

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR



CRAIG K. HIRAI  
DIRECTOR

GLORIA CHANG  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE**  
P.O. BOX 150  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96810-0150

EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM  
HAWAII EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH BENEFITS TRUST FUND  
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

ADMINISTRATIVE AND RESEARCH OFFICE  
BUDGET, PROGRAM PLANNING AND  
MANAGEMENT DIVISION  
FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION DIVISION  
OFFICE OF FEDERAL AWARDS MANAGEMENT (OFAM)

TESTIMONY BY CRAIG K. HIRAI  
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE  
TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & TOURISM  
ON  
SENATE BILL NO. 2819, S.D. 2, H.D. 1

**March 22, 2022**  
**9:00 a.m.**  
**Room 312 and Videoconference**

RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

The Department of Budget and Finance (B&F) opposes this measure.

This measure appropriates unspecified amounts for FY 23 for a teacher effectiveness support program, and for the Department of Education and Charter Schools to fund teacher compensation as negotiated and executed in separate memoranda of understanding between the Superintendent of Education/governing board of each State Charter School and the Hawai'i State Teachers Association, Bargaining Unit (BU) 5, for an experimental modernization project pursuant to Section 78-3.5, HRS.

In addition, this bill provides the following:

- Annual step increases for educational assistants, (BU 3), principals and vice principals, (BU 6), and teachers (BU 5).
- Every teacher assigned to a school-level classroom instructional position shall be provided no less than 225 aggregate minutes of preparation periods scheduled by the employer during the teacher's regular work week.

- Every teacher assigned to a school-level classroom instructional position may be provided a minimum of 225 minutes per week to assist students who need additional support in meeting the standards relating to the subject area for which the teacher is responsible.
- Every teacher assigned to a school-level classroom instructional position shall be provided a minimum of 45 continuous minutes per week, up to 1,260 minutes total per year, for collaboration with peers.

B&F opposes this measure because it is contrary to the collective bargaining (CB) process. This measure:

- Preferentially directs the outcome of CB negotiations for select BUs or select groups within BUs.
- Appropriates funding for cost items before negotiations are complete and agreements are reached.

While the Legislature has the authority to set the scope of CB, the Legislature did this in setting up a process in Chapter 89, HRS. This bill disrupts that process due to its partial return to directly legislated wages and working conditions for public employees.

B&F also notes that, with respect to the general fund appropriations in this bill, the federal Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act requires that states receiving Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) II funds and Governor's Emergency Education Relief II funds must maintain state support for:

- Elementary and secondary education in FY 22 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for elementary and secondary education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19; and

- Higher education in FY 22 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for higher education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19.

Further, the federal American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act requires that states receiving ARP ESSER funds must maintain state support for:

- Elementary and secondary education in FY 22 and FY 23 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for elementary and secondary education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19; and
- Higher education in FY 22 and FY 23 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for higher education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19.

The U.S. Department of Education has issued rules governing how these maintenance of effort (MOE) requirements are to be administered. B&F will be working with the money committees of the Legislature to ensure that the State of Hawai'i complies with these ESSER MOE requirements.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR



RYKER WADA  
CHIEF NEGOTIATOR

**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**OFFICE OF COLLECTIVE BARGAINING**  
**EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR**  
235 S. BERETANIA STREET, SUITE 1201  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-2437

**TESTIMONY TO THE  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & TOURISM**

For Hearing on Tuesday, March 22, 2022  
9:00 a.m., Conference Room 312 Via Video Conference

By

RYKER WADA  
CHIEF NEGOTIATOR

**Senate Bill No. 2819 SD2 HD1**  
**Relating to Teacher Compensation**

**(WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY)**

CHAIRPERSON ONISHI, VICE-CHAIR SAYAMA, AND MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE  
COMMITTEE ON LABOR & TOURISM:

The purpose of Senate Bill No. 2819 SD2 HD1 is to: (1) Provide automatic step increases in salaries for each year of satisfactory service completed by educational assistants, public school teachers, and principals and vice principals and to increase the amount of time available to teachers for collaboration, preparation, and planning time; (2) Repeal section 302A-624(c) and 302A-627(a), Hawaii Revised Statutes; and (3) Fund an experimental modernization project pursuant to section 78-3.5, Hawaii Revised Statutes, to address compensation equity issues and to make the necessary discretionary salary adjustments for approximately eight thousand seven hundred experienced senior teachers by recognizing their professional service to the department of education through discretionary salary adjustments.

The Office of Collective Bargaining (OCB) **opposes** S.B. 2819 SD2 HD1 based on the following:

- 1) OCB believes this measure does not embrace the spirit of collective bargaining. As cited within "Attorney General Opinions" under 89-10, HRS, the "Legislature has

power to pass law increasing salaries of one unit of state employees, but it would be inconsistent with the collective bargaining law to do so. Att. Gen Op. 74-6.”

- 2) The definition of Employer does not include “Legislature”. Att. Gen. Op. 74-6 states **“Noticeable by its absence from the definition of “public employer” is the Legislature.** Its role in the collective bargaining process appears to be limited to reviewing “all cost items,” including wages, the implementation of which requires an additional appropriation by the Legislature...It is apparent from the foregoing that the Legislature intended the parties closest to the employment relationship, that is, the public employer and the public employees, independently or through an exclusive representative, to negotiate in good faith a written collective bargaining agreement with respect to wages, hours and other terms and conditions of employment. Thereafter, **upon reaching agreement and upon ratification thereof by the employees concerned, all cost items, the implementation of which requires an additional appropriation by the Legislature, are to be submitted to the Legislature for approval or rejection.** Even then, however, the Legislature appears to have limited its role to approving or rejecting the cost items, “as a whole.”
- 3) The OCB also believes this measure is premature. Enacting legislation to appropriate funds for a single bargaining unit on salary adjustments yet to be negotiated significantly diminishes the Employer’s ability to collectively bargain on the compensation of not only teachers, but all public sector employees. The OCB notes that historically, and in accordance with 89-10 HRS, cost items including wages, are submitted to the Legislature after agreement between the Employer and Union is reached and ratification by the concerned employees is complete. The OCB is extremely concerned about the unintended consequences this legislation may have on current and future negotiations affecting all 15 bargaining units.
- 4) As currently drafted, the measure requires that a memorandum of understanding be negotiated between the exclusive representative of bargaining unit 5 and the superintendent. The OCB comments that the governor and the Board of Education should also be included as parties to the negotiation in accordance with 89-6, HRS.

Based on the above, the OCB respectfully requests that this measure be **held**. Thank you for considering our concerns and for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR



THOMAS WILLIAMS  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

KANOE MARGOL  
DEPUTY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM**

**TESTIMONY BY THOMAS WILLIAMS**  
**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM**  
**STATE OF HAWAII**

**TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & TOURISM**  
**ON**  
**SENATE BILL NO. 2819, S.D. 2., H.D.1**

**March 22, 2022**

**9:00 A.M.**

**Conference Room 312 and VIA Videoconference**

RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION.

Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and Members of the Committee,

S.B. 2819, S.D. 2, H.D. 1, proposes to fund an experimental modernization project pursuant to Section 78-3.5, Hawaii Revised Statutes, to address teacher compensation equity issues through necessary discretionary salary adjustments. The proposed funding will allow the Department of Education to implement discretionary pay adjustments based on years of teaching experience to address equity and compression issues for approximately 8,700 experienced teachers. According to estimates, the one-time and then ongoing salary adjustment for experienced teachers ranges from \$7,700 to \$26,000.

The Employees' Retirement System (ERS) recognizes the need for equitable and competitive pay to recruit and retain qualified teachers and education personnel. We support the intent of the bill and offers the following comments:

The proposed salary adjustment would cause a **substantial increase of approximately \$376 million in the ERS's Unfunded Actuarial Accrued Liability**



Employees' Retirement System  
of the State of Hawaii

**(UAAL)** due to the larger than anticipated salary increases for approximately 8,700 experienced teachers. The system's contribution levels or funding period (the estimated number of years it would take to pay off the current UAAL) may need to be increased if current funding progress is to be sustained.

As monies are being allocated to cover additional pay, we would encourage that funds be identified and allocated to offset the expected increase in our plan's UAAL (approximately \$376 million) resulting from the pay increase. The proposed salary increases would result in an increase in total employee and employer retirement contributions, but this would not be enough to cover the increased liability. According to calculations provided by the ERS's actuary, Gabriel, Roeder, Smith & Co., the Legislature could as an alternative to the lump sum payment elect to increase employer contributions. Either of the alternatives, either a lump sum payment or employer contribution increase, would avoid reversal of funding progress already achieved.

The legislation may desirably cause some teachers to delay retirement as they increase their average final compensation (AFC) for benefit purposes. The proposed salary increases are appropriately, though disproportionately, allocated to teachers with longer service, who are nearer to retirement.

The expected increase in payroll and employee and employer contributions will help, at least in part, to offset the increase in UAAL and potential increase in funding period.

Thank you. We appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony on S.B. 2819, S.D. 2, H.D. 1.



**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**Executive Office on Early Learning**  
2759 South King Street  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96826

March 20, 2022

**TO:** Representative Richard H.K. Onishi, Chair  
Representative Jackson D. Sayama, Vice Chair  
House Committee on Labor & Tourism

**FROM:** Coleen Momohara, Interim Director  
Executive Office on Early Learning

**SUBJECT: Measure:** S.B. No. 2819 Proposed S.D. 2, H.D. 1 – RELATING TO TEACHER  
COMPENSATION  
**Hearing Date:** Tuesday, March 22, 2022  
**Time:** 9:00 a.m.  
**Location:** Videoconference and Conference 312

**Bill Description:** Provides automatic step increases in teacher salaries for each year of satisfactory service completed by public school teachers and educational assistants. Increases the amount of time available to teachers for planning, preparation, and collaboration. Makes an appropriation to fund an experimental modernization project pursuant to section 78-3.5, HRS, to make necessary discretionary salary adjustments for certain teachers. Repeals section 302A-627(a) and 302A-627(a), HRS. Effective 7/1/2050.

**EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON EARLY LEARNING'S POSITION: Support Intent**

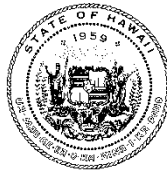
Aloha. I am Coleen Momohara, Interim Director of the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL). EOEL supports the intention S.B. No. 2819 S.D. 2, H.D. 1 and defers to HIDOE as it relates to provisions set forth in this bill, including related to implementation and funding needs.

EOEL is statutorily responsible for the development of the State's early childhood system and also administers the EOEL Public Pre-Kindergarten Program in partnership with the HIDOE.

We appreciate the support and attention of this committee to ensure that the DOE teachers who work with young children in the EOEL Public Prekindergarten Program classrooms are included in the effort to address compensation, which will positively impact both teacher recruitment and retention.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.





**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**HAWAII TEACHER STANDARDS BOARD**  
650 IWILEI ROAD, SUITE 268  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96817

March 19, 2022

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION**

**PERSON TESTIFYING:** Felicia Villalobos, Interim Executive Director on behalf of the Hawaii Teacher Standard Board (HTSB)

**DATE:** March 22, 2022

**TIME:** 9:00 am

**LOCATION:** Conference Room 312 and Video Conference

**TITLE OF BILL:** SB2819 SD2 HD1 Relating to Teacher Compensation

**PURPOSE OF BILL:** Makes an appropriation to fund an experimental modernization project pursuant to section 78-3.5., HRS, to make necessary discretionary salary adjustments for certain teachers. Repeals section 302A-627(a), HRS.

**POSITION:** Supports SB2819 SD2

**Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and Members of the House Committee on Labor and Tourism:**

The Hawaii Teacher Standards Board (HTSB) supports SB2819 SD2. HTSB envisions a highly esteemed Hawaii public education system. To ensure that this vision is met, HTSB views this bill as a way to recruit and, more importantly, retain qualified educators to teach at Hawaii's public schools.

Providing every child in Hawaii with qualified teachers throughout their educational career and promoting professionalism and teaching excellence are major components of HTSB's mission and vision. SB2819 SD 2 is a way to not only support teacher quality but will promote quality education for all Hawaii public school students now and in the future.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB2819 SD2.

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR



JOHN S.S. KIM  
CHAIRPERSON

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

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

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FOR: SB 2819 SD2 HD1 Relating to Teacher Compensation  
DATE: March 22, 2022 at 9:00 AM  
COMMITTEE: Committee on Labor & Tourism  
ROOM: Conference Room 312 & Videoconference  
FROM: Yvonne Lau, Interim Executive Director  
State Public Charter School Commission

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Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the Committees:

The State Public Charter School Commission (“Commission”) appreciates the opportunity to submit this testimony in **SUPPORT OF SB 2819 SD2 HD1**. This measure provides automatic step increases in salaries for each year of satisfactory service completed by educational assistants, public school teachers, and principals and vice principals and increases the amount of time available to teachers for collaboration, preparation, and planning time. Appropriates funds for the automatic step increases and increasing of time for teachers to collaborate and plan. Makes an appropriation to fund an experimental modernization project pursuant to section 78-3.5, HRS, to make necessary discretionary salary adjustments for certain teachers. Repeals sections 302A-624(c) and 302A-627(a), HRS

The Commission appreciates the support and attention of this committee and the Senate in ensuring that public charter schools are included in the effort to address teacher salary inequities.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.



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

**Date:** 03/22/2022

**Time:** 09:00 AM

**Location:** 312 Via Videoconference

**Committee:** House Labor & Tourism

**Department:** Education

**Person Testifying:** Keith T. Hayashi, Interim Superintendent of Education

**Title of Bill:** SB 2819, SD2, HD1 RELATING TO TEACHER  
COMPENSATION.

**Purpose of Bill:** Provides automatic step increases in salaries for each year of satisfactory service completed by educational assistants, public school teachers, and principals and vice principals and increases the amount of time available to teachers for collaboration, preparation, and planning time. Appropriates funds for the automatic step increases and increasing of time for teachers to collaborate and plan. Makes an appropriation to fund an experimental modernization project pursuant to section 78-3.5, HRS, to make necessary discretionary salary adjustments for certain teachers. Repeals sections 302A-624(c) and 302A-627(a), HRS. Effective 7/1/2050. (HD1)

**Department's Position:**

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) provides comments on SB 2819, SD2, HD1, which provides automatic step increases in salaries for each year of satisfactory service completed by public school teachers, administrators, and educational assistants; increases the amount of time available to teachers for planning, preparation, and collaboration; and makes an appropriation to fund an experimental modernization project pursuant to section 78-3.5, Hawaii Revised Statutes, to make necessary discretionary salary adjustments for certain senior teachers.

The Department appreciates the Legislature's continued commitment to ensuring that teachers have the necessary tools to provide students with an educational foundation to maximize academic achievement. Teachers are central to the academic effectiveness of schools and it is imperative to develop an environment where educators are able to simultaneously refine their skills while deploying effective instructional strategies in classrooms.

While preparation time and professional development are critical in optimizing opportunities for teachers, addressing these benefits have traditionally been handled through the collective bargaining process. The Department would like to continue to honor the collective bargaining process as it facilitates real-time discussions on the needs of the teachers to provide effective instruction to students while fulfilling the public's expectation for the maintenance of an effective K-12 public education system in Hawaii.

The Department is involved with negotiating contracts with three unions – the Hawaii State Teachers Association (HSTA), the Hawaii Government Employees Association (HGEA), and the United Public Workers (UPW). Members of all three unions play an equally significant role in the successful operations of schools and the entire Department. The Department urges the Legislature to consider providing equity to the dedicated members of each union that play an equally important part in providing the best possible educational foundation for students.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this measure.

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/21/2022 10:16:01 AM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b>            | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>    |
|---------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|
| PIPE                | Hawaii Department of Education | Comments                  | Remotely Via Zoom |

Comments:

Comments

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/19/2022 9:02:17 AM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b>                         | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Alec Marentic       | Hawai'i Association of School Psychologists | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

HASP supports the intent of this bill to adequately compensate educators to address critical shortage and retention issues.

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/18/2022 3:27:54 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Mike Golojuch, Sr.  | Rainbow Family 808  | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

Rainbow Family 808 definitely supports SB2819. Please pass this bill. Thank you.

Mike Golojuch, Sr., Secretary/Board Member, Rainbow Family 808



**HAWAII GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION**  
AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO

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

The Thirty First Legislature, State of Hawaii  
House of Representatives  
Committee on Labor and Tourism

Testimony by  
Hawaii Government Employees Association

March 22, 2022

S.B. 2819, S.D. 2, H.D. 1 - RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

The Hawaii Government Employees Association, AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO appreciates the intent but raises serious concerns over the impact of S.B. 2819, S.D. 2, H.D. 1 which provides automatic step increases for teachers, educational assistants, and administrators for each year of satisfactory service provided and creates an experimental modernization project to make discretionary salary adjustments for teachers.

**First, foremost, and most importantly, we continue to assert: all matters impacting an employee's wages, hours, and conditions of employment – including step movements and salary adjustments – are constitutionally protected mandatory subjects of collective bargaining. The appropriate venue to address these matters is the negotiations process that is reserved for the employer and the exclusive representative, and not via the Legislature.**

We fully recognize that from top to bottom and across every jurisdiction, your government workforce is under compensated. The concerns raised over high vacancy rates, early retirements, and staff turnover are not exclusive to one classification or bargaining unit, rather they are systemic problems that are pervasive throughout our state. We agree that a competitive salary and benefits package can address the crux of these issues, and we have proffered a variety of policy solutions for the Legislature's consideration. However, it is unconstitutional for the Legislature to directly intervene in the bargaining process by increasing the wages of select professions at the direct expense of all other employees. Elevating some classifications over others will have a devastating ripple effect across government and can result in lopsided salaries where subordinates could be compensated at a higher rate than their supervisors. The possibility of the Legislature providing additional unequal funding over and above a negotiated agreement has upended and stalled efforts to resolve contracts for other bargaining units and unfairly disadvantages those units that already settled their contracts. Collective bargaining offers a holistic approach that ensures fairness and considers universal impact.

While we appreciate the inclusion of educational officers in bargaining unit 06 and educational assistants in bargaining unit 03, this proposed measure does not equally



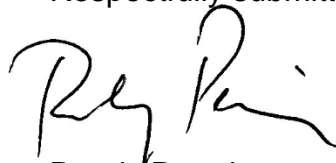
House of Representatives  
Committee on Labor and Tourism  
S.B. 2819, S.D. 2, H.D. 1  
March 22, 2022  
Page 2

include all unit 03 DOE employees, let alone all staff positions necessary to run a school – our school food service managers, security attendants, library and health assistants, school administrative support assistants, registered nurses, clinical and school psychologists, behavioral specialists, speech-language pathologists, athletic trainers, and so many more are excluded from this legislation. All DOE employees play a critical role in educational excellence and similarly, all government employees equally serve our community. This divisive mentality of elevating some classifications over others is destructive and hampers morale.

Finally, this legislation sets a dangerous precedent and infringes upon constitutionally protected rights. The Legislature is overstepping its authority by backdooring negotiations and substituting itself for the employer to resurrect, fund, and force agreement on proposals that the parties were unable to agree upon at the bargaining table.

For these reasons, while meritorious and rooted with good intent, we firmly insist that these important matters impacting wages must be bargained. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on S.B. 2819, S.D. 2, H.D. 1.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Randy Perreira". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "R" and "P".

Randy Perreira  
Executive Director

Greetings Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and Members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819, SD2. This bill would guarantee that teachers like myself and other teachers in the State of Hawaii would have their salaries adjusted based on their years of experience.

I have taught in the Windward and Leeward Districts and am currently working in the Honolulu District for a total of 29 years. I have been compressed at step 7 and step 11 as a Class VII teacher.

I am 1 year away from being able to retire at Class VII, Step 13. I have not taken any continuing education classes at the university for 15 years since there are no negotiations beyond Class VII and I do not want 21 job embedded hours which have not been educational. I am dependent on the step movements as a single parent and had to get a 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> job to maintain the mortgage payments of my house. It was so difficult to stay in teaching because the pay was so low without step movements for many years. I supplemented my pay by working after the teaching day ended or on the weekends. It has been financially difficult to raise a family on a single income and during those extremely bad years I relied on my charge cards to get me through. I am another teacher who lives paycheck to paycheck and have entertained the thought of leaving DOE.

As I think about retirement in 1 year, the current pay is definitely not worth staying beyond 30 years. I will have worked 30 years and will never reach the maximum pay level. Do I cut my losses at this time with the state and return to nursing where I would only have to work 3 days a week for the same amount of pay? Will paying me a fair wage for my experience (Elementary Teacher/Librarian, Secondary Librarian, High School Librarian/Tech, Special Education, Elementary CSAP-Comprehensive Student Alienation Program, AGT-Academically Gifted & Talented, Technology Coordinator, TA-Temporary Administrator, Registered Nurse, DMAT-Disaster Medical Assistance Team {FEMA Trained}, CPR Instructor, Stop the Bleed Instructor, CERT-Community Emergency Response Team Instructor, Licensed Security Guard) convince me to stay in teaching a few more years? If I am not compensated for my experience and skills, at 30 years I will leave the DOE because the DOE doesn't value experienced and skilled employees. I am constantly getting job offers so I am not worried about finding a job after my retirement from the DOE.

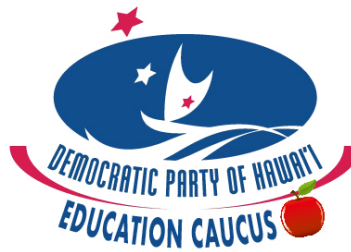
Things I am most sad about is that this teaching job negatively affected both of my children. They saw and lived the financial struggles of being children of a teacher first hand. There many things I am very sad about when thinking of my children and what I was not able to do for them or what I had to do to survive this profession during these 29 years of employment.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819, SD2.

Thank you,

Natalie Lum





## SENATE BILL 2819, SD 2, HD 1, RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

MARCH 22, 2022 · HOUSE LABOR AND TOURISM  
COMMITTEE · CHAIR REP. RICHARD ONISHI

**POSITION:** Support.

**RATIONALE:** The Democratic Party of Hawai'i Education Caucus supports SB 2819, SD 2, HD 1, relating to teacher compensation, which provides automatic step increases in salaries for each year of satisfactory service completed by educational assistants, public school teachers, and principals and vice principals and increases the amount of time available to teachers for collaboration, preparation, and planning time; appropriates funds for the automatic step increases and increasing of time for teachers to collaborate and plan; and makes an appropriation to fund an experimental modernization project pursuant to section 78-3.5, HRS, to make necessary discretionary salary adjustments for certain teachers. Repeals sections 302A-624(c) and 302A-627(a), HRS.

Teachers are the most important professionals in increasing student achievement. According to numerous studies, however, Hawaii's average teacher salaries are the lowest in the nation when adjusted for cost of living. A 2020 study conducted by APA Consulting on behalf of the Hawaii Department of Education found that when compared with other high-cost geographic locations, Hawaii teachers are paid \$7,700 to \$26,000 less than their peers in school districts with similar costs of living, depending on length of service.

Low teacher pay adversely impacts the State's ability to recruit and retain quality classroom leaders. According to the Hawaii Department of Education's 2021 Strategic Plan Dynamic Report, for the 2021-2022 school year, forty-nine percent of Hawaii's teachers left the profession within their first five years of service. The report further revealed that the State's teacher shortage currently stands at 886 positions overall, 230 of which are in the content area of special education.

During the severe economic recession that began in 2009 and that became known as the "Great Recession," funding was eliminated for teacher pay raises and step increases. **As a result, compensation for over 6,000 teachers is \$900 to \$17,000 below what it would be if teachers' salary steps properly corresponded with their years of service.** Failing to pay veteran teachers appropriately is one factor that contributes to increasing numbers of teacher retirements and resignations.

According to data from the Hawaii Department of Education, 428 teachers retired during the 2020-2021 school year, a 49 percent increase from the 2019-2020 school year. **To ensure that Hawaii's children are able to benefit from experienced educators, it is important to uplift the financial security of veteran teachers by guaranteeing a step raise for every additional year of public school service that they perform.**

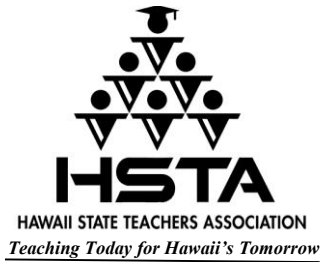
The Hawaii Department of Education, in consultation with the Hawaii State Teachers Association, implemented differential pay increases during the 2019-2020 school year to reduce teacher shortages in special education, hard-to-staff, and Hawaiian immersion teaching positions. Instituting differential pay increases led to significant progress in reducing longstanding teacher shortages in high-demand areas.

Departmental data show that the percentage of special education teacher vacancies dropped by 45 percent during the 2020-2021 school year, with 43 percent more teachers choosing to move into a special education teaching line than the year before. The number of teachers choosing to work in hard-to-fill positions in rural or remote areas increased by 52 percent over the same time period, while the number of Hawaiian immersion teachers increased by 7 percent.

Providing differential pay increases in future years is critical to strengthening the State's efforts to recruit and retain high quality educators for disadvantaged and high-needs student populations. **This further demonstrates that when teachers are paid professional salaries, students—especially our most vulnerable keiki—benefit.**

Accordingly, we strongly support this proposal, which will subsidize unfunded step increases for, or “true up,” teachers who are currently being paid far less than their years of service should afford and well below their actual step on the teachers' salary scale.

**Kris Coffield · Chairperson, DPH Education Caucus · (808) 679-7454 · [kriscoffield@gmail.com](mailto:kriscoffield@gmail.com)**



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

Osa Tui, Jr.  
President  
Logan Okita.  
Vice President  
Lisa Morrison  
Secretary-Treasurer  
Wilbert Holck  
Executive Director

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & TOURISM

RE: SB 2819 SD2 HD1 – RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

TUESDAY, MARCH 22, 2022

OSA TUI, JR., PRESIDENT  
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Chair Onishi, and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association **strongly supports SB 2819, SD1 HD1**, relating to teacher compensation, with some suggested revisions. This bill makes an appropriation to fund an experimental modernization project pursuant to section 78-3.5, Hawaii Revised Statutes, to make necessary discretionary salary adjustments.

**HSTA supports this bill that requests our state lawmakers to approve funding for a one-time salary adjustment to be negotiated as part of an Experimental Modernization Project for eligible teachers to address pay compression.**

**We calculate the amounts needed for BU 5 members affected by compression to be, with 62.78% fringe added, about \$88 million for BU 5 members at the Department of Education and \$6 million for BU 5 members at our public charter schools.**

**This bill is needed to address compensation equity issues and to make the necessary discretionary salary adjustments for approximately 8,700 experienced teachers by recognizing their professional service to the department of education and our public charter schools through discretionary salary adjustments, as negotiated between the superintendent of education and the exclusive representative of collective bargaining unit (5) Hawaii State Teachers Association. [See table at end of testimony]**

**In Hawai'i, teacher turnover is high. Chronic teacher turnover, in turn, forces the department of education to rely on emergency hires and long-term substitute teachers, who are not licensed teachers, to fill vacancies resulting in thousands of students each day in a class without a licensed teacher. Our teacher shortage problem is further clarified in the DOE's 2020-21 Employment Report, which shows that teacher voluntary separations increased from 961 for SY2019-20 to 1,199 for SY2020-21, an approximate 25% increase. When**



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

Osa Tui, Jr.  
President

Logan Okita.  
Vice President

Lisa Morrison  
Secretary-Treasurer

Wilbert Holck  
Executive Director

looking only at retirements, the numbers went from 287 to 428 over the same time period – a 49% increase!

**Unlike many school districts in the country, Hawaii educators' years of experience are not automatically taken into consideration to determine when they earn salary movements.** Hawaii public school teachers only receive increased pay for years of service if those rates are negotiated with the state, which has rejected increases during economic downturns.

The current distribution of teachers on each level of the salary schedule is inconsistent and compressed, contributing to senior teachers leaving. Current figures show nearly 5,000 certificated teachers alone clustered on just steps 9 and 11 with each step representing spans of 6 and 8 years of service, respectively. That's why the problem is called compression.

**This lack of equity causing the compression in teacher salaries is impacting the retention of licensed, tenured teachers who are essential to closing the achievement gap to ensure equity and excellence for each student.**

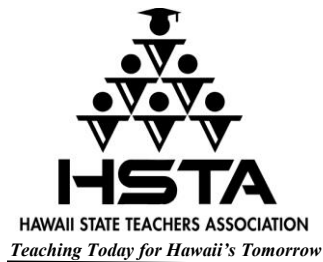
During 2013-2021, teachers were making step movements every other year. At that rate, teachers should reach their career salary (the top step, step 14B) after serving 22 years. Data shows that nearly 2,000 teachers are trapped on steps 12 through 14A with years of service ranging from 24 through 32 years. Teachers are leaving the profession disheartened and with no expectation of reaching their career salary. Fixing this problem will have an immediate effect on retaining our most experienced teachers who have honed their crafts the longest and know our students best.

**During furlough years and times of economic downturns, tenured teachers with over 10 years of service have sacrificed higher salary increases** when the steps were only adjusted up for newer teachers in efforts to recruit more during economic downturns, without a step advancement for teachers already working for years within the DOE and at our public charter schools.

Data from the 2020-21 school year shows that only 51 percent of teachers remained in the Hawaii DOE five years after hire. In addition, about 1,000 long-term substitutes and emergency hires filling vacancies in classrooms are not graduates of a state-approved teacher education program. In fact, some of those subs and emergency hires are not even college graduates.

HSTA believes the teacher shortage extends throughout the profession, which is why all educators' compensation should be increased and this is one major step that will





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help right away. Research shows that teachers become more effective the longer they are in the classroom.

**A study published by the Learning Policy Institute in 2016** showed the following: Based on a review of 30 studies published within the last 15 years that analyze the effect of teaching experience on student outcomes in the United States and met specific methodological criteria, researchers found that:

- Teaching experience is positively associated with student achievement gains throughout a teacher's career. Gains in teacher effectiveness associated with experience are most steep in teachers' initial years, but continue to be significant as teachers reach the second, and often third, decades of their careers.
- As teachers gain experience, their students not only learn more, as measured by standardized tests, they are also more likely to do better on other measures of success, such as school attendance.
- Teachers' effectiveness increases at a greater rate when they teach in a supportive and collegial working environment, and when they accumulate experience in the same grade level, subject, or district.
- More-experienced teachers support greater student learning for their colleagues and the school as a whole, as well as for their own students.

**We also appreciate the amendment repeal portions of Hawaii Revised Statutes Section 302A, especially to remove the cap of Class VII out of law, that will allow more classes to be negotiated during collective bargaining that will incentivize more teachers to take professional development courses to reclassify.** We have to do more to encourage educators, especially those who have years and even decades of experience, to remain in the classroom. This proposal is part of a multi-phased plan to ensure that all of our keiki, regardless of where they live, what their special needs are or their ethnicity, are taught by highly qualified licensed teachers.

**Finally, we agree with OCB testimony that an amendment should be made on who to negotiate with for non-charter schools.** Instead of just negotiating with the superintendent, the language should also reflect negotiations take place with the Board of Education and the governor, too.

**Our main goal for this bill is to request that our state lawmakers approve funding for a one-time salary adjustment to be negotiated as part of an Experimental Modernization Project for eligible teachers to address pay compression, repeal portions of 302A, and amend who to negotiate with. We need the legislature's help to end the teacher shortage crisis. Thank you!**





# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

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Testimony Presented Before the  
House Committee on Labor & Tourism  
Tuesday, March 22, 2022 at 9:00 a.m.

By

Nathan Murata, Dean  
College of Education

And

Michael Bruno, PhD  
Provost

University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

SB 2819 SD2 HD1 – RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on SB 2819 SD2 HD1, Relating to Teacher Compensation.

The University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, College of Education supports SB 2819 SD2 HD1 which provides an experimental modernization project aimed to address compensation equity issues and discretionary salary adjustments for experienced senior teachers by recognizing their professional service. These automatic step increases in teacher salaries for each year of satisfactory service completed by public school teachers and educational assistants will assist in addressing retention. Such discretionary may help encourage senior level teachers and educational assistants to remain in the profession thus increasing retention in our schools.



Committee on Labor and Tourism  
Representative Richard Onishi, Chair  
Representative Justin Sayama, Vice Chair

March 22, 2022

Dear Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and Members of the Committee,

We support SB 2819 SD2 HD1, relating to teacher compensation.

HE'E Coalition continues to be a fierce advocate for students in Hawai'i's public school system and will support measures to help our students thrive and reach the goal of college, career, and community readiness. We agree with the legislature that recruitment and retention of qualified teachers is critical to the success of our education system. We support any mechanism that supports teacher recruitment, retention, and teacher satisfaction, which will ultimately benefit our students.

Hui for Excellence in Education, or "HE'E," promotes a child-centered and strength-based public education system in which families, communities and schools are valued and empowered to help every student succeed. HE'E works to bring diverse stakeholders together to harness collective energy, share resources, and identify opportunities for progressive action in education.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Our support represents a 75% consensus or more of our voting membership.

Sincerely,

Cheri Nakamura  
HE'E Coalition Director



|  |  |
|--|--|
| Academy 21   | Kamehameha Schools   |
| American Civil Liberties Union                         | Kanu Hawai'i   |
| Alliance for Place Based Learning                      | Kaua'i Ho'okele Council  |
| *Castle Complex Community Council                      | Keiki to Career Kaua'i   |
| Coalition for Children with Special Needs              | Kupu A'e   |
| Education Institute of Hawai'i                         | *Leaders for the Next Generation   |
| *Faith Action for Community Equity                     | Learning First   |
| Fresh Leadership LLC                                   | McREL's Pacific Center for Changing the Odds   |
| Girl Scouts Hawaii                                     | Native Hawaiian Education Council  |
| Harold K.L. Castle Foundation                          | Our Public School  |
| *HawaiiKidsCAN   | *Pacific Resources for Education and Learning  |
| *Hawai'i Afterschool Alliance                          | *Parents and Children Together   |
| *Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice | *Parents for Public Schools Hawai'i  |
| *Hawai'i Association of School Psychologists           | Special Education Provider Alliance  |
| Hawai'i Athletic League of Scholars                    | *Teach for America   |
| *Hawai'i Children's Action Network                     | The Learning Coalition   |
| Hawai'i Nutrition and Physical Activity Coalition      | US PACOM   |
| Hawai'i Scholars for Education and Social Justice      | University of Hawai'i College of Education   |
| * Hawai'i State PTSA                                   | <i>Voting Members (*) Voting member organizations vote on action items while individual and non-voting participants may collaborate on all efforts within the coalition.</i> |
| Hawai'i State Student Council                          |  |
| Hawai'i State Teachers Association                     |  |
| Hawai'i P-20   |  |
| Hawai'i 3Rs  |  |
| *Hawai'i Youth Service                                 |  |
| Head Start Collaboration Office                        |  |
| It's All About Kids                                    |  |
| *INPEACE   |  |
| Joint Venture Education Forum                          |  |
| Junior Achievement of Hawaii                           |  |

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

RE: SB 2819, SD2, HD1 – RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

TUESDAY, MARCH 22, 2022

LAVERNE MOORE, SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER

Chair Onishi, and Members of the Committee:

I, Laverne Moore, special education teacher at McKinley High School, speaking on behalf of the McKinley High School Special Education Department, we strongly support SB 2819, SD2, HD1, relating to teacher compensation.

This bill provides automatic step increases in salaries for each year of satisfactory service for public school teachers and increases the amount of time available to teachers for collaboration, preparation, and planning time.

It also addresses compensation equity issues and to make the necessary discretionary salary adjustments for approximately 8,700 experienced teachers by recognizing their professional service to the department of education and our public charter schools through discretionary salary adjustments, as negotiated between the superintendent of education and the exclusive representative of collective bargaining unit (5) Hawaii State Teachers Association.

**We like the amendment to take off the cap of Class VII out of the law, that will allow more classes to be negotiated during collective bargaining.**

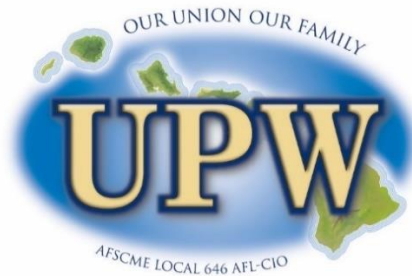
**About 30 years ago, the HSTA's lobbied heavily for Class VII for Hawaii's teachers. We were informed by Ways & Means Chair, Senator Donna Ikeda, that the votes were not there for its passage and that we needed to try again next year. At 11:55PM, she called me at home and asked, "How important is Class VII to my teachers in Hawaii Kai"? I answered, "Very important, especially for those teachers who are close to retirement and need this for their High Three". At the strike of midnight, Hawaii educators got their Class VII.**

**Instead of appropriating capital improvement for her schools, Senator Ikeda, appropriated educational improvement for her educators.** An offspring of this legislations...we teachers at Hahaione Elementary formed a cohort, used our credit cards, enrolled at the University of Hawaii taking night classes and stayed after school to complete our weekly class assignments. **Well, that was over 30 years ago, I am still at Class VII, and at the top of my salary schedule.**

It's time to replace years of experience and respect the thousands of veteran teachers who made a financial sacrifice and adjust their pay to reflect their service and hard work through a recession and pandemic.

The McKinley High School Special Education Teachers ask for your strong support for this bill.





**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
THE THIRTY-FIRST LEGISLATURE  
REGULAR SESSION OF 2022**

**Committee on Labor and Tourism**  
Representative Richard H.K. Onishi, Chair  
Representative Jackson D. Sayama, Vice Chair

Tuesday, March 22, 2022, 9:00AM  
Conference Room 312 and via Videoconference

**Re: Testimony with COMMENTS on SB2819, SD2, HD1 – RELATING TO TEACHER  
COMPENSATION**

Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and Members of the Committee:

The United Public Workers, AFSCME Local 646, AFL-CIO (“UPW”) is the exclusive bargaining representative for approximately 14,000 public employees, which includes blue collar, non-supervisory employees in Bargaining Unit 1 and institutional, health, and correctional employees in Bargaining Unit 10, in the State of Hawaii and various counties. The UPW also represents 1,500 members in the private sector.

UPW **raises concerns** regarding SB2819, SD2, HD1, which provides automatic step increases in salaries for each year of satisfactory service completed by educational assistants, public school teachers, and principals and vice principals. This bill would also increase the amount of time available to teachers for planning, preparation, and collaboration, makes appropriations to fund the automatic step increases, and makes an appropriation to fund an experimental modernization project to make necessary discretionary salary adjustments for certain teachers.

We recognize the issues that this bill is trying to address. However, the issues of high vacancies and competitive salaries are not limited to one classification or bargaining unit, but rather, is systemic throughout our state. UPW remains troubled with any legislation that could potentially circumvent HRS Chapter 89 and impact a public employee’s right to collectively bargain over wages, benefits, and terms and conditions of their employment. We believe that these types of discussions should remain between the Employer and the Employees’ Exclusive Representative.

**HEADQUARTERS** – 1426 North School Street ♦ Honolulu, Hawaii 96817-1914 ♦ Phone: (808) 847-2631

**HAWAII** – 362 East Lanikaula Street ♦ Hilo, Hawaii 96720-4336 ♦ Phone: (808) 961-3424

**KAUAI** – 2970 Kele Street, Suite 213 ♦ Lihue, Hawaii 96766-1325 ♦ Phone: (808) 245-2412

**MAUI** – 841 Kolu Street ♦ Wailuku, Hawaii 96793-1436 ♦ Phone: (808) 244-0815

1-866-454-4166 (Toll Free, Molokai/Lanai only)



The possibility of the Legislature providing additional funding outside of an already negotiated agreement could also affect ongoing negotiations and unfairly impact contracts that have already been agreed.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of the letters 'K' and 'W' in a stylized, cursive font.

Kalani Werner  
State Director

**HEADQUARTERS** – 1426 North School Street ♦ Honolulu, Hawaii 96817-1914 ♦ Phone: (808) 847-2631

**HAWAII** – 362 East Lanikaula Street ♦ Hilo, Hawaii 96720-4336 ♦ Phone: (808) 961-3424

**KAUAI** – 2970 Kele Street, Suite 213 ♦ Lihue, Hawaii 96766-1325 ♦ Phone: (808) 245-2412

**MAUI** – 841 Kolu Street ♦ Wailuku, Hawaii 96793-1436 ♦ Phone: (808) 244-0815

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**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/18/2022 3:14:33 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Kristen             | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

Salary is directly tied to retention; if we want to keep teachers we have to show them that they are valued.

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/18/2022 4:04:33 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b>    | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Kealakai Lindsey-Meyer | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

**Aloha Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the Committee,**

**I am testifying in SUPPORT of SB2819, which funds an experimental modernization project pursuant to Section 78-3.5, Hawaii Revised Statutes, to address compensation equity issues through necessary discretionary salary adjustments.**

**My name is Kealakai Lindsey-Meyer, I teach at Waimea High School on the island of Kauai, Hawaii. Passing SB2819 will allow the Hawaii Department of Education to implement discretionary pay adjustments to address equity and compression for teachers. This will not only positively impact both teacher recruitment and retention but also prevent the teacher shortage crisis from getting worse. I personally know of a few teachers that could not afford to rent and/or could never afford to buy their own home here in Hawaii so they left the islands and a teaching position that the school, state, and students would've benefited greatly from.**

**Please vote in support of all teachers in Hawaii by passing SB2819.**

**Mahalo for your time and the opportunity to testify.**

Dear Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the Committee:

Re: My Testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819

Aloha! I'm Angelita laea, a school counselor in the Central District at Mililani Waena for over 24 years. I am sharing my testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819 and want to share how I have been undercompensated in a career that I committed my life to during an untimely school year in 1997.

I loved the fact that I was going to impact student lives after I received a Masters in Education in school counseling. I entered into the DOE system also beginning a family being 3 months into my first pregnancy. Little did I know how the teachers contract worked; little did I know that I was going to be caught in this compression group for my entire career.

My salary did increase with the credits that I submitted to move classes within the salary schedule. But unfortunately, I didn't have consistent contractual step movements. I went from claiming 2 exemptions on withholding taxes to claiming 9 so I could receive more out of my salary to pay my bills. My former husband picked up extra work hours to be able to pay for the mortgage. Our family life became so unbalanced with our work schedules, taking care of a newborn and trying to be financially stable. Unfortunately, our teachers' contract was up for negotiations again during an untimely year 2001 when teachers did go on strike and I was pregnant, picketing the lines, throwing up and feeling nauseated and sick. However, I needed to do what I needed to do - for my family, to continue being in my school counseling career and just as important voicing my concerns and taking action to be fairly compensated. Sadly, the strike and being out of work on strike put me back even further in pay - not being paid, being without a contract even longer, furloughs and a delay in the new contract being established. I have yet to recuperate and ever be fairly compensated.

I am now a single parent and have been since 2008. We cannot change what has happened in the past or the timing of getting into school counseling and starting a new family. Further, I don't regret becoming a school counselor. However, in evaluating my present career and financial status, what would help me to persevere in this career without having to pick up a part time job, would be to be compensated fairly after 24+ years of service. I'd rather spend my last years dedicated to positively impacting young children's lives and also mentoring college student interns getting into school counseling. But with the cost of living doubling as a result of the pandemic, it will be impossible to keep my home, pay bills, help my daughter with college debts and pay for necessities without also finding another part time job.

When the compression was going to be remedied in January 2020, I was hopeful then, but the pandemic happened. Then the cost of living skyrocketed.

I humbly ask that I along with other teachers, librarians, counselors, IRA's be fairly compensated at this point in our careers. We have shown commitment, integrity, care and patience being in the DOE system despite financial inequity. Allow us to be treated as we deserve to be during the tail end of our careers.

Again, I am in support of Senate Bill 2819. Please vote in support of this Bill.

Thank you Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran and members of the committee for giving me this opportunity to share my testimony.

Mahalo,

Angie laea

School Counselor, Mililani Waena Elementary School, Central District

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/18/2022 4:29:25 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Michael Richey      | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819 SD2. My name is Michael Richey, I teach English Language Arts at Kailua High School. I, very gratefully, call this place my hometown, having been born and raised here. Unfortunately, as a public school educator, my salary does not allow my fiance and I to have the chance at owning a property in Kailua, or any of adjacent areas. This is, generally speaking, a problem many face here in Hawaii. SB 2819 would give my small burgeoning ohana, and all of my fellow educators, a greater chance at affording a healthy lifestyle so that they can continue to support and nurture our keiki.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819 SD2!

With aloha & gratitude,

Michael Richey

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/18/2022 4:40:57 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Brynn Matthews      | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

Please consider passing SB 2819. I have been a teacher in Hawaii for 22 years. My husband is a firefighter. We are not homeowners and are faced with the reality of being priced out of Hawaii. Having a salary that reflects my years of service would provide us with hope at the possibility of staying in Hawaii, a state that we have served collectively for 42 years.  
Thank you for your consideration.

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/18/2022 4:42:48 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b>  | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|----------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Lihauokalani Kaapuni | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB 2819, SD2.

My name is Lihau Kaapuni. I was born and raised on the island of Molokai. I've been an elementary school teacher for 13 years.

My children and I have been living with my parents for the past 7 years because I can't afford to rent a house let alone buy my own home. Living in Hawaii is expensive but living on Molokai makes financial matters worse. Food and gas prices are outrageous. We pay a lot more for food, gas, and various services than our neighboring islands. It's unfair that the cost of living continues to increase in Hawaii but our salary continues to stay the same.

In the past two years, I've contemplated finding another job and moving to the mainland for a better financial future. As the only financial provider for my family, I'm not sure how much longer I can stay in this profession if our salary doesn't change.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill SB 2819, SD2 relating to teacher compensation.

Thank you for your time and the opportunity to testify.

Kind Regards,

Lihau Kaapuni

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/18/2022 4:48:20 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Romeo Eleno         | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the Committee,

My name is Romeo Eleno and I work in the Maui District on the Island of Lanai and teach Health/Physical Education at Lanai High & Elementary School. I am writing in support of SB 2819 SD2 relating to teacher compensation (salary compression).

As a veteran teacher that can retire in Dec. 2022, I find myself making a tough decision to continue teaching the keiki on Lanai or venture into another career that will pay me for what I'm worth. Teachers have been used and abused in order to help balance the State budget with furloughs and pay cuts and not to mention dealing with the pandemic of Covid.

I would like to continue my passion and calling to teach and truly believe that it is now the time to put the affected teachers to the appropriate salary scale we need to be. The students have suffered enough and we need to be respected as professionals who are responsible in educating our future generation. Please support SB 2819 SD2.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

Romeo Eleno

Lanai City



**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/18/2022 4:49:23 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Michael Press       | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the Committee,

Name is Michael Press and I am a teacher at Ilima Intermediate on Oahu in Ewa Beach. I am writing you to support SB2819 addressing teacher compensation. The past 2 years has been difficult for all of Hawaii but those that have been hit very hard has been teachers. Bill 2819 would guarantee that teachers in Hawaii, like their counterparts around the United States, have their salaries adjusted based on their years of experience, meaning more than 8,000 of our members would see corrections in their salaries to help keep them in the profession longer. We need to keep teachers in Hawaii.

Mahalo Nui,

Michael Press

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/18/2022 4:52:32 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Lisa Barnard        | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the Committee:

I am submitting testimony in favor of Senate Bill 2819.

I teach at Volcano School. I support the passage of this bill because I have been teaching for the past 18 years without raises other than step raises. As you know, the past couple years have been very stressful on all our families. We need to keep senior teachers working with our students to help them make the progress they need to make.

I know several teachers that feel seriously underpaid and under appreciated and overworked who are considering retirement due to the many stresses of the job. Some of these teachers would not retire at this point if they had a higher rate of pay.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819. I appreciate your consideration of this testimony.

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/18/2022 4:54:40 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Hana Mauldin        | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Dear Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the Committee.”

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819. I am a teacher in the Kau, Kea'au, Pahoa complex area on Hawai'i Island. I have been a teacher for over ten years and my salary has been affected by the compression that this bill will address. I, like so many of my fellow teachers, service a community that is considered high poverty. I have used my own money to support my classroom, especially since the onset of Covid-19. If my salary becomes uncompressed it would allow me to continue to support my classroom as well as my own personal needs. Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819.

Mahalo for your time,

Hana Mauldin

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/18/2022 5:03:29 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Aoi Shinagawa       | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819 regarding teacher compensation. As the daughter of a teacher who endured the previous time of salary compression, I experienced firsthand the struggles to survive on a meager teacher salary. My mother worked tirelessly beyond her contract hours and barely managed to keep a roof over our heads. There was only three of us - we were not a large family. However, on her single income as a public educator she was unable to support her family. Unbeknownst to me, she ended up accruing a massive amount of debt in order to make sure my brother and I were fed, clothed, and cared for. After struggling with this debt for a decade, she was finally forced to declare bankruptcy in 2019. After 20 years of teaching, my mother finally left the classroom to work in a nonclassroom position within the DOE, because she realized that if she continued doing what she loved, teaching, she would not be able to retire until she died. As a result, my mother is now past retirement age and unable to retire because she lacks savings and still rents property, unable to purchase a home due to low credit, and still working tirelessly for the department of education. I am certain my family is not the only one who experienced this type of hardship. Is this really how we should thank our educators?

I believe that my mother deserves better, given that she worked passionately to support her students and her family. I believe that all teachers deserve better. Being a teacher is a very difficult job requiring hours of planning, maintaining high levels of energy throughout the day, taking on the emotional burden of caring for and comforting children, waking up early, staying late to prep for the next day, hundreds of dollars spent on supplies, and more. The current levels of compensation are not fair compared to the amount of work and expectations of teachers.

Please vote in support of SB2819.

Thank you for your time.

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/18/2022 5:17:29 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Samantha Silva      | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819. My name is Samantha Silva and I am a School Counselor at Kailua High School. I have humbly served the Waimanalo and Kailua Communities for about 19 years. I believe our students deserve to have skilled, veteran teachers in all of our classrooms across the state. Being an educator for this long, I have witnessed so many teachers leave the classroom via retirement, moving to the mainland, or just flat out leaving the profession because they cannot afford to live on a teacher's wage in Hawaii. I am stuck on step 11 and have been for a few years. At this rate, by the time I am eligible to retire in about 10 years, I may not have reached the top of the pay scale. I have exceeded the number of classes it takes to be at class 7, thus there is no other opportunity for me to increase my pay. Voting to support this bill will help teachers like me stay in the profession and mentor new and incoming teachers to do the same. In closing, I support SB2819, please join me in support. Thank you for your service.

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/18/2022 5:28:46 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Andrew Sanchez      | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

Veteran teachers deserve to be compensated appropriately. Part of the reason why Hawaii struggles with keeping good teachers is due to the dismal pay. Literally all my teacher friends have multiple jobs. THAT IS UNACCEPTABLE. FIX THIS. PAY TEACHERS.

Aloha Chair Onishi, Vice-Chair Sayama, and members of the Committee:

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819 SD2.

My name is Dr. Lawrence “Bo” Frank. I teach at Radford High School and serve as the Department Chair for Physical Education. I coach the State, National, and International championship cheer team at RHS. I am a proud graduate of the Hawaii public school system, and I have been a servant leader in our community since 1998 when I began my teaching career.

I am stuck in the middle of our salary schedule at step 11, with six steps below and 5 steps above. I have 23 years in the department, it is disheartening to be in the middle of our salary schedule due to pay cuts, furlough Fridays, and several contract negotiations that were finalized without step movements in my tenure. If salary compression is not addressed, I will not be able to continue my calling as a teacher. Under the current salary schedule, I could potentially retire with 30 years of service and never reach 14B, which is presently the top of our salary schedule and a point I should already be in with my years of service. I am beyond frustrated, struggling to provide for my children financially, which should not be the case after earning a doctoral degree in addition to my experience, after so many years of service to the keiki of Hawaii and the world, for that matter, in my position at Radford. If salary compression is not addressed, I will be forced to accept one of the much higher paying jobs I have been offered in the recent past, instead of doing what I love as a teacher and coach for the keiki of Hawaii.

I humbly ask that you folks do what is right. Please be pono and address salary compression for the future success of our students, schools, and teachers, aiding to cease the ongoing teacher shortage.

Please vote in support of SB2819 SD2. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this imperative bill.

Mahalo,

Lawrence “Bo” Frank, PhD

SB-2819 SD2

Submitted By: Thomas Luna

Organization: Individual

Testifier Position: Support

Remote Testimony Requested: Yes

Comments:

Aloha Chair Onishi, Vice-Chair Sayama, and members of the Committee:

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819 SD2 HD1.

My name is Thomas Luan, and I teach CTE and STEM at Radford High School in Honolulu, Hawaii. Again, I support SB 2819 SD2.

Many teachers in my school, complex, district, and state have shouldered the burden of salary compression for years and have endured an enormous fiscal sentence over the years. These teachers/facilitators/mentors /servant leaders of rigor and relevance have been mistreated and under-paid for a long time. It is evident that when teachers have more experience, their craft improves, and student academic output also progresses. In this time of transformation and uncertainty, our teachers have been remarkable in keeping students engaged. Teachers deserve a living wage that reflects their education and their experience.

Please vote in support of SB2819 SD2 HD 1. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this crucial bill.

Mahalo,

Thomas Luna



**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/18/2022 5:56:48 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Hilary White        | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819. My name is Hilary White and I currently teach students in the Windward District. I have been a full time educator for almost 19 years, yet I am only at step 11 due to salary compression. Other teachers I know are in a similar situation. Every teacher I know has worked very hard under this very stressful situation. Not only do we need to worry about the health and wellness of our students and ourselves, but we also worry if we are going to be able to pay the bills or if we will be able to afford to retire. Many times we have not received a step increase, yet inflation continues to rise dramatically. How can teachers afford to stay here and make a difference. I plead with you to vote in support of Senate Bill 2819.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in SUPPORT of Senate Bill 2819.

Respectfully,

Hilary White

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/18/2022 6:22:46 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Jason Tamura        | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

I have been a department of education teacher for 19 years... I have done all that I can to be at the top of my profession by taking courses to further my knowledge as well as to put myself at the top of my respective pay scale. Due to step movements being allotted only by contractual negotiations, I have been forced to take on other jobs to keep up with inflation and the rise of the cost of living in Hawaii to support my family as well create a future in which I could possibly retire at a reasonable age. I would greatly appreciate if the legislature would vote in favor of this bill.

mahalo

jason Tamura

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/18/2022 6:40:10 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Wendy Wilhelm       | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

My name is Wendy Wilhelm and I have been a teacher since 1995. Currently, I hold 3 jobs to make all of my and my family's ends meet. I took many classes to advance on our salary schedule across the page, but no matter what, I cannot earn any more without step increases built into our negotiations. With the passing of SB2819 SD2, I can finally earn what my years of service and experience so rightfully deserve. I strongly urge you to pass SB2819 SD2. We veteran teachers need incentive to stay in the profession we love, or risk losing us to an economy that we simply cannot afford anymore.

Mahalo, Wendy Wilhelm

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/18/2022 6:40:47 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b>    | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Leilani Johnson-Hagmoc | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

**Dear Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the Committee,**

**I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819. My name is Leilani Johnson-Hagmoc and I am an educator in the Campbell-Kapolei District. I believe that teacher's salaries should be adjusted to reflect their years of service in the Department of Education system.**

**If Senate Bill 2819 moves forward, the legislation will have a profound impact on Hawai'i educators. First off, Hawai'i school teachers are amongst the lowest paid in the nation when factoring in cost of living. By correcting the salary compression, teachers will be provided adequate financial support to pay their living expenses and support their families. Fixing the compression issue will help provide veteran teachers with a competitive wage that helps them remain in this profession for a longer amount of time. Veteran teachers are valued for their years of experience and countless years of refining their craft to impact their students. Educators usually put in work that is beyond their contractual hours because of their love for their students and responsibility to their education. Correcting the compression issue is a fair and just action that will compensate teachers for their hard-work that they provide for the future generations of Hawaii's children.**

**The salary compression has impacted me on a personal level, as I am the sole provider of my household. I financially provide my family with the entire rental, electricity and water payment. On top of those necessary bills, there is food, gas, car payments that need to be paid. With the cost of living so high in Hawai'i, my father who is reaching retirement age, has no retirement money. After bills are paid, I do not have enough to pay for an affordable living arrangement, and therefore will be his caretaker after retirement. If I was paid more, I would be able to support myself and his retirement wishes for an affordable living arrangement. If teachers could be paid based on years of service, it not only affects their quality of life but the lives of others.**

**I've known teachers who are so generous with their money, and would want to use that to empower other people's lives. I've also known teachers who have left the profession because they were not fairly compensated for the amount of work they provided for students. I've met younger teachers who think that the workload of educators is not fair in comparison to the amount of pay they garner every week. I've earned my Master's degree and even though I am compensated more than my colleagues, I could earn a higher income**

**at one night of work elsewhere than working in a school. Quitting has come across my mind multiple times. Yet, I stay in the profession because of the kuleana that I have for the future generation of Hawai'i. Education is the basis for all change, and if teachers can raise a generation to choose ethical decisions, we can impact a whole community. Teachers are needed to guide our youth to become loving and industrious adults. They are needed to help them realize their full potential so that they can lead healthy lives. I would like to be compensated fairly for refining my craft every year to help reach more students through education.**

**I believe that fairly compensating teachers will entice them to stay in the profession longer and help aid with Hawai'i's teacher shortage. Professions like police officers and firefighters save lives and are given higher status and pay in our society. Communities need to realize that teachers are shaping lives and be recognized with the same amount of status and financial compensation. Let's work together to elevate the teaching profession by taking the first step in compensating us fairly and justly. I love teaching, but I would also not want to struggle financially for the rest of my life. I would like to mahalo this committee for the opportunity to testify and please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819.**

**Mahalo nui,**

**Leilani Johnson-Hagmoc**

Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the Committee:

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819.

My name is Juliana Romero and I am in my 21st year teaching as a certified and licensed special education teacher. Currently, I am an Autism Consultant Teacher for the Central District. In passing this bill, it will allow me to stay in Hawaii and teach the students I love and help the special education teachers who have students with autism in their classes. I have been on Class 7, Step 11 for 9 years and it is very disheartening. Teachers should be paid a fair wage for our years of experience and education. I work 2 jobs in order to survive as a teacher with 21 years of experience teaching in Hawaii, 2 MA's, required PhD coursework, BCBA coursework and ABA/BCBA Supervision. I can make more money as a special education teacher in another state where the cost of living is less. I choose to stay in Hawaii because I love the students and know there is a tremendous shortage of special education teachers.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819. If passed, it will allow teachers to remain in the state they love, teaching students who deserve more.

Thank you Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the Committee for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Juliana R. Romero

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/18/2022 7:11:47 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| Submitted By           | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify                |
|------------------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Sandra Afuso-Fernandez | Individual   | Support            | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Dear Chair Woodson, Vice Chair Kapela, and members of the Committee:

My name is **Sandra Afuso-Fernandez**. I am a teacher at Ma'ema'e Elementary School in **Honolulu District** on the island of 'Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2819.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue. The Department of Education will need additional funding to ensure that teachers who were consistently overlooked and undervalued for many, many years will finally receive the pay that they rightfully deserve. Our veteran teachers are worth it as they are important to the future of all of our children in Hawaii.

I have been teaching in Hawaii for the past 24 years. When was young, I always admired my teachers and aspired to be one when I grew up. Through college, people would tell me that teachers don't make money and would struggle to make ends meet, but still decided that teaching was for me. Little did know that I would end up working a second job for 15 years to supplement my income as a teacher.

There has been many times that I have second guessed my decision to become a teacher through the tough economic times where we had furlough Fridays, pay freezes, step freezes, and spent time lobbying at the State Capitol to gain the attention of law makers to value teachers. Perhaps it is time for me to finally consider leaving a profession that I love because it is a struggle to provide for my family due to Hawaii's high cost of living rapidly outpacing my teacher salary. Or perhaps it is time that I consider "retiring" at the age of 48 and explore other opportunities to provide for my family.

As a veteran teacher who has been teaching for over 20 years, I have seen many highly experienced teachers retire and replaced by "rookie" newbie teachers who need time and experience to hone their teaching skills. Being an effective teacher takes years working with students and parents, understanding curriculum, and really knowing how to make a difference in students' education. Valuing experienced teachers with salary adjustments that they deserve will keep them in the classroom longer and ensure that students have veteran, experienced, and qualified teachers.

We desperately need your help to correct a great disservice to our veteran teachers. Now is the time to show teachers that they are valued.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Sandra Afuso-Fernandez

(Honolulu District, 'Oahu)



**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/18/2022 7:22:26 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Dawn LW Shiota      | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Please support SB2819 relating to teacher compensation.

Aloha,

My name is Dawn Shiota and I have worked for the Hawaii Department of Education for over 24 years on Maui and Oahu. I am writing to you today to urge you to support this bill to pay teachers and compensate them for their years of service, dedication, and expertise. The more teachers that we have and retain the less teachers we need to recruit.

Teachers are leaving the Hawaii DOE in droves. This last posting (March) there were about 1800 job vacancies for teachers and that is not including many that will leave at the end of the year or who have not submitted their intent to retire documents , those who plan to change careers or return to the mainland .

Teachers are burnt out and disheartened that we have to literally rally for compensations that we deserve. Teachers are living from paycheck to paycheck even while working 2nd jobs.

If the legislature fails to pass this bill, who will teach our keiki? Will our keiki continue to be corralled into our cafeterias and babysat by substitute teachers? That"s even if there are substitute teachers available. This year alone I have seen days where half of the teaching positions were not filled by substitutes, due to substitute teacher shortage. At a high school it may be 10 teachers a day with no substitute.. So who is teaching the students???

Please support this bill to retain our current dedicated effective teachers and to attract new highly qualified teachers. Mahalo for reading my testimony to support this bill.

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/18/2022 7:30:16 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| maria hector        | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

I am a class 7, step 9 teacher. I have been with the DOE for almost 10 years. Despite all my training and professional development, I am not able to receive compensation that matches my experience since my salary has been compressed. Please allow teachers to have adequate compensation for their years of experience. Thank you.

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/18/2022 7:35:41 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Nanna Lindberg      | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the Committee

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2819 SD2.

My name is Nanna Lindberg and I am a science teacher at Maui High School. I'm strongly urging you to pass this bill. For too long, teachers have been under compensated for their hard work. They are leaving the profession for better paying opportunities and to be able to support their families. my husband is also a teacher, and together we have two kids. The education we want for them is one that is sufficiently funded and led by the best teachers. We are losing those teachers. Through the pandemic, despite federal aid proposed to be used for teacher compensation, we have suffered a pay cut, and a new contract with no increases in pay. Many teachers ratified our new contract believing that the one time bonus passed by legislature was coming so that we wouldn't be suffering a pay cut. That did not happen as it was vetoed by the Governor and legislature did nothing to override that decision. This bill would be one, although not enough, step towards stabilizing the teacher workforce for our future generation. Although I am not directly affected by salary compression, my husband and most of the teachers I know are.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill SB2819 SD2. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Nanna Lindberg MSc, PhD

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/18/2022 8:22:36 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Cynthia Reves       | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

I am a teacher at McKinley High School and have watched my salary stagnate. This bill will right a wrong. I am nearing retirement, but this legislation would be incentive to work a few years longer. Please support it.

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/18/2022 8:11:05 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Cindy Deuz          | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the Committee,

I am writing in favor of SB 2819 SD2 relating to teacher compensation (salary compression) because Hawaii's teachers are professionals who deserve to be treated as such. I have been teaching for over a decade and absolutely love it, but I cannot afford to continue this way. Hawaii is a very expensive place to live and being a teacher, you tend to spend your own money for school supplies, goodies for your students, among other things. I do it because I care about my students and I want them to have unique learning opportunities that are not only educational but also memorable.

My daughter is going into education and I don't want her to have to go through living paycheck to paycheck. Fixing this salary compression will not only help us stay in Hawaii and continue to do what we love, but will also provide our keikis with quality educators who know what the meaning of Aloha is. Too often we rely on hiring mainland teachers who stay for a couple of years and then realize that Hawaii is not for them and the cycle starts all over again. We should be catering to the locals who are familiar with what Hawaii is all about and will stay if the pay is commensurate with experience.

Your favorable consideration for SB 2819 SD2 relating to teacher compensation (salary compression) is greatly needed to keep highly qualified teachers in Hawaii and to entice new teachers to the profession. Now is the time to fix what should have been done a very long time ago. Now is the time to do the right thing and pay our teachers what they deserve.

Thank you so much for your time,

Cindy Deuz

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/18/2022 8:31:17 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Yvette Rapozo       | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2819 SD2 HD1.

My name is Yvette Rapozo and I am a teacher at Kapaa Elementary School on the island of Kauai. I am in favor of this bill that helps to place teachers at the right pay level they deserve based on years of experience. I personally know of many teachers who left the profession last year and many more who are leaving at the end of this school year. The demands of the job and the lack of appropriate pay has a lot to do with their decision. We are losing the most effective and experienced teachers which directly affects students academic success. We are also not attracting many candidates into the profession like we have in the past. If we want students to succeed academically, we need to have highly qualified teachers in our classrooms everyday.

The state has been experiencing a shortage of teachers for years and this is one of the main reasons. No one is attracted to a stressful job that doesn't respect their skills and doesn't pay them what they are worth. If we want children to learn, they need to learn from the best and most experienced. But if the pay isn't matching the skills and training that teachers need, the shortage will continue and probably get worse.

I ask you to please vote in support of SB2819 SD2 HD1.

Thank you for allowing me to submit testimony on this very important matter.

Sincerely,

Yvette Rapozo

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/18/2022 8:35:38 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| David Wells         | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the Committee,

My name is David Wells and I am a licensed middle school science teacher on the Big Island in the district of Ka'u. I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2820 SD2.

I want to ask you folks to continue the differentials for certain geographical areas, SPED and Hawaiian language immersion. I see how the differentials have provided an incentive for more people to enter fields and geographical areas because of the extra pay. I know several people in the teacher training program that specifically went into special education or looked for a job in a geographically isolated area because of the extra pay. The differential pay has benefited my 'ohana as the sole earner with 3 children. Lastly, in a time where morale among teachers is low due to Covid-19 and inflation, please vote in support of Senate Bill SB2820 SD2.

Mahalo nui committee members for the opportunity to testify,

David Wells

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/18/2022 8:48:58 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b>    | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Maria Bernard-Reantaso | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

**Dear Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the Committee on Labor & Tourism,**

**I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819, SD2. By passing this legislation, I am able to take better care of my Mom, and my family, without the financial worries. I grew up in public housing while attending public school. My Mom worked as a housekeeper at a Waikiki hotel, then later as a janitor for the State Capitol. My dad was a taxi driver. Through their sacrifice, I became a teacher in our island state. With a total of 26 years in my teaching career, I've taught for more than 20 years and counting in the DOE.**

**Almost 11 years ago, when my dad was still alive, he wanted dentures. At that moment I recalled how my Dad would work the extra hours, just so that me & my sister could have braces. Therefore, I called various places to get an estimate. I went with the dentist who was the cheapest, because I couldn't afford the high price tag of the latest tech or highly recommended dentists. Then I sold the few stocks I had to make my Dad's dream come true. The dentures he got were nothing fancy. It was very basic. In fact the dentures were very uncomfortable for him, and he just couldn't use them. It was only then the dentist told me that once you pull out his back teeth, it will never be the same. From that point on, I saw my dad's health decline so quickly until he passed. I wonder sometimes, if I had enough money to afford the more expensive dentures, would it have given me more days with my Dad?**

**If SB2819 SD2 becomes law, I would be able to afford better health care for my Mom, husband, & loved ones.**

**I appreciate your support by passing SB2819 SD2.**

**Sincerely,**

**M. Bernard-Reantaso**





**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/18/2022 11:03:41 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| Submitted By    | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify                |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Marilou Bulagay | Individual   | Support            | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Dear Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama and members of the Committee,

My name is Marilou Bulagay. I am submitting testimony in support of the bill on Compression Pay for Teachers- Senate Bill 2819, SD 2. I am a teacher with the Hawaii Department of Education working in the Honolulu District.

**I have endured the teaching strike in 2000 (that was my first year of teaching) and furloughs. This also forced me to accept several contracts that compressed my pay, not allowing me to move in steps. Factoring in the high cost of living in Hawaii, with a mortgage and raising 2 children, it has been proven that Hawaii teachers are paid the lowest in the nation. Because of this I am struggling and continue to live paycheck to paycheck to support my family. This is so sad. The only reason why I continue to stay here in Hawaii is for the children and to be honest, I have a daughter in the public school system who is graduating this school year. My oldest son is currently in college in Oregon. So, I will have 2 college tuitions to be responsible for and I am still paying for my student loans that I have incurred when I went to graduate school. The only reason I went to graduate school was to get to the highest pay class which is Class VII. I have been stuck in that class for over 10 years now and only depend on step raises to increase my pay. After 22 years of teaching with a master's degree for half my teaching career I am still not at my career high in pay. Knowing that my own children will no longer be in the Hawaii public school system and I will soon have another financial burden, I am looking to leave the DOE and moving to the mainland where I could have more money in my pocket to support my family since my son is already on the mainland and my daughter is looking at mainland colleges. Moving out of Hawaii will allow me to take advantage of paying for their tuition as a resident and the opportunity for a higher pay. There really is no reason for me to continue to stay in Hawaii knowing that my children will not be here and the pay as a teacher will no longer suffice our financial needs.**

I am sure many other teachers are in the same situation as me and looking at other opportunities to increase their pay to support their families. The DOE is already facing a huge teacher shortage. Many teachers are also on the brink of retirement and have no reason to stay since they are already at their career high with the current pay schedule that we have.

However, the approval of the compression pay for teachers will close the gap on the teacher shortage because it will be a great incentive for teachers like myself to stay and teach in the DOE

system and a greater incentive for more senior teachers to teach since they will be at their career high in pay. The approval of this bill will provide the teachers with the pay that they deserve for all the years they have worked with the Hawaii DOE.

I am asking that you please support the bill for Compression for Teachers. The passing of Senate Bill 2819 will have a positive impact on my family's finances. This will allow me to stay here in Hawaii and support my own children's financial burdens of college tuitions. I would love to stay here and continue to teach the children of Hawaii but I also have my OWN children to support and receiving the benefits of the compression package would allow me to do both!

Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Many blessings to you,

Marilou Bulagay

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/18/2022 11:11:06 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Kaleolani Hanohano  | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION**

**RE: SB 2819 Proposed SD2, RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION**

**(SALARY COMPRESSION)**

**Wednesday, March 16, 2022**

**Aloha e Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the Education Committee:**

**My name is Josette Kaleolani Akim Hanohao. I am a teacher at Kahuku High & Intermediate School in Windward District in the moku of Ko`olauloa on the island of O`ahu o Kakuhihewa. I am submitting testimony in support of RE: SB 2819 Proposed SD2,**

**Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard to staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides to do so. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.**

**I am a dedicated 30 year veteran in the department who currently lives paycheck to paycheck. As a result of salary compression and oppressive salary schedules, I have had to forgo ideas of earning my masters degree in my 20's, erase dreams of owning my own home in my 30's, and dissolve any notions of becoming a principal or vice principal of a DOE school (because training and school requires financial stability). The most debilitating reflection is to look back in my 50's and see that I was destitute as a teacher, barely able to care for myself and my daughter. With 30 years of experience, I still hang by my "fingertips" below the top of the salary schedule. It is demoralizing and heartbreaking that colleagues 20 years younger make more than I do.**

**In closing, I hope that legislators are eager to make decisions to end compression with compassion and aloha. I further request that the state compensate teachers "locked in**

**compression” for their time of service. It is in the work that knowledge is attained and right now we need you to work at pushing this critical piece of legislation through. Please do the job your kupuna put you in the capitol to do, make great things happen for Hawai`i pono`i and restore our aloha!**

**I ke hana ka `ike!**

**The learning and knowledge is in the work!**

**Josette K. Akim Hanohano**

**Windward District, Moku o Ko`olauloa i O`ahu o Kakuhihewa**

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/19/2022 6:29:08 AM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Sandy Domion        | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

**Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the Committee.**

**I am submitting testimony in support of SB2819 SD2.**

**My name is Sandy Domion and I am the librarian at McKinley High School. I have been teaching in the DOE since 1997. I will have been with the DOE for 25 years, yet I am not on the top of the pay scale. I have a Master's Degree in Library and Information Sciences and am licensed to teach English and Language Arts. I am in the highest Class VII on the salary schedule but only Step 12. The difference between Step 12 and Step 14b, which is where I should be, is \$12,565. I make up for this difference by working two additional jobs. I teach as a part-time teacher through DOE's E-School and work as a cashier nights and weekends at Whole Foods 5 days out of 7. It is disheartening to know that I can only HOPE that I will be at the top of the pay scale when I reach retirement age.**

**Please vote in support of this bill SB2819 SD2 so we can be compensated fairly according to the years of service that we have put into the DOE.**

**Thank you for your time,**

**Sandy Domion**

## TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE on Labor and Tourism

RE: SB [SB2819](#) RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

Tuesday, March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2022

9 a.m.

Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the Committee:

My name is Maria Guardino. I am a proud public-school teacher at Kaimuki High School in Honolulu on Oahu. **I am submitting testimony in support of [SB2819](#)** relating to teacher compensation.

Our children are our future. When teachers instruct their students, they build the foundation for equality and prosperity for tomorrow's generations.

Supporting this proposal will lift our public schools in Hawai'i into the 21st Century. A vote for this measure is a vote that creates competitive professional pay which reflects the value of our hardworking teachers.

Just a month ago, I was walking with my friend. We are both in our 50s and trying to plan for our "golden years". She shared her income with me and I had to say, I honestly felt saddened with a tinge of anxiety. I have been working for Hawaii's DOE for 18 years, and yet, will be earning less than half of her income. When I shared how much I earn with her, she was frankly appalled. She asked why teachers were not paid respectfully. She said, "You take care of our keiki, why aren't we taking care of you??" We both love our careers, we love our community, and we both serve our community by working with the next generation. We know most teachers in other states who are committed to teaching earn more AND yet, teachers in Hawaii continue to be financially disregarded. How can our state reflect that they honor our teachers and their work when they do not prioritize their financial stability?

Every year, the cost of bills increases; rent, electricity, gas, food, etc. The only thing that has gone down steadily is my pay. (As relative to cost of living) As a teacher, I'd like to feel less anxious and more secure about my future. I'd like to know that I can afford to remain here. Per Bill 2819: "Hawaii's teacher salaries are the lowest in the nation when adjusted for the State's high cost of living",

I know other places are more affordable, and I've had people tell me I should consider moving. I

have. Is this the message we want to send our teachers? Can Hawaii afford more teachers leaving?

I quote directly from Bill 2919 “Unfair pay scales have driven experienced senior teachers to either retire early or leave the profession, due to the perception that their experience and dedication to public education and the teaching profession will never be adequately valued and recognized.

“The legislature has found that an increasing number of school districts around the country are utilizing compensation methods and strategies designed to improve the recruitment and retention of qualified teachers.”

Please help me and the many other passionate, committed educators, remain serving our students of Hawaii by addressing teacher compensation.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819.

Thank you,

“Ms. G,” as the students call me.

Maria Guardino, MSW, NBCT, Teacher Leader



**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/19/2022 8:37:50 AM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Kelly Cole          | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

**Please help the State of Hawaii keep their experienced teachers in the profession longer. Please guarantee that teachers in Hawaii have their salaries adjusted based on years of experience.**

**Thank you**

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/19/2022 9:29:21 AM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Sarah Starr         | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

I strongly support SB2819. This bill will fix longstanding issues with teachers salary compression, which has affected many veteran, highly qualified teachers. Hawaii has a teacher shortage, and the effects and stress of teaching through covid, the rising costs of living, and the lack of fair compensation is causing our most experienced teachers to retire. Notoriously low salaries and ranking lowest in the nation for teacher retirement discourages new teachers from sticking with this challenging profession. Let's give Hawaii's keki the education they deserve. Effective, caring teachers are the most critical ingredient of quality education. Let's give our teachers the respect and stability of fair compensation so we can focus on our job without economic stress.

Thank you for considering my testimony,

Sarah Starr

Pre-K SPED teacher

Honolulu District

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/19/2022 8:53:51 AM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Mara saltzman       | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

Aloha Legislators,

I have been a public school teacher in Hawaii since 2007. Teachers are under-compensated in Hawaii and with salary compression, there is a huge shortage of teachers in Hawaii. This is negatively impacting the children. With the high cost of living in Hawaii, teachers leave the state seeking fair salary in other states that pay based on years of teaching experience.

Please support this bill.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Mara Saltzman

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/19/2022 9:30:18 AM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Derek Bishop        | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Subject Line: Testimony in Support of SB 2819, SD2 HD1

Aloha Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the Committee,

This is my testimony in support of SB 2819, SD2 HD1. My name is Derek Bishop. I am a 32-year special education teacher veteran at Paauilo Elementary and Intermediate School on the Big Island.

Currently I am on Step 11 rather than 14B, or 5 steps lower than I should be, earning \$15,000 less than I ought. As a full-time special education teacher, I have 15 years from California and 17 years from Hawaii. After a lengthy absence, I relocated to Hawaii from the mainland when the special education and hard-to-staff differentials took effect in 2020. Even with the differentials, I still took a \$16,000 pay cut to be here. In Hawaii, every dollar of compensation counts. The cost of living in Hawaii is tremendous, and has only been exacerbated by COVID and the influx of wealthy families to the islands during the pandemic.

On the mainland I received yearly salary increment moves in line with years of service. These moves, typically 2-5% each, were automatic. I believe such moves based on years of full-time teaching service are fair, equitable, and extremely helpful to anyone trying to live on a teacher salary. I believe such a policy of automatic salary movement based on years of service should be instituted in Hawaii, where the cost of living is so high.

Also, another related matter is one of years of service granted for service in other school districts. On the mainland the standard is 10 years granted, with many districts granting 12, 15, 20, or unlimited years of service in order to attract the most qualified and experienced teachers possible. Hawaii grants a maximum of 6 years of service. This is a disincentive for any teacher with 10 years or more of experience, as they will lose their place in their respective salary schedule, forcing them when in Hawaii to accept the pay of a beginning teacher, when they have a wisdom and skill set that should receive a much higher compensation.

Please vote in support of SB 2819, SD2 HD1. Please provide pay commensurate with years of service -- and the wisdom and communal stability that they represent.

I wish to thank this Committee for the opportunity to testify.

Mahalo,

Derek Bishop

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/19/2022 10:03:57 AM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Cara Lynn Nishijima | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

It is imperative that we support teachers and the services they provide to our students.

Supporting long term teachers is so important because they have so much knowledge to share.

Please support this bill and get teachers back on the steps they deserve to be on.

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/19/2022 10:27:51 AM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Heather Ramiro      | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

**SENATE COMMITTEE**

**3/17/22 Video Conference**

**SB2819 SD1 - Relating to Teacher Compensation**

**IN SUPPORT**

**My name is Heather Ramiro, I am a teacher for the Central district. This is my 15th year teaching in a DOE school in the state of Hawaii.**

**I am testifying in favor of SB2819 relating to teacher compensation to fix salary compression. I believe that the passing of this bill will help many teachers to better survive and thrive living in Hawai'i. I was born and raised on O'ahu and would love to retire as a teacher in my home state. I have struggled to pay rent and have had to move my family back home to live with my parents. If I did not do this my children would not be able to play sports or music because we would not be able to afford anything extra other than food and rent. I have had many friends, who are teachers, move out of state and they have been able to afford a home, extra curricular activities for their children and basic necessities without having to worry about not having enough money to cover it all. I have worked tirelessly over my teaching career to increase my pay by taking professional development classes on the weekends and during the summer. I have paid out of pocket to take these courses to increase my pay. These courses have been beneficial and have helped me to be a better teacher, but I am already at the highest level of the payscale and cannot do anything else to increase my pay level, besides getting a second job.**

**This is why I encourage you to vote YES on bill SB2819 to help teachers like me to be able to stay in Hawai'i and provide the best we can for our families.**

**Thank you for your time and support,**

**Heather Ramiro**

**Central District Teacher**





**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/19/2022 11:42:27 AM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Andrea Quinn        | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

Dear Honorable Committee Members:

Please support SB2819.

Thank you for the opportunity to present my testimony.

Andrea Quinn

Kihei, Maui

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/19/2022 11:45:17 AM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Kalelani Ogata      | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Chair Woodson, Vice Chair Kapela, and members of the Committee. I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB 2819, SD2 relating to teacher compensation (salary compression). I am a teacher in the Honolulu district who has taught for over 20 years. I am still in the middle of the salary schedule on step 11 with no other options for movement as I am also in the highest class 7. It is very upsetting to know that when this salary compression began I already had 10 years of teaching under my belt but was paid the same amount as new, incoming teachers with zero teaching experience. This difference in pay was not resolved. My family has lost out on that income and the financial stability it would have provided us. It is not too late to fix this injustice. The money is still needed; the cost of living is even higher. I now have even more experience (over 20 years) and am worth a lot more. I should be on step 14 but I am not because of this salary compression. Please correct this compression in my salary so that I can be paid what is due to me and the other teachers affected by this salary compression. Please vote in support of Senate Bill SB 2819. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/19/2022 12:11:28 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Torie Nakata-Nagao  | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the Committee,

I strongly support SB2819 SD2. I have been a public school teacher for most of my career and recently made the transition to school counselor. Although I have an advanced degree, I cannot afford to buy a home in Hawaii with my salary. I live paycheck to paycheck paying for my student loans and living expenses. With the high cost of living quickly getting worse here, our public school educators desperately need help. Our school has a staff that have been on staff for 15+ years. It's unfortunate to see that a handful of my colleagues, including myself, have had to work part-time jobs after the school day so that we're able to support ourselves or their families. At our school, we have lost some amazing educators as they both moved to the mainland where they were able to afford a home for their families. I don't want to see our school, or state, lose any more amazing educators to the mainland. I would also love to continue to have a career where I'm able to support myself and build savings as well. Please vote in support of Senate Bill SB2819 SD2 HD1. Mahalo.

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/19/2022 12:59:32 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Peachie Garcia      | Hawaii DOE          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the Committee.”

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2819 relating to teacher compensation (salary compression). My name is Peachie Garcia from the Maui-Lahainaluna or Canoe complex. I currently teach full time at King Kamehameha III Elementary School. However, I also have to work part time at a hotel to earn extra income to support me and my son. I love living here in Maui and completely love teaching in our school. When the pandemic hit, I lost my part time and had no means to earn extra income. It was hard times for us living only with my teacher salary. We are renting a very small 1 bedroom apartment that costs \$2000. I have been working for Hawaii DOE for almost 13 years but my compensation does not reflect my years of service. It would greatly help me tremendously if this is rectified. I would be able to afford a 2 bedroom apartment and make my dreams come true of owning my home eventually without having to have a second job. I strongly feel that I have served our keiki and school community with love and dedication and it is just right to provide us with the appropriate compensation that we truly deserve. It would be sad if I have to eventually come to the decision of having to move out of island because I am both physically and financially exhausted. I urge and plead you to vote in support of Senate Bill SB2819.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify and mahalo in advance for supporting our teachers.

Respectfully yours,

Peachie Garcia

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/19/2022 1:20:38 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Doreen Tabe         | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Dear Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama and Members of the Committee:

I am writing in strong support of S.B. No. 2819 SD2 HD1, which provides automatic step increases in salaries for each year of satisfactory service completed by educational assistants, public school teachers, and principals and vice principals and increases the amount of time available to teachers for collaboration, preparation, and planning time.

I am a teacher at Waimalu Elementary School in Aiea, Hawai‘i and one of the 8000+ educators impacted by salary compression. I have seen the impact of losing educators due to job changes and the effect it has on our students when classrooms are left without highly qualified teachers.

Moreover, low teacher pay adversely impacts the State’s ability to recruit and retain quality classroom leaders. According to the Hawaii Department of Education’s 2021 Strategic Plan Dynamic Report, for the 2021-2022 school year, 49% of Hawai‘i’s teachers left the profession within their first five years of service. The report further revealed that the State’s teacher shortage currently stands at 886 positions overall, 230 of which are in the content area of special education.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/19/2022 2:03:12 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Tracy Brojakowski   | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

My name is Tracy Brojakowski, I am in my 21st year of teaching Special Education at Lahainaluna High School. When I first started my teaching career at Lahainaluna in 1999 we had initiated a strike to get the attention of the State due to the poor teaching terms and conditions. We have been through furloughs, not having a suitable contract due to State lack of commitment to education throughout the past two decades. On top of all this we are considered one of the lowest-paid teaching communities in the United States, when figuring the cost of living.

Personally I have worked two jobs to pay back my student loans and continue to survive on the current teacher salary. I lost my second job in the service industry due to the COVID-19 outbreak and it leaves me in a desperate situation.

Teachers are considered essential workers during this pandemic. I have worked from home setting up digital classrooms, correspondence with my students and their families, taking part in on-going communication all day & night with other staff members to meet students' needs. This is a critical time for most families that do not have a support system. We as educators are there for these families to give them strength and hope during these difficult times.

It would be an atrocity to take this life raft down when needed the most. Please back us up and support all State employees.

Thank you,

Tracy Brojakowski

Special Education Teacher, Lahainaluna High School

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/19/2022 2:12:36 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| Submitted By          | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify                |
|-----------------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Rebecca Kapolei Kiili | Individual   | Support            | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

**Aloha Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and the members of the Committee,**

**Please accept my testimony in strong support of SB2819 D2 which addresses compensation to fix the teacher compression issue. Passing this bill would ensure that Hawai‘i teachers are fairly compensated in the same way as teachers across the nation by having salaries adjusted based on their years of service. As we have all experienced through this global pandemic, schools and teachers are essential to our communities for all the services and education that is provided to families. Teachers who have dedicated their entire careers to this profession and who have not left in this time of global crisis deserve to receive fair compensation to match their years of service.**

**The HSTA has determined that approximately 8,000 teachers are impacted by this issue. I am one of those teachers. And while my service to the HDOE is approaching 17 years, well past the number of years that teachers burnout and leave, I am still here and dedicated to public service as a public school immersion teacher. I have shown up through distance learning and through the return to in-person learning this year, never wavering in my dedication to my students and our families. I take pride in my work and my leadership within my community. Teaching is my passion and I want to feel like I can stay invested until retirement.**

**However, it has been very frustrating to be stuck at step 11 for too long, especially because I have worked to move myself to Class VII within the first five years of my teaching career and have continued to improve my teaching practice throughout the years. All of the professional development credits I have earned past the 90 maximum are only being documented on my record. These credits cannot be counted to move me into a Class VIII or Class IX because those do not currently exist. Moving up the steps through years of service is the only way that I can increase my teacher salary. The compression issue has denied me the movement of two steps. I should be at step 13 on the salary scale. When I think about how much money I could have been earning if Hawai‘i fairly compensated teachers, I may have been able to pay down more debt and become a first time home owner years ago. It is discouraging to now be faced with figuring out how to afford a home in Hawaii with the median home price costing one million dollars and more.**

**I want to live and thrive in Hawai'i, not just survive. I want to enjoy the quality of life that Hawai'i promotes. Fixing this compression issue is overdue and will restore some faith in our government to keep our local families here. Please pass and fund this bill.**

**Thank you for your time and for the opportunity to testify.**

**Mahalo,**

**Rebecca Kapolei Kiili**



**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/19/2022 2:14:16 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Jeffrey Uyeda       | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

Dear Honorable Labor Committee members,

Please consider funding an increase in salary compression adjustments for teachers. I have been a teacher for over 20 years here in the state of Hawaii. We have been over-looked for multiple contract periods and have had contracts changed due to the "struggling" economy. Teachers are always one of the first groups to be "cut" when government funds/ shortages happen.

Every government official states that "Education is a priority!" However past actions have NOT backed that claim up!! NOW IS YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO REMEDY THIS ISSUE. In other words, "PLEASE vote in support of bill SB2819 and show the keiki and educators of Hawaii that we ARE INDEED A PRIORITY... IT IS TIME!!!"

Thank you for taking the time to read my testimony,

Jeff Uyeda

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/19/2022 2:18:16 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Jeffrey Uyeda       | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Dear Honorable Labor Committee members,

Please consider funding an increase in salary compression adjustments for teachers. I have been a teacher for over 20 years here in the state of Hawaii. We have been over-looked for multiple contract periods and have had contracts changed due to the "struggling" economy. Teachers are always one of the first groups to be "cut" when government funds/ shortages happen.

Every government official states that "Education is a priority!" However past actions have NOT backed that claim up!! NOW IS YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO REMEDY THIS ISSUE. In other words, "PLEASE vote in support of bill SB2819 and show the keiki and educators of Hawaii that we ARE INDEED A PRIORITY... IT IS TIME!!!"

Thank you for taking the time to read my testimony,

Jeff Uyeda

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/19/2022 2:43:49 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Sheri Preston       | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

Aloha!

My name is Sheri Preston, I am a 10-year Special Education teacher at Kohala Middle, and am in full support of SB 2819. We are a small isolated community that relies on each other and our limited resources on a daily basis. Our schools and teachers are essential supports in keeping our community and keiki strong and successful. The dedication our teachers have for continuing to live and teach here is apparent. Our veteran educators are committed to educating our keiki and have taught generations of families. They are also so crucial with sharing their experience and mana'o with not only our haumana, but also teaching our newer and younger teachers. It is appalling to know they are not being paid much more than teachers who have taught half as long as themselves. We truly need to compensate our veteran teachers in a fair and equitable manner. They deserve our highest esteem and respect for their powerful and significant contributions to our people and community.

In conclusion, I am in full support of SB2819 and duly compensating our important veteran teachers.

Mahalo for your time,

Sheri Preston

Kohala Middle School

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/19/2022 3:17:11 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Amy Shishido        | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the Committee,

My name is Amy Shishido and I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819. I teach Math at Kawananakoa Middle School. I support SB2819 for several reasons. With student's learning loss caused by Covid, you want your most experienced teachers to stay on board as long as possible to "Catch them up." Compression correction would incentivize experienced teachers to stay for a better high 3, as opposed to leaving now with no prospect of gaining a better high 3 than they already have. New teachers have a 50% retention rate, so your best chance of retaining teachers this school year is in your veteran teachers. This is the time to invest in experienced teachers because retention has never been such a hard sell. With hundreds of classrooms going without teachers, even without subs, retention should be the top priority. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB2819.

Amy Shishido

Testimony Before the Senate Ways and Means Committee

RE: SB 2819

Saturday, March 20, 2022

Aloha members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Kim Virtudazo. I am a teacher at James Campbell High School in Ewa Beach. Equally important, I am a mother of two public school kids, Logan (fourth grade) and Lily (first grade) who attend Ewa Elementary. I am submitting testimony in **support of SB 2819.**

It's common knowledge that in Hawaii, teachers are the lowest paid in the nation (due to the cost of living) and that we have a huge teacher shortage. If passed, this bill can get our teacher pay back on the right track. The fact that Hawaii pays its teachers so little is embarrassing and shameful. I have way too many friends and former colleagues who have left teaching because their *need to provide for their family outweighs their love for teaching*. This shouldn't be a choice; teachers shouldn't have to choose between their family's well-being and their profession... Hawaii's future. Increasing the pay for longtime teachers will keep our most qualified teachers. Please keep this in mind for our 180,000 students in Hawaii and for the future of Hawaii.

As a mother, I write to you asking for you to do your part in compensating Logan and Lily's teachers. They deserve qualified teachers and not "emergency hires" and long-term substitutes in their classroom. Logan and Lily deserve to have a quality education from a teacher who can focus on teaching, and not have to split their energy between two or three jobs. Please help teachers, the state, and the future of Hawaii by passing SB 2819

Mahalo,

Kim Virtudazo - Ewa Beach

James Campbell High School (Teacher)

Ewa Elementary (Mother of two)

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/19/2022 3:34:47 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Lara Mangieri       | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

As a teacher I support this bill.

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/19/2022 4:06:12 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Michael Domion      | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

**Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the Committee.**

**I am submitting testimony in support of SB2819 SD2.**

**My name is Michael Domion and I am the husband of a school teacher. My wife has been teaching in the DOE since 1997. She is qualified to teach English and is currently a school librarian with a Master's Degree in Library and Information Sciences. She is in the highest Class VII on the salary schedule but only Step 12 after 25 years of teaching. She works two additional jobs as a part-time teacher through DOE's E-School and works as a cashier nights and weekends at Whole Foods 5 days out of 7 in addition to being a wife and mom. We have children that we need to send to college and a mortgage to pay. She wakes up at 5 a.m. to prepare for school, drops off our son, goes to work, picks up son to take him to soccer, and heads to her second job and it's after 10 p.m. when she returns home.**

**Please vote in support of this bill SB2819 SD2 so teachers in this predicament can be compensated fairly according to the years of service that they have put into the DOE.**

**Thank you for your time,**

**Michael Domion**

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/19/2022 4:20:23 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Laurie Dela Cruz    | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Committee on Labor and Tourism

RE: In Support of SB2819 SD2, HD1

Saturday, March 19, 2022

Dear Chair Onishi and Vice Chair Sayama, and Members of the Committee on Labor and Tourism,

I am Laurie Dela Cruz, a public school teacher. I am testifying in favor of SB2819 SD2, HD1. I have been teaching for 23 years. Teachers spend countless hours during the week and weekends preparing, assessing, and creating relevant lessons for our students. We also spend a lot of our own money on classroom supplies, materials, and computer apps needed to teach our lessons. Living expenses have risen dramatically and it is often hard to make ends meet. It is important that this committee passes SB2819 SD2, HD1 to guarantee that teachers' salaries are adjusted based on years of experience like counterparts around the United States. When SB19 SD2, HD1 is passed, another step toward minimizing teacher shortage would be taken. Passing this bill would benefit all citizens of Hawaii and help retain and attract qualified and experienced teachers.

Mahalo,

Laurie Dela Cruz



**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/19/2022 5:30:47 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| John Fitzpatrick    | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Honorable Chair Onishi and the Labor and Tourism Comittee,

I am in strong support of SB 2819 because it is time we stop the tradition of ballancing the budget on the backs of our teachers. Chief Negotiator Ryker Wada will testify that this should be done during negotiations, but in the last negotiation a year ago he and the governor cut my pay by \$900 by eliminating the 21hours PD credits. I also had my first step increase withheld since I became an educator seven years ago, which means I am making \$1,994 less than I am suppose to be making.

There is something inherently wrong with the negotiation process when it takes a teacher 33 years to get to the top of the salary schedule and it is disengenuous for those who negotiated a horrible contract for teachers to testify against these important actions that will help retain and attract new educators to the profession as we have a 1100+ teacher shortage and mass exodus brewing next year.

Please correct the wrongs of the past 20-30+ years and pass SB2819.

Mahalo,  
Fitz

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/19/2022 6:00:31 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Erin Mendelson      | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

Dear Legislators,

Thank you for considering compensating educational assistants in this bill. This is the right thing to do. Educational assistants are incredible, selfless and impactful. Schools could not run as effeciently without them. Many EAs work multiple jobs to pay bills and take care of their children. It is a job that makes such a significant difference for children, but is rarely celebrated. A pay rasie is long over due.

Sincerely,

Erin

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/19/2022 7:01:03 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Irene Barber        | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

**Aloha Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama and members of the Committee,**

**I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2819, SD 2.**

**I have been a dedicated public school teacher on Hawaii Island for 30 years, currently in the Kea'au-Ka'u-Pahoa district. Sadly, as I become eligible for retirement, I haven't yet reached the top of the salary schedule. I am planning on retiring in a year, and getting a part time job as that will bring me more income than staying in the profession. I am asking your support for SB 2819 as having fair compensation would definitely convince me to stay in the teaching profession a few more years. As you know, filling vacant teachers positions is a real and dire necessity in the Department of Education and there just aren't enough substitute teachers to fill these vacancies. Keeping highly qualified, experienced teachers in the classrooms is necessary to give our keiki the education they deserve.**

**Please vote in support of SB 2819, SD 2 to keep qualified and experienced teachers in our schools, support fair wages, and to uphold our commitment to educate the children of Hawaii.**

**Thank you,**

**Irene Barber**

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/19/2022 7:11:43 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Karol Wack          | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

Dear Distinguished Members of the Legislature,

I am writing in support of SB2819 SD2 in relation to Teacher Salary Compression. Though this bill doesn't directly impact me at this time, it does impact many of my colleagues. Please stand with teachers and support us, we are weary and feeling defeated and would just like to be treated as professionals given a fair, liveable wage.

Our keiki deserve qualified teachers, we put our hearts and souls into teaching but it has become increasingly difficult to stay in a profession that cannot financially support us and our families, not to mention the added stress of teaching during a pandemic.

I thank you for the opportunity to share my testimony.

Sincerely,

Karol Wack

Special Education Teacher

Honoka'a Elementary School

Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the Committee  
SB 2819 SD2

In support of SB 2819 SD2

My name is Katrina Souza and I am in my 18th year of teaching at James B Castle High School in Kaneohe. I am testifying in favor of SB 2819 SD 2.

As a single parent of two school-aged children, addressing salary compression would be life-changing for me and my family. Despite having a Master of Education in Teaching from the University of Hawaii at Manoa and 18 years of service, I am at Class 6, Step 11, which means I make about \$72,000 a year. I am also the head of the English Department, so that means I earn an additional \$100 a month.

What this translates to in real life is that on average every month I am about \$300 short. I have a mortgage on a condo built in 1971 in Aiea, which I purchased in 2005. I also have to pay maintenance fees, which keep increasing every year, plus all the myriad household and car expenses that pop up as fun surprises. To cut costs, YouTube and I have become good friends as I learned how to replace my dryer belt, fix my washer when it stopped draining water with a load of towels in it, replace a pipe under my sink, fix my sink faucets, and change the filters in my car. I also pay for my son's morning care and A+ fees and my daughter's club soccer expenses. Additionally, I take care of our family's medical insurance premiums and associated out-of-pocket expenses, including my daughter's braces. So that \$300 short is not because I go on trips, take vacations, eat in restaurants, splurge on new clothes, or treat myself to a spa day.

The only way I have not been experiencing poverty or foreclosure is because of tax refunds, last year's generous federal stimulous payments, and the fact that I take every opportunity to pick up extra side jobs whenever I can. This includes teaching after school credit recovery, summer school, and tutoring. I have been hustling for the past six years. There is no such thing as summer vacation or getting off work at 2:50 p.m. This hustle is in addition to the hours I put in as a high school English teacher. For example, this spring break, during the week, I had three days off and I worked two and a half days, for free, grading essays and lesson planning.

Therefore, addressing salary compression would immediately allow me to break even every month and allow me to breathe and not be a ball of stress. Honestly, I am stuck. I am not like many of my co-workers who are so close to retirement or could retire and have been openly talking about retiring immediately if salary compression is not addressed. Because what would be the point of them staying? I still have at least 12 more years. All I am asking is that you see value in my 18 years of experience and my commitment to my students.

Please pass SB 2819 SD 2.

Sincerely,  
Katrina Souza

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/19/2022 9:29:24 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Wendy Nickl         | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

**Dear Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the committee**

**I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819. My name is Wendy Nickl, and I have worked as a public school teacher for 34 years in the State of Hawaii. I am currently a teacher at Kohala Middle School, in the West Hawaii district of the island of Hawai'i.**

**Please support SB 2819, which would adjust teacher salaries based on their years of experience. In my 34 years of teaching in Hawaii public schools, I have personally observed many promising educators leaving Hawaii schools for higher wages in other jobs or other states, due to the high cost of living and housing in Hawaii. Many of these talented teachers love Hawaii and teaching, but left Hawaii or the profession, because their pay was too low to be able to make it here.**

**We have a teacher shortage. Our public school teachers need to be fairly compensated in relation to the skill and professional knowledge they bring to our students daily. In our public schools, we teach ALL of our Hawaii keiki, with all of their needs, and all of their bright potential futures. Help us keep our teaching talent here in Hawaii.**

**Thank you for reading my testimony. Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819.**

**Wendy Nickl**

**Kohala Middle School**

**Proud public school teacher**

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/19/2022 9:16:21 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Rochelle Shiraki    | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Dear Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the Committee:

My name is Rochelle Shiraki and I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2819, SD2 HD1 which addresses teacher salary compression. I have been employed by the Department of Education for a total of 22 years: 11 years as a classroom teacher and 11 as a school registrar. During this time, I have seen many contracts which tried to address the bottom end of the teacher salary schedule to attract more people into the teaching profession. I believe additional work needs to be done to retain the more experienced teachers and fixing the compression in the middle area of the salary schedule is essential.

When starting out in this profession, I knew that I would never be “rich” like my other friends who majored in accounting or engineering and went to school far fewer years than I did, yet little did I know how great the disparity would be between my profession and theirs. Soon after starting my career, I realized that I would have to take on a side job to make enough money to pay for my needs. I have had at least one, and sometimes two, part-time jobs during the bulk of my teaching career. I absolutely loved being in the classroom but decided to become a 12-month teacher purely for the added pay, thinking I could give up my part-time work. After receiving my paycheck, I realized that still could not happen. It was only 4 years ago when I finally gave up my part-time work, not because I no longer needed the income, but because I had caregiving duties which required more of my time. If it weren’t for the support of my family, I could not have paid for all of my basic needs just from my salary alone , especially with the increasingly high cost of living in Hawaii.

After 22 years in the profession, I am quite a few steps away from the top and if contracts keep going the way they have, I will never attain the top step before I retire. I also noticed that despite my considerable years of experience, I do not make much more than my colleagues who started way after I did. I know other teachers who decided to retire as soon as they hit the minimum years required, saying “it’s not worth it” to stay in the job. I know at least 4 teachers who are on the cusp of retiring/resigning from the DOE and are looking hard at what the next contract will bring. Fixing the salary compression and recognizing the time they have invested into the craft of teaching would encourage veteran teachers to stay.

In short, I would like to thank you all for this opportunity to share my experiences and views, and I implore you to vote in support of Senate Bill 2819, SD2 HD1.

Sincerely,

Rochelle Shiraki



**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/19/2022 10:07:34 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Edene Nagai         | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting this testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819.

My name is Edene Nagai. I am a DOE STEM teacher in the Honolulu District. I have been teaching for over 22 years and I am one of the 8,000 plus educators that fall within the compressed salary range and I am nowhere near the top salary range. By passing this SB2819, veteran teachers like myself would be enticed to remain teaching in Hawaii and delay early retirement.

Please reward experienced and hardworking teachers by making our pay more equitable to our years of service, so that we can afford to stay in the teaching profession. By supporting and passing SB2819, we will be able to move forward in providing all of Hawaii's children with valuable and experienced teachers for years to come.

Thank you for your time, attention and allowing me to testify.

Respectfully,

Edene Nagai

DOE STEM Teacher

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/19/2022 10:15:11 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| jamie psak          | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting this testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819.

My name is Jamie Psak. I am a DOE Health teacher in the Honolulu District. I have been teaching for over 28 years and I am one of the 8,000 plus educators that fall within the compressed salary range and I am nowhere near the top salary range. By passing this SB2819, veteran teachers like myself would be enticed to remain teaching in Hawaii and delay early retirement.

Please reward experienced and hardworking teachers by making our pay more equitable to our years of service, so that we can afford to stay in the teaching profession. By supporting and passing SB2819, we will be able to move forward in providing all of Hawaii's children with valuable and experienced teachers for years to come.

Thank you for your time, attention and allowing me to testify.

Respectfully,

Jamie Psak

DOE Health Teacher

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/19/2022 11:09:25 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Kelli Uyeda         | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the Committee,

Thank you for allowing me to submit testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2819 SD2, relating to teacher compensation (salary compression).

My name is Kelli Uyeda and I am a teacher in the Central District on Oahu. I have 22+ years of experience working for the Department of Education. I am hoping that this will finally be the year that the issue of salary compression will be addressed and that the salary scale will be adjusted to reflect the dedicated years of service that teachers, such as myself, have put in. It has been disheartening to realize that with my many years of service, teachers that I have mentored and have had as student teachers are not far below me on the salary scale.

As a former beginning teacher mentor, I know that there has been much effort to recruit new teachers from Hawaii and from the mainland and there have been many discussions about how to retain them as many leave the profession before their fifth year. I believe that rectifying salary compression will help to retain teachers that are beginning to think about retirement to stay in the system longer, as they will be financially compensated and motivated. Especially with these trying COVID years, it would be beneficial to keep teachers with the most experience working with students as well as recruiting new teachers to help alleviate the teacher shortage.

Please SUPPORT Senate Bill SB2819 SD1 to show that our state believes that education is important and that retaining teachers with the most years of service is a priority.

Thank you for your consideration and for the opportunity to testify.

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/20/2022 5:54:35 AM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Richard Stange      | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Hawaii is arguably one of the most expensive places to live in the entire country. With that said, we have historically had the lowest pay for public educators after adjustment for the cost of living. That is something that can no longer continue. We are at the breaking point, and this school year we have seen what a teacher shortage can do to our education system.

Gas has risen over \$5 per gallon. My rental association has mercilessly raised my rent \$300 per month. Teachers are public servants who deserve a wage which we can live off of. Every other state in the entire country has pay based on experience. Teachers should not have to continue to pay for professional development, when it is literally a job expectation and then have to rely on negotiations for a pay increase once we hit that reclassification Class VII glass ceiling.

Teachers deserve better, and students certainly deserve better. This school year, we have seen what happens when we lose teachers. We have seen students in cafeterias without academic instruction being "babysat" by non-classroom teachers and custodial staff. Granted, that was in large part due to the pandemic and the governor's vaccination mandate, but that is also an illustration of the teacher exodus crisis that we could face if we do not start treating teachers like the university educated professionals that we are and compensating us accordingly.

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/20/2022 6:56:55 AM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| eric iwasaki        | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819 SD2 HD1 and I am a 20-year teacher at Kalama Intermediate on the island of Maui.

Salary compression has affected all students in every community in a negative way because experienced teachers are leaving the profession because working as a teacher no longer makes financial sense. Now more than ever, experienced teachers are the best at balancing the academic needs with the socio-emotional needs of our students. In addition, experienced teachers are the best at mentoring the next generation of teachers to help our students realize their dreams.

Please vote in support of SB 2819 SD2 HD1 to ensure students in Hawai'i receive the same educational opportunities as the rest of the nation.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/20/2022 8:23:58 AM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| David Brown         | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

Pass the bill.

Pay teachers more!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/20/2022 9:00:02 AM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Adrienne Vincent    | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

After teaching in Hawaii for 20 years with a master's degree in Educational Foundations I have reached the highest level of education Class 7 and I have been unable to make any more movement for many years in the Department of Education. It doesn't seem fair that I'm making slightly more than I was ten years ago and there have been no step movements in many years because it has not been negotiated or denied based on the economic situation. The cost of living in Hawaii and being the sole provider for my family compounded with the effects of the pandemic have greatly challenged our family in deciding if we should stay in Hawaii or move to the mainland. I have invested so much time and education in order to provide the best learning for the children I teach in Hawaii. Teachers should be paid based on their years of experience and be able to earn based on the work they put in and what they can control, not whether or not a raise is negotiated. If something is not done to keep veteran teachers in the profession then not only will we be trying to recruit new teachers but the quality of teaching will also suffer. Please fix the teacher salary and compression issue that is causing many veteran teachers to retire early or leave the profession. We need qualified teachers in education! We also need to pay teachers what they are worth and stop trying to justify why the government can't afford to keep quality teachers when they have put in so much to the keiki (children) of Hawaii and the communities around Hawaii. Teachers like me can't afford to buy a house here and feel hopeless at times as to why they should stay in their homeland of Hawaii. Please allow teachers a fair chance to be able to live and pay their bills and ultimately stay in Hawaii.

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/20/2022 9:14:15 AM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| Submitted By  | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify                |
|---------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Justin Hughey | Individual   | Support            | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Date: Tuesday, March 22th, 2022

Time: 9:00 AM

Place: Conference Room 312 & Videoconference

Timeslot: WAM

Aloha Chair Richard H.K. Onishi & Vice Chair Jackson D. Sayama, as well as all members on the committee,

Thank you Chair Richard Onishi for hearing this bill! As a teacher and a father of two children I am testifying in **strong support of SB2819!**

My name is Justin Hughey, I am a Special Education Teacher at King Kamehameha III Elementary and I am the father of two children.

King Kamehameha III said, "Chiefs and people, give ear to my remarks! My kingdom shall be a kingdom of learning." That has yet to be established. If you read the book Hawaii Pono, we have suffered from a teacher shortage since 1911. The main reason is because our state Constitution didn't fund public education with property taxes. We are the only district in the country that doesn't fund public education with property taxes.

The Governor can't fix teacher compensation with money that isn't in the budget. The legislature is the only entity that can fix this century old problem. Thank you for hearing this bill and please show our keiki you value them by passing this bill, which will fill the teacher shortage!

In order to have a healthy economy you need to have a functional public educational system. I know teachers who were a long way from retiring, but are retiring next year because the pay isn't worth the risk.

Maybe leadership at UPW and HGEA think they are helping their members by testifying against this bill, but I disagree. Every HGEA and UPW member deserves to have a certified teacher, teaching their keiki.



Please end the century old teacher shortage by finally paying teachers a comparable salary with other districts that have the same cost of living. Please value our keiki by passing this bill.

<https://www.staradvertiser.com/2021/09/23/editorial/island-voices/column-parents-desperate-for-bare-necessities-in-public-schools/>

Mahalo,

Justin Hughey

37 Poniu Circle

Wailuku, HI 96793

Democratic Party State Central Committee, Education Caucus Rep.

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/20/2022 9:26:04 AM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Mike Landes         | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819 SD2 HD1. My name is Mike Landes, and I am a teacher at Lahainaluna High School, the husband of an elementary teacher at Princess Nahienaena Elementary School, and the father of two public school students. I am also the HSTA Maui Chapter President. My wife and I have been teaching at our schools for the past 18 years. During that time, we have been furloughed and DLWOPed, and we have had our pay frozen in place during two separate economic slowdowns. We have colleagues with five years less experience than us who are on the exact same step of our salary schedule, because they did not have to suffer through all of those pay cuts and freezes. And sadly, we have colleagues with ten years more experience than us who are also on the exact same step of our salary schedule, because they had to suffer through even more pay cuts and freezes earlier in their careers. This means that I personally know people who are all on step 11 of the salary schedule whose professional teaching experience in Hawaii varies by 15 years. That is insane! If Hawaii is serious about doing something to address the teacher shortage crisis, this salary schedule compression must be addressed. Too many veteran teachers are willing to take their expertise and walk out the door because it seems they will never reach the top of the pay scale and be able to afford to retire in this place where they have dedicated their lives and sacrificed so much for their students and communities. It's hard to imagine that my wife and I will ever be able to retire, the way things are going. So why should any of us stay? We do it for the love of the job and the love of our students...but love doesn't pay the bills. Much more needs to be done, but this is a crucial step that will benefit the vast majority of Hawaii's teachers. Please, do the right thing and vote in support of Senate Bill 2819 SD2 HD1.

Mahalo for your time,

Mike Landes

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/20/2022 9:39:16 AM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Jodi Chun           | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chair Woodson, Vice-Chair Kapela, and members of the Committee,

I am writing in support of SB2819, which would allow educators like myself, to be shown that our dedication and hard work for our keiki matters. We humbly ask for your support of SB2819.

Mahalo for your consideration.

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/20/2022 10:10:17 AM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Kahanu Nguyen       | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee,

My name is Kahanu Nguyen. I am a 2nd grade, Special Education resource teacher at Waiakeawaena Elementary School in Hawaii District on the Island of Hawaii. I have taught for 15.5 years here in Hawaii. I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819.

I was affected by the salary compression and have had to return and teach in the special education classroom for me to afford to remain in Hawaii and raise a family. As teachers, we choose to work way beyond our salaried hours because we love our calling to serve our keiki. This salary restoration has been a major factor in remaining and teaching in Hawaii. Thank you for advocating for what is best for teachers because it will be what's best for our keiki! Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Mahalo,

Kahanu Nguyen, Hawaii District, Island of Hawaii

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/20/2022 10:18:03 AM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| Submitted By  | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify                   |
|---------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Emiri Iwasaki | Individual   | Support            | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

**Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the Committee,**

**I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2819 SD2.**

**I am a Special Education teacher teaching in the Leeward District and have been teaching in the State of Hawaii for 21 years. Currently, teachers like myself who have been teaching for many years do not have a pay that reflects our years of service. We have many years of knowledge and experience as well as various training, however, we do not get compensation that recognizes these merits. We need our salaries adjusted based on our years of experience so that we are able to keep veteran teachers in our field. We have many new teachers that enter this field, but sadly, I have seen many leave after a few years because they just can't make it because after a few years, our pay plateaus out with no pay raises reflecting our years of service. Teachers, like any other profession, should be acknowledged with a pay that reflects our years of experience and service. I think many teachers, like myself, will be happy to stay in the teaching progression for extra years if there was a competitive pay incentive. This, in turn, would prevent the teacher shortage crisis from getting worse. In Hawaii, it is sad, but love for our students alone can not keep our livelihood going.**

**Please vote in support of Senate Bill number SB2819 SD2.**

**Thank you for the opportunity to testify.**

## **Senate Bill 2819 SD2**

Measure Title: RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION.

Report Title: Department of Education; Charter Schools; Teacher Compensation; Experimental Modernization Project; Appropriation (\$)

Description: Makes an appropriation to fund an experimental modernization project pursuant to section 78-3.5, Hawaii Revised Statutes, to make necessary discretionary salary adjustments.

Dear House Labor & Tourism Committee

Thank you for taking the time to consider SB2819 SD2 the important bill that will rectify inequities in teacher pay. Please support this bill.

If the compression inequities are fixed I would consider staying in the profession longer. We have a teacher shortage in Hawaii and anything that can be done to retain teachers is of the utmost importance. Students need qualified experienced teachers.

I have been teaching at the same Title I high school on Maui since 2003. I love my job, school, and students but feel unfairly treated. I have been directly impacted by salary compression. I have a Masters Degree and have taken as many professional development classes as I can. The only way for me to earn more pay is if we are able to negotiate salary STEP increases and this does not happen every year. I was stuck for years at the same STEP and now I am stuck again. Teachers who started later than me have advanced faster than I have and now make what I do, this does not seem fair. Not only did I not advance in pay many years, my pay was reduced several times. Remember Furlough Fridays? My pay went down 9%. More recently, our pay is now frozen and we no longer receive the 21 hours of professional development pay we have gotten the last 5 years.. Meanwhile healthcare costs have increased. It is demoralizing to see my pay go down. Inflation and the cost of living are not going down.

Thank you for taking this serious matter into consideration and supporting **Senate Bill 2819 SD2**

Anna Crawford

[annabcrawford@hotmail.com](mailto:annabcrawford@hotmail.com)

808-269-1162

Teacher, King Kekaulike High

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/20/2022 11:29:50 AM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify                |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Julie Ko     | Individual   | Support            | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

**Aloha,**

**I am writing to you to ask for your support regarding Senate Bill 2819 to fix teacher’s salary compression. I am a dedicated teacher with 27 years of experience. I have a B.A. in Economics and a P.D. in Elementary Education. I left the business world to become a teacher because I wanted to make a difference by educating our future. If I had stayed in the business industry, I would be making well over \$150,000 by now with 27 years of experience and COMMITMENTt. However, as a teacher, because I am stuck in this salary compression disaster for the past 10 years, I only make almost \$80,000. This salary compression makes no sense because another teacher with only 15 years of experience makes almost the same. Why are we the only state that doesn’t reward teachers for being DEDICATED. We should be compensated according to our experience/years of service. If you fix this problem, you will have fixed the DOE’s retention and recruitment problem. I have 2 children in college, a mortgage, and trying to put something in my retirement. There is no way I can do it all. I thought about leaving education many times and so have many of my colleagues. In my 27 years, I have seen many teachers quit to find better paying jobs not because they don’t like teaching. They had no choice. They had financial obligations and responsibilities to their family. But more importantly, they felt defeated and knew that they would never reach the top of the pay scale because no one was trying to address this issue for the longest time.**

**Many teachers were so happy when salary compression was FINALLY going to be addressed 3 years ago. Dr. Kishimoto was supporting this issue and so were many senators and legislators. But you know what happened... COVID. This was devastating to us! Our dreams of finally correcting Salary Compression was destroyed but of course we understood even if it hurt so much. However, now with a teacher shortage and retention, this needs to be addressed. Students can’t be taught by substitutes because they do not have the expertise or know the standards to teach. No wonder our test scores have been trending downwards, even at my school, which is a high functioning school. We have subs with no education training teaching our students for the entire year as they are hired on as “long-term substitutes.” As a teacher with 27 years of experience, I can retire in 3 years and I plan to. HOWEVER, if Salary Compression is fixed this year, I would definitely work for another 6+ or more years and so would many of my colleagues. Veteran teachers**

**are needed to help mold our young teachers joining the teaching field. We support, teach, and guide these new teachers. We are their role models and mentors. They need us veteran teachers to be around.**

**Please, for decades, we lived with horrible Salary Compression issues. It's time to make it right for teachers who everyone says they respect and value. It's disheartening to hear that teachers are so important and valued but no one cares enough to actually do anything about it. My whole life, I have heard what a noble profession teaching is, so please treat us with respect. Respect our value and compensate us fairly by fixing Salary Compression. Governor Ige is going to give \$100 dollars to each resident and dependent because there is a surplus of funds. If you ask anyone in Hawaii, they would say to keep the \$100 and fix our failing education system. The solution is that simple: retain veteran teachers by fixing our salary compression. Not tomorrow or next year, we need to do it now. There is no more time left. Just look at our failing education system.**

**Thank you for your time and please support SB 2819. Please do it for our children.**



**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/20/2022 11:34:33 AM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Lorinda Alana       | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

ABSOLUTELY support this bill. We have the money to pay the teachers---whay aren't we paying them? My school lost so many teachers due to the fact that they hit the ceiling and worked and worked conitnuously for years with no raise in sight as prices and inflation continue to go up in Maui. Without this bill, teachers are "stuck" at a salary and their salaries will not go up no matter how many more years they work. These are GREAT experienced teachers ---the best teachers---because they have been working with students for years . These are teaechers that know what they are doing and know how tto work with all kinds of children - high behavior, high needs, learning challenged, gifted and talented---you name it---and DESERVE to be rewarded for their hard work and years of service. With all the other hardships that teachers have to endure ---from lack of housing, having to self-teach online distant teaching due to the sudden lockdown and much much more. PLEASE have a heart for our wonderful teachers that are in it for the long term and support them so that they continue to serve our communities and our schools.

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/20/2022 12:28:25 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| nancy hilson        | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I am writing to voice strong support of SB2819.

Teachers in Hawaii who began teaching 20+ years ago have seen many years with no step increases in pay, leaving us oddly earning salaries close to beginning teachers.

I have been teaching in Hawaii since 1996, first in Kalihi, then in Ewa Beach. When I first began, I accepted that I would have to continue doing restaurant work to supplement the low pay a beginning teacher received at that time. Today, with 27 years experience and 3 post-graduate degrees, including a MEd in curriculum studies, I am still waiting tables to supplement my pay.

The Covid-related stresses of the past 2 years have tempted many older teachers, including myself, to retire. I feel that all teachers need real incentive to remain in the profession. This is an especially good time to encourage experienced teachers in Hawaii to continue doing what they love and are good at. Thank you for recognizing and considering real steps toward addressing this problem.

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/20/2022 12:18:46 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Beth Kauwe          | DOE Teacher         | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

**Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the Committee:**

**Aloha and thank you for this opportunity to testify.**

**I am submitting this testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819 SD2 regarding teacher compensation (salary compression).**

**I am a teacher with over thirty years of experience, 21 of those years dedicated to one school on Kauai.**

**In all my years as a teacher, I have struggled financially living on the island, be it finding a reasonable rental I could afford, trying to buy a home, or paying monthly bills; it is the living ‘paycheck by paycheck model’.**

**I happen to be one of the teachers in the middle of the salary schedule and would benefit from the compression model, giving me a little room to breathe. I made it through the sacrifice of giving up my salary for Furlough Fridays, taking a payout during our recent traumatic COVID experience (21 hours were removed) and not receiving adequate compensation for the endless hours of creating online curriculum/assessment during the pandemic.**

**It is time to honor those of us educators who CHOSE TO STAY through all of this through all these years of going without, to honor us for truly knowing our keiki, our communities, for continually being passionate about our learning and growth, no matter what.**

**I believe we teachers in the middle of the salary guide need to be compensated first, before any new hire or teachers placed in hard-to-fill positions. Amazingly, I have been ‘head-hunted’ and offered an opportunity to take an online job at an educational institution at a substantially higher salary. This has pushed me into considering early retirement from the DOE, but honestly, I love my students and my community!**

**Think about that for a minute... what if many veteran teachers who have “had it” decided to leave early and take these jobs? Hawaii would be faced with a new kind of shortage...the loss of experienced, dedicated, passionate teachers who have years of experience and mana’o.**

**With this thought, I urge you to support SB 2819 SD2. Honor your teachers.**

**I thank you for your time.**

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/20/2022 12:42:37 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Brian Tsutsui       | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Please approve SB2819 SD2 HD1. I have been a teacher for the past 30 years and my wife for the past 27 years. Our salaries have both been adversely impacted by salary compression for the past several years. For too long. I have been saddened to see some of our best and most gifted teachers leaving the profession or retiring early even before the challenges of Covid; living on a teacher's salary in the most expensive state in the country is often the cited reason.

I love my job. It's my calling. My students are awesome! Retirement has not been something I have seriously considered in the near future, but both my wife and I have to work two jobs each to support our family. I don't know how much longer either of us can continually do so. I believe that by fixing salary compression and paying educators what they rightly deserve, more experienced, veteran teachers like myself who love their jobs, students, and mentor younger teachers will be much more inclined to stay in their profession and help stop the deluge of departing teachers.

While my salary isn't the main reason why I do what I do, and teaching is rewarding in so many non-monetary ways, a wise person said , "You reward what you VALUE". Please send a strong message to the people of Hawaii that teaching is valued. Please fix the salary compression issue and fairly compensate our Hawaii educators.

Thank you for your consideration,

Brian Tsutsui

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/20/2022 1:43:32 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Robert Hu           | DOE                 | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha and thank you for this opportunity to testify.

I am submitting this testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819 SD2 regarding teacher compensation (salary compression). I am a teacher with over 26 years of experience, 26 of those years dedicated to one school on Oahu and have worked through each of those years for summer school never ever taking any time off due to the lack of reasonable pay. In all my years as a teacher, I have struggled financially living in Hawaii with the constant rise of inflation with 2 children of my own. Be it finding reasonable rentals, trying to buy a home, or paying monthly bills; it is the living 'paycheck by paycheck model'. I happen to be one of the teachers in the middle of the salary schedule and would benefit from the compression model, giving me a little room to breathe. I made it through the sacrifice of giving up my salary for Furlough Fridays, taking a paycut during our recent traumatic COVID experience (21 hours were removed) and not receiving adequate compensation for the endless hours of creating online curriculum/assessment during the pandemic. It is time to honor those of us educators who **CHOSE TO STAY** through all of this through all these years of going without, to honor us for truly knowing our keiki, our communities, for continually being passionate about our learning and growth, no matter what. I believe we teachers in the middle of the salary guide need to be compensated first, before any new hires or teachers placed in hard-to-fill positions. This has pushed me into considering early retirement from the DOE, but honestly, I love my students and community! Think about that for a minute... what if many veteran teachers who have "had it" decided to leave early and take these jobs? Hawaii would be faced with a new kind of shortage...the loss of experienced, dedicated, passionate teachers who have years of experience and mana'o. With this thought, I urge you to support SB 2819 SD2. Please honor your teachers. I thank you for your time.

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/20/2022 2:04:14 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| De Austin           | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

**House Committee On Labor & Tourism**

**Rep. Richard H.K. Onishi, Chair**

**Rep. Jackson D. Sayama, Vice Chair**

**March 20, 2022**

**Honorable Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the Committee on Labor & Tourism,**

**Please support SB2819.**

**If we want to improve as a community, as a state, as a society, education must be valued and invested.**

**The pay scale for Hawaii's teachers does not reflect a community which values education or its teachers. If we want to recruit and encourage new teachers, and retain experienced ones, it only makes financial and moral sense to increase teacher salaries to be on pace with the cost of living here in Hawaii, as well as to be within market norms for a teacher's income, when compared to other states in the union.**

**If we continue to neglect the needs of our teachers, we will continue to lose teachers and fail to recruit teachers for the future. This impacts our children, which also impacts our future as a community.**

**It is baffling that the individuals who teach, raise and influence our children for most of their young lives are not wholly invested in, but we don't blink an eye for paying over \$100,000 per year for a police chief, whom we hope never has to meet our child due to a dubious circumstance.**

**Please support SB2819.**

**Respectfully,**

**D Austin**

**Kihei, Hawaii**



**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/20/2022 2:18:04 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Claire Gearen       | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Dear Chair Richard H.K. Onishi, Vice-chair Jackson D. Sayama, and other members of the House Committee on Labor and Tourism:

My name is Claire Gearen, and I am a teacher at Mililani High School. I write in strong support of Senate Bill 2819 SD2 HD1 relating to teacher compensation.

Were I to return to the Seattle School District, where I taught for seven years, I would earn \$44,000 more a year than I do now. That is almost enough for a stability budget for a single person in Honolulu.

I graduated from the Master's of Education in Teaching program at UH in 2000 and am a career public school teacher.

In 2007, I moved back home from Seattle to teach in Mililani. I took a 40% pay cut to do so, yet felt the move was worth it. I calculated that I could recover most of the pay within ten years, and I planned to teach the rest of my career in Hawai'i.

Instead, in the first ten years with the Department of Education, I moved only two steps on the salary schedule. In my intake interview, I was not informed that salary steps must be approved as if they are raises, and that step increases often don't happen.

I love teaching, yet the difference between my compensation in Seattle and Hawai'i has been striking. In Seattle, in just four years I saved enough for a 10% down payment on a house. I took the plunge into home ownership in 2004 when the Seattle superintendent promised we would be the fifth highest paid teachers in the Seattle metro area within five years.

In Hawai'i, I have built no equity despite dutifully paying the mortgage on my condo. My savings had to cover the deficit from pay cuts during Furlough Fridays. I recently refinanced my mortgage so that if we do not get step increases in the coming years, I can still keep my home.

Veteran teachers have a lot to offer the public schools. Our experience guides us to facilitate better outcomes for students. While this measure would only provide a fraction of my lost income working for the HDOE, it would be a sign of appreciation and course correction, and it would improve my quality of life measurably.

Sincerely,  
Claire Gearen

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/20/2022 2:31:16 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Joanna M Lee        | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

SB 2819 SD2 Proposed HD1 – RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide supporting testimony on SB 2819 SD2 Proposed HD1, Relating to Teacher Compensation.

I am in support of Senate Bill SB2819 SD2 to provide an experimental modernization project aimed at addressing compensation equity issues and discretionary salary adjustments for experienced senior teachers by recognizing their professional service. These automatic step increases in teacher salaries for each year of satisfactory service will have a direct impact on experienced teachers to "stay in the system" who might otherwise retire.

I am a veteran teacher with 36+ years of service in the Honolulu District at Washington Middle School.

Over the years, I have experienced frustration over the teacher salary schedule and the inability to negotiate movement especially when years of service is considered. Although I could retire today, I would be inclined to stay longer because this bill offers a fair wage that would compensate for my additional years of experience. With the present salary schedule, I see teachers retire "as soon as they can," with some retiring at the end of the year or after just a quarter to satisfy their retirement requirements. Other teachers take health leaves in part due to the COVID year as well as the "after COVID year" demands. I have seen teachers literally "burn out" from the steep learning curve from virtual learning retiring even before the COVID pandemic making the teacher retention rate worsen over the past few years.

Unlike other professionals, the more students that are taught by a teacher actually gives valuable experiences in teaching instruction, assessment, counseling, evaluation as well as a history of student alumni who become successful citizens in society. As the senior teacher on campus, more of us "old school" teachers need to stay to transition new teachers and retiring administrators .

Please vote in support of Senate Bill SB 2819 SD2 Proposed HD1, Relating to Teacher Compensation (Salary Compression).

Thank you again for your effort to keep experienced teachers in the classroom to help teacher retention.

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/20/2022 2:44:04 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| Submitted By   | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify                |
|----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Dawn S. Fraser | Individual   | Support            | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Dear Chair Onishi, Chair Sayama and Members of the Committee:

My name is Dawn Fraser and I have worked in the Windward (Kailua-Kalaheo) District for the past 29 years. I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB 2819, SD2.

**Despite family, friends and other people, including my former teachers, warning me that I would never be "rich", I chose to enter the teaching profession because I love working with children. When I first started out at 23 years of age, I was not worried so much about pay because I had the time and energy to also work part time. I lived with my family and used my "extra" money to pay for professional development classes and eventually a master's degree to become a school counselor in addition to trying to save money to buy a car and a future home. The classes and master's degree gave me the opportunity to get an increase in pay as well as open another opportunity to work with students in a different capacity.**

Since 1993, I have worked as a part-time math teacher, project coordinator (mainly for programs that targeted increasing the college going rate of first generation, low income students, especially Native Hawaiian students), science teacher, high risk counselor, grade level counselor, and now as a college and career counselor. In addition to my "regular" duties, I have worked as a department chair, accreditation committee chair, graduation chair, supervised counseling interns, helped with planning and chaperoning student activities (field trips, proms, commencement), organized fundraising activities for student groups, and coordinated and participated in various evening and weekend workshops for students and families. My career has definitely kept me busy from Monday through Friday and in the evenings and weekends (time for which I have never received compensation). My career has been nothing short of rewarding because of the students and families I have worked with.

When I first began working at my school, I was overwhelmed with curriculum and lesson plans, assessment and grading, corresponding with colleagues and parents, and classroom management. My love and passion for working with students was not enough to get me through the daily tasks and responsibilities. Although I had a degree and completed student teaching, I had so much more to learn and often considered whether I had made the right career choice. Fortunately, I had the support, encouragement and mentoring of experienced teachers and counselors. Their mentoring made the difference for me and the other new teachers on our campus to develop the skills of experienced, effective teachers and persist through those early years until we gained the confidence to do it on our own.

I first earned national board certification in school counseling in 2011 and just completed my recertification for another 10 years. Going through the process made me a better leader and educator because I became more aware of what I am doing and how I measure progress in terms of student achievement. In doing so, I am better able to implement systems in what I, and my colleagues, do to effect positive change in our school and for our students. I believe in ongoing professional development regardless of class or step because it increases my knowledge and strengthens my skills not only for myself but also for my fellow colleagues through the interaction we have as we plan, implement and assess the daily lessons and programs for our students. With the exception of my national board certification status, for nearly 20 years I have not financially benefited from the professional development I have participated in but I continue to do so because as a professional I value and believe it is my responsibility to keep learning and growing for the benefit of my students.

As I am now in my 29th year of my career and looking towards retirement and what I will be able to afford, I do not regret the time, energy and personal money I have invested in my career or the supplies, food, and gas I have paid for out of my own pocket. I am, however, worried about what kind of life my profession will be able to provide for me after I retire. The credits I earned and paid for (mostly with my own personal funds) put me in Class VII and I have been there for about 20 years. Today, I am only at Step 13 (something that was only achieved in recent years because of the last teacher contract). Even with my national board certification, I still do not reach the top of the teacher pay scale. My colleague who is in her 30th year is at Step 14a (still not at the top of the pay scale). And, I did not realize that colleagues who have at least 10 years of service LESS than me, are just a couple of steps behind me. I do not understand how teachers and counselors with years of service and experience like me AND able to retire in less than three years are separated by just a few thousand dollars a year from those who are midway through their careers.

Legislative support once helped to increase the starting pay of teachers to help attract more people to the profession. During the course of my career, our school was fortunate to have outstanding teachers placed at our school. However, we have also lost too many who left for careers in the private sector or to move out-of-state because they could not afford to live in Hawaii without working a part-time job. These teachers could also see that, by remaining in our profession, their pay would never be commensurate with their commitment and years of service and experience.

I humbly ask for your help in recognizing the work and dedication my colleagues and I have given to the students and families we serve. Through a teacher strike, work furloughs, staff and budget shortages and cuts, distance learning, and salary compression, I (along with my fellow colleagues) have remained dedicated to our students, their families, and our profession. I do not believe we are asking for something that we did not earn. Your support will make the difference in what our lives will be now as educators and in the years ahead as retirees. Your vote will make the difference whether or not I can retire and choose to work OR need to work out of necessity. Addressing salary compression will make the difference for me and many of my colleagues who are nearing retirement to continue working past the minimum age and years of service requirement instead of seeking other employment opportunities.

Especially since the pandemic, many of my friends and colleagues have chosen to retire or leave our profession which is already hugely affected by staff shortages. As I work with my students to plan for college and their future careers, most of my students who share that same passion as I did (and still do) make a conscious decision to NOT choose teaching because they know they will not be able to financially afford to make it on their own.

We need your help now to recognize teachers who have and continue to dedicate their careers and personal lives to our profession for our students and their future families. We need your help now to encourage experienced teachers to continue working and mentoring inexperienced teachers. We need your help now to encourage new teachers to remain committed to our profession and show them that there is a secure future for them. We need your help now to encourage high school students with a passion to make a positive difference in our community and who love working with children to CHOOSE to be an educator.

I humbly ask for your vote in support of Senate Bill SB 2819, SD2. Thank you for your time and consideration.

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/20/2022 3:44:48 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Laura Hew           | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

**Aloha Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the Committee,**

**I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819 SD2 HD1.**

**My name is Laura Hew and I am a teacher in the Honolulu District. Prior to teaching in the Honolulu District, I taught in the Leeward District for 6 years.**

**I have been a public school teacher for over 20 years. I was with the many other teachers who struck in 2001. Since then, the pay raises for teachers have stagnated for many years. I am one of the 8,000 plus educators that fall within the compressed salary range. Inorder to compensate for this shortfall, I have had to find other jobs to earn an income to support my family and my classroom needs. I also know numerous educators who are in the same circumstance as myself by working afterschool, on the weekends and summers just to make ends meet. By passing SB2819 SD2 HD1, veteran teachers like myself would be enticed to remain teaching in Hawai'i and delay early retirement to find higher paying jobs.**

**Please reward experienced, hard-working and dedicated teachers by making our pay equitable to our years of service, so that we can afford to stay in the teaching profession.**

**By supporting and passing SB2819 SD2 HD1, we will be able to move forward in providing all of Hawai'i's children with valuable and experienced teachers for the years to come.**

**Mahalo nui for your support and time.**

**Sincerely,**

**Laura Hew**



**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/20/2022 3:49:25 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Colleen T Parlee    | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the Committee.

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB 2819, SD2

My name is Colleen Parlee and I teach at Wheeler Elementary in the Central District.

Salary compression has certainly impacted me as I have been teaching for 15 years and am stuck in the middle of the salary schedule. As I am the primary wage earner in our family, this has placed a burden on me and my family as we endeavor to manage our daily cost of living. Paying me a fair wage for my experience will convince me to stay teaching for several more years. This is turn will prevent the teacher shortage crisis from getting worse.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill SB 2819, SD2

Thank you for the opportunity to testify,

Colleen Parlee

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/20/2022 5:24:35 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Jeffrey Iverslie    | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

To: Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the Committee:

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2819 SD2 HD1.

My name is Jeffrey Iverslie. I am a Special Education teacher at Konawaena Elementary School in West Hawaii District.

I am currently in the middle of the salary schedule after 19 years of teaching. I have worked with over 30 teachers who have resigned from the DOE and moved to the mainland because it was cost prohibitive to own a home or even to rent one. This revolving door prevents Hawaii from retaining highly qualified, experienced teachers. This ultimately leads to a significant disservice to the keiki of Hawaii.

I strongly urge you to pass SB2819 SD2 HD1.

Respectfully submitted, Jeffrey Iverslie

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/20/2022 5:34:33 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Sheila T Yuasa      | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

**The Senate Bill related to teacher compensation is SB2819 SD2**

**Aloha Senator Dela Cruz,**

**I have been teaching in Hawaii’s public schools since 2001—over 20 years now. By earning a Master’s Degree and enrolling in a seemingly endless number of professional development classes, I am now at the top of the salary scale for credits, and the only way that my salary will increase is through additional years of service. Of course, I plan to continue teaching anyway because it meaningful and noble work. However, once teachers reach this point in our careers, there is less motivation for us to participate in professional development because the credit will not impact our salary. Also, many teachers my age have children who will soon be entering college, so any increase in salary would be extremely helpful on that front as well. Hawaii is the only state in which teachers’ salaries are so compressed. Considering our high cost of living, appropriately compensating teachers with the most years of service would ensure that Hawaii’s students have access to high quality teachers. This would benefit all parties involved. Therefore, I strongly urge you to support Senate Bill 2819 SD2.**

**Mahalo for your service to Hawaii as well.**

**Aloha,**

**Sheila Yuasa**

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/20/2022 5:56:28 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Logan Okita         | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

**Aloha Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the Committee,**

**I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2819, SD2 HD1.**

**My name is Logan Okita and I am a National Board Certified Teacher at Nimitz Elementary in Central District and Vice President of the Hawaii State Teachers Association. This is my sixteenth year as a teacher in Hawaii.**

**I am in the middle of our salary schedule at step 11 along with 2,568 of my colleagues, many of whom have more experience than I do. I have missed step increases during my career and will hopefully reach the top of the salary schedule after my twenty-fifth year of teaching. This has not been the case for my colleagues who missed stepped increases during negotiations and are only on step 12 in their twenty-fifth year. Colleagues who I respect and have mentored me have said that they will retire or leave the profession if compression is not addressed soon. These educators have so much more to give to our students, but will not continue if they can never make it to the top of the salary schedule before they qualify for retirement.**

**I was fortunate to have a principal in my early years who encouraged the faculty to take professional development courses to not only improve our practice, but move us across the pay schedule as quickly as possible. She let us know about free courses offered by the complex, hosted a course on a topic she wanted us to improve on, and supported those of us who chose to pursue our Master's degrees while teaching. As she signed my reclassification papers one day she told me "I want you to get to Class VII so you can get paid better, but when you get there your learning cannot stop." I reached Class VII in 2011 and have not stopped learning. I am currently holding 24 credits that I cannot use to reclassify and have attended at least 100 hours of professional development that was not for credit since 2011. I did everything I could to improve my pay on my own, but I have missed step increases during my career and need the state to address compression now so that 8 years from now I am not in the same situation as my colleagues who have suffered even longer.**

**Please vote in support of Senate Bill SB2819, SD2 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to testify!**

**Sincerely,**

**Logan Okita, MEd, NBCT**

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/20/2022 6:11:30 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Rick Yamashiro      | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

Dear Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and Members of the committee,

I am writing today in support of SB 2819. As a counselor with a Doctorate degree in the Leeward District for the past 17 years, I still find myself working an additional part time job to be able to afford the cost of living in Hawaii. I know that if the issue of compression were fixed, this would greatly help my family and I. We humbly ask for your support to fix the current compression issue. Thank you for your consideration! Take care.

sincerely,

Rick Yamashiro

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/20/2022 6:17:10 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Hope McKeen         | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

Aloha e nā luna o ke kōmike hana a me ka ho‘okipa malihini,

Please submit SB2819, SD2, HD1 to support teachers in gaining back years of service they have lost do to economic downfalls. Our mid-career teachers are the ones that are committed to teaching in Hawai‘i to support the growth and development of our most precious resource, our keiki. Please support this measure.

Na‘u nō

Hope Pualani McKeen

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/20/2022 6:36:50 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Maria Gordon        | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Chair Woodson, Vice Chair Kapela, and members of the Committee:

- I am Maria Gordon and teach in the Central District.
- I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill - SB2819 SD2 for the following reasons:
- There should be some compensation given due to the impact of teacher shortage in Hawaii due to cost of living. I know of many teachers who may have reached the top step and level but are still unable to secure a mortgage and afford other living costs in Hawaii. With a current nationwide teacher shortage, it seems that the mainland provides more salary compensation and housing benefits, etc. That said, if a teacher is paid a fair living wage for her experience, it probably will convince her to stay teaching in Hawaii; Hence, it will prevent the teacher shortage crisis from getting worse in Hawaii.
- Please also consider the lost teacher household income during the pandemic. During the pandemic, spouses of teachers lost jobs or were unable to work, while teachers remained in the front lines supporting the students. Remaining stagnant in the salary schedule does not reflect what actually has happened in our schools since the pandemic. Countless working hours and adapting to various instructional models while maintaining household costs, often with additional child care needed is not accurately reflected in the fair wage scale of the current salary schedule. A salary scale should also reflect the economic impact of the recent community and global events, such as the pandemic and nationwide teacher shortage.

Please accept this testimony vote in support of Senate Bill - SB2819 SD2.

Thank you.



**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/20/2022 7:06:36 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Chad Mahoe          | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chair Woodson, Vice Chair Kapela, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2819 SD2 relating to teacher salary compression.

My name is Chad Mahoe. I am a school counselor at Ewa Makai Middle School. I have been an educator for 15 years. I have my Master's degree of Education in School Counseling. I am on Class IV, Step 10. I have not been able to commit to taking professional development due to my growing family and not taking advantage of certain opportunities. Although I appreciate attracting new educators to our profession, it seems like the incentives for educators who are committed to Hawaii and our haumana takes a back seat. I love the job that I have and seek to retire from the DOE when the time is right. With a family of 8 and another child on the way, it is near impossible to survive in Hawaii without making certain sacrifices. My 'ohana and I chose to raise our family with me as the sole breadwinner and my wife to stay at home and care for our children. We put our faith in God and he has provided for all of our needs. However, if this bill is passed, it will ensure that I will eventually be able to get paid what I am worth and retire at a pay that will help me to survive later in life as well. I do not work in this field for the pay nor the glamor that it offers, but rather to ensure the keiki of Hawai'i has educators who truly care about them and seeing them succeed in life. Any pay increase will help my family and I to persevere through our harsh economic climate, especially during these tough times!!

Please vote in support of Senate Bill SB2819 SD2.

Thank you for your consideration,

Chad Mahoe

Ewa Makai Middle School Counselor

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/20/2022 7:33:00 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Roseann Michaud     | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

I strongly support this bill. Teachers work tirelessly for the children of our state and they must be compensated fairly. Our salaries should be based on years of experience comparable to teacher salaries elsewhere in the country. This bill will help to compensate teachers for the valuable work being done and it will also help with teacher retention.

March 19, 2022

Dear Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the House Committee on Labor and Tourism:

I am submitting testimony in SUPPORT of **Senate Bill 2819, SD 2**. My name is Eleyne Fia and I teach at a high school located in the Leeward District.

When this school year ends, I will have been with the DOE for 28 years. I am also a nationally certified board school counselor, by NBPTS. I have served as president of my local professional affiliate, HACAC (Hawaii Association of College Admission Counseling), I was a past Hawaii School Counseling Association School Counselor of the Year, and am currently serving and have served on HACAC's board in other key roles. These and other accolades could not have happened without the dedication and years of service, experience, continuing education and training in my school counseling field. The invaluable expertise, knowledge, skills and resources that I have accumulated speaks to the quality of service I provide. While I am grateful for all my career thus far, it is demeaning and demoralizing to observe that my pay equates to a fellow teacher whom may have been working in the DOE 10+ years less than I.

Add in the differentials, and that same teacher with less experience which lends to less resources, skills and expertise, now makes a substantial amount more than me. I love my students and my school, I do not want to leave them behind for better pay. My high school has the largest student population, and the challenges are no less. But the load is double many of my counterparts, and I am not compensated for that differential. Add on, my pay is compressed, and it is enough to leave the profession.

My family's newest car is a 2008 Accord. We struggle with our bills, juggling them around. I know many teachers who like me, were stuck in the middle of the pay scale, left their teaching jobs and now are paid their worth at other places and have great benefits. Not one of these former teachers drive a car older than mine, because as a car gets older, reliability gets worse. To take a family vacation, I have to take on a second job or even find two additional jobs. How can I encourage teachers to stay in the field, or students to pursue a career in teaching, when I know the struggles?

Bottom line - Fixing the compression would lend to fixing the teacher shortage. Experienced educators like myself will choose to stay longer, with the students we enjoy working with. Less experienced educators will stay as they observe us Kupuna.

As a school counselor, I humbly ask that you please vote in SUPPORT of Senate Bill 2819, SD 2. Thank you for taking the time to read my written testimony.

Sincerely,  
Eleyne Fia

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/20/2022 7:45:32 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Inga Park Okuna     | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha, I would like to ask for your support of SB2819, SD2, HD1 which would correct the salaries of many and help keep public educators from leaving the field. It took me 32 years to reach the top of the teachers' payscale, and I know of other teachers who are currently close to 32 years of service, but aren't at the top yet. Some have given up and are retiring, while others are waiting to see if this bill will pass and make it worthwhile to stay in teaching a few more years. We are getting desperate for qualified teachers and it's so important to do everything possible to attract teachers to work here and encourage current teachers to remain in the profession.

My son is finishing his BS Degree in Computer Science, and was recently hired at a starting salary far above mine! How can we hope to attract high achieving people to the teaching profession if we continue to offer teachers little hope of moving up the pay scale?

Thank you for your consideration and support of this very important bill!

Mahalo,

Inga Park Okuna

HSTA Honolulu Chapter President

Kalihi Uka School Counselor

Parent of a Roosevelt HS Senior!

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/20/2022 8:38:07 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| KRISTEN HULL        | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and Members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2819 SD2 HD1. I am currently a first grade teacher in Kailua Kona, West Hawaii. I was born and raised on Oahu. My mother was a teacher for 41 years. She inspired me to become a teacher. I graduated from the University of Hawaii at Moana, College of Education in 2008.

When I started my career as a kindergarten teacher in Central Oahu, we were hit with furlough Fridays and the state faced huge budget cuts. I worked hard at taking professional development classes to raise my increase in Class, knowing that step increases were not happening for teachers anytime soon. I taught for five years before transferring to Hawaii Island. During those five years of teaching I did not receive any step increases.

I committed myself to take as many professional development classes as I could before I started a family, in order to boost my income as much as possible. I have seen pay increases every two years, according to step movements from 2013 through 2019. Those four step increases were recognized and definitely helped my family financially, especially after giving birth to my daughter in 2018. I am at Class 6, Step 9 currently, but should be higher in step according to my years of service. It is hard to believe that I will complete my 14th year of teaching at the end of this school year.

When I was hired in 2008 there was already a teacher shortage and retention issue. 14 years have gone by and our state is still struggling to retain and keep teachers. I believe it is mainly due to financial struggles. Just from my graduating cohort at UH Manoa, I personally know 8 teachers that have left the profession after teaching less than ten years. 3 other teachers moved back to the mainland. Out of 16 graduates in my cohort, I only know of 5 of us that are still teaching in Hawaii today. That is heart breaking to me. It also makes me think...why am I still here? Did I choose the right profession?

This year I can honestly say that I have seriously considered quitting teaching. The time and effort that I have put in to adjust to the pandemic and teaching online, switching to in person learning, splitting our classes up into groups, teaching them on different days, taking on summer school to help with finances, balancing my school life and my home life...has been a tremendous struggle.

Everyone has suffered during the pandemic the last two years. I personally have had to find a new place to live this past July, during a major housing crisis. I would never have imagined that I would be dealing with looking for a new place to live right before school started. After living in the same place for 7 years, our home that we were renting was sold. Thankfully my family and I were able to secure a new place to live, a week before I had to go back to school. Our rent has tripled. It does not include utilities. Now with inflation, rising gas prices, a potential 20% increase in electricity, the cost of living in Hawaii has skyrocketed. On top of all of this, I am debating if I can afford preschool for my daughter next school year. I do not think I will be able to. Buying our first home is now definitely out of the question. I do not know how other families are making it here. I myself am starting to really lose hope that teachers in Hawaii will ever make enough. More of us will be pushed out of Hawaii. Will I be one of them? I love my home; Hawaii, born and raised. I hope I can continue to live here and raise my children here.

Thank you for taking the time to listen to my story and journey as a teacher. I truly hope that things get better for those of us in the teaching profession. We desperately need higher pay and recognition for our years of service. Please vote in support for Senate Bill 2819 SD2 HD1.

Kristen Hull

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/20/2022 8:48:38 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Debi Schmeding      | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I'm writing in support of SB2819 as a teacher who is affected by the Hawaii DOE compressed salary schedule. I am currently at step 11 along with many of my colleagues, some of them with many fewer years of teaching than I. I have been teaching in Hawaii for 23 years, through a strike during Governor Cayetano's tenure, Govenor Lingle's Furlough Fridays, and a "last, best and final offer" contract imposed on us by Governor Abercrombie, always hoping that the next contract would recognize my years of service and pay me accordingly.

At this point in my career I cannot move on the salary schedule through reclassing; I have paid for and done all the course work to get to the final class on the schedule. The only advancement possible for me before retirement is through step movement, which must be negotiated with each contract.

Addressing the salary compression issue will directly benefit many veteran teachers and benefit our keiki as more of us are financially able to stay in the classroom, instead of leaving for the private sector.

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/20/2022 8:50:40 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Anjanette Naganuma  | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chair Onishi, Vice-Chair Sayama, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of SB2819 SD2 HD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION.

I am Anjanette Naganuma, a teacher at Lahainaluna HS in the Maui District. I am one of many teachers in the state affected by salary compression. I love my students and I love my community, but love does not keep a roof over one's head.

When the average price of a home in the community is at \$1M, the State cannot expect teachers to stay and struggle on a frozen, underpaid salary. I graduated from the high school where I now teach. I have seen family and classmates and colleagues leave for the continent where the cost of living is lower and homes can still be bought on a teacher's salary.

Have you heard of [New Mexico's bill](#) to move toward a 3-tiered pay system, where beginning teachers on Tier 1 would earn \$50K - the same starting pay Hawaii starts our own teachers at? Do a search for a cost-of-living calculator. CNN's calculator tells me that if New Mexico passes their bill and pays a beginning teacher \$50,000, then Hawaii would need to pay a salary of \$109,628 in order to be comparable. No wonder teachers are leaving Hawaii. Hawaii's teacher salary is well known to be the lowest in the nation when adjusted for cost of living. A teacher just beginning their career in NM will be out-earning Hawaii's best paid, most experienced educators. Hawaii teachers in the middle of their careers, like me, wonder every paycheck if now is the time to pack it up and head out.

Fixing salary compression is a small step toward honoring the hard work of long-term dedicated teachers and hopefully avoiding having us flee for other states.

Please vote in support of SB2819 SD2 HD1.

Mahalo nui.



**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/20/2022 9:19:56 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Tina Marie Myers    | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Semate Bill SB 2819, SD2 relating to teacher compensation. I have been teaching special education in the Leeward District for 12 years. Addressing the salary compression will be beneficial to so many teachers, like myself, who are in the middle of the salary schedule. Veteran teachers should be recognized for the years that they have been teaching.

Please vote in support of support of Semate Bill SB 2819, SD2.

Thank you,

Tina Marie Myers

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/20/2022 9:53:56 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Karen Veriato       | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chair Onishi, Vice-Chair Sayama, and Committee Members,

I strongly support the passage of SB-2819, SD2, HD1. I work at Na'alehu Elementary School, a hard-to-fill, rural school in the Ka'u District of Hawai'i Island. It is about time that the teacher salary compression is fixed. I have over ten years of teaching experience and currently stuck on Step 9 along with over 2,000 fellow teachers. Other districts on the mainland take into account years of service in their salary schedules. Please fully fund SB-2819, SD2, HD1.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Karen

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/20/2022 10:11:56 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Jon G. Higa         | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the Committee,

My name is Jon Higa. I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819, SD2. I am currently a health and physical education teacher at Waiakea High School. I have 23 years of teaching experience in the Hawaii Department of Education. During this time, I have obtained my Master's in Science, taken dozens of continuing education courses/workshops, and volunteered countless hours in service to my students/school. I have worked hard to become the best teacher I can be and to be able to provide for the needs of my family. If I'm being completely honest with myself, I have succeeded as a teacher, but failed as a provider for my family. You would think that after 23 years of service, I would be at the top of the pay scale, but this has not been the case. I have been stuck at various steps throughout my career and currently stand at step 11. It's been heart-breaking and a blow to my pride not to be able to provide for my son, daughter, and wife. During the days of furlough Fridays, I remember my son asking me to purchase a baseball bat because he was embarrassed to be the only player on his team not to have his own. I had to explain to him that his mother (also a school teacher) and I didn't have that kind of money to buy extras. - we ate a lot of peanut butter sandwiches back then... and sadly, still do. Fast forward to the Spring of 2020, it finally looked like veteran teachers such as myself were going to be compensated for lost wages throughout our career through the well-supported salary compression bill. Then a once in a lifetime pandemic derailed that plan. As educators, we don't expect to live an extravagant lifestyle. We teach because we love our students and want to set them up for a successful future. Like everyone else, we want our work to be valued and to be compensated fairly. I humbly ask for your support of Senate Bill 2819, SD2. I can't go back in time to buy my boy his bat, but maybe I can help him to pay for college or with a down payment on a house/business. Thank you for your time and service to our community.

Sincerely,

Jon Higa

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/20/2022 10:17:17 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Sybil Ranada        | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Dear Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819 SD2 HD1.

My name is Sybil Ranada & I am an educator (secondary teacher who transitioned to secondary school counselor) in the Leeward District. I am in my 17th year with the HIDOE & have been working at the same school for my entire career. When I was still in school working towards my teaching licensure I knew that I was going into a career that was known for its low compensation & I was honestly okay with that. I knew I was going to be fulfilled by working with my students & that would be enough. It's easy to believe that when you're young & naive, living with your parents rent-free, & having been inspired by the likes of teachers like Erin Gruwell of *Freedom Writers*.

Fast-forward to several years later, being married, trying to start a family & purchase our own home. The reality of a teacher's income set in & the fulfillment of connecting with students does not help to pay bills. Fast-forward again to finally having a family, paying for a mortgage & childcare, on top of sacrificing many hours of family time due to putting in (non-paid) overtime both at work & while at home. I've contemplated changing professions for several years due to the amount of time I've sacrificed from my personal life as well as the high stress level, but never as seriously as these last two years dealing with Covid. The combination of high stress, investment of time (aka more time spent focusing on other people's children = less time to focus on my own child) & crazy inflation have caused me to look more seriously at a new career. Because I plan to work for about 20 more years, that allows me enough time to re-establish myself in a new career path that allows me to be compensated more fairly & spend more time with my own family.

If Senate Bill 2819 is passed, it would give me pause in looking at a new career in the healthcare field because it would allow me some relief from some of the financial stress my family is under. It would allow me to not have to search for another part-time job once my son is a bit older, as I was working part-time before I had him, in order to supplement our income. Being able to keep up with bills & not constantly stress about finances would help my family, as well as keep me in this career that I enjoy & have hopes to retire in.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819 SD2 HD1.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my story.

Sincerely,

Sybil M. Ranada

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/20/2022 11:19:00 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Joy Shlachter       | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the Committee,

I have been a teacher for almost 17 years. Please pass this bill SB2819 so that I and other veteran teachers can finally be paid the salary we are supposed to be paid based on our years of experience teaching. It is a need to pass this bill. It has been long overdue. Updates are needed to our pay schedule to compare the ever so hard work professionals, teachers. It is also important so they will be in place for teachers newer to the profession as well to help teacher retention in Hawaii. Teachers work hard for our keiki. We must do everything we can to encourage teacher recruitment and teacher retention for the long term. Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819. Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Mahalo.

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/20/2022 11:42:45 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Leona Watson        | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha mai Kakou Committee and Chair members,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819 SD2 HD1. My name is Leona Watson, I am a teacher in the Leeward District at Ka Waihona O Ka Na'au'ao Public Charter School. As a beginning Kumu in my third year as a licensed teacher, I am writing to gain your support for my colleagues and friends who have served my community as a Kumu or teacher for 5, 10, 15, and 20 plus years of their dedicated heart in helping or future generation. My dedicated colleagues and friends have remained onipa'a and steadfast in our Leeward District where teacher retention has been a continuous challenge. My colleagues and friends are lifetime residents with a heart of services for our Keiki who continuously join professional development, attend college classes, and problem solves through this pandemic without any complaints. Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819 SD2 HD1. I appreciate your time and kokua in this matter.

Me Kealoha Pumehana,

Leona Watson

- Be sure to reference the correct bill numbers for the testimony you are going to provide.
- Thank the committee for the opportunity to testify

TO: Representative Richard H. K. Onishi, Chair  
Representative Jackson D. Sayama, Vice Chair  
Committee on Labor & Tourism

REGARDING: **RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION  
SB 2819, SD 2** (HSCR 1159-22) Provides automatic step  
increases to correct salary compression.

DATE: Tuesday, March 22, 2022  
TIME: 9:00 A.M.  
PLACE: VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE  
Conference Room 312  
State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street

POSITION: **IN SUPPORT** of SB 2819, SD 2

INTRO: I am a teacher of 19 years, currently working on the Leeward  
Coast of Oahu.

I am testifying in **support** of SB 2819, SD2

*Step increases* to correct salary compression for our more experienced teachers will help our State retain teachers, and encourage those thinking about becoming teachers encouragement to do so. Teacher retention is still a problem, with only a little more than 50% of new teachers making it past 5 years of seniority.

Adequate teacher compensation will have teachers feel valued for what they do, and feel that educating our children of Hawaii is an important career. I have colleagues who had 8-18 years of seniority who have left the teaching profession in Hawaii, and have chosen other better paying careers. These were great, intelligent teachers who have determined that leaving teaching benefits their families financially as well as providing them with more time to spend with their families.



Poor teacher retention also affects our State's ability to turn out good administrators. Currently, because of the administrator shortage, a teacher need only 5 years of experience before applying to be an administrator.

In our State of Hawaii, quality education does not seem to be a high priority. As the pandemic has shown, public education's priority seems to be free day care, not quality education. The teaching profession is not valued in Hawaii, but a good educational system is how we build a strong middle class for a strong economic community, which cannot be done without good teachers.

Teaching is a time consuming, expensive (because teachers spend a lot of our own money) and under valued profession. Let's show our teachers that our State does value quality education, and fund this step movement.

Sincerely,  
Debra Yamakawa  
Public School Teacher  
debyamakawa@gmail.com

March 20, 2022

Aloha,

I have been a teacher for 15 years. My husband has been a teacher for 13 years. I strongly support and urge for your support of SB2819\_SD2.

Teaching is difficult with or without COVID "life". Compensating teachers for what they are worth keeps experienced teachers in the classroom, increases student learning, and helps families afford to stay in Hawaii

These last two years have been especially hard since many experienced teachers are leaving and less experienced personnel fill the spot. New teachers and Long Term substitutes definitely do not fill their shoes. I've seen many GREAT teachers leave the profession due to harder and harder conditions. Pay was no longer enough to keep them in the classrooms. Many teachers are also retiring early. It is sad to lose such talent. I am not close to retirement so that is not an option. I'm sad that I am stuck at step 9 along with 2,374 of my fellow teachers. Some of these teachers have been teaching even longer than I have. I also work 2 part time jobs to live comfortably. It would lift a huge burden if I were compensated for my knowledge and time as an experienced teacher. I know it would help me stay longer if my pay was based on years of service.

In addition students with effective teachers learn more than students in classrooms with less effective teachers. I won't make this long but, if we keep losing good teachers then students lose out on their education.

Cost of living in Hawaii continues to soar. Teacher pay has not done the same. Expenses of buying/renting a home, car, gas, food etc adds up and our paychecks do not keep up with these rising costs. When my husband and I first started teaching we only saw our pay go down each year. There are many in similar situations.

It is time teachers got paid according to their years of service and comparable to the cost of living here in the islands.

**Me ka ha'aha'a, Lehua Yamagata**

15 year teacher

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/21/2022 7:17:13 AM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| Submitted By            | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify                |
|-------------------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Dana Shishido Kobayashi | Individual   | Support            | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

**Honorable Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the Committee:**

**My name is Dana Shishido Kobayashi. I am a third grade teacher at Major Sheldon Wheeler Elementary School in Central District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2819, SD2.**

**I gave testimony two years ago in support of SB2488, SD2. I stated that I believed the salary compression would move teachers to the proper step in line to their years of service.**

**I shared my financial struggles of being a single mom as a public school educator. The furloughs had depleted my savings and I had to live paycheck to paycheck. I put my child first in the area of physical health care, setting aside my health concerns. Although I did have medical insurance, I couldn't afford the copays for both of us.**

**Fortunately, I am now married; however, I am still paying for my daughter's college tuition.**

**The pandemic has placed different struggles on public educators. The students academic capabilities and social behaviors are not at the appropriate levels. My third graders' last full year of school was in kindergarten. I am desperately attempting to get them "up to speed," frankly though, it is mentally draining. I am constantly adjusting my plans and now, I have to create so many motivators to keep the students engaged. I have had to spend much of my personal funds to purchase items for my "treasure chest" and school supplies for the students. These are issues that educators, at all levels, are now challenged with.**

**I will be able to retire this coming July, after 32 years of service. I do enjoy working with the keiki, however, after over three decades of service, I still have not met the highest salary step. Honestly, I feel disrespected. I continue to pursue professional development even if I am not compensated for it. I do this to better myself, for my students. The passage of SB2819 would be compensation for this very issue.**

**Recently, we faced a shortage of over a thousand teachers. Again, the pandemic placed a strain on the teaching field. I am seeing many mainland transplanted teachers moving back to their home states. As well as many veteran teachers contemplating early retirement.**

**Something must be done to retain them and encourage more to pursue the field of teaching. I believe this can be achieved with the passage of SB2819.**

**I feel there are parallels to legislators and educators. I chose to become a teacher because of my love for children and the desire to make positive impacts upon our community and the future generation. Perhaps this was your objective in choosing to be elected as a legislator? In any case, we are all public servants and deserve to be respected and fairly compensated.**

**I invite you to partner with us, to do what is right for the children of Hawaii - respect the teachers, respect the students; just as we respect you. Please vote in support of SB2819.**

**Thank you, for your time and your service,**

**Dana Shishido Kobayashi, Central District, Oahu**

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/21/2022 7:36:38 AM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Merry K Kiyan       | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819.

This is Merry Kiyan and I am a first grade teacher at Mountain View Elementary School on the Big Island. This is my 27th year of teaching and although I have taken enough classes past my Professional Diploma in Elementary Education and am in Class 7, I am still not at the top of my pay potential because of salary compression through the years. I was born and raised in Hawaii and only now, at age 57 have I finally bought a home. I don't know how anyone on Oahu or other islands can afford even "affordable homes" on a teacher salary. I absolutely love the keiki I work with every day, they are the light in our community and I have worked very hard to become the best teacher that I can.

Please help with the long standing issue of salary compression so that teachers like me who have worked in schools our whole lives can finally get the compensation we have worked all these years for.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Aloha,

Merry K Kiyan

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/21/2022 7:36:41 AM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b>  | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|----------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| christopher castillo | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Chair Onishi, Vice-Chair Sayama, and members of the committee,

My name is Christopher Castillo, an EOEL PreK teacher in Waianae. I am writing today in support of SB2819 SD2 HD1 relating to teacher compensation in the form of salary compression. It is often said that people develop and better their craft over time.

If this bill were to pass, it would not affect me at the moment in my 8 years of teaching, but many of my counterparts who have put their whole lives into this profession and teaching the keiki of Hawai'i. Many of these teachers with over 20 years of teaching experience have been looking towards pay increases over their years of service, only to be denied and left stagnant. Making them feel underappreciated as new teachers enter the field and make almost as much as them. These teachers have rolled with the punches of our education system, been through years of various training and professional development only for their pay not to reflect the time and effort that they gave to better themselves as educators.

We have already started seeing the beginning of a mass exodus of new and veteran teachers. Lowering our teacher retention rate to less than 50%. By fixing the compression, we would have a chance to retain experienced and veteran teachers to carry on rather than having to scramble just to fill vacant seats. If you really cared about education and the future of our keiki of Hawai'i you would support SB2819 SD2 HD1.

Because supporting teachers trickles down to supporting our classrooms and the keiki we serve. Thank you.

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/21/2022 7:37:34 AM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Brent Kiyan         | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819.

This is Brent Kiyan and I am a second grade teacher at Mountain View Elementary School on the Big Island. This is my 30th year of teaching and although I have taken enough classes past my Professional Diploma in Elementary Education and am in Class 7, I am still not at the top of my pay potential because of salary compression through the years.

I work full time and also have a part time job to help make ends meet, me and my wife are both teachers and we have worked so hard to provide for our family, and we do not have a lavish lifestyle by any means nor do I need that. What I need is for you to please fix the salary compression that has happened through the years.

Please help with the long standing issue of salary compression so that teachers like me who have worked in schools our whole lives can finally get the compensation we have worked all these years for.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely ,

Brent H Kiyan





Testimony Before the House Labor and Tourism Committee

RE: SENATE BILL 2819 SD 2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

Monday March 21, 2022

Dear Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the Committee:

My name is Cynthia Broc. I am the Student Services Coordinator at Laie Elementary School in the Windward District on the island of Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819 SD 2 Relating to Teacher Compensation.

I am a veteran teacher who has been at Laie Elementary School for the past 30 years. I started out as a parent volunteer. Due to the shortage of special education teachers, even back then, I was asked to assist in the pre-school special education classroom in 1998 as a long term substitute special education teacher. I loved it so much I went back to school to get my teaching license. I taught for 12 years as a special education pre-school teacher and then moved into the Student Services Coordinator position where I have been for the past 10 years. I have experienced the Cayetano teacher strike and Linda Lingle furlough Fridays. I have gone year after year with no pay raise, or an increase in my pay accompanied by an increase in my insurance premiums. I have had to get a second job, sell my jewelry, and borrow money from my parents so my family has food on the table and a roof over our heads. My husband and I have lived pay check to pay check so our children could afford college and we could afford to care for my husband's 97 year old mother in our home.

I am asking you to support compression pay for us veteran teachers. My salary has been stuck at classification Step 11 for years. I would love to stay in my position and assist my special education department for the next 5 years. I have been mentoring new special education teachers and we have continued to experience success in their development. The extra compensation for my years of service will allow me to retire and stay in Hawaii. I plan to continue to give back to our children by volunteering to support the special education department at Laie Elementary School if the compression pay goes through. If not, upon retiring my family and I will have to leave the island because it is just too expensive to stay here.

I urge you to support compression pay for us veteran teachers so we can continue to stay in our positions and support the future educators and children of Hawaii.

Thank you for your time and consideration- Cynthia Broc, Windward District, Island of Oahu

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/21/2022 8:07:33 AM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Nicole Ilae         | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Chair Woodson, Vice Chair Kapela, and members of the Committee:

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819. I am a teacher at Olomana School, and I have taught for about 18 years. I love my students, and I love my job, but I have not been able to make ends meet because I am stuck in the middle of the salary schedule. I had to recently move in with my parents... please please please pass this bill so that I can be compensated for my years of experience. If the minimum wage gets increased, people with no college education will be getting paid close to what I am being paid. Please support the teachers! Please support SB2819.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Nicole Ilae

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/21/2022 8:10:49 AM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Kristina Lee        | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chair of the Senate Committee,

This testimony is in regards to SB 2819, SD2 - Relating to teacher compensation (salary compression)

For the Hearing on March 22, 9:00am

In SUPPORT of SB2819 SD2 HD1

I am Kristina Lee, a teacher at Moanalua Middle School. I am testifying in favor of fixing the salary compression. As a long time teacher of the DOE I have seen good teachers leave our school because of opportunities to earn more money elsewhere. Our keiki deserve the best education, and it means keeping our great teachers. I believe that by fixing the salary compression we will not only retain our veteran teachers, but give those people interested in becoming educators incentive to make this a career. This is why I am in support of this measure of teacher compensation.

Thank you,

Kristina Lee

Moanalua Middle School

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/21/2022 8:20:26 AM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| David Napier        | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama and members of the Committee,

I am writing in support of SB 2819 SD2. I have been in the DOE for 27 years (Leeward district) and would appreciate your support in helping address the issue of salary compression. The additional money would help our family achieve a long term goal of ours...to own a home and stay in Hawaii.

As I near retirement age, I have started to look at what I would potentially make in retirement and I was startled to find out that I could make more in retirement by retiring and getting another job than if I continued working. I would prefer to continue working with our students, but I have a kid in college and another one will be there soon. Financial considerations will go a long way towards determining how long I stay in the DOE.

I have several other colleagues making the same decisions soon. Our students benefit from having our most experienced educators serving them.

Please support SB2819 as it will help our most experienced educators stay in the field longer.

Thank you for your time,

Dave

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/21/2022 8:22:49 AM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Jonathan Silva      | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

I support teacher pay battling compression. I see teachers all around the world and nation are shown value by having annual pay increases. By not valuing this, many teachers are leaving the field to pursue a career that can adquetly support a family.

I work 72-80 hours a week just to provide for my family. We don't eat out, we have no car payments, and we live simply; but the pay levels we're receiving as professionals are embarassing.

Please make this right.

Jonathan Silva

School Counselor 11 years

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/21/2022 8:32:54 AM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify                |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Chris        | Individual   | Support            | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

**Aloha Chair, Vice Chair and members of the Committee.**

**I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819. My name is Chris Nepl, and I have been a part of Honolulu District, Kaimuki-McKinley-Roosevelt Complex Area for 20 years to this month. I currently teach 4th grade at Jefferson Elementary School.**

**The impact this legislation will have for me personally will be life changing. If the bill is passed, I will be able to say with certainty that I can continue and finish my teaching career here in Hawaii. I started my career in January 2002, the school year directly after the teachers' strike. I was here for the pay cut in 2009, where we had furlough Fridays that forced me to work a second job on those Fridays in an effort to make up for the decrease in salary. I had a friend who started their teaching career alongside me 20 years ago, yet disappointingly had to leave after about ten years because of the pay cuts during those furlough Friday years. I don't want to have to do the same. I chose to stick it out here in Hawaii, hoping for improvements in pay. I've been around for the tiny pay increases that have only been limiting, not prospering. I've been stuck in the middle of the salary schedule, which has restricted me from being able to keep up with the cost of living, to meet basic living needs like a place of my own and properly save money for my family's future. Two years ago I submitted my testimony for this bill and covid killed it, resulting in another decrease in salary, and a new contract cementing me again in a pay that isn't even keeping up with the cost of living from years ago. I've committed to teaching here in Hawaii 20 years ago, and would very much like to continue teaching here, and finish my career here, and retire. I can't continue this career path that has me stuck on the same step of the salary schedule, only to have to wait for negotiations to decide if and how many step movements I will get for each contract, when my years of service should be the deciding factor securing me at the top of the salary schedule. This bill will resolve these issues. This bill will allow me to continue teaching here and finish my career here.**

**This bill will allow me to be able to afford my own place to rent, and provide the chance to buy my own home in the near future. This bill will secure my life here in Hawaii where I can put roots down and say with confidence that I can raise a family here, and have my kids attend a school within a system I've worked in for so long. Salary compression has restricted me from buying a home, or even renting a place of my own, forcing me to bounce around for the past 20 years to over 10 different shared rental properties, a live in boat situation, and even homelessness, all in attempts at surviving here, not prospering. The**

passing of this bill will allow me to afford a living situation where I don't have to rent a room in someone else's house, but instead provide me the opportunity to rent my own place and in the near future purchase my own property that either way, would give me a place I can call my home.

This bill will allow me to focus on what is most important, my students, and their learning, by using the necessary time outside of the classroom to grade papers and plan, rather than a second job. Salary compression has forced me to consider and take on additional jobs and non educational training to provide a second income in attempts at making up for the shortage in my teaching salary. I've worked as a cook in kitchens, taught yoga classes, tutored, acted, worked for my friends' businesses including Hawaii International Conferences, attended broker's opens for Revoluson, and worked as an educational consultant, all in so many attempts at just keeping up with the cost of living that my salary does not provide. This legislation will provide the opportunity for me to have a choice, and not a required second job so that I can focus solely on my job as a teacher and the needs of my students.

Personally, this bill will make what has been wrong for too long, right. Hawaii is the only state in the country that does not pay teachers based on years of service. I have felt disrespected, restricted, and demoralized. Over the years I've spoken with people in public who have said to me the following: "I have so much respect for what you do." "I love teachers, I wish they paid you guys more." It's bittersweet to hear such words from strangers. After hearing these words it's just disheartening and upsetting. We all know veteran teachers like myself are more effective in the classroom having a greater impact on students' lives and their education because of the years of education and experience they've put in. This bill will make what has been disrespectful, just and right. What has been restrictive, prosperous. What has been demoralizing, uplifting.

Salary compression has impacted my personal health and well being. Twenty years of teaching, working nights and weekends, and still unable to provide the basic needs of a decent home and savings are a heavy burden on one's self worth. The choice of a teaching career is one of great sacrifice with little reward. The knowledge that we are so underpaid in comparison with the rest of the nation is very disheartening. It is not right. I go to work everyday, focusing on taking care of my students to the best of my ability, but who is taking care of me? Salary compression certainly has not. I've been teaching for 20 years, yet remain stuck in the middle of the salary schedule at step 11. I've earned my masters degree in education. I've taken all the professional development classes and earned my way to the highest class on the pay scale (class 7). It's time for our state to catch up with the rest of the country and pay us based on our years of service because that is the right thing to do for our teachers, our students, and the future of public education in the state of Hawaii.

Passing this legislation will be life changing for so many reasons. One, I will be able to do what I had planned to do without question, stay in Hawaii to continue to teach and retire. Two, I will be able to afford my own place to rent, and provide the chance to buy my own home in the near future. Three, I can focus on what is most important, my students, and their learning, by using the necessary time outside of the classroom to grade papers and

**plan, rather than a second job. Four, I will feel respected knowing that I am receiving a salary that is equitable to my peers in other states because I am getting paid for my years of service.**

**Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819. Thank you so much for the opportunity to testify.**



**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/21/2022 8:39:14 AM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Cathleen Oyama      | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Dear Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2819 SD2, relating to teacher compensation (salary compression).

I have been working as a DOE school counselor for 28 years (with an additional 3.5 years with the DOH) and am currently on salary step 13. I love my job. I love my coworkers and I love our students. Yet, being a career educator is not easy. The long hours require us to give up family time and skimp on “self-care.” The lack of supplies and on-going purchase order issues (restrictions, rules, and long turn-around periods) require us to use personal funds to provide for the needs of our students. The mediocre pay requires us to seek additional sources of income, despite our already limited time. In addition to this, these past two years have been especially taxing on our time and mental and physical energy. This has brought a number of my highly qualified and experienced colleagues to the breaking point and they chose to retire. Many of them retired mid school year, which is not the norm for educators and speaks to the extreme burnout that is occurring.

I, too, am contemplating retirement and on January 3, 2022, I hand delivered my application to the ERS office with the intention of retiring on June 1, 2022. This was not my original plan. My plan changed when I discovered that working part-time while collecting my pension would bring in more income than if I continue to work full-time with the DOE. Isn't that sad? After devoting 28 years to the DOE, I am still not at the top of my pay scale. And after a total of 31.5 years working for the State of Hawaii, I need to retire from the job I love in order to increase my income. My fear is that many of my veteran colleagues have discovered the same and we will see a mass exodus of retirement-eligible educators walk away from the job, taking with them their invaluable and irreplaceable knowledge and experience.

Will the passing of SB 2819 SD2 entice me to postpone my retirement? I honestly do not know. I do know that it will cause me to take a pause and consider my options. I also know, more importantly, that it will make a difference to my colleagues. Fixing the salary compression issue will not only provide educators with much needed income, it will also be a huge morale boost. I cannot express enough how vital that is right now. It will also give new and potential educators hope that being a career educator is financially beneficial and not a financial liability.

Please vote in support of SB 2819 SD2. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Cathy Oyama

Committee on Labor and Tourism

Tuesday, March 22, 2022 at 9:00am

Rep. Richard H.K. Onishi, Chair

Rep. Jackson D. Sayama, Vice Chair

Aloha Chair Onishi, Vice-Chair Sayama, and Members of the Committee,



My name is [Sarah "Mili" Milianta-Laffin](#). I teach at Ilima Intermediate School in the Campbell-Kapolei Complex, Leeward District on O'ahu. I am submitting testimony in strong support of SB 2819 SD 2 HD1.

Teachers like me confront challenges, do extra work and lose sleep all the time, worrying about other people's children. It's the nature of the job. But do you know what we teachers shouldn't worry about? **Being compensated for our work.**

I'm a 16 year public school educator who makes about \$50,000 a year. This is the lowest salary of my career. This is less money than I made during my 1st year teaching, 16 years ago, in Houston, Texas. My entire salary doesn't even cover our rent, we have little savings, and even though I desperately want to start a family -- I'm scared that we can't realistically afford to have a baby with the high cost of living in Hawai'i. Without my husband's salary, I could not even afford to be a teacher in Hawai'i.

SB 2819 SD 2 HD1 would guarantee that teachers in Hawaii, like my peer teachers around the United States, have their salaries adjusted based on their years of experience. This would mean more than 8,000 public school teachers would see corrections in their salaries to help keep them in the profession longer. While this particular bill does not help my own salary, it helps the salaries of many teachers I care about, and it's just the right thing to do.

If we can't keep our master teachers in the field, who will help the next generation of educators become master teachers? Mentorship from an educator who "has been there" is the only way to support the growth of the teachers we'll need for the future of public education in our state.

I was 1 of 4 teachers recognized nationally by Dr. Jill Biden and Speaker Nancy Pelosi for Women's History Month in March 2021. I'm a Hawaii State Finalist for the National Presidential Award for Excellence in Math & Science Teaching. I was awarded the HSTA 2021 STACY Award, and 2020 "Pono Award" for my work with social justice in education with menstrual equity, WiFi on Wheels, supporting LGBTQ+ youth and more. I say this not because it should matter, but I hope it illustrates that I love what I do, and I work hard. I'm already vastly underpaid for the work I do. Yet, I do it because I believe in the transformative power of PUBLIC education.

I stay in public education, because I believe in public education. I'd like to bring up the elephant in the room. Did you know, teachers like me get LinkedIn messages all the time from wealthy private schools and enterprising charter schools in our state, asking us to come work for them? These schools have learned to "cherry-pick" the best public school teachers we have by preying on our state's low public school teacher pay. While it breaks my heart each time we lose a teacher to the wealthy privatized schools, I understand why they go. If you believe in public education, you must fix teacher pay by supporting this bill.

Students deserve teachers who can focus all their energy on creating engaging lessons, not worrying about how they can make ends meet. Mahalo for reading, and for supporting the students of Hawai'i by caring for their teachers through your support of SB 2819 SD 2 HD1.

Sarah Milianta-Laffin, Teacher  
Ilima Intermediate School  
Leeward District

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/21/2022 8:54:25 AM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Robert Widhalm      | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

**Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the Committee,**

**I am writing in SUPPORT of SB2819 SD2 HD1.**

While much of this testimony is similar to my testimony submitted to other committee hearings this year, I felt it important to share my experience with the House’s Labor and Tourism Committee as well.

I have been a teacher in Hawaii for over twenty-one (21) years and am currently a twelve-month state office teacher at the Professional Development and Educational Research Institute in the Office of Talent Management for the Hawaii State Department of Education.

One of the main reasons I am still an educator is because of the compensation of my current twelve-month position. Prior to becoming a twelve-month teacher, I worked a second job and/or summer school for almost half of my career as a ten-month teacher just to make ends meet. While teachers technically had a couple months off in the summer, I rarely felt “off” the job. I would often spend several weeks during the summer either improving my own abilities and skills as a teacher (conferences, PD courses, professional readings) or improving my units and lessons and planning for the next year. During my last six years at the school level, I gave up almost all of my summers for our robotics program because students were that interested and willing to come and learn, build robots, and grow as individuals.

As a result of having to work multiple jobs and the demands of being a teacher, I began seeking employment in other fields and had a reasonably good chance of being hired as an apprentice for the Naval Shipyard program at Pearl Harbor as I made it to the interview rounds. Fortunately, by the time I was interviewed for the Shipyard I had been offered and accepted my current twelve-month position and thus informed the interview committee from the Shipyard I was no longer interested in the apprenticeship.

While I am not a current school-level teacher, I have considered returning to school-level and the classroom if I wouldn’t have to worry about covering my expenses. If this experimental modernization project to address the salary compression issue is enacted, my ten-month salary would be \$91,948 as compared to my current twelve-month salary of \$92,486...less than \$600 difference! That salary would definitely make it more doable to return to the classroom as a ten-month teacher.

Finally, I appreciate the latest amendments to include other employees such as administrators and educational assistance to have annual step movements and/or raises. In my current position, I support new and aspiring administrators and know how hard they work and the incredible responsibility of their role. Therefore, they deserve the compensation commensurate with the work they do as school leaders and the experience they gain serving in that role over time.

While my experience is my own, I know many teachers and administrators with this level of commitment and dedication to their students and the profession. The classroom teacher is one of the most demanding and stressful jobs and deserves the compensation commensurate with the demands of the job. With the pandemic, I can honestly say I cannot imagine the extreme challenge it has been for classroom teachers as I did not have to do what they did—every day! For anyone who has not taught at least an entire semester, they really cannot say what it is like to be a teacher. As such, I cannot say what it would be like to teach in school during the pandemic.

Therefore, I urge the committee to recognize the need to adequately compensate experienced teachers, administrators, and educational assistance through this bill in order to retain (and possibly attract) the large number of experienced educators, especially considering the current job market for job seekers. Please pass this legislation and appropriate funds to retain (and hopefully attract) experienced educators.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Robert (Bobby) Widhalm

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/21/2022 8:54:44 AM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b>          | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Jessibelle Kahauolopua-Young | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha! My name is Jessibelle Kahauolopua-Young, and I am currently a student at Kalaheo High School. I strongly support of SB2819 SD2 HD1, Relating to Teacher Compensation. This bill should be passed because I believe that increasing the salaries even just a little bit each year could help reduce income struggles and increase employee satisfaction, increasing worker motivation. The slow increase in salary annually would boost worker productivity while also making teachers stay at a school longer, lowering teacher shortages.

Thank you for your time and consideration, I truly hope that you will support Senate Bill 2819 SD2 HD1.

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/21/2022 8:54:50 AM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Moani Aiona         | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

To: Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the Committee

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819 about teacher compression.

I am a veteran school counselor at Hana High and Elementary School in rural Maui. I have been a counselor for 21 years. Under the current pay scale I have not had a pay increase in several years and will not have one for the rest of my career if something doesn't change in our pay scale. Veteran teachers/counselors are not encouraged to continue in the field. We can work elsewhere for more pay and less stress. I love my job and I love helping young adults find academic success. I want to continue to do my job especially with the current need for mental health services for needy population however, I also need to think of my family. I need to be able to pay my mortgage and send my own children to college.

Please support this bill so we can keep veteran teachers and counselors in schools.

Mahalo, Moani Aiona, School Counselor



**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/21/2022 8:55:41 AM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Alicia Nakamitsu    | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819.

My name is Alicia Nakamitsu and I am a teacher at 'Aiea High School and honored to serve my community as a public educator for the past 21 years. My husband is also a teacher at 'Aiea High School who is nearing retirement with over 28 years of service. My husband and I are proud to be a products of Hawaii's public education system. We are both part of the largest groups that have been impacted by the salary compression, and honestly, given the rate of step movements during our careers, we both believed we would never have to opportunity to reach the highest pay scale step before retiring despite serving over 30 years by retirement. I am currently at 7-11, and he is at 7-13 and for both of us to reach step 14b seems like a far and distant impossibility without the passing of this bill. We have two young children, both attending public elementary and middle schools. We wholeheartedly believe in public education, but we have raised them under the burden of Furlough Fridays and pay freezes. As public servants, we understand that those measures were last resort measures; however, with the rising cost of living, and the offers to teach for private schools and elsewhere, it is becoming increasingly necessary to entertain the idea of leaving our public school teaching positions. My cousin has left the HDOE to take a teaching position at one of our private schools where the pay and working conditions are better, but I would love to remain as HDOE teacher as long as I can afford to. Our best teachers are considering leaving and by paying them what they have earned through years of service would help all of us stay where our hearts are, supporting the public school system.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819. Thank you for your support of a quality public education in Hawaii, and for the opportunity to testify.

Thank you,

Alicia Nakamitsu

National Board Certified Teacher in Mathematics

Presidential Awardee for Excellence in Math and Science Teaching

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/21/2022 8:59:46 AM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Mackenzie Brammer   | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

I strongly support SB 2819, SD2, relating to teacher compensation. Teachers put a lot of work into their job and deserve to be properly compensated for it. Also, not paying teachers enough decreases the amount of people who choose to be in the education field. Because of this, it is clear that paying teachers more would solve the problem of not enough people in the education field.

Thank you for your consideration.

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/21/2022 9:00:39 AM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b>       | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Dorisa Pelletier-Yamasaki | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I am in Support 100% of this bill. Thanks, Dorisa Pelletier-Yamasaki

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/21/2022 9:56:26 AM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify                |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Chani Matsui | Individual   | Support            | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the Committee,

I am writing in support of Senate Bill [SB 2819, SD2](#). I'm in my 8th year of teaching at Kaimuki High School. I'm lucky because I have a husband and family who support my dream of teaching, but this isn't always the case. As an 8th year teacher, I have been stuck in the middle of the pay scale for many years. Teachers' pay increases on two "axes" -- one based on Professional Development (PD) courses we choose to take, and one based on our years of service, or experience as teachers. I've completed the maximum number of PD credits possible to move up on one "axis," but have yet to see much, if any movement, on the other axis, based on years of service. Like I said, I'm lucky that my family is generous and allows me the opportunity to follow my teaching dreams, or else I would have to seek out another career, that would pay more.

But not all of my colleagues are as fortunate. Most of my friends who are teachers have second jobs that require them to work on nights and weekends, and in many cases they earn more at these second jobs than they do as teachers. Their internal debate becomes one of leaving a career they love (teaching), in order to pursue something that pays more. And this is a shame, because it means we would be losing dedicated teachers and counselors, who know our students and are passionate about supporting them. In times of uncertainty, our keiki deserve teachers who are fully dedicated to their growth, and who know their struggles without having to re-introduce themselves to new teachers year after year.

This compression is frustrating, because I know that I have grown through my eight years of teaching, and it would be nice if my salary reflected that growth. This becomes even more apparent with teachers who are also compressed, with 15-20 years of experience. These teachers have SO MUCH more experience, and their salaries should also reflect that. While new teachers are eager, intelligent, and can offer so much, experienced teachers have a larger "toolbox" of strategies to work with, and have more experience when faced with challenges. I know I have learned so much from my interactions with more experienced teachers. If these teachers with 15-20 years of experience are not valued, they will choose to leave the profession, leaving newer teachers the daunting task of figuring it all out on their own. Please don't let these experienced teachers go! We need them to help improve our practice!

Please vote in favor of Senate Bill [SB 2819, SD2](#). It would mean providing our students with the best teachers our state has to offer.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

-Chani Matsui

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/21/2022 12:12:55 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Cassandra Coonradt  | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha,

I've been a teacher for over 11 years at King Kamehameha III school. I have been serving this community with love and aloha in my heart. I'm a single mom trying to make a life for my daughter and I, and in the last few years I've been struggling financially due to the continued inflation. I would really love to continue to serve this community, but I need some support. I dream of owning a home here one day. Please support the teachers here. We are trying our best and deserve to survive and keep our lives out here. Thank you for listening to me and giving me the time of day. Take care.

With love,

Cassie Coonradt

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/21/2022 9:18:54 AM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| ROBERT LOZANO       | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama and members of the Committee:

Aloha, I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2819 SD2 HD1. My name is Robert Lozano. I teach fifth grade and coach the robotics team at Waikoloa Elementary & Middle School. I have been teaching at Waikoloa School for 19 years, and have also found making financial ends meet a challenge during my tenure there. I began teaching at Waikoloa School in 2003 with the equivalent of a Master's Degree in Education and six years of prior teaching experience in Japan and California. At the time, the salary for that level of education and experience was under the threshold to qualify my young family of four for WIC food stamps as well as Quest medical coverage for my dependents. Since that time, I have maxed out my educational credits under the salary schedule, but suffered under the lack of STEP salary increases for my years of experience. Contract negotiations have produced less than half the number of step increases relative to the number of my years of service. Financial strains from the housing crisis of 2007/2008 and the global pandemic of the last two years, combined with skyrocketing inflation have all served to freeze my step increases during contract negotiations, as well as reduce my purchasing power. Oftentimes, a negotiated raise is effectively wiped out due to rising medical premiums and inflationary pressures. Giving teachers step increases relative to their years of service would go a long way in helping to make up the compression that has occurred over the last two decades and beyond. We have lost veteran teachers over the years due to the lack of financial investment in them. In my grade level alone over the last five years, I have welcomed and said goodbye to nearly a dozen teachers who could no longer afford the high cost of living in our Aloha State. It is my sincere hope that in passing Senate Bill SB2819 SD2 HD1, I will be able to work together with a team of teachers that can stay together over the long haul. Having a team with longevity can create a stronger school community, less teacher shortage, and more consistency for our keiki in school.

Please vote in support for Senate Bill SB2819 SD2.HD1

Mahalo for your consideration,

Robert Lozano

5th Grade Teacher

Robotics Coach



Waikoloa Elementary & Middle School

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/21/2022 10:03:52 AM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| Submitted By      | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify                |
|-------------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| LORELEI L KUHEANA | Individual   | Support            | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chairman Onishi and the members of Labor and Tourism Committee,

My name is Lorelei Kuheana and I am a 24 year veteran middle school teacher in Pearl City. I am writing to ask for your **SUPPORT of SB2819 SD2 HD1**. In this economic climate and the rising cost of goods and services in Hawaii, it is increasingly more difficult to support my family as a single parent/head of household. Being compensated properly based on my years of dedicated public service to the State of Hawaii, would afford me and my family a satisfactory lifestyle and possibly afford me the ability to own my own home. I spent 2020-2021 teaching both virtually and in-person while caring for my elderly father who passed in April. I am now caring for my elderly aunt. The passing of this bill will give me peace of mind that my efforts to serve my family, my students and their families, as well as my community, will not go unnoticed and unrewarded.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Lorelei Kuheana

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/21/2022 12:32:45 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| SHIRLEY YAMAUCHI    | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chair Onishi, Vice-Chair Sayama, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819.

The current salary compression has greatly impacted me. I am currently in the middle of the salary schedule after 22 years. I was hired at Kapolei Middle School back on August 11, 2000, with a starting pay of \$30,000. Back then, I had three additional roommates, no children, still unmarried, and very optimistic about my future. Here I am now, 22 yrs. later, with my almost seven-year-old son, two college-aged stepsons, living in the same townhouse for the last 17 years. My former 6th-grade student is now a grown woman, teaching at Waianae High School and her starting pay was \$49,000! Though I was very happy for her, I did not receive any compensation for the years since I was hired until the time my former student entered the Hawaii public school teaching profession. My teaching partner last year was a Navy wife from the East Coast. One day, during her second year at Kapolei Middle, asked me where was the annual pay raise, as that is what she had experienced as a US mainland teacher. I told her that, sadly, here in Hawaii there was no such thing. She was shocked, surprised, and eventually ended up leaving during this current school year, due to her husband's US Navy orders. This is very embarrassing. How is it that Hawaii is pretty much the only place in the nation that does not recognize years of service? How is it that I am at Step 11, although I've taught for 22 years with the HDOE?! I feel as though I should be at 14B, NOT STEP 11. Paying me a fair wage for my experience MAY convince me to stay teaching a few more years, which may prevent the teacher shortage crisis from getting worse. Otherwise, I am looking at retiring in 8.5 school years. I've already informed my Principal, school SASA, coworkers, and my retirement guy at Chinen and Arinaga of my plans. I am limited in part-time work and shifts since I have no child care provider anymore, due to the Covid pandemic. My son's former babysitter cannot risk having a first grader come to her home, where there are four little children, all under the age of Covid vaccinations. Being fully vaccinated does not mean that my son is immune from catching Covid. I am also the breadwinner of my immediate family of three. Though my community college dropout husband does work a full-time job, I make twice the amount that he does. I have participated in neighborhood food giveaways held at UHWO or the original Kapolei movie theatre parking lot, receiving much-needed groceries for my family. When my son was born in 2015, I was told that I "make too much as a teacher" to qualify for WIC. I resorted to buying tins of unopened baby formula from random strangers in parking lots, who would advertise on social

media outlets. WHY should I be reduced to this level of lifestyle, after all of my advanced degrees? I recently shared on Facebook that I have a total of \$0.50 left in my bank account, to last me until the March 18th teacher payday. A Nanakuli HS teacher responded back that I should consider leaving Hawaii, for somewhere more affordable. But why should I? I am a Big Island native and a lifelong Hawaii resident. Hawaii is my home. I should be paid as much as US mainland teachers. Hawaii is part of the US and we are the 50th state.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819.

I thank your committee for the opportunity to testify through this written piece.

Sincerely,

Shirley Yamauchi.

Kapolei Middle School

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/21/2022 3:15:27 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Bob Davis           | DOE                 | Oppose                    | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

This Bill circumvents collective bargaining and will limit management rights. It will likely take away instructional time and/or administrative time for planning, pro. development and collaboration.

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/21/2022 3:38:50 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Kori Oros           | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the Committee

**I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2819 SD2 HD1**

**My name is Kori and I am a 3rd grade teacher in the Central District. I teach at a Title I School and I have been teaching for 13 years.**

**Before Covid, for years, I would take my 3rd grade Lego Robotics Team to the Lego Expo at the Blaisedell which happens on a Saturday. I'm taking them again this year to the Stan Sherrif Center, again on a Saturday.**

**I've walked to a student's house during Covid to deliver learning materials, I've communicated with parents at 8pm to assist them with tech problems as well as meet with their children to catch them up on learning that they missed in class...I organized a staff beach clean up and my class used the found plastic to create a 4 x 8 Mural...**

**I have taught long enough that some of my students have now graduated high school and have found me on social media to tell me how much it meant to them to have me as a teacher ... I love my students and what I do.**

**When I started teaching I was 27 and I didn't pay attention to my financial future - I was happy to have a job doing something I love! I had roommates and I paid \$600 in rent for my room. Fast forward, now I have a husband and a daughter, and we are quickly getting priced out of Hawaii. My parents told me that I will not be inheriting our family home in Makakilo because they plan on selling it to pay for my dad's long term care, as he has no hands or feet.**

**Please fix our pay scale, give us hope to be able to stay in Public Education and hope that we may one day afford a home.**

**Please vote in support of SB2819 SD 2HD1**

**Thank you for the opportunity to testify,**

**Kori**



**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/21/2022 3:42:13 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Elena Kealoha       | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I have been teaching for 23 years and there are teachers making almost as much as I do and they have only been teaching for 5 years. I continue to put a big chunk of my paychecks back into my classroom to provide for students. Not only for classroom supplies, but for basic living living supplies that many of my students lack.

I cannot afford to buy a home in Hawaii and paying rent is a struggle even after committing a huge part of my life to the state and community. I continue to have thoughts of leaving the profession for a better life for myself and my family. How can we retain teachers who have proven to be a positive impact on the school, community, and state if we/they are not paid accordingly? Majority of teachers have a second job. What other profession do you know of in which a person has 5 degrees in the field, has committed 20+ years, and they are making less than \$80,000 a year? Well, welcome to the education field, where we continue to pay for more education and get nothing back in return but more student loans.



**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/21/2022 3:46:55 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Erica Yamauchi      | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

As a mother of two children in our public schools, I strongly support this legislation to be able to recruit and retain quality teachers.

Erica Yamauchi, Kaimukī/Wilhelmina Rise

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/21/2022 8:08:48 PM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Thomas Schemel      | HSTA                | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Greetings,

I would like to offer testimony in support of SB2819, which relates to teacher salary compression. I believe that this is one of the most important bills being considered as it will dramatically impact teacher recruitment and retention for decades to come. The impact of salary compression or a lack of negotiated step movements, over the past thirty years has unfairly impacted thousands of Hawaii state teachers.

I am in the midst of my 32nd year as a DOE employee and am still two steps away from the top step of a twelve step salary schedule. There are also thousands of teachers behind me in years of service that are stuck on a salary step that is way behind their years of service. It is long past time to correct this issue.

I have personally witnessed many quality teachers who have gone elsewhere for better compensation. This school year, my school located in the heart of Honolulu, has been forced to employ teachers without certification due to mid-year resignations and because qualified applicants do not exist. Please do what is fair and pass SB2819 so that teacher salaries become more competitive, allowing the Hawaii state department of education to attract qualified applicants.

Respectfully,

Tom Schemel

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/22/2022 6:03:15 AM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Stacy Sugai         | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Thank you for allowing me to submit testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819 SD2 HD1.

This is my 28th year as a school counselor in the Leeward District. After 28 years of service, I am only on Step 13 of the pay scale. There were numerous years that we didn't get any step movements or raises due to Hawaii's economy. Like many other educators, I currently have a second job. I believe passing this bill would encourage many educators to stay in the DOE. We all love our students and it's our passion to make a difference in their lives.

Having veteran teachers is crucial to be able to mentor the younger educators. There are many things in education that only experience can teach you; you can't learn these things in books. As a veteran educator it is always a privilege to not just teach our keiki, but the young educators as they enter the school system. Please pass this bill.

Please also consider adding steps for my colleagues who are at the top of the payscale.

Mahalo,

Stacy Sugai

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/22/2022 6:06:48 AM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Sara O'Rourke       | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819.

My name is Sara O'Rourke and I am a teacher at Kapaa High School on Kauai.

I've been a DOE teacher in Hawaii for 26 years and I have only advanced to Step 12 on the salary schedule; which is the middle of the salary schedule. I love my career, but I feel really undervalued because I have not been fairly compensated for my 26 years of dedicated service. I've started looking for jobs on the mainland where the cost of living is lower and my salary would be higher. However, getting paid a fair wage for my years of experience would definitely convince me to stay in Hawii.

Salary compression is a "make or break" issue for myself and many teachers at the moment. The passing of Senate Bill 2819 will be the morale boost that many teachers need right now, and prevent the teacher shortage crisis from getting worse.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/22/2022 6:25:05 AM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Christine Russo     | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

**Aloha Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the Committee,**

**My name is Christine Russo and I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819 SD2 HD1.**

**Passing this bill will ensure that our most experienced teachers are properly compensated for their years of service. I personally know several experienced teachers that have left the state to teach elsewhere. Passing this bill is one very important tool that will help keep our best teachers in Hawaii. As a parent of a child that attends public school, I want to ensure that my daughter has the best education possible and our state can make that happen through passing bills like this.**

**Mahalo for your time and consideration.**

**Christine Russo**

TUESDAY, MARCH 22, 2022

MITZIE HIGA, LEGISLATIVE CHAIR  
DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF HAWAII LABOR CAUCUS

Chair Onishi, and Members of the Committee:

The Democratic Party of Hawaii Labor Caucus **supports SB 2819, SD2, HD1**, relating to teacher compensation, **with suggested amendments**. This bill makes an appropriation to fund an experimental modernization project pursuant to section 78-3.5, Hawaii Revised Statutes, to make necessary discretionary salary adjustments.

We appreciate that this bill addresses teacher compensation equity issues and makes the necessary discretionary salary adjustments for experienced teachers by recognizing their professional service to the department of education and our public charter schools through discretionary salary adjustments, as negotiated between the superintendent of education and the exclusive representative of collective bargaining unit (5) Hawaii State Teachers Association. We leave the negotiations language up to Hawaii State Teachers Association, and ask you to incorporate their suggestions as they see fit.

**We really want this particular bill to focus only on teacher compensation, and fixing their salary compression issue with the Experimental Modernization Project, and we believe any part of this bill that has been added that deals with professional development changes and funding belong in SB3209 as that particular bill would allow for the funding of professional development which includes collaboration, and it needs to be noted that any changes in hours for professional development, outside of the current contract hours, needs to be negotiated. The current amendments in this HD1 could be interpreted to not fund these PD hours, and also they do not seem to be subject to negotiations in the current language of this bill, which is problematic, if they are outside of the current contract hours of teachers, thus these amendments would be better inserted into HB3209 and it needs to clearly state, “subject to negotiations regarding the hours/minutes” as well as that teachers should be compensated for any additional time. SB3209 is a bill with the purpose of bringing back the 21 hours of professional development that teacher lost last year during the economic downturn caused by the pandemic. Placing these amendments on PD in SB3209 would be the best way to ensure these 21 hours/1,260 minutes return and are funded and negotiated.**

We know that teacher turnover is high, and only going up. This lack of equity in salary for years of service is impacting the retention of licensed, tenured teachers who are essential to closing the achievement gap to ensure equity and excellence for each student. We need the legislature’s help to end the teacher shortage crisis.

To support our teachers in Hawaii in the public school system, including charter schools, the Labor Caucus asks your committee to **support** this bill, with any suggested amendments from HSTA that regard their process for negotiations.

**SB-2819-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/22/2022 8:56:18 AM

Testimony for LAT on 3/22/2022 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Wendy Pasion        | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Wendy Pasion, and i would like to submit my suupport on this SB 2819 bill that would give our Teachers in our DOE system the needed financial support that they deserve and so rightly need. Mahalo and may GOd bless you in every area of your Life!!!