

SB-315

Submitted on: 2/1/2019 3:14:44 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/5/2019 2:50:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Javier Mendez-Alvarez	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

SB-315

Submitted on: 2/1/2019 3:29:59 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/5/2019 2:50:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Alan Urasaki	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

SB-315

Submitted on: 2/2/2019 1:58:22 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/5/2019 2:50:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Hannah	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

SENATORS DONNA MERCADO KIM, CHIAR & MICHELLE N. KIDANI, VICE CHAIR

COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Hannah Liebreich

hannahli@hawaii.edu

3379 Kilauea Ave. A

Honolulu, HI 96816

Tuesday, February 5, 2019

Support for S.B. No. 315, Relating to appropriations for graduate student stipends.

Greetings Members of the Higher Education Committee,

I am writing in strong support of SB315, which would provide an increase in graduate student stipends. I support an increase in graduate student stipends because graduate students at UH make less than our colleagues at our peer and benchmark schools. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Warmest Regards,
Hannah Liebreich

SB-315

Submitted on: 2/2/2019 4:20:03 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/5/2019 2:50:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jonathan Valdez	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support the passing of SB 315.



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

LATE

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Higher Education
Tuesday, February 5, 2019 at 2:50 p.m.

by
Krystyna S. Aune, Dean of Graduate Division
and
Michael Bruno, Interim Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

SB 315 - MAKING AN APPROPRIATION TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

Chair Senator Kim, Vice Chair Kidani and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony regarding SB 315, which appropriates funds to increase the minimum Graduate Assistant (GA) stipend to Step 10 (\$20,472 for 9-Month GAs, \$23,028 for 11-Month GAs). For GAs at step 10 or above, we propose a 2% increase for the first year of the biennium and 2% across the board for the second year of the biennium. The costs for these proposed increases would be \$2,193,360 for the first year and \$2,242,327 for the second year of the biennium.

The University of Hawai'i supports S.B. No. 315.

Graduate assistants (GAs) are graduate students who provide academic and program support to academic, administrative or service units of the university. GA responsibilities may involve teaching, research, or administrative duties. Graduate assistantships are the mechanism by which research universities recruit top graduate students into their programs. Their contributions to the mission of a research university are far reaching, particularly in the teaching and research arenas. Furthermore, the ability to work with graduate students are critical factors in recruiting and retaining excellent faculty to the university. In other words, graduate education is the defining essence of a research university.

Governor Ige's education mission is to "Empower our public schools and university, focus on 21st century skills and learning, and ensure schools provide a healthy and safe learning environment." This Graduate Student initiative helps to support graduate education; providing proper support for graduate assistants will enhance the attainment of 21st century skills and learning. Graduate educational attainment is increasingly imperative within the knowledge economy.

The Graduate Student initiative also supports the University of Hawai'i System Directions, 2015-2021, the Hawai'i Graduation Initiative (HGI). The goal is to increase the educational capital of the state. To increase participation and completion of

students, graduate assistantships (and more competitive funding packages) are essential to recruit and retain students. In addition, the Hawai'i Innovation Initiative is designed to create more high-quality jobs and diversity Hawai'i's economy. Strategies to achieve innovation include sustaining and advancing the UH research enterprise. The UH research enterprise is supported by graduate faculty, graduate programs, and, centrally, the graduate assistants who greatly support the research mission of the research university.

The request for Graduate Assistant support also advances the Board of Regents directive on Enrollment Management. Support for graduate assistant stipend levels will facilitate graduate recruitment and retention. A pervasive concern expressed by graduate chairs is that many programs are finding it difficult to recruit top candidates because the prospective graduate students receive better offers at other institutions. Finally, the Graduate Student initiative is also directly linked to the UHM Strategic Plan Matrix. Two Mānoa Initiatives map on to the Hawai'i Graduation Initiative: Enhancing student success and recruiting a vibrant, prepared student body. As mentioned above, recruitment and retention of highly qualified graduate students is directly related to the level of funding offered. Increasing the minimum stipend levels for graduate students will positively impact recruitment and retention. In addition, the UHM strategic Plan Matrix includes two initiatives that map on to the Hawai'i Innovation Initiative: Advancing the Research Enterprise and Fostering Excellent Faculty and Shared-use Facilities. Graduate student support is directly related to accomplishing those metrics such as graduate degrees conferred and faculty scholarly productivity.

Thank you for your consideration.

LATE

SB-315

Submitted on: 2/4/2019 2:57:25 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/5/2019 2:50:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Daniel Flores	Testifying for Graduate Student Organization of the University of Hawaii at Manoa	Support	No

Comments:

February 4, 2019

From: The Graduate Student Organization (GSO)

To: Hawaii State Senate Committee on Higher Education
 Date/Time: February 5, 2019 2:50PM Place: Hawaii State Capitol, Rm. 229 Re: Hearing
 Testimony in SUPPORT of SB315

Dear Chair Donna Mercado Kim, Vice-Chair Michelle N. Kidani, and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of SB315, which would allocate funds to increase graduate student stipends. We support an increase in graduate student stipends because graduate students at UH make less than our colleagues at our peer and benchmark schools. However, we would also like to note that 2.2 million dollars translates roughly into \$500 more annually per graduate student. Given this modest annual increase, we humbly ask that the Committee consider an amendment, increasing the appropriations. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Daniel Flores, Vice President
Hannah Liebreich, Advocacy Chair

LATE

SB-315

Submitted on: 2/4/2019 2:56:16 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/5/2019 2:50:00 PM

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

Comments:

LATE

SB-315

Submitted on: 2/4/2019 3:25:16 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/5/2019 2:50:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
M Lee Brown	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha kākou,

I am writing this as a Ph.D. candidate in Political Science at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. I hold two Masters degrees from UHM as well - one in French, one in Political Science. I have also held three different Graduate Assistantships during my time at UHM; each of these was not enough for a student to live on, let alone a returning student who is also a single parent. I am not alone in this, as other faculty and administrators have noted in prior testimony, the salary for a GA **has not risen significantly in decades**. As a result, this forces students to work two or three other jobs to try and make ends meet - while studying full time, and if a teaching or research GA, contributing to the success of undergraduate students and the University of Hawaii as an R1 institution.

As you might imagine, that cannot happen. Or if it does happen - not as well as it could or should. Support GAs. Fund them with a liveable salary. In return, you have an increase in undergraduate outreach and support and a boost to UH research and innovation. The legislature has demanded more of the latter two, I would like to show how fully funding GAs addresses a core issue for both of those demands.

An investment in graduate students is an investment in UH's future. As graduate assistants, we already teach. We already produce research. But we do it at great personal costs with little compensation and little protection. There are so many missed opportunities. It also means high caliber potential graduate students will attend other universities that do recognize their importance and fund them. So much more could be done that would benefit the University of Hawai'i from incoming freshman up through the Board of Regents if our GAs were fully funded instead of barely scraping by. Please do this.

Mahalo for your time and attention.

LATE

SB-315

Submitted on: 2/4/2019 4:03:36 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/5/2019 2:50:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Alex Miller	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support SB315 which will grant an increase in the stipend earned by graduate assistants for their labor provided to the University of Hawai'i. Graduate assistants, like all workers, deserve a dignified, living wage. Their labor provided in graduate assistant positions varies from administrative work to teaching, coaching, mentorship, and more, and keeps the university functioning. Without the labor of graduate student workers, faculty and support staff would be overwhelmed. The university would essentially stop functioning effectively. With the stipend at it's current level, many graduate workers are dealing with not only the stress of long work, school, and research hours, but also of worrying how they will pay for rent, food, and heathcare next week. Students who have dependent family members feel this even more keenly. Graduate student workers make UH a diverse, enriching environment and deserve the state's support. Please pass SB 315 and support graduate student workers.

LATE

SB-315

Submitted on: 2/4/2019 4:55:34 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/5/2019 2:50:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Mike Poblete	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support SB315 which will grant an increase in the stipend earned by graduate assistants for their labor provided to the University of Hawai'i. We are the educators and workers that keep Hawai'i's only research university running, and we all have to take second jobs, or go deeply into debt to support ourselves. We all must choose on a daily basis whether to sacrifice our job performance, our financial wellbeing or our health, because with our current pay we cannot have all three. We deserve fair compensation, just like any other job. For the next generation of students, and for the next generation of Hawai'i, please pass SB 315 so we can do our jobs effectively, and give those attending the University of Hawai'i the support and education they need to make these islands a better place.

LATE

SB-315

Submitted on: 2/4/2019 5:30:18 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/5/2019 2:50:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Nanea Lo	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

To Whom It May Concern:

My names is Nanea Lo and I'm in STRONG SUPPORT of this bill. I'm currently a GRA for the College of Social Sciences at the University of Hawai'i at MÄ• noa and this job just isn't enough. I have to work two other jobs to keep myself afloat in this economic setting. I am also native Hawaiian and was born and raised here on O'ahu and it saddens me that so many of my friends and family are slowly getting pushed out because of this same issue. I'm a minority in my own homeland because we can't afford to live here. Please support us.

Thank you,

Nanea Lo

Chair Kim
Vice Chair Kidani
Senate Committee on Higher Education



Tuesday, February 5, 2019
2:50 PM

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB315 RELATING TO MAKING AN
APPROPRIATION TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII**

Aloha Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, Members of the Senate Committee on Higher Education,

My name is Jun Shin. I am a freshman at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa and a executive committee member of the Young Progressives Demanding Action (YPDA). I am testifying as an individual in **support of SB315 relating to making an appropriation to the University of Hawaii.**

As a student now in my third semester at the university, I have had the privilege of being taught by several graduate students in my short time here. They are passionate in their fields, that is why they continue to seek further education, and their passion really rubs off on you. As students themselves and many times closer in age and their undergraduate years not that far behind, grad students are able to empathize on issues undergraduate students face. Such as struggling with school work, financing your education, and balancing a tight schedule, allowing them to create a more open and inclusive learning environment. I have learned and gained new perspectives in their classrooms on history, politics, race, gender, Hawai‘i, and so much more that I’ve kept close to me as I interact with the world around me.

Taking on research roles, instructor roles, mentorship roles, it’s not really an exaggeration to say that graduate student assistants are the foundations of the university. Despite continuing to take on more and more workloads, compensation is not enough to be able to live and survive in a state with a very, very high cost of living. I appreciate the legislature taking the steps to add an additional \$2.2 million for grad assistant compensations, it will definitely be helpful to the graduate students, but they need collective bargaining to solve these problems and more. For continued fairness in the workplace, **I urge you to pass SB315 out of your committee.**

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

LATE

SB-315

Submitted on: 2/4/2019 10:40:10 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/5/2019 2:50:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Scott Van De Verg	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am in strong support of SB315. There is an urgent need to increase the graduate assistant stipend at University of Hawai'i.

Graduate assistants are the lifeforce that drive innovation in many R1 universities throughout the United States. However, our graduate assistants here in Hawai'i are in financial peril due to the higher costs associated with housing and goods. Overtime, the work quality of the teaching and research personnel may also be impacted if nothing is done to help. Please consider passing SB315 to allow further teaching and research to go unimpeded by financial stress and disparity. This bill gives hope to the many students that are struggling to make ends meet all the while helping to give Hawai'i a better future to look forward to.

I highly urge you to pass SB315.

LATE

SB-315

Submitted on: 2/5/2019 9:54:30 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/5/2019 2:50:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Diliaur Tellei	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chair Kim and members of the committee:

My name is Diliaur Tellei and I'm a graduate assistant at the University of Hawaii at Manoa and I strongly support SB315.

I'm not being biased when I say that graduate assistants are some of the most amazing people you'll ever have the privilege to meet. We are supposed to be students, but we are also expert researchers and workers, teachers, part-time psychologists for our students, political activists, and generally people who deeply care about improving the world through the little niche we each have identified as an area of study.

So many of us go above and beyond to better our community and work more than the 20 hours we're supposed to per week. And a lot of times, this 20 hour "limit" is abused by our supervisors. Some may be tempted to say that -- "what, they're only working part time, they don't deserve higher compensation" -- but to that I have three responses: one, that our positions are all demanding and often require the concentrated mental and emotional effort usually allotted to a 40 hour a week position; two, that many previously 40-hour positions have been converted into graduate assistantships (of which I actually have worked one); and three, that all workers deserve fair compensation that allows them to thrive in the area they live, and which protects them from being priced out of the place they've made home and the community they contribute to.

There are a lot of problems that only unionization can begin to tackle, but in terms of more fair compensation considering all that we do -- this bill is a good start and I urge you to pass it.

Sincerely,

Diliaur



Academic Labor United

www.academiclaborunited.org

Testimony from Academic Labor United
Tuesday, February 5th, 2018
2:50 PM, Room 229

LATE

Attention: Senator Donna Mercardo Kim, Chair
Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair

Re: Support for SB315 Relating to the University of Hawai'i

Academic Labor United (ALU) writes in strong support of SB315. ALU is dedicated to advancing the voice and wellbeing of academic labor, particularly those on the margins, like many Graduate Assistants. SB315 would appropriate funds for increases to graduate assistant wages for fiscal year 2019-2020 and fiscal year 2020-2021.

We contend that all matters relating to employment including wages are better addressed through the collective bargaining process. We also recognize that decades of administrative neglect have put us all in an unsustainable situation. Two years of scheduled and budgeted movement in pay will provide immediate relief to 1,262 members of Hawai'i's educational workforce on multiple islands. This will get us through the process of setting up a bargaining unit, holding elections for exclusive representative, and negotiating a Collective Bargaining Agreement.

Many graduate assistants work second, third, or fourth jobs or pick up an additional teaching load to cover basic costs of living. Additionally, students have their graduate studies, which professors and advisors suggest devoting the same time and effort one would a full-time job. Student success and the quality of education often depends on how much time a teacher invests into their students. Teachers working two or three jobs on top of an already demanding research agenda are limited in the amount of time they can spend with their students. We want a university where syllabi, pedagogy, and other teaching decisions are based on providing the best education rather than being based on what the teacher can realistically withstand.

Graduate Assistants are a highly educated part of the workforce that have made significant personal and financial investment to get where they are today. Do you want these workers to use their time helping our youth to grow, unleash their potential, and thrive for the betterment of all, or do you want them to use their time making lattes?

Lastly, nobody goes into education to get rich. These jobs always pay less than what you put into them. Nobody in the education sector thinks they should be rich, we just want to be able to do our jobs to fullest extent, shaping a more pono future into existence, and be able to make rent at the end of the month.

Respectfully,
Benton Rodden
Chairperson, Academic Labor United

SB 315 - Making an Appropriation to the University of Hawaii

Feb. 5, 2019, 2:50PM, Room 229

LATE

The following individuals submitted testimony in support via form letter. See next page for form letter.

Nicholas Chagnon	Jesse Williams	Theodore Zenzal	Brittany Clemens
Lauren Arnold	Airlia Shonkwiler	abraham yi	Scott Goldberg
Erik Brush	Kawena Elkington	Liat Portner	Cody Lestelle
Eric Dilley	Andrew Meyer	Chelsie Counsell	Daniel Wilkie
Ava Fedorov	Theo Fehsenfeld	Anna Pruitt	Bethany Coffey
Lev Gerstle	Christopher Shuler	Lena Phomsouvanh	Alberto Gonzalez
Kira Lee	Amanda Silliman	Colleen Rost-Banik	Andrian Gajigan
Melissa Atkins	Nate Hix	Marcus Daniel	Claire Lewis
Katelyn Jones	Jacob Henry	Ruben Campos	Alexandria Barkman
Sofia de la Sota	Ross Villiger	Luke Campillo	Ivan Bondoc
Valentina Alvarez	Joseph Han	Jamaica Osorio	Elizabeth Seibel
Kimo Cashman	David Stupplebeen	Kirsten Moy	Joanna Kettlewell
Jesse Black	Noam Altman-Kurosaki	William Allen	Wyatt Souza
Rachael Wade	Grace Zhang	Cheryl Burghardt	
Amali Wedagedara	Ariana Huffmyer	Terrence Corrigan	
Hazel Hotchandani	Katrina Obleada	Cheryl DeMarco	
Maria Houar	Jessica Schaefer	Cameron Grimm	
Allison Wagner	Tyler Greenhill	Jason Snitker	
Kisha Borja-Quichocho-Calvo	Cody Anderson	Guoqian Li	
Taylor Stacy	Amanda Vincent	Smrity Ramavarapu	
Shari Brown	Soksamphoas Im	cassandra matsushige	
charu lata	Jing Zhong	Kornelia Thomas	
Niegel Rozet	Feresa Corazon Cabrera	Jonathan Fisk	
HANNAH MOON	GIOCONDA T LOPEZ LOPEZ	Nicole Grove	
Maria Diez ortega	Shayle Matsuda	Lucie Knor	
Gabrielle Stedman	Patrick Nichols	'Iwakeli'i Tong	
Kareem Elassy	Bjarne Bartlett	Elizabeth Lenz	
Carrie Bach	Helen Sung	Derek Kraft	
Jennifer Belon	Shreya Yadav	Kirsten Poff	
rebecca maria goldschmidt	Jennifer Sou	Van Wishingrad	
Emily Conklin	Kamahuialani Barbett	Ludwig Mayerlen	
Annastasia Fiala-Watkins	Megan McElligott	Dominique Elento	
Nadine Ortega	Kim Compoc	Katherine Achacoso	
Ellen-Rae Cachola	Ida Peric	Becca Lensing	
Erika Johnston	Michael Hoban	Yvonne Barkley	
Jessica Perelman	Luke Powell	Diliaur Tellei	
James Carrillo	Pam Atkins	Jason Ellinwood	
Emily Costello	Keith Scott	Anna Michelle Freed	
Tanya Torres	Soren Ruppelius	Florencia Duron	
Sharain Naylor	Leslie Lopez	Vânia Filipa Lima Fernandes	
iana Weingrad	Jennifer Quirk	Jasmine Samiere	
Janet Graham	Victor Gregor Limon	Cameron Ahia	
Nicole Woo	Leah Thompson	Kahala Johnson	
Ari Eisenstat	Chantell Balaan	Erin Netoskie	

From: [Nicholas Chagnon](#)
To: academiclaborunited@gmail.com; [HRE Testimony](#)
Subject: In Support of SB315
Date: Monday, February 4, 2019 8:31:05 PM



Testimony in support of SB315

Name	Nicholas Chagnon
I am a graduate assistant:	No
Email	nsurfecoast@gmail.com
Address	Street Address: 3132 Williams street City: Honolulu State / Province: Hawaii Postal / Zip Code: 96816
Testimony Message	<p>Senate Committee on Higher Education Conference Room 229</p> <p>Chair: Senator Donna Mercado Kim Vice Chair: Senator Michelle N. Kidani Tuesday, February 5, 2019 at 2:50 pm</p> <p>Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. I write in strong support of SB315. SB315, if passed, will provide needed relief for graduate assistants in Hawaii.</p> <p>Graduate assistants are the researchers, discoverers, teachers, mentors, and scientists that make the University of Hawaii a world-class, Tier 1 research university. Every year, our class sizes and workloads increase, and we shoulder more and more of the work of the university. However, we are poorly compensated for our work, compared to other similar benchmark universities. In fact, our compensation is lower than it was back in 2013, adjusting for inflation. In effect, we have received pay decreases every year. With the continuously increasing cost of living, the university has trouble attracting and keeping top-level graduate assistants.</p> <p>We need collective bargaining to solve these problems. However, this bill will help. For these reasons, I urge you to pass SB315.</p>
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.