertation proposal that semester. I say this to emphasize that I, along with my fellow graduate assistants in English, work very hard to be competent instructors for ENG 100. ENG 100 is the most highly taught class in our department, and the vast majority people teaching these courses are graduate students. Just as an example: of the 34 sections of ENG 100 offered this Spring semester, 27 are taught by graduate students—that is, nearly 80% of ENG 100 this semester are carefully designed and taught by graduate students.

To fairly compensate and honor the remarkable quality and quantity of work we provide to the university and the state as graduate assistants, we ask for our basic human rights as workers—to form a legally-recognized union.

Thank you.

**From:** Robert Quartero <noreply@jotform.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 12, 2019 2:41 PM  
**To:** academiclaborunited@gmail.com; LHEtestimony  
**Subject:** In Support of HB919



**Testimony in support of HB919/SB1368**

Name	Robert Quartero
Position/Organization	Kulanui.org
I am a graduate assistant:	No
Email	robq68@gmail.com
Phone Number	(808) 7240129
Address	Postal / Zip Code: 96813 Country: United States
Testimony Message	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. I write in strong support of this bill, which if passed, will create a new bargaining unit for graduate assistants in Hawaii. Every undergraduate student is taught and mentored by a graduate teaching assistant; graduate research assistants advance scientific frontiers and make new discoveries; and graduate administrative assistants run key facilities and labs on campus. The university 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.</p> <p>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. To remedy these issues and more, what we are asking for are our basic human rights as workers - to be able to form a legally-recognized union.</p> <p>It is important to emphasize that this is</p>

fundamentally about more than just compensation or grievances. This bill asks for no extra appropriations. It simply creates a pathway for graduate assistants in Hawaii to exercise their basic right to join a union.

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, including many of our peer and benchmark institutions. 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 has led the way in breaking ground for labor unions. For the cutting-edge research and instruction graduate assistants do, the ability to collectively bargain and have a seat at the table is essential and long overdue. I urge you to pass this bill.


Attending Hearing?	Yes
--------------------	-----

You can [edit this submission](#) and [view all your submissions](#) easily.



**From:** Helen Sung <noreply@jotform.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 12, 2019 9:18 AM  
**To:** academiclaborunited@gmail.com; LHEtestimony  
**Subject:** In Support of HB919



 **Testimony in support of HB919/SB1368**

Name	Helen Sung
Position/Organization	Ms student/UH
Email	helenwsung@gmail.com
Phone Number	(951) 2057879
Address	Postal / Zip Code: 96822 Country: United States
Testimony Message	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. I write in strong support of this bill, which if passed, will create a new bargaining unit for graduate assistants in Hawaii. Every undergraduate student is taught and mentored by a graduate teaching assistant; graduate research assistants advance scientific frontiers and make new discoveries; and graduate administrative assistants run key facilities and labs on campus. The university 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.</p> <p>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. To remedy these issues and more, what we are asking for are our basic human rights as workers - to be able to form a legally-recognized union.</p> <p>It is important to emphasize that this is fundamentally about more than just compensation</p>

or grievances. This bill asks for no extra appropriations. It simply creates a pathway for graduate assistants in Hawaii to exercise their basic right to join a union.

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, including many of our peer and benchmark institutions. 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 has led the way in breaking ground for labor unions. For the cutting-edge research and instruction graduate assistants do, the ability to collectively bargain and have a seat at the table is essential and long overdue. I urge you to pass this bill.

Attending Hearing?	No
Optional	I permit ALU to use excerpts of my testimony on social media.

You can [edit this submission](#) and [view all your submissions](#) easily.

**From:** Kyle Help <noreply@jotform.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 12, 2019 10:10 AM  
**To:** academiclaborunited@gmail.com; LHEtestimony  
**Subject:** In Support of HB919



**Testimony in support of HB919/SB1368**

Name	Kyle Help
Position/Organization	CoCurricular Specialist
I am a graduate assistant:	No
Email	kylehelp@hawaii.edu
Phone Number	(801) 4553908
Address	Postal / Zip Code: 96816
Testimony Message	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. I write in strong support of this bill, which if passed, will create a new bargaining unit for graduate assistants in Hawaii. Every undergraduate student is taught and mentored by a graduate teaching assistant; graduate research assistants advance scientific frontiers and make new discoveries; and graduate administrative assistants run key facilities and labs on campus. The university 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.</p> <p>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. To remedy these issues and more, what we are asking for are our basic human rights as workers - to be able to form a legally-recognized union.</p> <p>It is important to emphasize that this is fundamentally about more than just compensation</p>

or grievances. This bill asks for no extra appropriations. It simply creates a pathway for graduate assistants in Hawaii to exercise their basic right to join a union.

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Hawaii has led the way in breaking ground for labor unions. For the cutting-edge research and instruction graduate assistants do, the ability to collectively bargain and have a seat at the table is essential and long overdue. I urge you to pass this bill.

Attending Hearing?

No

You can [edit this submission](#) and [view all your submissions](#) easily.

**From:** Sabrina Diemert <noreply@jotform.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 12, 2019 10:39 AM  
**To:** academiclaborunited@gmail.com; LHEtestimony  
**Subject:** In Support of HB919

**LATE**



**Testimony in support of HB919/SB1368**

Name	Sabrina Diemert
Position/Organization	Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering
I am a graduate assistant:	Yes
Email	sdiemert@hawaii.edu
Phone Number	(808) 8246621
Address	Postal / Zip Code: 96822 Country: United States

**Testimony Message**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. I write in strong support of this bill, which if passed, will create a new bargaining unit for graduate assistants in Hawaii. Every undergraduate student is taught and mentored by a graduate teaching assistant; graduate research assistants advance scientific frontiers and make new discoveries; and graduate administrative assistants run key facilities and labs on campus. The university 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. To remedy these issues and more, what we are asking for are our basic human rights as workers - to be able to form a legally-recognized union.

It is important to emphasize that this is

fundamentally about more than just compensation or grievances. This bill asks for no extra appropriations. It simply creates a pathway for graduate assistants in Hawaii to exercise their basic right to join a union.

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, including many of our peer and benchmark institutions. 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 has led the way in breaking ground for labor unions. For the cutting-edge research and instruction graduate assistants do, the ability to collectively bargain and have a seat at the table is essential and long overdue. I urge you to pass this bill.

Attending Hearing?	No
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**From:** Joy Agner <noreply@jotform.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 12, 2019 10:39 AM  
**To:** academiclaborunited@gmail.com; LHEtestimony  
**Subject:** In Support of HB919



 <b>Testimony in support of HB919/SB1368</b>	
Name	Joy Agner
I am a graduate assistant:	Yes
Email	joyagner@hawaii.edu
Phone Number	(503) 200-9221
Address	Postal / Zip Code: 96822
Testimony Message	<p>This is crucial! I know several graduate students that have been homeless because of low pay, that have worked despite having cancer and seeking medical care, or that are juggling several jobs and suffering poor health as a result. Personally, I currently have 3 part time jobs in addition to my graduate assistantship, service to the university, coursework, and degree requirements. This is not the way to build an robust and educated citizenry.</p> <p>Sincerely, Joy Agner</p>
Attending Hearing?	Yes
Optional	I permit ALU to use excerpts of my testimony on social media.

You can [edit this submission](#) and [view all your submissions](#) easily.