

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

March 28, 2022

WRITTEN TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

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

DATE: April 1, 2022

TIME: 3:00 pm

LOCATION: Conference Room 308 and Video Conference

TITLE OF BILL: SB2819 SD2 HD2 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 HD2

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Members of the House Committee on Finance:

The Hawaii Teacher Standards Board (HTSB) supports SB2819 SD2 HD2. 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 SD2 HD2 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 HD2.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



CRAIG K. HIRAI
DIRECTOR

GLORIA CHANG
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

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

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

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

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

**April 1, 2022
3:00 p.m.
Room 308 and Videoconference**

RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

The Department of Budget and Finance (B&F) offers comments for this measure.

This measure appropriates unspecified amounts for FY 23 for the Department of Education and Charter Schools to fund teacher compensation as negotiated and executed in separate memoranda of understanding between the Governor, Superintendent of Education, and Board of Education/governing board of each State Charter School and the Hawai'i State Teachers Association, Bargaining Unit 5, to address compensation equity issues and make the necessary discretionary salary adjustments.

B&F has serious concerns because this bill "puts the cart before the horse." Appropriating funding for cost items before negotiations are complete and agreements are reached could adversely impact the collective bargaining process.

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.



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Finance
Friday, April 1, 2022 at 3:00 p.m.

By

Nathan Murata, Dean
College of Education

And

Michael Bruno, PhD
Provost

University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

SB 2819 SD2 HD2 – RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the House Committee on Finance:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on SB 2819 SD2 HD2, Relating to Teacher Compensation.

The University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, College of Education supports SB 2819 SD2 HD2 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.



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

Date: 04/01/2022
Time: 03:00 PM
Location: 308 Via Videoconference
Committee: House Finance

Department: Education

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

Title of Bill: SB 2819, SD2, HD2 RELATING TO TEACHER
COMPENSATION.

Purpose of Bill: Repeals sections 302A-624(c) and 302A-627(a), HRS. Makes an appropriation to fund a memorandum of understanding to address compensation equity issues and to make the necessary discretionary salary adjustments for experienced senior public school teachers and state public charter school teachers. Effective 7/1/2050. (HD2)

Department's Position:

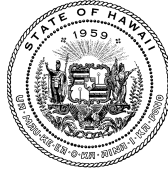
The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) supports SB 2819, SD2, HD2, which repeals Sections 302A-624(c) and 302A-627(a), Hawaii Revised Statutes, and makes an appropriation to fund a memorandum of understanding to address compensation equity issues and to make the necessary discretionary salary adjustments for experienced senior public school teachers.

The proposed funding will allow the Department to implement discretionary pay adjustments to address equity and compression issues for teachers. The Department agrees that addressing the pay compression issue will positively impact both teacher recruitment and retention and looks forward to having meaningful discussions with stakeholders about this important endeavor.

Thank you for your continued support during these unprecedented times. Please know

that the Department is committed to working collaboratively with the Legislature to ensure the hiring and retention of qualified individuals throughout the Department's tri-level structure.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on SB 2819, SD2, HD2.



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

House Committee on Finance

Friday, April 1, 2022
3:00 p.m.
Via Videoconference
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 308

**Senate Bill 2819, Senate Draft 2, House Draft 2, Relating to Teacher
Compensation**

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Members of the Committee:

The Board of Education ("Board") respectfully provides **comments** on SB 2819 SD2 HD2, which would, among other things, make an appropriation to fund a memorandum of understanding to address compensation equity issues and to make the necessary discretionary salary adjustments for experienced senior public school teachers.

The Board appreciates the intent of this measure and generally supports proposed legislation that increases the compensation of school-level employees in public schools. We applaud this measure for attempting address the longstanding issue of retention of some of our most experienced and best teachers. The Board, however, defers to the Department of Education, Department of Budget and Finance, and the Office of Collective Bargaining as to the most appropriate mechanism to address this longstanding issue.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify on behalf of the Board.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "William N. Arakaki".

Sincerely,

Bill Arakaki
Chairperson, Board of Education 2022 Legislative Ad Hoc Committee

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 FINANCE
ON
SENATE BILL NO. 2819, S.D. 2, H.D.2**

April 1, 2022

3:00 P.M.

Conference Room 308 and VIA Videoconference

RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION.

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Members of the Committee,

S.B. 2819, S.D. 2, H.D. 2, proposes to fund a memorandum of understanding to address compensation equity issues and to make the necessary discretionary salary adjustments for experienced senior public school teachers and state public charter school teachers. 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, 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 years of service and average final compensation (AFC) for benefit calculation 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 but will prove insufficient to offset the expected increase in liability absent additional funding.

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



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

March 31, 2022

TO: Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair
Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair
House Committee on Finance

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

SUBJECT: **Measure:** S.B. No. 2819 HD 2 – RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION
Hearing Date: Friday, April 1, 2022
Time: 3:00 p.m.
Location: Videoconference & Conference Room 308

Bill Description: Repeals section 302A-624, subsection (c), and 302A-627(a), HRS. Makes an appropriation to fund a memorandum of understanding to address compensation equity issues and to make the necessary discretionary salary adjustments for experienced senior public school teachers and state public charter school teachers. Effective 7/1/2050. (HD2).

EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON EARLY LEARNING'S POSITION: Supports

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

EOEL is statutorily responsible for the development of the State's early childhood system that shall ensure a spectrum of high-quality development and learning opportunities for children throughout the State, from prenatal care until the time they enter kindergarten, with priority given to underserved or at-risk children. EOEL also administers the EOEL Public Pre-Kindergarten program in partnership with the HIDOE.

Addressing the pay compression issue will positively impact both teacher recruitment and retention. As an attached agency to the HIDOE, EOEL staff are employees of the HIDOE and EOEL Public Pre-Kindergarten Teachers, Substitute Teachers, and State Office Teachers may benefit from this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 10:27:37 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
PIPE	Hawaii Department of Education	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

On file



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 FINANCE

For Hearing on Friday, April 1, 2022
3:00 p.m., Conference Room 308 Via Video Conference

By

RYKER WADA
CHIEF NEGOTIATOR

Senate Bill No. 2819 SD2 HD2
Relating to Teacher Compensation

WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY

CHAIR LUKE, VICE-CHAIR YAMASHITA, AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE:

The purpose of Senate Bill No. 2819 SD2 HD2 is to: (1) Repeal sections 302A-624(c) and 302A-627(a), Hawaii Revised Statutes; and (2) Fund a memorandum of understanding to address compensation equity issues and to make the necessary discretionary salary adjustments for experienced senior public school teachers and state public charter school teachers.

The Office of Collective Bargaining (OCB) respectfully **opposes** S.B. 2819 SD2 HD2 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.
- 4) The OCB believes this measure will set a precedent. Other bargaining units are aware of this measure and will be expecting the same treatment next year. Colloquially, “if you give to one you should be prepared to give to all.”
- 5) The OCB believes the costs associated with this measure will be alarming. While OCB defers to the Department of Budget & Finance with regard to the actual costs associated with items such as automatic step increases, various shortage differentials, discretionary salary adjustments, it is OCB’s opinion that the immediate costs will be significant and the recurring costs will increase exponentially.
- 6) The OCB is extremely concerned about the unintended consequences this legislation may have on current and future negotiations. For example, the 15 bargaining units may see this as an opportunity to get “two bites of the apple” by seeking items both at the collective bargaining table and through the legislature.
- 7) Finally, as currently drafted, Section 4 of the measure requires that a memorandum of understanding be negotiated between the governor, Board of Education, exclusive representative of bargaining unit 5, and the superintendent. The OCB comments that the governor and the Board of Education should also be named within the latter part of this section.

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



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

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

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.

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/28/2022 3:09:28 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mike Golojuch, Sr.	Rainbow Family 808	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Rainbow Family 808 supports SB2819. Please pass this bill.

Mike Golojuch, Sr., Secretary/Board Member

RE: SB 2819, SD2, HD2 - RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, APRIL 1, 2022

MITZIE HIGA, LEGISLATIVE CHAIR
DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF HAWAII LABOR CAUCUS

Chair Luke, and Members of the Committee:

The Democratic Party of Hawaii Labor Caucus **supports SB 2819, SD2, HD2**, relating to teacher compensation. This bill repeals sections 302A-624(c) and 302A-627(a), HRS. Makes an appropriation to fund a memorandum of understanding to address compensation equity issues and to make the necessary discretionary salary adjustments for experienced senior public school teachers and state public charter school teachers.

We appreciate that this bill addresses teacher compensation equity issues to make the necessary discretionary salary adjustments for approximately 8,700 experienced teachers by recognizing their professional service to the department of education as negotiated between the governor, superintendent of education, board of education, and exclusive representative of collective bargaining unit (5), and our public charter schools through discretionary salary adjustments, through a memorandum of understanding for the state public charter school commission and administration (EDN 612), as negotiated between the governing boards of state public charter schools and the exclusive representative of collective bargaining unit (5).

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.



Committee on Finance
Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair
Representative Kyle Yamashita, Vice Chair

April 1, 2022

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Members of the Committee,

We support SB 2819 SD2 HD2, 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,

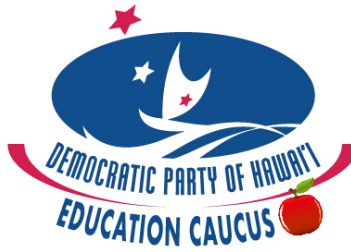
Cheri Nakamura
HE'E Coalition Director



Academy 21
American Civil Liberties Union
Alliance for Place Based Learning
*Castle Complex Community Council
Coalition for Children with Special Needs
Education Institute of Hawai'i
*Faith Action for Community Equity
Fresh Leadership LLC
Girl Scouts Hawaii
Harold K.L. Castle Foundation
*HawaiiKidsCAN
*Hawai'i Afterschool Alliance
*Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice
*Hawai'i Association of School Psychologists
Hawai'i Athletic League of Scholars
*Hawai'i Children's Action Network
Hawai'i Nutrition and Physical Activity Coalition
Hawai'i Scholars for Education and Social Justice
* Hawai'i State PTSA
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

Kamehameha Schools
Kanu Hawai'i
Kaua'i Ho'okele Council
Keiki to Career Kaua'i
Kupu A'e
*Leaders for the Next Generation
Learning First
McREL's Pacific Center for Changing the Odds
Native Hawaiian Education Council
Our Public School
*Pacific Resources for Education and Learning
*Parents and Children Together
*Parents for Public Schools Hawai'i
Special Education Provider Alliance
*Teach for America
The Learning Coalition
US PACOM
University of Hawai'i College of Education

Voting Members () Voting member organizations vote on action items while individual and non-voting participants may collaborate on all efforts within the coalition.*



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

APRIL 1, 2022 · HOUSE FINANCE COMMITTEE ·
CHAIR REP. SYLVIA LUKE

POSITION: Support.

RATIONALE: The Democratic Party of Hawai'i Education Caucus supports SB 2819, SD 2, HD 2, relating to teacher compensation, which repeals sections 302A-624(c) and 302A-627(a), HRS, and makes an appropriation to fund a memorandum of understanding to address compensation equity issues and to make the necessary discretionary salary adjustments for experienced senior public school teachers and state public charter school teachers.

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



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 Finance

Testimony by
Hawaii Government Employees Association

April 1, 2022

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

The Hawaii Government Employees Association, AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO raises serious concerns over the impact of S.B. 2819, S.D. 2, H.D. 2 which makes an appropriation to preemptively fund a memorandum of understanding to address compensation issues for senior public school and charter school 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. **Although this legislation may be beneficial for employees, it is wrong for the Legislature to preemptively fund a memorandum of understanding prior to it being bargained and agreed upon. To expound on this, we contend that the counter scenario holds true: it is equally wrong for the Legislature to cut salaries and benefits without it being bargained and agreed upon.** 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.

House of Representatives
Committee on Finance
S.B. 2819, S.D. 2, H.D. 2
April 1, 2022
Page 2

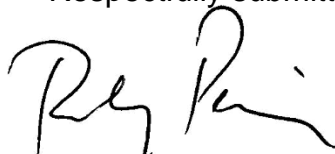
Further, while this measure may temporarily entice senior teachers to remain in the profession for a few more years, it does not necessarily resolve the root issue of teacher retention since it allows for the possibility that senior teachers would elect to remain for three additional years to elevate their average final compensation on their pension before retiring. This is not a long-term, sustainable solution. Therefore, we respectfully echo the concerns raised by the Employees Retirement System and how these salary increases will undoubtedly exacerbate the state's unfunded liability by an estimated \$376 million.

We continue to remind the Legislature that it takes a community of staff to run a school. In addition to teachers, educational officers, and educational aides, students also rely on 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 who are excluded from the financial benefits contained in 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. 2.

Respectfully submitted,

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

Randy Pereira
Executive Director

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 9:55:32 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lei Tata	HGEA UNIT 3	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The Hawaii Government Employees Association, AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO raises serious concerns over the impact of S.B. 2819, S.D. 2, H.D. 2 which makes an appropriation to preemptively fund a memorandum of understanding to address compensation issues for senior public school and charter school 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. Although this legislation may be beneficial for employees, it is wrong for the Legislature to preemptively fund a memorandum of understanding prior to it being bargained and agreed upon. To expound on this, we contend that the counter scenario holds true: it is equally wrong for the Legislature to cut salaries and benefits without it being bargained and agreed upon. 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.

Further, while this measure may temporarily entice senior teachers to remain in the profession for a few more years, it does not necessarily resolve the root issue of teacher retention since it allows for the possibility that senior teachers would elect to remain for three additional years to elevate their average final compensation on their pension before retiring. This is not a long-term, sustainable solution. Therefore, we respectfully echo the concerns raised by the Employees Retirement System and how these salary increases will undoubtedly exacerbate the state’s

unfunded liability by an estimated \$376 million. We continue to remind the Legislature that it takes a community of staff to run a school. In addition to teachers, educational officers, and educational aides, students also rely on 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 who are excluded from the financial benefits contained in 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, I 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. 2.

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

RE: SB 2819, SD2, HD2 – RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, APRIL 1, 2022,

LAVERNE MOORE, SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER

Chair Luke, 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, HD2, relating to teacher compensation.

This bill makes an appropriation to fund a memorandum of understanding to address compensation equity issues and to make the necessary discretionary salary adjustments for experienced senior public school teachers and state public charter school teachers.

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.

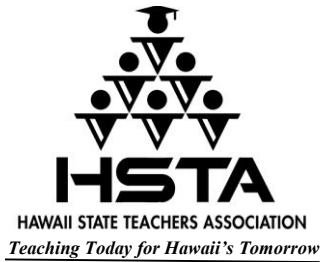
We like the amendment to take off the cap of Class VII out of the law, that will allow more classes to be negotiated during collective bargaining.

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, and the salary schedule is still at Class VII with 4,300 teachers seeking to remove Class VII cap to allow future negotiations to incentivize continuing professional development.

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.



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

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

RE: SB 2819 SD2 HD2 – RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, APRIL 1, 2022

OSA TUI, JR., PRESIDENT
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Chair Luke, and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association **strongly supports SB 2819, SD1, HD2,** relating to teacher compensation, with some suggested revisions. This bill Repeals sections 302A-624(c) and 302A-627(a), HRS. Makes an appropriation to fund a memorandum of understanding to address compensation equity issues and to make the necessary discretionary salary adjustments for experienced senior public school teachers and state public charter school teachers.

HSTA supports this bill that requests our state lawmakers to approve funding a memorandum of understanding to address compensation equity issues and to make the necessary discretionary salary adjustments for experienced senior public school teachers and state public charter school teachers. This compensation adjustment has been referred to previously as funding 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.

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 as negotiated between the governor, superintendent of education, board of education, and exclusive representative of collective bargaining unit (5), and our public charter schools through discretionary salary adjustments, through a memorandum of understanding for the state public charter school commission and



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administration (EDN 612), as negotiated between the governing boards of state public charter schools and the exclusive representative of collective bargaining unit (5). [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 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



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economic downturns, without a step advancement for teachers already working for years within the DOE and at our public charter schools.

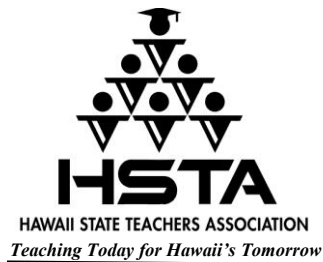
Data from the 2020-21 school year shows that only 51 percent of teachers remained in the Hawaii DOE five years after hire. In addition, about 1,000 long-term substitutes and emergency hires filling vacancies in classrooms are not graduates of a state-approved teacher education program. In fact, some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



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where they live, what their special needs are or their ethnicity, are taught by highly qualified licensed teachers.

Finally, we appreciate the addition of the amendment to comply with OCB testimony, that instead of just negotiating with the superintendent, the language should also reflect negotiations take place with the Board of Education and the governor, too. We appreciate this amendment as well.

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 Memorandum of Understanding/Experimental Modernization Project for eligible teachers to address pay compression, and repeal portions of 302A to allow bargaining for more Classes on our pay scale. We need the legislature's help to end the teacher shortage crisis. Thank you!

To take care of the needs of our hardworking public school teachers, and to provide our keiki with the quality education they deserve, the Hawaii State Teachers Association asks for your **strong support** of this bill.

ADDRESSING TEACHERS COMPRESSED ON LOWER HSTA SALARY STEPS

EXHIBIT A TEACHER'S ANNUAL RATE SALARY SCHEDULE (10-MONTH) Effective the First Working Day of the 2021-2022 School Year

Yrs of Svc (Span)	Curr Count	Yrs of Svc (Span)	Realign Count
33+	513	22+	2898
32 (1)	143	20-21 (2)	637
31 (1)	174	18-19 (2)	684
27-30 (4)	796	16-17 (2)	813
24-26 (3)	848	14-15 (2)	796
16-23 (8)	2569	12-13 (2)	686
15 (1)	495	10-11 (2)	745
9-14 (6)	2374	8-9 (2)	1130
7-8 (2)	931	6-7 (2)	1035
5-6 (2)	931	4-5 (2)	947
3-4 (2)	1125	2-3 (2)	1189
0-2 (2)	1727	0-1 (1)	1064

Initial Classification	CLASS II		CLASS III		CLASS IV		CLASS V		CLASS VI		CLASS VII	
Reclassification	BA		BA+30 or MA		Class III + 15		Class IV + 15		Class V + 15		Class VI + 15	
14B ⁵	T02-14B	71,403	T03-14B	77,115	T04-14B	80,200	T05-14B	83,408	T06-14B	86,744	T07-14B	91,948
14A ⁵	T02-14A	67,361	T03-14A	72,750	T04-14A	75,661	T05-14A	78,686	T06-14A	81,835	T07-14A	86,743
14 ⁵	T02-14	65,399	T03-14	70,631	T04-14	73,457	T05-14	76,395	T06-14	79,450	T07-14	84,218
13 ⁵	T02-13	63,493	T03-13	68,573	T04-13	71,317	T05-13	74,169	T06-13	77,136	T07-13	81,764
12 ⁵	T02-12	61,645	T03-12	66,577	T04-12	69,241	T05-12	72,011	T06-12	74,889	T07-12	79,383
11 ⁵	T02-11	59,850	T03-11	64,638	T04-11	67,223	T05-11	69,911	T06-11	72,707	T07-11	77,069
10 ⁵	T02-10	58,105	T03-10	62,755	T04-10	65,265	T05-10	67,875	T06-10	70,589	T07-10	74,827
9 ⁵	T02-09	56,414	T03-09	60,928	T04-09	63,365	T05-09	65,900	T06-09	68,535	T07-09	72,648
8 ⁵	T02-08	54,771	T03-08	59,152	T04-08	61,517	T05-08	63,979	T06-08	66,538	T07-08	70,531
7 ⁵	T02-07	53,176	T03-07	57,429	T04-07	59,727	T05-07	62,115	T06-07	64,600	T07-07	68,476
6 ⁵	T02-06	51,627	T03-06	55,756	T04-06	57,988	T05-06	60,307	T06-06	62,718	T07-06	66,482
5 ⁵	T02-05	50,123	T03-05	54,132	T04-05	56,298	T05-05	58,549	T06-05	60,892	T07-05	64,545
	1706		2684		1762		1217		955		4300	

Counts do not include Steps 1-3 nor teachers at charter schools that do not utilize HDOE payroll.

↑ STEPS Vertical movement happens only via negotiations. Seeking to realign teachers whose step does not align with their years of service based upon two years of service per step.

→ CLASSES Initial placement based upon credits when entering the profession and subsequent horizontal movement based upon earning of professional development credits. Seeking to remove Class VII cap to allow future negotiations to incentivize continuing professional development.





CURRENT DISTRIBUTION OF TEACHERS BY SALARY STEP AND YEARS OF SERVICE

HSTA BU05 Years completed after 2021-22 SY (10/1/21 data)

Step	Total	<1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	>37			
14B	513																	1								1		7	5	8	9	11	14	15	111	105	62	52	29	84			
14A	143																									1	1	5	2	1	5	7	13	106	1				1				
14	174																										4	2	1	3	10	17	132	6									
13	796										1		1										8	14	8	24	13	44	183	180	177	138	6					1					
12	848														1		1			24	24	18	19	21	37	206	206	262	28	3													
11	2569			1					1		2	10	14	10	12	34	103	367	366	347	263	295	262	248	207	11	6	2	2		4	3		1						1			
10	495				1				1	1	8	23	27	23	53	61	261	14	8	6	2	2	2	1		1	1																
09	2374			1	4	11	74	79	86	107	393	357	303	262	275	295	28	27	17	5	9	11	9	4	8	4	1	1	2	1		2									2		
08	931	2	6	8	75	79	34	38	313	311	25	5	8	5	4	3	2	2	1		1	4	2	2	2																	2	
07	931	3	3	4	37	53	360	377	45	15	5	6	2	3	6	3	2	2	1		1	1	2	1																			
06	1125	1.5	76	98	442	397	42	21	22	5	6	1		1	3	1	1	1	2	1	1		2																		1		
05	1727	509	556	519	53	32	17	11	5	5	6	2		1	2	1	2	2	1		1	1				1	1	1															
03	25	5	7	2	3	6		2																																			
02	12			1	10		1																																				
01	321	170	75	50	6	1	7	1	4	1	2						1	1																									
*	12980	690	723	683	631	578	534	529	476	444	448	404	357	305	354	398	399	418	396	383	302	332	305	290	262	249	232	325	223	196	205	179	165	128	112	105	65	53	30	84			

(some totals may differ due to rounding) (*Information from charter schools that do not use DOE payroll were not provided and are not reflected in this data.)

Affected

8626		568	59	429	67	410	76	337	44	371	315	295	342	397	399	417	396	383	302	332	305	290	262	248	232	318	218	188	196	168	151	113	1		3	1	1		
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(some totals may differ due to rounding)

DISTRIBUTION IF SALARY STEPS WERE CONNECTED TO YEARS OF SERVICE

HSTA BU05 Years completed after 2021-22 SY (10/1/21 data) **Step Corrected**

Step	Total	<1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	>37			
14B	2898																	1							290	262	249	232	325	223	196	205	179	165	128	112	105	65	53	30	84		
14A	637																								332	305																	
14	684																																										
13	813										1		1																														
12	796																																										
11	686			1					1		2	10	14	305	354																												
10	745				1				1	1	8	394	340																														
09	1130			1	4	11	74	79	86	442	435																																
08	1035	2	6	8	75	79	34	447	385																																		
07	947	3	3	4	37	481	419																																				
06	1189	2	76	617	495																																						
05	1064	509	556																																								
03	46	5	7	2	3	7	8	3	4	1	2						1	1																									
02	67			51	16																																						
01	245	170	75																																								
*	12980	690	723	683	631	578	534	529	476	444	448	404	357	305	354	398	399	418	396	383	302	332	305	290	262	249	232	325	223	196	205	179	165	128	112	105	65	53	30	84			

(some totals may differ due to rounding) (*Information from charter schools that do not use DOE payroll were not provided and are not reflected in this data.) (rev 1/19/22)



The Thirty-First Legislature, State of Hawaii
House of Representatives
Committee on Finance

Testimony by
Bargaining Unit 6 – Educational Officers Board of Directors
Hawaii Government Employees Association

April 1, 2022

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

On behalf of the educational officers employed by the Hawaii State Department of Education, the Unit 6 Board of Directors of the Hawaii Government Employees Association, AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO, wishes to provide comments on S.B. 2819, S.D. 2, H.D. 2 which makes an appropriation to fund a memorandum of understanding to address compensation equity issues and to make further discretionary salary adjustments for experienced senior public school teachers and state public charter school teachers.

We are concerned that this measure circumvents good faith bargaining which provides for productive and ongoing relationships between the employer, its employees, and our unions. We believe this will set a bad precedent and goes against the spirit of collective bargaining. While the teacher shortage is real and negatively impacts our schools, so too, are shortages in administration, educational assistants, office workers, custodians, cafeteria workers, specialists and other special services personnel which keep our schools running.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on S.B. 2819, S.D. 2, H.D. 2.

Respectfully submitted,
Unit 6 Board of Directors
Derek Minakami, President
Kelcy Koga, Vice President/Hawaii District
Wendy Matsuzaki, Secretary/Windward Oahu
Brett Tanaka, Treasurer/State Offices
Bert Carter, Oahu At-Large
Lorelei Aiwohi, Honolulu District
Keoni Wilhelm, Maui District
James Sunday, Central Oahu District
Jon Henry Lee, Leeward Oahu District
Corey Nakamura, Kauai District
Kathy Silva, Vice Principals/Athletic Directors

TESTIMONY OF
LARRY S VERAY

TO THE COMMITTEE ON:
FINANCE

MOST STRONGLY SUPPORT SB 2819 SD2 HD2
RELATING TO TEACHER'S COMPENSATION

MARCH 31, 2022

Aloha, Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita and committee members. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to provide testimony on SB 2819 SD2 HD2. I am Chair for the Pearl City Neighborhood Board No. 21, I am submitting on behalf of our board and residents of Pearl City. On March 28, 2017 our board unanimously passed a resolution in support of increasing teachers pay and general funding for our schools. I totally concur with our Board Secretary Charmaine Doran's testimony in support of this bill. I compliment her testimony with the follow comments.

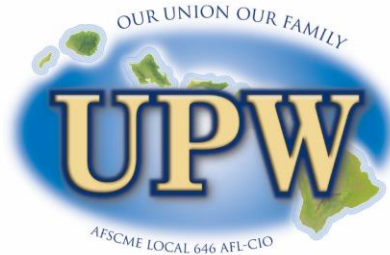
It truly hurts me that year after year, Hawai'i public schools are underfunded by the State and lowest in priority funding which undermines the State's goal of providing quality education for our keiki. Hawai'i teachers are grossly underpaid compared to other school districts when cost of living is taken into consideration. Teacher retention is a serious problem where hundreds of teachers have left our state for better paying jobs back in the mainland. Because our teachers have to work secondary part-time jobs to support their families with shelter, food and transportation; this dramatic situation has led to an increase in a high number of teacher vacancies and a decrease in college students' pursuing careers in education.

Passing this bill will allow the Hawaii Department of Education to implement discretionary pay adjustments to address equity and compression for teachers. This bill will positively impact both teacher recruitment and retention but also prevent the teacher shortage crisis from getting worse.

I most strongly urge you to support and approve SB 2819 SD2 HD2 because it is the right thing to do to increase teacher's pay in Hawaii. Mahalo!

Very respectfully,

Larry S. Veray



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

Committee on Finance
Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair
Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair

Friday, April 1, 2022, 3:00PM
Conference Room 308 and via Videoconference

**Re: Testimony with COMMENTS on SB2819, SD2, HD2 – RELATING TO TEACHER
COMPENSATION**

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, 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 **provides the following comments and concerns on SB2819, SD2, HD2**, which repeals HRS sections 302A-624(c) and 302A-627(a), makes an appropriation to fund a memorandum of understanding to address compensation equity issues, and makes the necessary discretionary salary adjustments for experienced senior public school teachers and state public charter school teachers.

We recognize the intent of this legislation. However, it could set a harmful precedent moving forward by circumventing HRS Chapter 89 and impacting public employees’ constitutionally protected right to collective bargaining over wages, benefits, and conditions of their employment. Intervening in this process encroaches upon the intent and spirit of Collective Bargaining and could adversely affect the working dynamic between the Employer and the Employees’ Exclusive Bargaining Representative on future negotiations.

Furthermore, the Legislature setting aside funds or providing additional funding outside of an already negotiated agreement could have far-reaching repercussions on ongoing negotiations and unfairly impact contracts that have already been settled.

The issues of high vacancies, staff turnover, and lack of competitive salaries are not limited to one classification or bargaining unit but is systemic and prevalent throughout our state jurisdictions. UPW is open to solutions that address these issues, but not at the expense of Collective Bargaining.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on SB2819, SD2, HD2.

Sincerely,

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

Kalani Werner
State Director

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/28/2022 3:07:18 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cynthia Reves	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I have been unable to use any professional development opportunities I have taken over the last 15 years to raise my salary. This has caused me to sometimes not take advantage of such opportunities and always to feel frustrated that I reached the top pay scale with so many years left in my teaching career. I am near retirement and this legislation would cause me to consider staying longer.

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/28/2022 6:14:58 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alec Shimizu	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee,

My name is Alec Shimizu and I serve as a resource teacher and new teacher mentor in the Honolulu District. I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819.

This year marks 27 years that I have been an educator. I became a teacher because I wanted to spend my life making a positive difference in the lives of every student who came through my classroom. After all these years, I still feel that teaching is a noble profession and I continue to pour my heart and soul into my job. However, for the first time in my career, I have made the decision to leave the profession as soon as I am eligible – in three short years.

I always thought that I would continue to teach past the 30-year (retirement) threshold, but I am tired and fed-up with the way teachers are treated. I understand that we are coming out of a pandemic, but to be underpaid for so many years and then have no increase for the next two years through our latest contract, it was a slap in the face and I have had enough.

I recently helped a teacher with much less experience than me understand our pay scale. She had just earned her Master's degree and we identified her Class and Step on the table in our contract. She asked me what Class and Step I was and, when she realized that she made almost as much as me with many, many years less experience, the look on her face said it all; she was shocked. I explained the issue of salary compression and she said she felt badly for me. Then I told her that if the compression problem isn't fixed, she would soon face the same reality as me - that she would become stagnant in her ability to increase her pay with experience.

I never became a teacher for the money, but I should be compensated for the years of experience and expertise I bring to our beloved profession. The salary compression problem is real and has affected me and other veteran teachers like me tremendously. In the past three years I have seen more of my fellow teachers retire or leave the profession altogether simply because they were underpaid and, more importantly, undervalued.

There has never been a more pivotal and important bill for me than this one. I humbly ask you to vote in support of Senate Bill 2819.

Thank you,

Alec Shimizu

March 28, 2022

Aloha Honorable Chair, Vice Chair, and members of the Committee,

My name is Sarah Kern and I am a resident of Lihue, Kauai teaching science at Chiefess Kamakahahelei Middle School. I am testifying in strong support of **SB2819**. I will be completing my 9th year of teaching in the DOE this year, and there are people with as little as two and as many as thirty five years of experience that are all at the same salary step as me. This year we will become further compressed because we did not receive a step increase when our last contract was negotiated. Someone who has dedicated 35 years to educating our keiki should not be stuck at the same step as someone who is just completing their second year. I strongly urge you to pass this bill which seeks to correct this salary compression issue, taking one step toward fairly compensating the teachers who work so tirelessly to prepare our students for the future. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

Sarah Kern
Teacher, Chiefess Kamakahahelei Middle School

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/28/2022 6:29:38 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Katie Hillstead	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Katie Hillstead. I am a resident of Makakilo and an educator on the leeward coast of Oahu.

I am writing to you as a concerned educator and resident of Hawaii. The Hawaii State Teachers contract has essentially frozen teacher pay for the next school year, additionally teachers took a paycut with the loss of the 21 hours of job embedded professional development.

This concerns me, as inflation is causing daily expenses to rise. As you're aware, the cost of living in Hawaii was already high, but more so now with inflation. My bi-weekly costco run for my family is now totaling over 400\$ each trip, whereas just a few months ago it was only 300\$. **If you have seen a Times ad recently, you will notice that meat that was 5.99\$ a pound is now 7.99\$ a pound. A box of frozen chicken thighs is now 6.99 instead of 5.99 (on sale, might I add). What was once 2 for 5\$, is now 2 for 7\$ and things that were 2 for 6 are now 2 for 8\$. My paycheck is not going as far as it used to, and I fear I may have to leave my home if this trend continues.**

Hawaii cannot afford to lose more teachers. On the coast, several schools are experiencing teachers quitting after semester 1, and leaving the profession all together.

I ask, as a concerned resident and Educator, what are you doing at the legislature to combat inflation for our local families? As well increase teacher pay?

What actions are you taking to support salary compression relief for educators?

What actions are you taking to help local families deal with this inflation?

In my humble opinion, the legislature needs to approve direct payments to families (like stimulus), continue P-EBT to help low-income families afford the now higher priced food items, and encourage the Governor to restore the 21 hours of job-embedded professional development as well as negotiate step movements and across the board raises for all educators to reflect rising inflation.

Mahalo for your time, and I look forward to your response.

Aloha,

Katie Hillstead

Leeward Educator, Parent, concerned resident

808-364-0601

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/28/2022 6:36:24 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brian Tsutsui	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please approve SB2819 SD2 HD2. 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-2

Submitted on: 3/28/2022 7:24:58 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jannalyn Igarashi	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a teacher, I support this bill.

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/28/2022 7:31:36 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Emily S Oandasan	HSTA	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In 2009, I moved back to Hawaii after leaving with my family in 1975 a year after I was born. I wanted to return to be an educator in the place of my birth, and was lucky enough to find employment as a school counselor not long after I arrived.

Although I came to Hawaii with already 6 years experience in California and Arizona, I understood that I would be starting from the beginning step of salary as a counselor.

It has been financially challenging for my family to build a life here, the added income should this bill pass and be made into law will solidfy my committment to stay here and raise my daughter.

Our state needs educators who are dedicated and want to stay in their profession. I strongly believe that this is a necessary and timely decision given the circumstances of the last 2 and a half years of a pandemic.

Families and educators alike know that the role of school in our communities is essential. Ideally if we can keep teachers in the field, we can plan and deliver a strong future of education in our state by ensuring we make a career in education something our current students want to pursue in their home.

Hawaii needs to take care of the people who have chosen a life in education for the future of our state through competitve salaries and compensation of experience.

Respectfully,

Emily S. Oandasan, M.A. Ed.

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/28/2022 7:31:16 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Irene Barber	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2819, SD 2, HD 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, HD 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-2

Submitted on: 3/28/2022 7:39:16 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Pana Kia	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support veteran teachers who then support new teachers.

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/28/2022 7:40:58 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rochelle Shiraki	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee:

My name is Rochelle Shiraki and I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2819, SD2, HD2 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 in Kalihi. 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, HD2.

Sincerely,

Rochelle Shiraki

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/28/2022 7:43:22 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kalelani Ogata	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, 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. 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-2

Submitted on: 3/28/2022 7:51:30 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and the members of the Committee,

Please accept my testimony in **strong support** of **SB2819 SD2 HD2** 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 **SB2819 SD2 HD2**.

Thank you for your time and for the opportunity to testify.
Mahalo,
Rebecca Kapolei Kiili

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, 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 Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, 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-2

Submitted on: 3/28/2022 8:01:02 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Susan Fryxell	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To Whom It May Concern,

It should be guaranteed 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 should see corrections in their salaries to help keep them in the profession longer.

Many of our teachers have been “compressed” on the salary schedule, especially on steps 9, 11, 12, and 13, and these years of service fall out of alignment with salary steps with more years of service.

Susan Fryxell

Testimony Before the Finance Committee

RE: SB 2819

Saturday, March 28, 2022

Aloha Chairperson Sylvia Luke, Vice Chair Kyle Yamashita, and Members of the Finance 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-2

Submitted on: 3/28/2022 8:18:55 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sybil Ranada	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, 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-2

Submitted on: 3/28/2022 8:22:38 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kari A Handley	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Committee Members,

My name is Kari Handley, and I am a teacher of the Deaf/Hard of Hearing at Lehua Elementary School in Leeward district on Oahu. I began my teaching career in Hawaii in 2005, 17 years ago. However, with the current salary schedule, I am only on step 11, where with years of service, I would be on step 14. If I were receiving a higher wage, I would better be able to support my family. As it is now, we will never be able to afford to purchase a home here. This may eventually cause us to leave the state for the mainland, where we can earn a living wage. I would hate to do this. We love Hawaii- the people, the culture. But with inflation the way it is now, this will become the reality for us. I encourage you to pass SB 2819 SD2 HD2 and fix the compression problem. Mahalo!

Kari Handley

Lehua Elementary School

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/28/2022 8:34:44 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Phillippe Rivera Fernandez-Brennan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

[COMMITTEE ON FINANCE](#)

DATE: Friday, April 1, 2022

TIME: 3:00 p.m.

VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

Conference Room 308

PLACE:

State Capitol

415 South Beretania Street

March 28, 2022

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee:

I am sending testimony in strong support of Senate Bill 2819, Relating to Teacher Compensation.

My name is Phillippe Fernandez-Brennan and I was born in Honolulu and grew up in Kāneʻohe. I have also taught in Hawaiʻi public schools for the past 8 years and currently teach at Roosevelt High School in the Honolulu District. I am a PhD student in Education: Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Hawaiʻi at Mānoa (UHM), member of the UHM College of Education Tinalak Council and council member of the College of Education Doctoral Students Association (COEDSA). I am testifying as an individual and do not represent the University of Hawaiʻi nor the Hawaiʻi Department of Education.

I strongly support SB 2820 because teachers are vital members of our community and we need highly qualified teachers in the classroom. I teach and work in the community that I live in and every year I contemplate if I should leave the teaching profession because although I know how important it is to have local teachers represented in the classroom in Hawaiʻi, expenses are making it difficult to remain in the profession.

I have heard numerous stories from my teacher colleagues telling me about their struggle to pay their rent or mortgage, student loans, children's expenses, medical bills, and day-to-day expenses. They also share with me their struggle to have energy during the day in the classroom because of the multiple jobs they need to have in addition to their full-time teaching careers just to make ends meet. Many of us have graduate degrees and have worked hard to take graduate classes and professional development courses (PDE3) to earn a livable wage. Every year, that livable wage seems to increase while teacher pay has remained historically stagnant and does not keep up with inflation or cost of living in Hawai'i. Teachers are stressed and undervalued.

Teachers need to be compensated like any other profession. Teachers are the foundation to a society and education is the foundation to a successful democracy. The legislature needs to make it a priority to support teachers and prevent the worst teacher shortage in recent history. Without a livable wage, teachers will leave the profession.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819, Relating to Teacher Compensation.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Phillippe R. Fernandez-Brennan

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/28/2022 9:06:48 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Roberta Shibuya	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee,

My name is Roberta Shibuya and I am a kindergarten teacher from Hilo Hawaii and I am vehemently in support of this bill.

I have been teaching since 2002 and I have seen too many teachers leaving the classroom or retiring as soon as they could because this job is hard. Each lunch break is filled with discussions about the earliest we can possibly retire even if it means taking a penalty for leaving before 30 years. Thirty years seems like an eternity when each day is a struggle due to everything else that is asked of classroom teachers. We are no longer just teachers. We are counselors, mediators, models, first responders to their health needs (vomiting and diarrhea are just the tip of the iceberg) and of course we are entertainers (because we need to be as or more interesting than what they watch on their devices to compete with their short attention spans). But mostly we are mom's and dad's to the kids in our classroom. I beg of you to support this bill. I may not be able to claim my 18 classroom kids on my tax returns (I should be able to but that's a topic for later) but my hard earned pay check inevitably goes right back into my classroom anyway so compression would allow me to buy: more craft supplies for my class, more snacks for my kids who are not able to bring some from home, more presents so that they have something to give to their real mom on mothers day, more boiled eggs and dye because Easter is coming up and you'd be surprised how many kids have never gotten to experience egg coloring and dying...I could go on and on and on but at the end of the day, I just want my kids to love school. Mahalo!

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

RE: SB 2819 Proposed SD2 and SB 2820, SD2, RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION STEPS and DIFFERENTIALS, respectively.

WEDNESDAY, March 16, 2022

Chair Kidani and members of the Education Committee:

My name is **Helen W. Lau**. I am a teacher at **Moanalua High School** in **central district** on **Oahu**. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2819 SD2. I have been in support of fair teacher compensation since 2020 SB2488.

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. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our young people.

I began teaching in 2008. That first year was my hardest. Harder than my previous work in the business world as a marketing professional. Yet, I would look forward to Mondays for the students energized me and I always sought to meet the challenge of teaching them and learning from them.

Now, as I had settled into teaching two subjects – namely English and Chinese – I see dividends from my early efforts every day. I lecture less; I let students learn from each other. I would model a skill, then we practice, then each student tries it on his/her own. Their peers evaluate their individual efforts; I contribute feedback as needed. In Chinese, these methods expose students to a language and culture that they may not have been born into. With added practice, they advance into conversing and handling daily transactions, even discussing current events and deeper topics. Besides helping students gain Chinese literacy, these methods help students in my English classroom advance their critical thinking and communication skills. They begin with personal stories and evolve to see their role in a community of citizens, thereby gaining a public voice. Students see their efforts pay dividends as they go on to college with scholarships or qualify to train in their chosen vocation.

Giving students a fighting chance is what teaching in a public school is about.

A former student who had graduated as valedictorian at our school is now a teacher at an elementary school in Kalihi, my old neighborhood. Her classmate is scheduled to do her student teaching next fall and her gift is her patience coupled with her bilingual Chinese background, but she is hesitant because so many other people are telling her not to become a teacher.

Why would they do this? I love teaching and I can see her blossom in the profession. But if the concern is on future income, I can only agree. There has been no financial dividends since I have become a teacher. In fact, when my daughter was applying to colleges, I discovered that she qualified for free and reduced school lunch. This is based on my income as a single-parent with two children after a decade with the HIDOE. While I reaped tremendous dividends in job satisfaction, no dividends accrued in my bank account. Since the COVID pandemic, I lost income from tutoring and translation. In addition, there has been a reduction in my teacher pay due (21 hours of professional development.) One paycheck is no longer enough to cover rent for me. Over half of my income goes to just housing!

I hope that you can right this wrong this time.

My sincere thanks,

Helen W. Lau

Moanalua High School

Central District

Oahu

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/28/2022 9:20:00 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Calvin Nakano	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita and members of the Committee,

I am supporting a testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819.

I have been teaching for the last 27 years for the State of Hawaii in the DOE and in the Charter School, Ka Waihona o ka Na‘auao. Most of my 27 years have been on the Waianae Coast with a little stint of 3 years in town. It has been a very rewarding professional teaching my students computers, video production and now special education.

I am presently not at the top salary, in fact, I have 3 more steps to climb till I am at the very top of the salary schedule. With most professions, if you were employed as long as I have been, 28 years, you would have reached the top within 25 years. I am looking to retire soon in just about 2 years. The disappointing part is, at the rate that we are climbing the salary scale, I will never be able to reach the top within 2 years. So, there are no incentives for me to continue on.

On the other hand, after hearing about the potential of Senate Bill 2819, I was very hopeful. If the bill passes, I would like to continue teaching for another 5-7 more years instead of my original plan of 2 years. I am so hopeful towards this bill that I have been telling colleagues of mine who have just retired and are contemplating on retiring to stay on because of the potential of this bill.

With your support for this bill, we will be able to accomplish keeping experienced and skilled teachers in our profession and to help to stop the depletion of good teachers that our keiki need and deserve. For I believe that an investment in our keiki is an investment towards a better Hawaii for all.

Please support Senate Bill 2819.

Mahalo nui loa for allowing me to testify and for your dedication to serve us all in our beautiful Hawaii nei.

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/28/2022 9:20:26 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Karen Veriato	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice-Chair Yamashita, and Committee Members,

I strongly support the passage of SB-2819, SD2, HD2. 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, HD2.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Karen

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/28/2022 9:26:18 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Beth Kauwe	Hawaii DOE	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Members of the Committee:

Aloha and thank you for this opportunity to testify. Please know that it takes great emotion for me to write testimony. I ask that you to hear my words.

I am submitting this testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819 SD2 HD2 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. Sadly, as a teacher on Kauai it is the “living paycheck by paycheck model”.

I happen to be one of the educators in the middle of the salary schedule who 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, reluctantly accepting a pay freeze and a pay cut (with 21 hours being removed) during our recent, traumatic COVID experience. For some reason, teachers in Hawaii are not appreciated and compensated. It is time to honor those of us educators who CHOSE TO STAY through all of this, through all these years of going without. It is time to honor us for truly knowing our keiki and our communities and for continually being passionate about learning and growing, no matter what pandemic or financial crisis we face.

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. Please put the money where the dedication is...with those of us who have remained devoted, not the new teachers, not the hard-to-fill positions. I am incensed that these teachers (who come without teaching experience and some without masters) are making almost as much as I make with 21 years experience (here) and an EdM. Mind you, my mainland college friends are making over 100K with our 30 years experience and they don't face the financial strain of living on an island.

Amazingly, I have been presented with a few opportunities at educational institutions offering a substantially higher salary. This has pushed me into considering early retirement from the DOE,

but honestly, I love what I do! I love my students and my community and would strongly consider staying if salaries were adjusted!

Think about that for a minute... what if many veteran teachers who have “had it” with the lack of pay decided to leave early and accept these jobs? Hawaii would be faced with a new kind of shortage...the loss of experienced, dedicated, passionate teachers. *Maybe then you would be offering us a differential.*

With this thought, I urge you to support SB 2819 SD2 in favor of salary compression. Please, honor your teachers who have remained committed.

I thank you for your time.

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/28/2022 9:26:34 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Erin Mendelson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear State Legislators,

Thank you for prioritizing students, teachers, and schools. At the end of my workday, I can say that I made a difference. Today, I spoke with a student about making better choices and devised an action plan with him. In our fourth quarter, I can say that our classroom functions like a family. We take care of each other, learn from each other and rely on each other. If we have learned anything from the pandemic, we learned that schools play a bigger role in our communities than most of us used to assume. Schools can be hubs of learning, provide essential services and create a sense of place for our communities. If we prioritize education, we are planning for our futures.

Thank you,

Erin Mendelson

Special Education Teacher

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/28/2022 9:34:35 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tammy Holt	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita and members of the Committee,

My name is Mrs. Tammy M. Holt and I am writing in support of SB 2819 SD2, HD2

Salary compression affects our veteran teachers. These are teachers who have a deep knowledge of their school communities, have generational relationships with families and organizations within their communities, and have worked tirelessly for the keiki of these communities. Veteran teachers have years of invaluable experience and innate knowledge that is unreplicated and immeasurable in value.

I am respectfully asking the House Committee to acknowledge the fact that salary compression in the teaching field does exist and that it must be fixed before we lose our experienced and veteran teachers.

Through personal conversations, testimony at the Board of Education, Town Hall Meetings and neighborhood board meetings I have heard the frustration of countless veteran teachers proclaiming that they are done with the teaching profession if the issues of salary compensation and compression are not fixed.

If we lose those valuable veteran teachers, we lose invaluable innate knowledge of curriculum. We lose historians of our community, we lose trusted teachers who know and understand the families they serve, and most importantly, our children lose a trusted adult outside of the family nucleus.

I urge you to please fix this compression issue. Please, understand, acknowledge and pay our veteran teachers what they deserve and need so that they can continue to teach and serve our communities.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of SB 2819 SD2, HD2

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/28/2022 9:36:43 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, 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,SD2,HD2.

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 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. As a child growing up, I always admired my teachers and aspired to be one. 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 have 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 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 years to gain 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. Please vote in support of SB 2819,SD2,HD2. 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-2

Submitted on: 3/28/2022 9:57:03 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christy Sakamoto	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE House Finance Committee

RE: SB2819, SD2, HD2

For April 1, 2022

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Members of the Committee

My name is Christy Sakamoto. I am a teacher at Kamali‘i Elementary School in Kihei on Maui. I am submitting testimony in support of **SB2819, SD2 , HD2**, relating to salary compression. I greatly appreciate the efforts of all of those who are supporting this bill aimed at fairly compensating Hawai‘i’s educators.

I have been a dedicated teacher on Maui for over 20 years. During this time, my fellow teachers and I have endured a strike, many contracts with no step increments embedded, furlough Fridays, and increased demands and paperwork. I have been willing to tolerate all of this, despite the financial burden put on my family, because I am passionate about teaching. I have been steadfast in remaining loyal to my profession here on Maui while being underappreciated and underpaid.

As teachers, our main priority is our students. We consistently put students‘ needs in front of our own, sometimes even in front of the needs of our own families. We must also realize, however, the importance of taking care of ourselves and staying physically and emotionally strong. If we are dedicating ourselves to our students, we must be in a position that allows us to be able to provide for them with continued passion and confidence. If the government does NOT make the

choice to treat teachers fairly and with respect for their years of service, it will be doing a disservice to the employees, their families, and to all the students who are relying on our state to help them continue being properly educated.

We need to retain dedicated, quality, experienced teachers. **Teachers work hard, we will continue to work hard, and we deserve to be paid fairly.** PLEASE help us make this happen and demonstrate that our government leaders and our state support our keiki as much as our educators do.

Mahalo.

Christy Sakamoto, BKM Complex Area, Maui

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/28/2022 10:31:20 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cindy Deuz	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee,

I am a teacher with Central District on the island of Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2819, SD2, HD2. Please provide the funds necessary to fix the teacher salary compression issue to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. Our teachers are worth it because our keiki deserve to be taught by highly qualified teachers. These past 2 years of Covid have had a negative impact on them and we need to work harder than ever to bridge the gaps that distance learning and quarantining have caused.

Teaching is my second career and it has been very rewarding to be able to see the growth our keiki make in a year. However, with the cost of living in Hawaii being so high, it has been extremely hard to make ends meet. My family and I have had multiple discussions about moving to the mainland where I would not need to look for a second job. My daughter is currently at UH Manoa pursuing a degree in education and even she is discouraged about the teacher pay. She has been told time and again to not go into teaching because of the low pay and stress involved. But she remains steadfast in her decision because she loves kids and she's really good with them. She will most likely stay to gain some experience but ultimately will need to move away to be more financially secured.

A lot of veteran teachers are pushing back retirement to be able to benefit from the pay compression fix. This not only benefits teachers but the future of Hawaii as students will be taught by highly qualified teachers and not by emergency hires or long term substitutes. Please approve the funding needed to keep Hawaii's teachers in Hawaii.

We need your help!

Mahalo!

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/28/2022 10:57:11 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Leinaala Kealoha	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I highly support this bill, as I am a Native Hawaiian and a tenured Public School teacher.

Dear Sirs and Madams,

I am testifying in favor of SB2819 that addresses the issue of salary compression for senior teachers. I've been teaching for the past 22 years, and was Teacher of the Year for Kalani complex in 2020. When given this honor, one of the first things they do is ask you to join a group to recruit new teachers. I respectfully declined. Anyone I find wanting to go into teaching I try to talk out of because of the slave wages, and lack of respect we receive. Over the past 22 years, my pay hasn't even kept up with inflation, and any time I have received a slight increase in salary, it comes with an increased cost of health coverage. Over the years, legislators have understood the difficulty of recruiting teachers and increased the starting pay of new teachers and added bonuses for hard to fill positions, while at the same time only providing seasoned teachers with a miniscule pay increase. Last year was the most difficult and time consuming school year of my life because of the establishment of distance learning, and instead of getting compensated, teachers were given a pay cut through the removal of the 21 hours of embedded professional development pay. This was morally debilitating.

I am extremely frustrated with HGEA's stance that we don't deserve this. My husband is currently an administrator with State Parks, and no longer in their union, but when he was a member, he got yearly pay increases, and once he left work, he left work. Teachers don't get that luxury. When we leave work our grading and planning periods begin. Think about how many times you, as a parent, have received an email from a teacher in the evening or on the weekend.

The department of taxation has a special tax refund for teachers because they know how much we pay out of pocket to teach students. This is ridiculous. No other job are you expected to do so much, for so little.

This lack of pay and respect is why, after 22 years doing what I love, I have started to look for other work. Please consider passing SB2819 fixing the salary compression, which will go a long way to retaining experienced teachers.

Sincerely,
Courtney Carpenter
Waikiki School

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 7:29:52 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Wendy Wilhelm	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Wendy Wilhelm and I have been a teacher since 1995. Currently, I hold 2 other part time 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. And since many times we sacrificed our step increases due to a struggling economy, I am not at the top of the pay scale after 27 years of teaching!. With the passing of SB2819 SD2 HD2, I can finally earn what my years of service and experience so rightfully deserve. I strongly urge you to pass SB2819 SD2 HD2. 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-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 7:56:06 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lynn Yoshizaki	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairperson Luke, Vice Chairperson Yamashita, and members of the Committe:

I am submitting testimony in SUPPORT of Senate Bill SB2819.

I am a teacher at James B. Castle High School and have been teaching for thirty years. When I started in 1991, the beginning teachers' salary was about \$24, 000. Since then there has been a focus on increasing this starting salary, and rightly so.

However, as a new teacher, I did not see my salary increase unless I took classes that cost money so that I could move up a class. Step increases were not in the contract, and year after year it became more and more demoralizing when I thought about it. Teachers who started seven years after I did, somehow were a mere ONE step below me.

If I were at the more appropriate step level, I would most likely not retire and stay on. It would help a lot because these past 2-1/2 years have not helped morale at all.

Thank you for reading this. I appreciate that this issue is finally being addressed.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill SB2819 SD2HD2

Thank you

Lynn Yoshizaki

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 8:18:20 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Liz Noetzel	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

3/28/22

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Members of the Committee:

I am writing in strong support of SB 2819 SD2, HD1 for several reasons.

Covid has left our keiki struggling in many ways. Most notably, what I see in my seventh grade English students at Waikoloa Elementary and Middle School on the Big Island (Kona district) is that they are 'zoned out' after staring at a zoom screen for several semesters. Sometimes it takes an experienced, veteran teacher with a toolkit of ideas, strategies and intuitiveness to wrangle these brains back to life- and I can attest to the fact that this is no easy task. In fact, this has been the most challenging year of my 22 year career in the Hawaii DOE. Every single day, I am asked to entertain while teaching in order to get my students to appreciate the content of what I have to deliver. I rise to that challenge as often as I can, and it changes from period to period, depending on the mood and tone of each class. It is like tap dancing on thumb tacks daily.

In order to retain teachers like myself who can switch things up on the spot, who know how to inspire students in the moment, how to spontaneously keep the energy going, and how to bring the content to life, it would be really great if the salary reflected those years of experience and dedication. I am in my 22nd year, yet I am on step 11. Were I to move out of state, as I have often been tempted to do, my step would reflect my years of service, as is most common and obviously, most fair to the teachers.

If this bill passes, my life will change for the better financially in many obvious ways, and I will be justly rewarded for my years of service and for not moving to the private school where my husband works. It would not only be an incredible sign of respect to those of us who have dedicated so many years to this department, but the financial benefits would allow us to put money back into the economy of Hawaii! (Trust me, I don't save, I spend). The state has seen an increase in tourism during covid and to take some of those funds and allot them to the teachers sends quite a message- it says that you respect, value and support those of us who are in charge of your public school students, enough so that you will pay us what we are worth. This will inspire the old timers like myself to stay in-state, and to not retire early. There are many layers of benefits to the compression package and I STRONGLY encourage you to support SB2819, SD2, HD1.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

Elizabeth Noetzel

Teacher, Waikoloa Middle School

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 8:23:42 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Aimee Uyeda	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Thank you for taking the time to read this testimony! I have been a teacher here on Oahu for almost 20 years. I love teaching and am passionate about helping our keiki. However, it's been increasingly harder to continue in this profession with the rising costs of living on our islands. Our pay raises in our salaries are not even close to inflation and rising costs. Being compensated for the past years of pay compression would greatly help me to be able to stay in the profession I love and be able to support my family. I'm already having to take on extra jobs just to help make up the difference. PLEASE do what's only fair and fix the salary compression!!!

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 8:26:41 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ken Capes	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hi,

My name is Ken Capes and I am writing to support SB2819. I am a Special Education Teacher in Wahiawa. I have been teaching for the Hawai'i Dept. of Ed since 2003. I have a Master's in Education, Special Education and a Masters of Education, Secondary Education. Since 2011 I have remained at Class V Step 11 and that is with 2 Masters Degrees in education. Throughout my teaching career I have always had to have 2 to 3 side jobs while raising my kids and just to pay the basic bills, nothing extravagant (always drive used cars that are paid for, etc.). I am currently working on another degree, Bachelors of Science, Early Childhood Education. So in order for myself to get to the top of the payscale. I needed to had 2 Bachelors degrees and 2 Masters Degrees. I am not sure which profession requires 4 degrees to move up the payscale, but it is currently like that for Hawai'i Department of Education Teachers. Please vote in support of SB2819. This will address many issues with teacher shortages in Hawai'i and pay what teachers according to what teachers deserve.

Aloha,

Ken Capes

Special Education Teacher

Ka'ala Elementary, Wahiawa

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 9:09:41 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Deanne Fu	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am a veteran school counselor writing to you in support of SB2819. I like many other teachers and counselors find myself at the cusp of retirement after 30 years of service. I am a "highly qualified" counselor at the maximum class VII for advanced education but have been stuck in a holding zone of step 13 with no upward movement. The passage of this salary compression bill will be the deciding factor between continuing in the profession I have dedicated my life to or retiring to work at a private school or an alternative job to supplement my retirement.

Many like me would greatly appreciate your support of this bill.

Mahalo

Deanne Fu

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 9:16:58 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
William D Pacheco	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819. My name is William Danny Pacheco and I currently teach at Nanakuli High and Intermediate school in the Leeward district of Oahu.

I have been teaching in Hawaii for 20 years and I am only at step 12. I feel after 20 years of teaching I should be at the highest step level of 14B. I know during the years of furloughs and DLWOPs we never moved in steps. For many years I was stuck at step 10 with no compensation for being reviewed every year and achieving high marks.

My family and I have been thinking of moving due to the lack of compensation. In todays time, there are many states that are offering incentives to move. States like Nevada and Texas where cost of living is much lower and compensation for teachers are about the same if not higher with incentives.

I feel being better compensated for my efforts and moving up steps would afford more teachers to stay in Hawaii. We are short teachers at my school and I have seen more than a handful of teachers leave for the mainland. Those teachers are compensated better than we are and it is compelling to leave.

Thanks for your time and consideration,

William Danny Pacheco

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 9:32:13 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Arnold K. Martinez	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the committee. I am submitting testimony in support of Senate bill SB2819.

My name is Arnold Martinez and I have been teaching for the Hawaii DOE for 18 years. I currently teach at a title 1, hard to staff school. Prior to teaching in Hawaii, I was teaching in California for 5 years. My prior experience out of state gave me a unique perspective regarding contracts and teacher salaries. Each of my 5 years of teaching in California resulted in a step increase based on years of experience and I was surprised to learn that was not the case here in Hawaii. The step increases based on years of experience served many purposes. They rewarded teachers for their hard work, they helped retain teachers and they tried to help teachers keep pace with cost of living and inflation. Living here in Hawaii, we all know the cost of living is very high. For my 18 years of teaching here, I have worked additional part time jobs to make ends meet. My wife works 3 jobs in order for us to raise our family here. We love it here, I love teaching the kids here and inspiring them to go to college and realize their dreams. As a National Board Certified teacher I am approaching 20 years of teaching here, I have considered my options to continue here based on the fact that I can be compensated at a higher salary in a different state with a significant lower cost of living. I would love to continue teaching another 10 years here however being compressed /stuck on the same salary step is discouraging. Many of us feel we did our part during the 2009 economic recession and we did not recover from that financially. Add that to the issue of compression and we have been underpaid for many years.

Thank you for listening to our testimony. Please vote yes in support of Bill SB2819.

Mahalo!

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 9:33:06 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Beth Fujikawa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Members of the House Finance Committee,

My name is Beth Fujikawa. I am currently a Student Services Coordinator at Webling Elementary School in Central District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2819, SD2, HD2.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been an educator with the Department of Education since 2000. This is currently my 22nd year teaching. Despite furthering my education with a Master's degree, classes, and professional development I have only been able to advance my salary through step movements. I worked very hard to reach the top of the classes very early in my career, yet have only received pay raises through contract negotiations. Despite my almost 22 years of service, I am currently at step 11, which equates to 12-13 years of service. My salary does not reflect the numerous years of service I have dedicated to the teaching profession.

In the past 10 years, I have seen numerous teachers change careers or move to the mainland, due to frustration regarding pay or the promise of better pay elsewhere. I have seen some teachers quit mid-year, choosing not to return following winter break or even as early as fall break. Teachers deserve support and recognition for hard work. I especially feel that veteran teachers that have stayed in the profession deserve fair compensation. I personally know two teachers that will be relocating to the mainland if the salary compression issue is not corrected. I believe addressing the salary compression issue now will assist in retaining teachers in the profession in the future.

I appreciate your time in reading my story and hope that you will feel compelled to support SB 2819, SD2, HD2.

All teachers need your help.

Mahalo,

Beth Fujikawa

Student Service Coordinator

Webling Elementary School

Central District, Oahu

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice-Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee:

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819 SD2, HD2.

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, HD2. 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 Luke, Vice-Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee:

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819 SD2 HD2.

My name is Thomas Luan, and I teach CTE and STEM at Radford High School in Honolulu, Hawaii. Again, I support SB 2819 SD2, HD2.

Many teachers in my school, complex, district, and state have shouldered the burden of salary compression for years and have endured an enormous fiscal fiasco 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 years of experience.

Please vote in support of SB2819 SD2 HD2. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this crucial bill.

Mahalo,

Thomas Luna

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 10:10:34 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Laila Popata	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

Please do something to address the salary compensation issue and pass this bill. I have been working for the Hawaii D.O.E. since 2004 after working in California. My colleagues in California have seen their salaries increase each year with their years of service. I have only seen my salary increase after I have taken professional development courses or with union negotiations. My salary is significantly less per year than my teacher friends in California and they have asked me over and over again, why would I stay in a state that does not reward my experience?

Yes, paying teachers based on years of service is costly, but we must compensate our teachers fairly! Teachers will not stay in this state if they can not afford to pay for the basic cost of living. We are professionals, who are trained and in very high demand across the country! There is a teacher shortage! Many people have left the state in the last few years because of the high cost of living and teachers, such as myself, know that we can make so much more in other states then we can here in Hawaii. Addressing salary compression will help retain qualified teachers.

I know that I could leave, like so many others before me, so that I could be paid a fair salary. I do not want to leave. I love Hawaii and my job, but being stuck at the same wage for so many years while prices are rising is very frustrating.

Please support this bill so that teachers could be fairly compensated for their years of service. The teachers and the keiki of Hawaii deserve this!

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 10:11:10 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Katrina Karl	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the committee,

My name is Katrina Karl and I am a teacher at Waipahu High School. I am submitting testimony in support of SB2819. I strongly urge you to pass this bill to ensure that teachers' compensation will be commensurate with their years of experience. As I approach the 10th year of my teaching career, it has become increasingly concerning to see that some of my colleagues with over 20 years of experience barely earn more than I do. The issue of salary compression must be addressed to attract and retain teachers in Hawaii. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of SB2919.

Katrina Karl

Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair
Representative Kyle Yamashita, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance

Lorelei Kuheana; Middle School Social Studies Teacher
Tuesday, March 29, 2022

SUPPORT for SB2819.SD2.HD2 Relating to teacher compensation.

I have devoted 25 years of my life to the Department of Education here in Hawaii. I have had 2200+ students walk through my doors. The past two years have been the most challenging of my entire career. Wanting to keep my students, as well as myself and other staff members safe has kept me up at night with worry.

My current salary, in this climate of inflation and the rising cost of goods and services, has added to the stress of providing for my family. As a single mother I will be forced to find a second, even a third job to meet our needs or leave the profession altogether in search of higher pay. As evidenced in the article posted on February 8, 2022 on Honolulu Civil Beat site, "*The state estimates there are 8,700 veteran teachers whose salaries are largely stagnant due to the existing pay structure.*" I would like to finish my career strong but may not be able to do so financially.

The passing of this bill will have a huge impact on me and my family. If passed, I will gladly continue teaching here in Hawaii.

I urge the committee to SUPPORT this measure to ensure that veteran teachers, like myself, stay in their classrooms and continue the work they have devoted their entire lives to. It takes a special type of person to teach and care for Hawaii's future generations.

Thank you for your consideration,
Sincerely,
Lorelei Kuheana

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 10:33:23 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Emily Haines	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Emily Haines-Swatek and I am a teacher at King Kekaulike High School on Maui. I am submitting testimony in support of SB2819 SD2 HD2.

Please provide funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and show that we as a state value hardworking teachers.

I have been teaching at King Kekaulike for 23 years. I started when I was 24 years old after receiving my Masters of Arts in Teaching Mathematics and am extremely committed to the school. For the last 18 years I have been the schools Career and Technical Education Coordinator and the department head. During that time I have seen many teachers in my department come and go and I am the only one who has stuck with it.

Early on in my career, before I had children, I took advantage of professional development and moved up to the highest class where I have been for over 12 years. I no longer have any control of my advancement in pay and can only receive pay increases when the union negotiates a new contract. Due to compression the starting pay for a new teacher has increased, which is great thing, however it also means that there is not a great difference between a starting teaching with a Masters Degree and one who has taught for 20 years. 10 years ago I became a Nationally

Board Certified teacher so that I could increase my pay. I just successfully went through the renewal process so that I did not end up with a reduction in pay in the last 10 years of my career. Without this extra effort, my salary would have remained the same for the last 8 years due to compression.

SB2819 will make a huge difference in many dedicated teachers' lives and will reward them for sticking with the profession despite struggling to make ends meet for many years.

We need your help to make this a reality.

Mahalo,

Emily Haines-Swatek, Maui District

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 11:01:49 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Renee Dieperink	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I wholeheartedly **SUPPORT** SB2819 SD2 HD2

I have been a teacher for 32 years, and 23 of those here in Hawaii. My own daughter is currently in college and wants to become a highschool math teacher. I told her not to, because your financial life will be a struggle, living paycheck to paycheck.

"Do what you love, and the money will follow" was the worst career advice I've ever heard. I do what I love, but the money has not followed. I'm 55 and am tired of living paycheck to paycheck, and having to work a second job in order to make ends meet. During Covid I have seriously considered to leave teaching and to put more energy in my second job, and completely switch jobs. By giving teachers a pay raise I will most likely stay until I can retire.

Senate Bill 2819 SD2, HD2

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 Finance Committee

Thank you for taking the time to consider SB2819 SD2, HD2 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

808-269-1162

Teacher, King Kekaulike High

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 11:44:39 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elizabeth Laliberte	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Luke, Vice-Chair Yamashita and members of the Committe,

I am writing in strong support of SB2819 because it would fix the problem faced by myself and many other experienced teachers who continue to teach for years, and sometimes decades without a raise. Being given a one-time lump sum amount to mitigate this problem isn't a fair solution.

Compression denies us one of the most basic rewards for years of service - increased compensation. Other professions such as fire fighters and law enforcement do not face this same problem and teachers should not either.

It is especially critical that our compensation reflect years of service in this time of record-setting levels of inflation. Teachers dealing with compression problems are closer to retirement and therefore facing the prospects of a limited income which my be harder and harder to live on. All the more important that we earn a living that matches our years of service and cost of living.

I appreciate your time and consideration on this matter.

Mahalo,

Liz Laliberte, Hilo

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 12:10:06 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Theresa M Thompson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill.

Theresa Thompson

Maui

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 12:12:50 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Vanessa Lariosa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support salary increase for our educators because we are the ones that teach our future leaders. If our state invests in our education system and educators, then our future leaders of tomorrow, our Keiki, will have more teachers that continue to stay and be passionate about their career. Every year our openings for educators increase because one cannot afford to live in Hawaii with an educator's salary. So, most decided to leave the state or find a new profession.

Testimony Before the House Finance Committee

RE: SENATE BILL 2819, SD 2, HD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

Tuesday March 29, 2022

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, 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, HD2 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 11 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-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 12:28:40 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
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-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 12:31:46 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Uluhani Waialeale	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Welina ke aloha,

I, Uluhani Waialeale, am a teacher at Kualapu‘u Elementary School. I write in support of Bill SB 2819 SD2 HD2, Salary Compression and hope for it to be rectified to save the fidelity of Hawaii’s teachers.

Retaining our current Hawaii teachers is top priority. We don’t want them to either leave the profession or move to the mainland in search of a higher pay.

I am a graduate of the Kahuawaiola Indigenous Teacher Education Program and since 2004 I have been a licensed Hawaiian Language Immersion Teacher (K-12) in the State of Hawai‘i.

Fixing compression will boost the salaries of most teachers, helping and hoping to persuade many of our teachers to remain on the job and stay in Hawaii where our keiki can benefit from their experience. Mahalo nui loa for this opportunity to testify in support.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819 SD2 HD2

‘O wau iho nō me ka ha‘aha‘a,

Uluhani Waialeale

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 12:32:24 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sarah Tochiki	Hawaii State Teachers Association	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Honorable Legislators,

My name is Sarah Tochiki and I am the band director at Chiefess Kamakahelei Middle School in Lihu'e. I am also the Vice-President of the Kaua'i Chapter of HSTA. I am writing in support of SB2819, related to teacher compensation.

I am one of the teachers this bill will benefit. I started my career as a teacher in Hawai'i the year before Furlough Fridays. I persevered through all the cuts and challenges placed upon our education system and our teachers. I was born and raised in Hawai'i. I am invested in our students and community. I hope the system will invest in their teachers. Please support this.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony and for your support of our hardworking educators in our Hawai'i Public Schools.

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 12:50:07 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Heather Baraka	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819. My name is Heather Baraka and I am a Special Education teacher in Kona. The cost of housing has risen by \$500 a month here in Kona. Teachers will not be able to afford to live here at their current salary. This will have a negative effect on the children of Hawai'i. Paying a fair wage for my experience may convince me to stay teaching a few more years, preventing the teacher shortage crisis from getting worse. Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify

Heather Baraka

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 1:14:49 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Aurene Padilla	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aurene Padilla

March 29, 2022

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819. My name is Aurene Padilla and I am a twenty-six year veteran of the Department of Education. I am a second-generation Hawaii public school teacher, the daughter of a retired principal and a teacher. I currently serve as the Induction and Mentoring Program coordinator for North Central District serving 20 schools in the Leilehua, Mililani, and Waiialua Complex Areas.

Senate Bill 2819 has the opportunity to change the lives of 8,000 of our public school teachers whose salaries are compressed. As a teacher working in multiple schools with beginning teachers who are emergency hires, I know first hand how important it is to retain our veteran teachers on our campuses. Our veteran teachers are leaders on our campuses, they do the heavy lifting, they serve as mentors and role models to our new teachers. However, due to salary compression many of my colleagues are not earning a salary commensurate with the years of experience that they have dedicated to Hawaii's keiki, and are faced with a current contract that does not afford for a pay increase. Too many of my experienced colleagues are thinking about leaving the profession because they can no longer afford to be a poorly paid public school teacher in Hawaii.

For me personally, salary compression has had a negative impact on my ability to raise my family as a single mother of two in Hawaii. Although I have dedicated 26 years to teaching in Hawaii I only reached step 12 of the salary schedule last school year. With our latest contract not offering any step increases through 2023 it is unlikely that I will reach the top of the salary class by my 30th year of teaching. In what other profession can an employee who has excellent evaluations every year, diligently serves in leadership roles every year, and earns a Master's Degree in their teaching field not reach the top of the pay scale after serving 30 years? To add insult to the injury I've only recently learned that I am actually on the same pay step as teachers I mentored who have only been teaching 15 years. It is a

travesty to know that our state pays a 26 year veteran and a 15 year teacher in the middle of their career the same salary.

I have devoted my life to being a public school teacher and after 26 years I still do not own a home, I have large loans that are unpaid, and live paycheck to paycheck. I am unable to take my children on family trips, and I continue to work part-time jobs to make ends meet. Throughout my career I have had to go on strike, take furlough Fridays, and see my annual take home pay decrease as medical costs have increased. As my children near college age I wonder how I can possibly afford to remain a poorly paid public school teacher. My kids ask me why I work so hard and get paid so little.

Surely I can find a job that would pay me what I am worth!

Today I submit testimony humbly asking you all to vote in favor of Senate Bill 2819. Let's show our teaching force that we appreciate and honor their years of service by ensuring that teachers are paid a salary that reflects their years of service.

Sincerely yours,

Aurene Padilla

Induction and Mentoring Resource Teacher.

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 2:08:48 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kyle Hall	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting this testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819. My name is Kyle Hall, and I am a special education teacher currently employed by the Leeward District. If this legislation is passed, it will make it sustainable to continue to be an educator in Hawaii. If this legislation is not passed, it will signal to me that the state does not value education as a whole. I will feel that I have no long-term future as a DOE teacher. I have taken on student loans to become a credentialed teacher, and I want to be appropriately valued.

Who would feel good about encouraging their children to study to become teachers at this current point? How could a recent college graduate be expected to repay student loans and afford to live here? This bill would be a step in the right direction. At the very least, the passing of this bill would signal that state wants to stop the bleeding-out of our fine profession.

If this bill fails to pass, I would imagine that the teacher shortages will continue to grow more severe each year. The strain on the remaining teachers will increase, causing even more teachers to leave. This will cause the most harm to our children who will not be receiving the type of education that will allow them to contribute back into society in a meaningful way.

I ask the legislative body to pass SB 2819, giving education a fighting chance in Hawaii's public schools.

Thank you for your time,

Kyle Hall

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 2:11:36 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tiffany Tawata	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, My name is Tiffany Tawata and I am a third-grade teacher at Pearl Ridge Elementary. I have been teaching for 19 years and I absolutely love my job. I am a single mom of a 13 year old and have been struggling all my life to make it in Hawaii, my home. I have had a second job or "side gig" since I started teaching in 2002. Three years ago I also started teaching summer school at a private school to help my pay the bills each month and combat the rising cost of everything... rent, food, gas, etc.

Passing this bill would help myself and I'm sure thousands of other teachers who are in the same situation as myself. It would alleviate the tremendous stress of keeping my checking account in the black. I do dream of one day owning a home and this would truly help in taking steps to make it a reality. Hawaii is my home and I would never want to leave in order to achieve my dream, but in all honesty, I am envious of my friends who have done so.

Please pass this bill so that I can achieve my dream in my home.

Thank you for your time! All the best, Tiffany Tawata

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 2:33:02 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kelli Uyeda	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for allowing me to submit testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2819 SD2, HD2, 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 SD2, HD2 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-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 2:40:22 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lesley Calaro	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I would like the members of the legislative body and representatives of the state to consider this bill as a necessary item that is crucial to sustaining our economy and communities. We are losing teachers through retirement and burnout. We need to retain the ones who have stayed and persevered through this pandemic. The current system for pay raises requires more work than it did before. And while this allows us to keep a high standard of expectation for our teachers, I know that in many professions, licenses need only be kept current by attending classes and completing assessments. For teachers we are required to take classes that we pay for, create and teach lessons, then collect evidence in a portfolio. This wasn't the case before I started teaching 16 years ago. Teachers could reach the top level of pay without having to do so much extra work. This is on top of what we are already expected to do. This is not a complaint about doing work. It's what we have to do, to get what we deserve. It's asking for salaries that are comparable to mainland school districts that provide enough so that we don't have to work part-time or have side businesses. Keep the home grown teachers home by paying them what they need to survive. Thank you.

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 2:55:40 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brad Kusunoki	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita and members of the committee,

My name is Brad Kusunoki and I'm a school counselor at Alvah Scott Elementary in Aiea. I am writing to beg you to vote in support of Senate Bill 2819 SD2 HD2

I have been a school counselor in a Hawaii public school for the last 15 years. Hawaii's children are wonderful, but at the same time, they need a lot of love from the teachers, counselors and other school personnel. The amount of love and care from these adults has been on a steady but noticeable decline. Many educators have left Hawaii or the education profession altogether due to the high cost of living in Hawaii and the inability to afford to live here with the rising costs and low salaries.

I may become one of those educators real soon. I have two young boys whom I want to provide everything in the world to, in order for them to have a happy childhood. I will not be able to do that at my current pay without needing to take out significant loans, which would be challenging to do since I am only able to afford to rent a place to live. I don't know how I will pay for their needs and future and I am terrified of that.

Please support this bill so that I may have a chance to give my children what they need. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Brad Kusunoki

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 3:07:38 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Hilary White	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819, SD2, HD2 which addresses Educator's Salary Compression.

My name is Hilary White and I teach in Windward Oahu. I am finishing up my 19th year of educating students as a full time teacher, yet I am at step 11 due to salary compression.. It is very discouraging to see that I might never reach the career salary level, as I am a few years away from being able to retire. This makes me want to leave the teaching profession as soon as I am able. It is hard to afford to live in Hawaii on the current teacher's salary schedule with the cost of living being what it is, especially housing. I can only imagine what it is like for beginning teachers. Fixing the salary compression will help to attract teachers that are willing to be lifelong educators and retain teachers, like myself, who are here, but might feel the need to go elsewhere due to salary compression.

I am asking for your support of Senate Bill 2819, SD2,HD2.

Sincerely,

Hilary White

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 3:35:44 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
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-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 4:40:27 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jasmine Tangonan	Department of Education	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a teacher working in Hawai'i's public school, I absolutely love working with students and colleagues at my school in 'Ewa. Work is always a new adventure and I receive so much support from my team. However, thinking about working in the DOE for another 20-25 years is stressful because of lack of salary increases throughout the years. I've heard stories from many colleagues who have been working for the DOE for decades about how their pay hasn't gone up for such a long time and how they've been stuck at one step or in between two steps for a while. It makes me reconsider continuing to work for the DOE as the cost of living in Hawai'i rises each year. Please consider having teachers pay be reflected by their years of service. If not, the teacher shortage may continue to increase, with qualified educators unfortunately seeking employment outside of the DOE or in other professions.

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 5:35:42 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
T. Tomita	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To the Members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2819. My name is T. Tomita and I teach at a Title 1 school in the Honolulu District. I have taught for 23 years and as a teacher I believe that we should be paid for the work we have done. Many of us have poured extra hours into our jobs not only through professional development but also through extra curricular activities and after school support for the students and the parents. Many of us also use our own monies to provide supplemental activities and extra academic support for our students. There are many of us who work a second job just to live. There are many of us who can't even afford to buy a home or an apartment. Help the State of Hawaii by investing in our greatest resource, our own people, the teachers and students. Please vote in support of Senate Bill SB2819. I thank you in advance for your support!. T. Tomita

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 6:03:48 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jessica Kato	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819. Both my husband and I are public school teachers and have been impacted by the wage compression.

However, I am writing to you as a parent of two public school children.

My children are beginning their education in Hawaii Public Schools-my son is in Kindergarten and my daughter is in second grade. Their education has already begun with unprecedented challenges; in fact, my daughter is of the class who has been in public school for three years, yet has never known a non-COVID education. **My deep fear is that as they move on through the public school system there will not be teachers for them.** My husband and I have witnessed too often classrooms with long term substitutes, and classrooms with emergency hires who are not certified, all because there are not enough teachers.

Many colleagues of mine who are ready for retirement are tracking these bills and have shared with me that they will stay in the profession longer if they pass, but what gives me even more hope is that the passage of these bills will signal to future educators that Hawaii cares about its teachers and the profession is respected. My hope is that this is the beginning of a new era for education in Hawaii, and we can be a state that is known for caring for those who care for our keiki.

I believe in public education, but belief is not enough. Action is required now to ensure that my children and all the children of Hawaii have a quality education worthy of this great place.

Thank you,

Jessica and Kevin Kato

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 6:30:26 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Date: Friday, April 1st, 2022

Time: 3:00 PM

Place: Conference Room 308 & Videoconference

Timeslot: FIN

Aloha Chair Sylvia Luke and Vice Chair Kyle Yamashita as well as all members on the committee,

Thank you Chair Sylvia Luke for hearing this bill! This bill is a long time coming and I'm scared it is being heard on April fools day! 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-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 7:09:46 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Allison Kohlhepp	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the House Committee on Finance. I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2819, SD2, HD2. My name is Allison Kohlhepp and I have been working for 22 years as a teacher in the County of Kauai, currently at Hanalei Elementary school. When I was hired, it was during my early years that the Governor at that time froze teacher salaries for 6 years. This seems to have had the most dramatic impact with respect to reduced salaries for teachers. It is a sad affair that the State of Hawaii has not paid a living wage for its teachers. It is been extremely painful to watch so many colleagues leave Hawaii for higher wages in other states because they just can not afford to live here. My family personally struggles constantly with finances and we want to stay but with the current level of inflation it is doubtful. It is important if you want a future in which our young people can become leaders in our communities to invest in education. This means you must actually fund the teacher workforce to create and then maintain capable and experienced educators. The revolving door of being a teacher in Hawaii for a year or so - is a sad legacy for our children who often have longterm subs for their classroom teachers. A long term sub does not have to meet the criteria of a highly qualified educator. I urge you to support our keiki and pay our teachers a living wage. Please vote in support of Senate Bill SB2819, SD2, HD2. Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony regarding this vital issue.

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 7:17:46 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jon G. Higa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee,

My name is Jon Higa. I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819, SD2, HD2. 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, HD2. 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-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 7:22:49 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Leanne Teves	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee,

My name is Leanne Teves and I am submitting testimony in support of [SB2819, SD2, HD2](#) Relating to teacher compensation (salary compression). I currently serve as Student Services Coordinator (SSC) at Iroquois Point Elementary School (IPES), in the Leeward District. I have been at Iroquois Point Elementary since 1999. Prior to serving as the school's third SSC commencing in 2003, I served as a special education teacher at IPES. This is my thirty-third year in the teaching profession, twenty-three years of which were at IPES. I have been at the same pay range, that includes class and step for the majority of the time I have served at IPES. Despite the numerous courses taken through my tenure at the school including the course I am currently enrolled in, to fulfill requirements and expand my knowledge in the teaching profession, I continue to remain at the class and step in regards to pay. If it were not for the love, I have for teaching children, and fulfilling my dream to help the citizens in the state of Hawaii, as a state employee, I would have considered as many of my former colleagues have, retirement or leaving the profession altogether. To see this bill become a reality would be a great incentive for me and all teachers to continue in the profession. In addition, the financial gain would help with our living expenses as all in Hawaii have seen increases with the cost of basic necessities. Please vote in favor of this bill. I thank you for this opportunity to testify.

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 7:56:07 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lisa Yamagata	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee:

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819 SD2 HD2. My name is Lisa Yamagata and I am a high school teacher in the Kaua'i district. I support this bill because my family as well as many of my fellow colleagues have been personally affected by salary compression. Both my husband and I have been teaching in the HIDOE for 17 years. If we were given step movements based on years of service we would've been 2 whole steps ahead of where we currently are. It may not sound like much but for our family the impact of that is doubled. It is a helpless feeling to know that the only way we can move up in steps is to hope that the government will agree to it in our negotiations. Why is the HIDOE different from so many other teaching districts and other professions, where employees can count on regular pay raises based on satisfactory performance and years of service? Ensuring that step movements happen regularly can be one factor in retaining teachers. The assurance of knowing that your pay will increase with time may be enough to keep a teacher here, rather than the uncertainty of how it is now.

I humbly ask for your support in this bill on salary compression. We had your support on a similar bill prior to the pandemic and although the bill was passed, the pandemic and shutdown prevented us from seeing the results of that bill.

With gratitude,

Lisa Yamagata

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 8:41:54 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Yvette Rapozo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita and member of the committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819 SD2 HD2. My name is Yvette Rapozo and I am a teacher on the island of Kauai. I am writing to you to help push through this importance legislation to help retain and recruit more people to our profession and to correctly compensate our current teachers. In years past, we have had a teacher shortage and the number of teachers leaving the profession in staggerly increasing. I know of many teachers who will be retiring and many who just want to leave the profession. If we want to keep our experienced and highly qualified teachers to help our students succeed, action has to be taken now. For years teachers have been undervalued and underpaid and now is the time to help correct this problem. We need to retain as many experienced teachers and to recruit more people to the profession by accurately compensating them. This is a great starting point, otherwise the shortage issue will continue to grow.

Thank you for allowing me to submit testimony in support of SB 2819 SD2 HD2.

Sincerely,

Yvette Rapozo

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 8:48:24 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jeffrey Uyeda	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Honorable House Finance 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-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 9:28:26 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Chrystie Isaacs	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819. My name is Chrystie Isaacs and I am a public school teacher in the Central District of Honolulu. This is my nineteenth year of teaching. I am one of the the teachers that are affected by the salary compression. It has been quite difficult trying to make ends meet with the continous high cost of living in Hawaii. I lived with my parents for ten of the nineteenth years because I couldn't afford to rent on my own, pay bills, utiilities, student loans, a car loan, and purchase groceries. Teachers don't have enough time in the day to get everything done either. Most times we work after hours and at home without any pay. I am in support of Senate Bill 2819. Please vote in support of bill Senate 2819.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify,

Chrystie Isaacs

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 10:10:03 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ashley Olson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita and members of the Finance Committee:

My name is Ashley Olson and I am a veteran teacher at Lahainaluna High School on the island of Maui. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2819, proposed SD2.

Please ensure that the teacher salary compression issue, which is so financially ruinous to thousands of teachers, is rectified. Please show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. It is past time to fairly compensate teachers not just for the vitally important job that we do but also to begin to repay us for the many times that the state has balanced the books on teachers' backs through increases so small that they did not keep up with the cost of living, wage freezes, and pay cuts- furlough Fridays, anyone?

I started teaching at Lahainaluna on February 1, 1993 yet I have still not reached step 14b on our pay scale- I am currently on step 13. A former student of mine started teaching at Lahainaluna in 2013. and she is already on step 8. I have 20 years more experience, yet I am only five steps ahead. Can you understand how teachers, like myself, feel that our experience and dedication is devalued and disrespected? Failure to address the salary compression will drive myself and literally thousands of others to leave- if not before we are eligible to retire, then certainly the moment we are eligible. This will only exacerbate the teacher shortage crisis in which we currently find ourselves.

We need your help. Our students need you to support us so that we may better support them.

Mahalo.

Ashley Olson

Lahaina, Maui

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 10:46:05 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tina Marie Myers	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819, SD 2, HD 2 relating to teacher compensation and salary compression. 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 SB 2819, SD 2, HD 2.

Thank you,

Tina Marie Myers

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 7:31:34 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joy Shlachter	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I have been a teacher for almost 17 years. Please pass this bill SB2819 SD2 HD2 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-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 7:40:49 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Max Won Kil Kaneshiro	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee.

Senate Bill 2819 on Friday, April 1st, 2022

I Support Bill 2819

I am an elementary school teacher testifying in favor of Senate Bill 2819. The 3 main reasons why I support this bill is because it will help retain teachers, it will allow me to have 1 job instead of 2, and it will take some financial burden off of the very people who have been loyal to the children of Hawaii.

There is a shortage because it is very hard to climb the pay scale. Attempting to make a living, while setting up for retirement off of 58K (average) per year, is very hard to do in Hawaii. I know that if teachers are rewarded for their loyalty and years of service, the retention rate will go up. I have been an educator for over 10 years and have climbed 1 level in the pay scale. I am very short on time and do not have the extra money to pay for most of the PDs that cost hundreds of dollars.

I currently have 2 jobs. I teach during the day and have another job at night, so I can make ends meet. This schedule is difficult to navigate because it takes time away from me which I could spend with my 2 sons and wife. Being rewarded with a higher salary based on years of service would change my life. I hope to remain an educator for the rest of my life, but I am scared that I may have to leave for a higher paying, less gratifying career path.

Many teachers I know have students loans, families, car payments, and pay rent. When all of these bills are taken care of, there is not much to save for retirement. If we are allowed to receive pay increases based on our loyalty, it would help teachers feel appreciated, which in turn would make them stay in the DOE.

I would like to thank you very much for taking the time to allow me to submit my testimony. I SUPPORT Senate Bill 2819 because it will help our state to retain teachers, allow me to focus on my family and 1 job, and help the teachers who are struggling with their finances. If the state would like to see a change in teacher retention, it would be wise to try a different path. Thank you very much.

Max Kaneshiro

5th Grade Teacher, Wilson Elementary School

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 8:05:11 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jaclyn Hardy	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Happy teachers = happy students = happy communities

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 8:28:30 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Leigh-Ann Casuga	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Honorable Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee, My name is Leigh-Ann Casuga and I have been a teacher for 23 years at Ilima Intermediate school. I am writing to you today in Strong Support of SB2819. It has been proven repeatedly that Hawaii public school teachers are some of the lowest paid in the country, when adjusted for cost of living. This bill would give well earned opportunities for fair pay and support to allow more teachers to be able to afford to stay within the profession. Please support SB2819 and support the future of public education in Hawaii for our keiki.

Mahalo Nui Loa,

Leigh-Ann Casuga

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 8:45:38 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Merry K Kiyon	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819, SD2, HD2. My name is Merry Kay Kiyon and I have been serving the keiki in Hawai'i for 27 years. I currently teach first grade at Mt. View Elementary.

I did not choose the profession of teaching to get rich, I knew that the pay wouldn't be enough to support me unless I took additional jobs, which I have done all 27 years. I chose teaching to make a positive impact on the lives of children, to guide them, to teach them, to show them their unlimited potential to make a difference in our world, to give them agency.

I am nearing retirement age, and I have been stuck on Step 11 for the past few years. I never would have believed that after serving as a teacher this long, I still am far from earning the top pay, even though I work diligently, spend countless hours beyond the work day, and have been deemed a 'highly effective' teacher by my last 6 administrators.

My plan is to retire in 3 years unless this salary compression issue is fixed. I see it as a way of honoring the hard work I have done each and every day with the students I am fortunate to get to spend my day with.

Please make a lasting legacy during your term in office by honoring the dedication, perseverance, compassion and aloha I have given to the State of Hawaii Department of Education. Please honor the critical role teachers play in the lives of our children, families, and community by fixing the salary compression issue once and for all.

Aloha,

Merry Kay Kiyan

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 8:47:10 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Derek Bishop	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Subject Line: Testimony in Support of SB 2819, SD2 HD2

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee,

This is my testimony in support of SB 2819, SD2 HD2. 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 17 years from Hawaii and 15 years from California. 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 and retention of seasoned teachers is a concern.

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 HD2. Please provide pay commensurate with years of service -- and the wisdom and community stability that they represent.

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

Mahalo,

Derek Bishop

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 8:50:15 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jerwin Descallar	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Jerwin Descallar and I have been a counselor for the Hawaii Department of Education for over 13 years. Today I am writing you in Strong Support of SB2819 SD2 HD2. Hawaii public school teachers are some of the lowest paid in the country, when adjusted for cost of living. This bill would give well earned opportunities for fair pay and support to allow more teachers to be able to afford to stay within the profession.

Mahalo Nui Loa,

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 8:52:59 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kathryn Donahue	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Kathryn Donahue, and I am a teacher at Wilson Elementary School in Honolulu. I have been teaching for almost 27 years. I am in support of SB2819. This salary compression has negatively impacted me in many ways. Living in Hawai'i is already an economic struggle. Living check-by-check has put me at a disadvantage. The cost of living is so high in Hawaii that my family and I were not be able to do the things that we really wanted to do as a family. Paying monthly bills is always a struggle too. The correct compensation could have benefitted me and my family. Again, I am in support of SB2819. Mahalo for your consideration!

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Jay Nakasone, I've been a school counselor for 24 years. I do love my job, and trying to meet the social emotional needs of our keiki. I have to say that it is disheartening to see younger colleagues with less years of service being paid as much as me. I've been stuck on step 11. I have my master's degree. It's difficult seeing others in the travel industry making an equivalent salary. I have friends who only have a high school degree and worked for 20+ years in the travel industry, and their pay is equivalent to a teacher's pay. Please consider this bill. Mahalo for your time.

Mahalo,

Jay Nakasone

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 8:56:55 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brent Kiyon	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819, SD2, HD2. My name is Brent H. Kiyon and I have been a highly effective teacher for 30 years. I currently teach second grade at Mt. View Elementary on the Big Island.

I want you to know that I have worked full time AND held a part time job for the last 30 years in order to pay my mortgage, buy food, help my two sons grow up and go to college. I have not lived a lavish lifestyle by any means, and even with all these years of serving the children of Hawai'i I am NOT YET at the top of the pay scale...how is that possible?

I have the age and years of service to retire next year and that is my plan. I cannot believe I am eligible to retire next year and am still stuck on Step 11 with no end in sight except for this Salary Compression Fix. I never would have believed that after serving as a teacher this long, I still am far from earning the top pay.

My plan is to retire next year unless this salary compression issue is fixed. Please honor the work I do every single day with the students who rely on me in my classroom. It is an honor to serve them, and I ask you to honor my work by fixing this issue once and for all during your time as our leadership. I am counting on you!

Sincerely,

Brent H. Kiyon

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 9:07:22 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Teresa M Okuhara-Onzuka	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Yamashita, and Members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2819 SD2 HD2, Relating to teacher compensation (salary compression). My name is Teresa Okuhara-Onzuka. I currently teach 3rd grade in the Honolulu District. I have been teaching for nearly 30 years and enjoy teaching my students, but sadly admit that I continue to live pay check to pay check. Teaching our students and doing what's best for is hard work. I work long hours to prepare for upcoming lessons, teaching is not a 6 hour job like what so many people in the community think. So many people think teachers only work from 8:00 to 2:00. Reality check, I am on campus from 6:15 - 5:45 on a daily basis. Since the pandemic, teaching has become even more difficult and requires even more time. The workload has gotten tremendous and I don't see it getting better. The demands from our students, the parents, the school, the district, and the state continue to grow and grow. If I could retire, I would do so right now. Should the compensation bill pass, I would definitely consider teaching longer. Please vote in support of Senate Bill SB2819 SD2 HD2 Relating to teacher compensation (salary compression) so that our students can continue to learn and grow from experienced teachers such as myself.

Thank you for your time and the opportunity to share my story and testify.

Teresa Okuhara-Onzuka

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 10:18:51 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lisa Johnstone	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice-Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee

Thank you for taking the time to review my written testimony. I ask that you please support SB 2819. I have been in the Department of Education for 22 years and could retire in eight years. I have been sitting at step 11 for a number of years along with my colleagues who have both more and fewer years of experience than I. Why and how is this possible? One of my coworkers has been in the DOE 6 years longer than I and is stuck at the same point. How can we be at a place where we can retire based on age and years of service but not at the top of the pay scale? I strongly believe we should be able to move up the pay scale based on our years of service. Without that what is the incentive to keep working? As experienced educators, we should be respected and treated as such. Our pay should reflect the years of services we have put in. And in this case, in education, it really is years of service. Especially during these last two years, the education system did not stop. We had to adapt, we have to overcome many obstacles and we persevered. I worry that due to the past two years and the lack of compensation, acknowledgment and feelings go being burnt out, many close to retirement will retire and many new educators will not stay. Where is the incentive? Now it is time to give the educators the respect they deserve and correct our pay scale to be what is deserved. Give us a reason to stay and help us to retire with a little more comfort.

Thank you for reading my testimony and I ask that you please support SB 2819. We appreciate your work to help support our educators and keiki.

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 10:45:41 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Julia I Davison-wyse	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am an experienced 30 year Special Education Teacher and if this bill passes I will stay for longer. Otherwise I do not see any incentive to continue at this pay rate. I am compressed for 6 years and stayed working through that and furloughs but it is getting harder and harder to convince myself it is worth it to work this hard without raises. Please pass this bill. SB2819 SD2 HD2

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 10:59:02 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Samantha Silva	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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.

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-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 12:21:37 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Scott Oberg	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My wife and I have been teachers in the DOE for 20 years. We moved from Chicago, and thought we would stay for a year or so. We decided to stay and have made this our home. We started teaching in Waianae (the most affordable place on Oahu). In order to buy a house, we needed to have roommates while we were married to afford the cost of living. After 10 years, we moved to Puna on the Big Island (the most affordable place to live) in order to start a family and be able to afford it. In order to make a life here, we have invested in real estate to make some money on the side, taken on extra jobs, rent out our car, and take every PD class to rise up the pay scale. After 20 years of this, we have made things work. When people ask us how we can afford to live and teach in Hawaii, we tell them our story. Most people don't want to teach, landlord, work weekends, rent their car, have roommates, etc. all in order to live in areas that have the least infrastructure to support our families. Even after 20 years, we can't afford to purchase a house in any of the island cities.

While many of these issues of the cost of living will not be solved with the bill alone, it is a good faith attempt to show current and future teachers that their time and efforts are appreciated. I hope you support the profession through the passage of this bill. Mahalo for taking the time to listen.

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 1:24:41 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael Englar	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha!

I ask that you fairly compensate teachers in the State of Hawaii public school system. Those of us who have been with the department for 31 years have not and will not reach the top of the pay scale due to collective bargaining unfairness. Please do the right thing and pass this legislation.

Michael Englar

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 1:48:22 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Malcolm Yorkston	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha House Finance Committee,

Please consider supporting and voting in favor of Senate Bill 2819. Fixing the salary compression within our public-school salary scale would really be the right thing to do for the teachers, students, and parents of the State of Hawaii.

As a teacher and a parent, I continually question the direction of the funding of our public education in the State. As a parent, I feel that if we want to create leaders and innovators within the State, we need to have great teachers supporting and nurturing our learners. As a teacher, I see the many young adults choosing occupations other than teaching due to the low salary and increases that don't keep up with the cost of living. Over the years, I have seen teachers leaving the field or choosing to teach somewhere else. Since 2011 I have also needed two jobs to help support my family due to the low wage and lack of salary increase.

By fixing the salary compression, It would not only send a positive message to potential teachers, It would also allow teachers to work as teachers with respect and dignity.

Please Support Senate Bill 2819!

Best Regards,

Malcolm Yorkston

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 1:48:24 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Diane Hirashima	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the House Committee on Finance. I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2819, SD2, HD2. My name is Diane Hirashima and I have been working for 30 years as a teacher in the County of Kauai, currently at Hanalei Elementary school. When I was hired, it was during my early years that the Governor at that time froze teacher salaries for 6 years. This seems to have had the most dramatic impact with respect to reduced salaries for teachers. It is a sad affair that the State of Hawaii has not paid a living wage for its teachers. It is been extremely painful to watch so many colleagues leave Hawaii for higher wages in other states because they just can not afford to live here. My family personally struggles constantly with finances and we want to stay but with the current level of inflation it is doubtful. It is important if you want a future in which our young people can become leaders in our communities to invest in education. This means you must actually fund the teacher workforce to create and then maintain capable and experienced educators. The revolving door of being a teacher in Hawaii for a year or so - is a sad legacy for our children who often have long term subs for their classroom teachers. A long term sub does not have to meet the criteria of a highly qualified educator. I urge you to support our keiki and pay our teachers a living wage. Please vote in support of Senate Bill SB2819, SD2, HD2. Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony regarding this vital issue.

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 2:17:07 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
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 SB2819, SD2 HD2

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

Fixing the salary compression and adjusting salaries adjusted based on teachers' years of experience would certainly help keep teachers in their profession. I have been teaching for 15 years and I am stuck on a fixed salary step. I am the main wage earner in my family and this poses a hardship on me and my family.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill SB SB2819, SD2 HD2

Thank you for the opportunity to testify,

Colleen Parlee

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 2:58:22 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rachele Laminman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee.

I am submitting testimony in support of SB2819

I have been a teacher in the Hawaii DOE for 14 years and am struggling to pay my bills on a monthly basis. My step-son who graduated two years ago and is working at a hardware store brings home more money monthly than I do educating our future. The cost of living in this state is so high and there is no reflection of our value in what we are paid as educators. I would like to thank you for all that you do for our state, please consider supporting this bill as both the children of Hawaii and the teachers of Hawaii deserve better. Thank you

Rachele Laminman

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 3:01:38 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Robyn Amana	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee.

I am submitting testimony in support of SB2819.

Thank you for the work that you've done to get the bill this far. I am a special education teacher at Keaau Elementary School on the island of Hawaii. There is a huge teacher shortage in the state of Hawaii as the cost of living is so high and the pay does not reflect the work that we do. This is the only profession where we don't get paid over time and everyone knows we work a ton of overtime. Please consider supporting this bill as the children of Hawaii deserve to receive high quality education from qualified individuals. Improving the step compression will attract and retain more individuals.

Thank you for your consideration.

Robyn Amana

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 3:04:28 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christina Love	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2819 SD2 HD2. My name is Christina Love, and I am a kindergarten teacher at Kea'au Elementary School on the East side of the Big Island. Although I have only been teaching for seven years, and the approval of this bill may not directly impact me, it will impact many of my dear friends and colleagues who I hold close to my heart. I have learned so much working alongside such strong, dedicated, and loving teachers who have paved the way for newer teachers like myself. They deserve to be properly compensated for all of the years of service they have devoted to our students, families, and communities. I truly appreciate the time you are taking to review all of the testimony that is being submitted in support of this Senate Bill and I kindly ask that you please vote in support of Senate Bill SB2819 SD2 HD2.

Sincerely Yours,

Christina Love

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 3:05:18 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Windy Berrigan-Sanchez	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2819. I appreciate the work that you've done to get the bill this far. I am a teacher a 3rd grade teacher on the Big Island of Hawaii. I am currently at step 9. I have been teaching for 19 years and and love my job. There is a huge teacher shortage in the state of Hawaii as the cost of living is so high and the pay does not reflect the work that we do. However, I honesty do not encourage other people to become teachers because I feel like the pay does not reflect the work. This is the only profession where we don't get paid over time and everyone knows we work a ton of overtime. Please consider supporting this bill as the children of Hawaii deserve to receive high quality education from qualified individuals. Improving the step compression will attract and retretain more individuals. Please consider paying teachers what they are worth.

Mahalo for your support,

Windy Berrigan-Sanchez

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 3:06:26 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Andrea Platt	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Members of the Committee,

Mahalo nui for work that you've done to get the bill this far. I am a fifth grade teacher at Kea'au Elementary on the Big Island of Hawai'i. There is a huge teacher shortage in the state of Hawai'i, where the cost of living is high and the pay fails to reflect the work that we do. This is the only profession where we don't get paid overtime. Teachers work a **great** deal of overtime. Please consider supporting this bill as the keiki of Hawai'i deserve to receive high quality education from qualified individuals. Improving the step compression will attract and retain more individuals.

Thank you for your consideration and time,

Andréa Platt (Kumu Dréa)

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 3:18:26 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Windy Berrigan-Sanchez	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2821. I appreciate the work that you've done to get the bill this far. I am a teacher Big Island of Hawaii. I have bought pads for my students with my own money because my students did not have any. I can see how this can be a problem for many girls in every community. I have had students not come to school because they don't have clean clothes. I am sure students miss school because they don't have access to feminine products, and are too embarrassed to ask for support. Please help our children.

Mahalo for your support,

Windy Berrigan-Sanchez

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 3:24:40 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dyani Fujita	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee.

In support of Senate Bill 2819.

My name is Dyani Fujita and I currently teach at Kea'au Elementary School in the Kea'au-Ka'u-Pahoa Complex. I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819. I have been working for 14 years, with a Master's Degree and still find trouble making ends meet. Currently, I am at Class 7 Step 9, but should be at Class 7, Step 12. With inflation, living on an island, and being one of the least paying teacher professions across the country, my pay makes it harder and harder to stay in this field. Our district has already had difficulties keeping teachers, which is why we've had the bonuses. But even with the bonuses, many teachers are leaving because the pay, or lack of pay isn't worth the hassle of rising costs.

With that, please consider supporting this bill as the children of Hawaii deserve to receive high quality education from qualified individuals. Improving the step compression will attract and retain more individuals.

Thank you so much for being open to reading my testimony and all the work you do for us.

Please support SB2819 and paying teachers a fair wage. I really believe this would help convince me, a teacher of 14 years, and other teachers to stay, preventing the teacher shortage crisis from getting worse.

Thank you again for your time,

Dyani Fujita

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 3:31:03 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Una Burns	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee.

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819 SD2 HD2.

My name is Una Burns and I have been a teacher in Hawai'i for nearly 18 years. I love my job and feel very blessed to work in this amazing state and want to continue to work for as long as I can!

As you probably all know but *definitely worth always repeating* an estimated 8,700 teachers in Hawaii are underpaid based on years of experience, with a gap ranging from \$7,700 to \$26,000, per the proposed bill. This negatively impacts recruitment and retention, with Hawaii reporting 886 teacher vacancies, 230 in special education alone. A teacher with decades of experience could conceivably make little to no more than a new teacher. This is extremely unfair and I'm sure if this "system" was used in your profession you too would be submitting testimony!

I do my best every day (and many nights) to be a good educator, I certainly did not take on this job thinking about how much money I could make but at best this system is incredibly inequitable and totally undervalues many of us who have put their hearts and souls into teaching in Hawai'i. We need to retain teachers, not keep losing them and then continually have to recruit and train new teachers- which is not an easy task.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819 SD2 HD2 not just for me but all of us who have been underpaid for a very long time and also help us to retain many more teachers.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to testify and I look forward to continuing teaching your children, grandchildren and younger relatives for years to come but hopefully with a better fair wage.

Una Burns

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 3:34:29 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
marylee fredericksen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the House Committee on Finance. I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2819, SD2, HD2. My name is Marylee Fredericksen and I have been working for 28 years as a teacher in the County of Kauai, currently at Hanalei Elementary school. When I was hired, it was during my early years that the Governor at that time froze teacher salaries for 6 years. This seems to have had the most dramatic impact with respect to reduced salaries for teachers. It is a sad affair that the State of Hawaii has not paid a living wage for its teachers. It is been extremely painful to watch so many colleagues leave Hawaii for higher wages in other states because they just can not afford to live here. My family personally struggles constantly with finances and we want to stay but with the current level of inflation it is doubtful. It is important if you want a future in which our young people can become leaders in our communities to invest in education. This means you must actually fund the teacher workforce to create and then maintain capable and experienced educators. The revolving door of being a teacher in Hawaii for a year or so - is a sad legacy for our children who often have long term subs for their classroom teachers. A long term sub does not have to meet the criteria of a highly qualified educator. I urge you to support our keiki and pay our teachers a living wage. Please vote in support of Senate Bill SB2819, SD2, HD2. Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony regarding this vital issue.

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 3:38:48 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Susanna M.G. Rivera	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of SB2819. I appreciate all of the work you have done to move the bill this far. I have been a Teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing on the Big Island (Hilo and Kea'au) for the past 36 years. I have done everything I can to move ahead on the salary schedule (working for 36 years, taking classes, getting my Masters degree, becoming National Board Certified...). I have reached my maximum pay on the current salary schedule. No matter how many more years I teach or how many more classes I take, I will receive no increase in pay reflecting those two achievements.

I look at some of my younger colleagues who are languishing in a lower payscale even though they too have done everything in their power to move ahead on the salary schedule. The years they have taught are not being reflected in their pay. SB2819 can fix this issue and move these teachers up to pay that reflects their years of experience.

Thank you,

Susanna MG Rivera, MA, NBCT-ENS:ECYA, D/HH

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 3:42:42 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Daphna Ehrenhalt	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Members of The Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of SB2819.

I appreciate the work that you've done to get the bill this far. There is a huge teacher shortage in the state of Hawaii as the cost of living is so high and the pay does not reflect the work that we do. While I have only been teaching in this state for six years, I have nine years of experience from before I was recruited. My fifteen years of hard work and dedication are not reflected in my salary because of compression. I cannot imagine how it must feel to teachers who have been working in Hawai'i for over 23 years to be paid the same amount of money as someone who has only worked for 16 years. It is like a slap in the face to have stayed stagnant for that long.

Improving compression will not only keep our current teachers, but it will help to recruit more teachers, especially those who are from Hawai'i. So often, people who should become teachers do not because they know they cannot support themselves or a family at our current salary rates.

Supporting and approving SB2819 means that you will help to support the hard working teachers of Hawai'i, who have dedicated their entire working careers to our keiki. You will be treating them with fairness and honor.

Mahalo for your time,

Daphna Ehrenhalt

Testimony in support of:
Senate Bill 2819, SD2, HD2: Fixing Teacher Salary Compression

Dear Chair Luke, Vice-Chair Yamashita, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Laule'a Smythe and I am a teacher at Kalaheo Elementary School on the island of Kaua'i. I am testifying in favor of Senate Bill 2819, SD2, HD2 on Salary Compression.

Ever since I was a child, I dreamed of becoming a teacher. After graduating from a College in Spokane, WA where I received a BA in Business Management and a Masters in Education, I had a choice of places to move and continue on with the next chapter in my life. I applied for teaching jobs in Hawai'i and several other states such as Nevada, Washington, and California. As an educated Native Hawaiian who was born and raised on Kaua'i, I wanted to do right for our island and the State of Hawaii and educate and inspire our precious Keiki to dream big, do big things, and be successful while still being able to live here in Hawai'i. My heart was here at home and I wanted to give back to my community. I moved home and started my first year of teaching in the DOE in August 1998.

Coming into the DOE with a Master's, I was automatically placed in Class III. Over the next 10 years, I took classes in Math, ELL, Accelerated Reading, as well as attended other Professional Development Sessions for credits so that I could get more skillful in my teaching as well as advance horizontally and eventually get to Class VII, the last classification possible on our horizontal scale. Every few years I would move a step up which was a slight increase in my pay, but have never moved consistently up the payscale vertically because there was no set system for people that came into the DOE around the same time as me to move up on the pay scale for years of service. Even though this is my 24th year of teaching, I am still on Step 11. Ever since 1998, I have always worked a second job, ran a side business, or had to teach summer school to make ends meet. I only stopped working a second job in 2019 after the death of my daughter's father. I was no longer able to work a night job because I was now a single parent who had to take care of my daughter. Even while working the 2nd job I was, like many others, living paycheck to paycheck and still having to pay college loans since 1998. I was forced to file for bankruptcy. I would also come to find out that even though I have over 20 years of service, colleagues that came in without a Masters and started 6 or more years after in the DOE were on the same step and getting paid the same as me! I was, and still am extremely discouraged.

As a result, in all the 24 years I have been teaching, when I hear students say I want to be a teacher, I tell them to reconsider. After all, how can a teacher in Hawai'i make a decent living? Here I was with a MASTERS in education barely being able to make ends meet. My daughter, now a senior, also wants to be a teacher. It's sad to say that I discourage her every opportunity I get because I want her to have a "better life." I even find myself questioning if college is even worth it because all it did was put me in debt and in a career that requires one to usually work more than 40 hours per week, is stressful, and in some instances gets no respect as more initiatives keep getting pushed down and "put on our plate" with no compensation for the extra time and planning that it takes to fulfill these initiatives.

We all know that the past two years have been difficult. While I am thankful we still were working, it has been extremely stressful and taxing on anyone and everyone who works in the school system. Teachers have been forced to risk themselves on the front lines of Covid and “just figure things out.” It has pushed so many teachers that I know to the edge. The amount of stress has been unbearable for some. At what point do we put our Community, Keiki, and the education and future of Hawai’i first? Prior to this pandemic we already had teacher shortages because the pay in relation to the cost of living was just not worth it for some. I am certain that the teacher burnout due to the pandemic will, and has already caused a lot of people to retire or quit. How will these positions be filled if we could barely get teachers here in the first place? We are forced to recruit teachers from the mainland. In many of these situations, they have no vested interest in our students or staying in Hawai’i for the long haul, and the cost of living is so high they can’t afford to teach and live in Hawai’i. Consequently, they stay a couple of years and then return back to the mainland causing the same cycle of recurring teacher shortages here in Hawai’i. If we continue to not offer, or keep delaying competitive teaching salaries to retain quality teachers, this will be a never-ending cycle, and the children, as well as the people of Hawai’i, will suffer. Our children of Hawai’i hold the future in their hands, their education is the key!

It is time to start putting our Keiki and education first! I urge you to support Senate Bill 2819, SD2, HD2 so that we can compensate and retain QUALITY teachers here. Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony and for your time and consideration on this Bill.

Sincerely,
Laule’a Smythe

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 4:12:22 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Samantha Tomori	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee:

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819 SD2 HD2. My name is Samantha Tomori and I teach kindergarten at Kea'au Elementary School on the island of Hawai'i. First of all, I'd like to thank you for the work you've done to get the bill this far. It's encouraging to feel the support of our legislators.

I have been an educator since I was fresh out of college at 22 years old, which means I've been teaching for 14 years. Over the course of my career, I've experienced Furlough Fridays, Directed Leave Without Pay, and other cost-cutting measures. This bill brings me hope. Although it doesn't address the issues of the past, it's a step forward in the right direction. As you know, we have a teacher shortage crisis in Hawai'i, particularly in hard-to-fill areas like the one I work in. Fixing the step compression issue may encourage teachers to remain in the profession and attract qualified individuals to the teaching field.

Thank you for supporting this bill!

Samantha Tomori

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 4:38:24 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Hana Mauldin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819 relating to teacher salary compression. Please consider supporting this bill. I, like so many teachers should have a salary the reflects my years of service. I love teaching but I also have to plan for my future. I would greatly benefit to have my salary match what I should be earning. Again, please support SB 2819.

Mahalo,

Hana Mauldin

Date: March 29, 2022

From: Caitlin Kryss
P.O. Box 711687
Mountain View, HI. 96771

To: Hawaii State Legislature

RE: Support for SB 2819

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and committee members,

Please support SB 2819 to create a salary scale that recognizes years of service. My husband is a DOE public school teacher serving our keiki for over a decade. I am a new teacher and I rely on mentorship from experienced teachers. If we don't compensate them fairly and value their perspective, knowledge and experience, we risk losing them and the mana'o they can share with incoming teachers. Please recognize the value of their years of service. Teaching during a pandemic has pushed many teachers to their limit and, without this compensation, many will retire early and our students and new teachers need them to share their knowledge. Show you value our kupuna who teach. Please pay them fairly and support this measure.

Mahalo,
Caitlin Kryss

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 5:12:32 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Chris	DOE	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee.

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB 2819 SD2 HD2. My name is Chris Neppl, 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 although I have always been grateful, these amounts 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, 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, or a tiny old studio, but instead provide me the opportunity to rent my own place, and in the near future a chance at purchasing a condo 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, and maybe the most important to me is that 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 we'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 me 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 SB 2819 SD2 HD2. Thank you so much for the opportunity to testify.

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 5:38:54 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bru Lucero	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee.

In support of Senate Bill 2819

My name is Bru Lucero and I am a Registered Nurse at Hilo Medical Center on Hawai'i Island. I am writing on behalf of an amazing group of professionals that stepped up and performed highly during a global pandemic. It is unfortunate and a travesty that all teachers' hard work was thanks with a pay freeze. I believe it is short-sighted because that income would have directly gone into our economy to help stimulate growth, people's livelyhood, and would have helped take us through the economic downturn.

During this time teachers took up the difficult task of being counselors, IT specialists, and be available through the entire day for parents who needed assistance. A pay cut is extreme for a group that took on so much responsibilities. It is only fair that we recognize the hard work and dedication they put in. Teachers aren't asking for a pay raise but the stated income in their contract that was agreed upon by them as well as the state of Hawai'i. Please, please, please support our teachers and allow them to do what they love, which is to take care of students which will then take care of our future in Hawai'i. They should not be the only ones making such an extreme sacrifice during COVID.

Thank you for your hard work during this difficult time.

God bless and thank you for your time,

Bru Lucero

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 6:07:29 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kristina Lee	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

State House Finance Committee

SB2819 SD2 HD2

Friday - April 1, 2022

IN SUPPORT OF SB2819 SD2 HD2 - Fixing the Salary Compression

My name is Kristina Lee, I am a teacher at Moanalua Middle School.

I am testifying in support of fixing the salary compression.

I have been teaching in the DOE for 23 years and I have seen many good teachers come and go. I hope that the salary compression can be fixed to help retain veteran teachers as well as new teachers. Each year we have lost many great teachers to other career paths or other states with higher pay for teachers. Our Keiki deserve good teachers, we must retain both our highly skilled veteran teachers as well as new teachers to the field. The teacher shortage leaves many of our students with long term subs, not just one single sub over the course of a year, but multiple subs. Sometimes the students are lucky and the sub is versed in the content they are teaching, but this is not always the case. We also want to attract and grow individuals that are thinking of becoming educators.

In conclusion I am testifying in support of fixing the salary compression to help retain teachers and attract and grow new educators.

Kristina Lee

Moanalua Middle School Teacher

tinastarlee@gmail.com

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE on Labor and Tourism

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

Tuesday, March 22nd, 2022

9 a.m.

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, 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. Per Bill 2819: "Hawaii's teacher salaries are the lowest in the nation when adjusted for the State's high cost of living", So supporting this bill will be moving Hawaii away from the the lowest in the nation. 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 of 18 years, I'd like to feel less anxious about my future. I'd like to know that I can afford to remain here. I would appreciate feeling financially secure.

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-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 6:45:11 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jarrett Honjiyo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Jarrett Honjiyo and I am a teacher from Moanalua Middle. I have been working with the HODOE for over 20 years. In Hawaii, things are getting more and more expensive. My wife is a Doctor yet we both struggle to buy a home here, pay bills, and buy every day necessities. Due to pandemic, teachers are tired and unappreciated. I've never felt like leaving teaching until recently. By passing this bill you will not only help veteran teachers with pay but also make us feel more appreciated and not want to leave education or Hawaii. Mahalo for your support.

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 6:53:28 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Richard Stange	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Prior to COVID-19, Hawaii has been suffering a pay shortage, not a teacher shortage, but a pay shortage. I call it a pay shortage, because there are plenty of qualified and capable educators in Hawaii. So, why aren't these individuals teaching? They are not currently teaching, because they could not afford to live on a teacher salary in Hawaii before the pandemic. Now, that gas is over \$5/gallon and rental associations mercilessly raise rent by \$300 per month, more and more people are leaving the teaching profession.

It is time to pay teachers a professional salary.

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 6:56:00 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Edene Nagai	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, 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

Committee on Finance

April 1, 2022

3:00pm

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice-Chair Yamashita, 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 HD2.

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 HD2 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 2x-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 HD2.

Sarah Milianta-Laffin, Teacher
Ilima Intermediate School
Leeward District

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 7:12:03 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Thomas Schemel	HSTA	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Greetings,

As you meet to consider potentially life changing bills, I would like to offer testimony in support of SB2819,SD2, 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 three decades has unfairly impacted thousands of Hawaii state teachers.

The salary compression issue affects both veteran educators and teachers in the mid-point of their careers. I am in 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 lumped together and stuck on a salary step that is way behind their years of service.

It is no secret why there is currently a shortage of qualified teachers in Hawaii. 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.

There is a historical precedence for correcting past salary compression issues. The last time this occurred was in 1991, so it is long past time to correct the current issue. Please do what is fair and pass this bill so that teacher salaries become more competitive, allowing the Hawaii state department of education to attract qualified applicants.

Respectfully,

Tom Schemel

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 7:14:07 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
jamie psak	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of SB2819. My name is Jamie Psak and I am a DOE health teacher in the Honolulu District. I have been teaching for over 28 years and I am 1 of the 8000 educators that fall within the compressed salary range. I am still no where near the top of the salary range. By passing this SB2819 veteran teachers like myself would be more willing to continue serving the children of Hawaii. It is getting harder to find and keep dedicated teachers when they have to find other income to make ends meet. I personally have 2 other jobs. By making my pay more equitable to my years of service, I would be more inclined to delay my retirement and it would also encourage other teachers to continue in their teaching profession.

Thank you for allowing me to testify on behalf of myself and fellow educators.

Respectfully,

Jamie Psak DOE Health Teacher

Testimony for SB2819, SD2, HD2

My name is Joyce Vea and I am a counselor at Waimea Canyon Middle School on Kauai. I am writing in support of SB2819, SD2, HD2 which would address the teacher compensation (salary compression) issue which has plagued teachers, counselors, and support staff educators for decades. This is not a new issue, in fact, there have been rumblings of teachers not being compensated fairly for their dedication in years of service to the DOE since my hiring back in 2008. It is time to compensate educators fairly - especially now that the state is at a surplus - the legislature may not have the opportunity (and financial capability) to address this concern again in the near future. This is "the final call" for you legislators to invest in public schools, in public school students, and in our local communities/workforce.

I entered the Department of Education in January of 2008 only 3 weeks after graduating from UH Manoa's last cohort in school counseling. Not long after entering the state workforce,, Governor Lingle put into place "Furlough Fridays" which was my first experience of having my salary "stunted." In fact, I took a 5% pay cut for the 2 years where Furlough Fridays existed. I was hopeful when Governor Abercrombie said he was a supporter of Education and Educators only to see "Directed Leave Without Pay" days - these were essentially the same as Furlough Fridays and had the same impact. Those first 5 years being a state employee for the DOE were difficult years financially and set me up in a way where I needed to "catch up" financially.

For people unfamiliar with the teacher pay scale, our pay is determined by two factors: a) "Classes" which reflects our level of education + professional development classes and b) "Steps" which reflect pay raises negotiated through our contracts - NOT years of service as it would be in any other state. I was appalled to hear my colleagues admit that they were nowhere near the "top of the pay scale" even after 25-27 years of service. I was mindblown...I asked myself, "How does the State of Hawaii (our leaders, the legislature) not ensure that our educators are properly taken-care-of financially?" It is a question I struggle with today. At about year 3 in the DOE, I started taking professional development classes pretty aggressively - meaning I would try to take two classes per semester on top of my regular day job and a part-time job to help pay down student loans. It took me maybe 5-6 years (by this time, I'm also a mother), but I finally made it to CLASS VII - the end of the teacher pay scale in terms of education/professional development. Now, it was a waiting game to go up in "Steps." My hopes dwindled as there have been a few contracts where "steps" were NOT negotiated and agreed upon which means my base salary would not improve for 2, 3, and sometimes 4 years. For example, we got a \$1000 bonus one year - that was a slap in the face. Give us our step movements - we've earned them. Given that we are now considered essential in the light of a global pandemic, I'd say it's pretty clear that Educators have earned the right to say we've earned our paychecks.

After 14 committed years to the Department of Education, I wish I could say in confidence that our State leaders and politicians prioritize Education - sadly, this has been untrue for the entire tenure of my career. If the compression issue is not fixed, the problems within the ranks of teachers will not only continue, they will exponentially get worse. Current

teachers will retire earlier than they previously planned or hoped for, the stressors related to covid will push teachers out of the field, and more importantly students will suffer. Our students cannot receive quality education when the best and most seasoned educators are leaving the Department of Education. The DOE likes to look at all types of data regarding academic marks, attendance, covid cases, Title I funds...but where is the accountability piece where the state and our legislature looks at how state level decisions impact teacher recruitment and retention and what kind of impact does that have on student learning? Our field will not be able to sustain another round of teacher loss and/or lack of teacher recruitment. Furthermore, not fixing the compression issue at this very moment will negatively impact generations of local students who will not see Education as a viable career choice. Why go into a field that historically gets ignored and lacks funding and support? Politicians have a responsibility to ensure that Hawaii's public schools attract and retain the most qualified teachers.

There has never been another time where things have been so aligned to compensate Hawaii's teachers fairly and comparable to that of our mainland counterparts. The passing of this bill would put value in the 14 years that I have already dedicated to the Department of Education and give me 2 more steps which would raise my salary by \$7,000. Yes, that's right...\$7,000 - this is money that I earned but due to a series of bad contracts, I had to just accept where the DOE said I had to be - because funding was not available. It's time to correct the wrong, it's time to pay educators what we are worth. There were times in the past where the burden of the state's financial struggles were squarely put on the backs of state workers. It's our turn to reap the benefits of a funding surplus. There is no time better to tell our students and communities that public education in the state of Hawaii is a priority and their future is an investment worth saving. Please pass SB2819, SD2, HD2 to fairly compensate our Teachers and Counselors!

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 7:50:29 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

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 and a Mililani resident. 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 28 years of experience and commitment. However, as a teacher, because I am stuck in this salary compression disaster, I 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 28 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.

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 hurts so much. However, now with a teacher shortage and retention, this is the solution. As a teacher with 28 years of experience, I can retire in 3 years. However, if Salary Compression is fixed, 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. At this point, it's really now or never. That's the attitude of many teachers. If you can't fix salary compression all at once then start from the top 30 years, 29 years, 28 years and so on. At least teachers will have hope.

Please, for decades, we lived with horrible Salary Compression issue. 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 to that is by retaining veteran teachers.

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

THANK YOU FOR ALWAYS SUPPORTING TEACHERS AND EDUCATION!!

Julie (A veteran teacher of 28 years)

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 7:52:45 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Stacy Sugai	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Thank you for allowing me to submit testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819.

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.

Mahalo,

Stacy Sugai

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 8:56:27 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Erin Raguindin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee:

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819, SD2, HD2. I am a School Counselor in the Maui District and I've worked at the same Elementary School since 1998. I am just like many other loyal educators who have two decades of experience and I'm currently supporting children of former students! Imagine how valuable it is to have experienced educators who have built relationships with generations of families and who really know the community. Funding this bill will fix the salary compression problem and encourage teachers with years of experience to stay in the profession. I live and teach on Molokai which makes it even more of a challenge to find and keep experienced teachers, so please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819, SD2, HD2.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 8:58:06 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Deborah Olive	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To: Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee.

I am submitting testimony in support of SB2819. I am a second grade teacher at Keaau Elementary School on the Big Island of Hawaii.

I have been teaching in the DOE public school since 2005. Before that I worked in the DOT Highways Division and in DAGS, Public Works. In comparison to these state positions, being a teacher is 10x more demanding. If I were to calculate my hourly pay based on the time I spend "on the job" and my extra out-of-pocket expenses, I would be making less than minimum. If you and your constituents value the work of teachers, than please show it by passing SB 2819.

Thank you,

Deborah Olive

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 9:06:44 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Evelyn Ibonia	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819 Relating to teacher compensation (salary compression). My name is Evelyn Ibonia, a fifth grade teacher at Kihei Elementary School on the island of Maui. This year marks my 18th year of teaching with the Hawaii DOE. I spent 8 years teaching on Oahu before moving back to Maui, to teach at the elementary school that I attended. I don't think I have to tell you that teaching is hard, even more so in the last couple of years with all the uncertainty of the pandemic. So it's no surprise that a great number of my colleagues are leaving the profession or retiring. I, myself, have been back and forth about it too, questioning whether this is still worthwhile. It is becoming increasingly difficult to deal with the changes that are constantly coming down on us all the while wondering if we can make ends meet at home. I am fortunate that I have family that I can share my home with, otherwise I would never be able to pay the mortgage on my own. After giving 18 years of my blood, sweat, and tears, you would think I would be better compensated so that I could afford to live on my own, but that is not the case and it's not the case for many other teachers like me. It's time to restore our salary. It's time to show teachers how much we are needed and appreciated because we are loosing hope. It's time to do better by us because if we don't see real changes, the state will not be able to come back from this teacher shortage crisis.

I am in support of Senate Bill 2819 Relating to teacher compensation (salary compression). Please vote in support of this bill too. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Evelyn Ibonia

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 9:07:39 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mike Landes	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819 SD2 HD2. 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 HD2.

Mahalo for your time,

Mike Landes

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 9:20:22 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Iris Yamamoto	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2819. I am Iris Yamamoto. I have been teaching in the DOE since 2009. I am currently teaching in the Honolulu district. Every year, I have been taking multiple professional development courses in order to earn credits to receive salary increases. All of these courses were paid for out of my own pocket and took many hours of my nights and weekends to complete the evidence binders required to earn the course credits. Only after earning 15 credits, did I finally see a slight increase in my pay. It took me 9 years to finally earn enough credits to reach Class 7, which is the highest Class in pay. I have not see a movement in "Steps" for many years. Thus, no matter how many additional Professional Development courses I take, it will not help me increase my salary. I often wonder if I will be earning the same amount of pay 5, 10, or even 20 years down the line. I feel that it is only right to compensate us for the years of service that we dedicated to this profession. Through the years in this profession, I have grown as an educator and feel that I am continuously refining my teaching practices and skill. I understand that I have become a teacher for the love of teaching our keiki and building a strong foundation for our future, but I also need to express the dire need for a salary that can support my own growing family along side the rising costs of living in Hawaii. Now with children of my own, I cannot afford to continue being in this profession if I don't see an increase of salary soon. As a teacher, I've learned to sacrifice a lot of my needs to meet the needs of my students. But there may be a day in the near future where I find myself walking away from this profession and finding a profession that can support my family and our needs. Aside from myself, there are veteran teachers at my school who have many more years of experience and are making the same amount as I am. I lean on these teachers as mentors as they have provided me with guidance to help me grow as an educator. I don't think people understand the wealth of knowledge these teachers possess. They deserve the respect and a salary that reflects that. There is a teacher crisis, a terrible teacher shortage...are you willing to risk all of the precious educators in Hawaii walking away from the profession that they love?

Again, I am in support of the Senate Bill SB2819 and I humbly ask for your vote in support of this. Thank you for your time.

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 9:21:45 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alana Haitsuka-Fernandez	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2819 SD2 HD2.

My name is Alana Haitsuka-Fernandez, and I have had the honor and privilege of teaching in the Hawaii Department of Education for the past 27 years. Currently, I work at Honoka`a High and Intermediate School on the Big Island. I love being an educator and value the work that I am able to do. I teach and work with students and fellow educators because it's important and incredibly rewarding to play a positive role and make a difference in young people's lives. More recently, for the last seven years, I've also gotten to work with and mentor new teachers. I've been granted this opportunity due to my years of experience. There really is no substitution for experience. As time passes, your teaching toolbox grows full of strategies: You learn how to anticipate situations, how to face daily challenges, how to reach all kinds of students, how to take lessons a bit further. Experience matters and for many years, our salary schedule has not recognized this. I'm nearly to that 30 year mark, but I realize that my experience, committment, dedication, and time strengthening my craft are not recognized nor compensated. We need our experienced educators to stay in our system. It's not only so they can continue to serve our students, but it's also because their presence on campus significantly impacts the new and younger teachers in a positive manner- which in turn, also benefits students. All along the way, these past 27 years, I never had extra money, and almost always had a second or third job in order to provide for my own children's tuition or to cover unexpected expenses. At this point in my career, I'd like to feel financially secure, lose the second and third jobs, and be paid according to my years of service. If we want our experienced educators to keep on moving our schools forward, we have to move their salary step as well. It hasn't been fair that we've stalled. The resources are now available and it's time to make things right. Let's compensate farily those that have given to our keiki for so very many years.

Please vote in support of SB2819 SB2 HD2.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony and for your consideration of this bill.

Alana Haitsuka-Fernandez

TO: Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair
Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance Members

REGARDING: **RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION**
SB 2819, SD 2, HD2 (HSCR 1396-22) Provides automatic step increases to correct salary compression.

DATE: Friday, April 1, 2022
TIME: 3:00 P.M.
PLACE: VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE
Conference Room 308
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

POSITION: **IN SUPPORT** of **SB 2819, SD 2, HD2** (HSCR 1396-22)

INTRO: I am a teacher of 19 years, currently working on the Leeward Coast of Oahu. I am testifying in **support** of this bill, to support quality public education.

Step increases to correct salary compression for our more experienced teachers will help our State retain teachers, and encourage those thinking about becoming teachers to do so because this will show that our State values quality public education. Teacher retention is still a problem, with only a little more than 50% of new teachers making it past 5 years of seniority, and passing this bill will encourage teachers to remain in the career of teaching.

Adequate teacher compensation will show teachers that we're valued and for what we do, and 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 that they also provides better quality of life. 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. Administrator shortage has been an issue for a little more than a decade now, and as a result, a teacher need only 5 years of experience before applying to be an administrator. This practice doesn't necessarily produce quality administrators.

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 teachers that our State does value quality education, and fund this bill.

Sincerely,
Debra Yamakawa
Public School Teacher

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 11:24:04 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Steven K Souza	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair and Representative Kyle Yamashita, Vice Chair

Committee on Finance

Bill SB2819 SD2 HD2

April 1st, 2022

Aloha,

My name is Steven Souza and I am a teacher at Waimea High School. I have been teaching at Waimea High School for 26 years and I am in support of this Bill SB2819. I agree that this bill will allow veteran teachers to "catch up" on the pay scale to where we should be. It has been a long, slow climb up the pay scale. I have topped out at Class 7 but am still only at Step 12, even with 26 years of teaching. Recent contracts have favored the new and incoming teachers to attract and keep them in the profession. It is time to reward the veteran teachers with compensation they deserve. At the current rate, it is possible that I make my 30 years of service and retire without reaching the highest step on the pay scale. That doesn't make sense. This is not a matter of just wanting more money but being fairly compensated for working extra long hours in a time where teaching is becoming more difficult and exhausting. For all the work that we do and keep hearing that the children are the future and how important education is, teachers should be able to live a little more comfortably, not paycheck to paycheck. None of us went into teaching thinking we were going to be rich but I should be able to take my children on vacation to the mainland more than once every 3-4 years because that is all I can afford.

When I heard about this bill, my first impression was "It's about time" and " I think this would be fair and it rewards the teachers who have stayed in education this long in a day where teacher turnover is so high." Passing this bill will, in my opinion, keep verteran teachers on the job longer instead of choosing to retire. If education is so important, teachers should be able to earn more than other jobs that can make just as much or more without a degree or sometimes, zero college education.

I can retire in 4 years when I make my 30 years of service. I will be only 55 years old. I am still going to have to work. Passing this bill will significantly increase my pay and will definitely influence when I actually retire from teaching. Being able to pay for travel in the summers or on

breaks or being able to go out to dinners a little more often would be a reward for all the stress dealing with the issues of teaching in this day or sacrificing family time or personal time consistently working 10-11 hour days as well as working on the weekends prepping for school.

In conclusion, passing this bill would show teachers, especially veteran teachers, the respect we deserve. We keep hearing that our reward is the growth we see in our students. This is true, but for all the time we put in, we deserve to be rewarded with some financial stability towards the end of our teaching careers and into retirement. Thank you for your time.

Steven Souza

Waimea High School

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 11:25:14 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita 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. 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. 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 own 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-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 11:30:32 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kim Mah	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

SB-2819-SD-2 Submitted on: 3/31/2022

Chair Woodson, Chair Kapela, 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 thirty-four years of experience in the DOE, 31 of those years in one school in Kailua, Oahu.

In all my years as a teacher, I have struggled financially, married and currently divorced, now living on a single income and paying a mortgage by myself. I have basically spent my career living ‘paycheck to paycheck’. I am one of the teachers in the middle of the salary schedule and would benefit from the compression model, compensating me for my years of service.

I went on strike, only to have my 21 days of striking become my “raise”. I made it through giving up my salary for Furlough Fridays. I remember seeing my partner’s pay stub and her salary as a beginning teacher and my pay stub as a 15 year veteran as almost the same. Years later, I didn’t receive a pay cut during our recent traumatic COVID experience but there were no negotiations for step or salary increases either.

It is time to compensate those of us educators who CHOSE TO STAY through all of this and through all the years of going without. It is time to honor us for truly sticking with our keiki, our communities and for continually being passionate about our teaching and learning, 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. I LOVE MY JOB and I have the energy and desire to continue working. But this Bill has made me realize that our profession is not respected and this is sad. It is sad because I am not respected in my home state. I was raised in Kailua and love teaching in my community. But talking to educator friends on the Mainland makes it evident that my state does not respect their teachers. Salary “compression” sounds almost criminal. Not one lay person outside of

education whom I spoke to about it, ever even thought of it, heard of it or knew it was happening.

I was recently told to take my years of service and retire. Do something else! What if more of us were convinced to do something else? Hawaii would be faced with a new kind of shortage...the loss of experienced, dedicated, passionate teachers who have years of experience and who really enjoy what they do. With this thought, I urge you to support SB 2819 SD2. Please honor your teachers.

Before I end, I would just like to ask a question about the description: Is it really effective in 2050? Then I would not see any compensation in my lifetime and my testimony would be pointless.

Description:

Repeals sections 302A-624(c) and 302A-627(a), HRS. Makes an appropriation to fund a memorandum of understanding to address compensation equity issues and to make the necessary discretionary salary adjustments for experienced senior public school teachers and state public charter school teachers. Effective 7/1/2050. (HD2)

I thank you for your time.

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 11:54:59 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dee	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819. I have been teaching Hawaii DOE for almost 16 years. I really enjoy working with children, however, the low pay plus the high cost of living had really made me consider one possible option of moving to other states for a better living environment. As much as I want to stay in Hawaii and raise my children in this paradise, the underpay does not help. If SB2819 can pass, it will not only help my family financially, but also it makes me feel being appreciated.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819.

Dee

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 5:59:05 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kori Oros	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2819 SD2 HD2

I am a 3rd grade teacher in the Central District. I was raised in Makakilo,I teach at a Title I School. 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 Saturday April 2, 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 their house 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 SD2 HD2

Thank you for the opportunity to testify,

Kori Oros

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 7:02:53 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
John Fitzpatrick	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

Aloha Honorable Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita and the finance 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-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 7:16:46 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gayle Lee	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee

My name is Gayle Lee and I am a Student Services Coordinator in Ewa Beach on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819.

Please allocate funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been teaching for 26 years in Hawaii and I am one of those teachers who got “stuck”. I am on Step 13 and I know that there are some teachers who have been teaching for a shorter period of time that have surpassed me in steps. It is a struggle to know this and not feel valued for the years of solid service that I have put into this profession. My colleagues and I have worked diligently to support our students in Hawaii’s public schools. By working together to balance the interests of all the stakeholder groups and reflecting on how we will use the money received to best meet the needs of our students, our schools and our communities, I am confident we will allow for a greater number of students to achieve excellence.

Mahalo,

Gayle Lee, Leeward District, Oahu

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 7:33:03 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lorie Javier	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Sylvia Luke, Vice Chair Kyle Yamashita, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819.

Please do not allow unfair compensation to continue. Making the pay adjustments that correct salary compression now will help keep experienced public school teachers in our schools. Many of my colleagues have left the profession after 10 to 20 years of service specifically because of this salary compression issue. Experience teachers who love what they do each day continue to talk about having to consider leaving teaching for a better paying job or leaving the islands for a place with a better cost of living.

Fixing this wrong will help retain veteran teachers. It is so important to retain our teachers with 10 plus years of service. They have put their knowledge and skills to work to improve their craft. These teachers are at a point in their career where they are expert managers, school leaders, and they routinely apply effective strategies that help students learn and grow. These are the mentors who support, develop, and retain new teachers.

Sadly, it is our public school students who will suffer from veteran teachers leaving the profession.

Please vote to keep our experienced teachers in Hawaii's public school classrooms. Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Lorie Javier

Teacher

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 7:42:36 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joshua Ching	HSTA, DOE	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To whom it may cocern,

I have been teaching in Hawaii for 19 years and I take pride in my job and the honor I have to work with our future lawyers, doctors, construction workers, and military. I feel that is important that you pass this Bill so that teachers like myself can continue to work in Hawaii and be a public school teacher. I know too many people who have left this position to either work in another field because it pays more, retire once they can and continue to work elsewhere, or transfer to a private school. In order to keep the teachers, rather than have a revolving door, we need to compensate all teachers who have decided to work and live in Hawaii. I know some organizations might not think it fair that only teachers benefit from this. Just understand that if we pass this Bill it will only help those other organizations in the future when the choose to advocate for themselves and their members.

Mahalo,

Joshua Ching

Maui Waena Intermediate School

English Language Arts

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 7:51:27 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
ken kozuma	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and the Finance Committee,

I'm writing to support SB2819 relating to teacher compression as an individual. I'm the agriculture teacher and FFA Advisor at Waipahu Intermediate School, and I'm also serving as the Hawaii FFA State Coordinator. My wife is also a teacher, and we've put in nearly 20 years in education, and we're still so far away from the top of the pay scale due to compression. We're in education because we believe in our youth, we're not in it for the money. But at the same token, being in constant debt and living from pay check to pay check shouldn't be something that a married couple with masters degrees with nearly 20 years of service should have to endure.

I get job offers all the time to leave teaching, and I've come to a point in my career that I need to make a decision to continue my struggle as an educator, or jump to the private sector. I've sacrificed so much time and energy into teaching and pushing the agriculture industry forward and personally have so little to show for my efforts. True, my students have won national awards, and go on to be highly successful, and that helps me to continue putting in my best effort, but I also have to consider my family and what they're sacrificing of because I'm never home. I use my own money to buy snacks for my students to stay after school or come in on weekends or breaks. I use my own sick leave to do presentations or workshops or all my trips to the capitol. With all of this sacrifice, I'm left with personal satisfaction and a mountain of debt.

So, unfortunately, I've been talking to a company and I'm most likely leaving teaching at the end of this school year because at least in the private industry, I'll be compensated for all of my additional efforts.

This bill is just the starting point to keeping veteran teachers, but there's still so much work to be done.

Thank you so much for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Ken Kozuma

Waipahu Intermediate FFA

Hawaii FFA State Executive Secretary

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 8:12:18 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jason Wisdom	Hawaii Department of Education Employee	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing in regards to SB2819 (not to exclude SB2820, SB3209)- Teacher Compensation- to voice my concerns and support for the bill, but to include all Hawaii Department of Education employees (HIDOE). This includes Behavior Analysts, Behavior Health Specialists, Clinical and School Psychologists, Speech and Language Pathologists, Social Workers, and many more. Those of us in unions outside of HSTA are often left behind with new legislation which promotes pay increases, yet we are the ones assisting teachers with some of the most difficult students on a daily basis. Those of us who provide services such as Applied Behavior Analysis, speech and language therapy, and mental health counseling have been here for the students throughout the entire pandemic. We also work 12 months out of the year to support our students. We are begging the legislature to include us in any upcoming bills that promote pay increases and better working conditions.

Retention of employees throughout the HIDOE does not only include teachers, this also includes all of the workforce previously mentioned above. Please accept this testimony as a demand for those of us in unions outside of HSTA, to include but not limited to, HGEA Unit 13, to be included in SB2819 to receive comparable compensation, shortage differentials, and improvements in benefits and working conditions.

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 8:19:36 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Laura Hew	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee,

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

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, 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, 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-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 8:21:36 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jennifer Suzuki	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee:

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2819 SD2 HD2.

My name is Jennifer Suzuki, and I am a teacher at Maui Waena Intermediate School. I have been teaching here for 23 years and I love my job. However, the disrespect that teachers have endured, especially in the past few years, has made me think about retiring early for the very first time. The flexibility and ingenuity that teachers have shown recently deserves some sort of recognition. The very fact that I have to write this letter to beg for a raise that I deserve is evidence that although politicians say they work for and understand the importance of education, the government does not really see education as a priority.

I am an "old" teacher. I have worked through strikes, furloughs, no pay raises, and every new acronym that has been thrown at me, and I still love the students and work my very hardest to give them every opportunity that I am able to provide. I am also fortunate to be married to someone who is not a teacher, so finances are less of an issue for me, but I have seen some of the best and brightest new teachers leave the profession, not because of their lack of effort or passion, but because they simply could not afford to continue. This is a complete travesty. Our students are able to compete on a national level and deserve teachers who provide consistency and expertise. It takes years to master the art of teaching (if you can ever even master something that is so fluid), and the turnover rate due to lack of financial stability causes our students to be consistently short changed.

I fear that if the pay scale is not repaired and increased, the coming years, when old teachers like me decide to either retire early or right on time because the financial situation seems hopeless, there will be a huge shortage of teachers.

By honoring the profession by paying a respectful and competitive salary, I predict that many of our young people will turn to instead of away from teaching. My own son currently wants to become a teacher because he says I have helped so many students, which is sweet and true, but I am actively discouraging him from pursuing education as a career because he will not be able to afford living here if he becomes a teacher. This is a tragedy as he is a bright, kind, empathetic young man who would be an amazing teacher.

Think of all the other amazing young people who would want to go into education if they could afford to live here on the salary.

Anyway, what will happen will happen, and frankly I am not optimistic. Too many times I have gotten my hopes up, and been disappointed. I really hope to be proven wrong this time!

Thank you,

Jennifer Suzuki

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 8:22:49 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Andrea Carter	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To Whom It May Concern,

Aloha my name is Andrea Leialoha Carter and I was born and raised on the island of Oahu. I began my career as an Educational Assistant (in my early 30's) after a divorce and became a single parent. This motivated me to go back to school as a non traditional student and become part of a cohort with Chaminade University of Honolulu. I earned my bachelors of science in elementary and special education in 2010 and have been a Special Education Teacher since.

As we are all aware, living in paradise is expensive! I want to continue to live and teach in my home but it has been financially challenging. Passing Bill SB2819, SD2, HD2 would retain those such as me, who wants our keikis to benefit from having experienced teachers.

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 8:24:20 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cheryl Ann T Yoshioka	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2819.

This bill has gone far and I truly appreciate all the hard work that you put in to advance it. I am supporting this bill for a number of reasons. The cost of living in Hawaii is high and the pay for teachers does not reflect all the work that we do. Teachers don't get paid overtime, yet, we put in many extra hours of work. I spend my own money for things for my students and have done so throughout my career. I have been a teacher for 24 years at the same school that I started at. I am proud of that and I love my profession but it would be nice to be compensated fairly for the work that I and all the other educators do. Please consider supporting this bill. Children in Hawaii deserve a high quality education from highly educated teachers. Having the step compression will attract and keep educators and improve the quality of education in Hawaii.

I am a teacher at Kea'au Elementary School on the Island of Hawaii.

Thank you,

Cheryl Yoshioka

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 8:39:31 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
ROBERT LOZANO	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita and members of the Committee:

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

Mahalo for your consideration,

Robert Lozano

5th Grade Teacher

Robotics Coach

Waikoloa Elementary & Middle School

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 9:18:46 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Hillary Watt	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha.

I have been teaching in Hawaii for nearly 18 years. I love my job and I love working with students, and really feel teaching is not just my job, but a true calling. So I was willing to put up with furloughs and no raises when the state was short of funds. I was willing to struggle along with everyone else when there was no choice.

However, the state is no longer in danger of being bankrupt. So why am I still getting paid for only half my years of experience? I've done a lot of things over the years to hone my craft (as well as get a Master's degree and National Board Certification) and yet, all this experience and expertise does not feel like it is being appreciated. It certainly is not being rewarded.

If I were to move to another state that only took half my years of teaching, I'd still be on a higher step placement than I am in the state where I have dedicated my entire adult life. So what is my incentive to stay? I keep moving up classes, but there's only so far I can go, and without having made step movements, I'm not keeping up with the rising costs of housing, gas, or inflation.

This year, I've had to take on extra students outside my caseload and grade level because we can't get enough teachers to service all of our special needs students at our school. We have a real problem retaining teachers and those of us who remain are starting to get burnt out, especially when we don't feel appropriately compensated for the time, effort, love, and dedication we have put in. That's why people leave. If you want us to stay, show us that you're willing to pay us what we are worth.

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 9:27:31 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Anthony Christe	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am support of SB 2819.

It's no secret that Hawaii has trouble finding and keeping quality teachers. When a teacher can earn more in another state with a lower cost of living, it's hardly a wonder why Hawaii's public education is lagging behind other states.

Fixing the salary compression and ensuring that teachers are being paid fairly and what they're worth will go a long way in solving this issue. Fixing the salary to match time worked will help attract new teachers to the state and help keep current teachers in the state.

The future of Hawaii is in our keikis' hands. We owe it to them to provide the best education possible.

I implore you to support SB 2819.

aloha,

Dr. Anthony Christe

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 9:42:29 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Juliana R Romero	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, 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 Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Juliana Romero

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 9:52:14 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
William Howard	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in SUPPORT of SB 2819, SD2, HD2.

My name is William Howard and I've been a teacher at University Laboratory School in Honolulu for the past six (6) years. Previously I taught for one (1) year at Castle High School in Kaneohe as well as three (3) years in the state of Arizona. I made the move to ULS because I also coach at the school and wanted to be teaching and coaching in the same building in order to better serve my students. When I was hired in 2016, all of my years of experience were not honored so I was hired as an entry-level teacher. This is not the way it should be. I had four (4) years of teaching experience when I was hired, but was not rewarded for any of those years.

I also have colleagues who have many more years of experience than myself who are stuck near the middle of the salary schedule and therefore are not paid as fairly as they deserve. These are real examples of how teachers' lives are negatively affected by a lack of equity in regard to compensation. All teachers deserve a more equitable salary schedule that honors years of experience. Again, I am in full SUPPORT of this bill. Please vote in support of SB 2819, SD2, HD2.

Thank You in advance for the opportunity to testify,

Sincerely,

William K. Howard

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 9:56:09 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dorisa Pelletier-Yamasaki	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee. I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819. I have been working 16 years as a teacher in the DOE, and I am not on my proper salary step ever since times got hard in 2008. I am a highly qualified teacher who is not getting the pay I deserve for the years I've worked. I hope you all will see fit to right this wrong. It is getting almost impossible to get by as a teacher here in Hawaii. Not only are we the lowest paid in the nation when one factors in the cost of living, but we now have inflation to deal with as well! We teachers whose salaries have been compressed might have a chance to afford to stay teaching if we are at least placed on our proper step. We need to be paid properly for our years of service. As you all are well aware, the cost of living is extremely high here, especially when it comes to finding affordable rentals and housing. Please help the teacher shortage crisis not to worsen! I kindly ask you to help those of us still willing to teach, to continue doing what we love. I am requesting that you vote to help the keiki of Hawaii to be able to have highly qualified teachers and award them the opportunity to receive a great education! Mahalo nui loa for this chance to testify, Sincerely, Dorisa Pelletier-Yamasaki

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 9:56:24 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shely Chang	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2819 SD2 HD2.

My name is Shely Chang and I'm a counselor in Leeward District. Both myself and husband are DOE teachers.

I'm currently in my 18th year of teaching and love my job. The one struggle especially with two DOE salaries is the lack of pay movements over the years. Both my husband and I have taken all our professional development and are at the top of our pay scale and there is no other way to advance our pay unless there is a contract negotiation. With that we are still living paycheck to paycheck for a family of 4. For the first 15 years of my profession my husband and I both had a second job. With family commitments I needed to quit my second job but my husband still works 2 jobs.

With almost 20 years experience I'm still making the same as teachers with much less experience. I have seen teachers leave this profession, struggle with multiple jobs, and retire because the stress and amount of work with lack of compensation makes them.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill SB2819 SD2 HD2.

Thank you for time in listening to my story.

Shely Chang

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 9:58:45 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Beth	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am a public school teacher and have contributed 17 years of service to Hawaii public schools.

I may have to relocate to another state to teach because of the cost of living here and the lack of acceptable teacher compensation over the years.

It's time lawmakers, and our society, demonstrate they value education for our state's youth by compensating the people who spend all day with our keiki.

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 10:05:01 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Angela D Tompkins	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2819. I am an intervention instructor and new teacher mentor on Maui. I have had the honor of educating students in kindergarten through grade five over the past 27 years. It has been a privilege to teach in the state of Hawai'i, but it has come at a high financial cost to my family over the years. Through strikes and pay freezes I have gone many years without a standard step raise, even though I have consistently worked on my craft and continued to grow professionally.

The isolation of our islands makes it imperative to provide a well-rounded and solid education for our children so that they can be successful and strong contributors whether here at home or on the mainland. If teachers cannot afford to live here then our children suffer. As the cost of living has increased our salaries have not and every year we are finding it more difficult to hire and keep qualified teachers in our classrooms. Over the past five years, I've seen many gifted educators leave for California where teachers are compensated for their years of service, the cost of living is lower and they are able to buy a home. We must make education a priority. We must fairly compensate teachers. Please support our children by voting for SB2819.

Mahalo for your time,

Angela Tompkins

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 10:19:35 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Leimomi Kaaihili Leong	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

TO: Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair, Committee on Finance

Representative Kyle Yamashita, Vice Chair, Committee on Finance, and Members

FROM: Leimomi Ka‘aihil Leong

Hawaiian immersion teacher for 18 years, parent of 2 Hawaiian immersion students

RE: SB 2819

Hearing on April 1st, 2022

IN STRONG SUPPORT of SB2819

Aloha mai e na poo a me na lala o ka Aha Olelo,

My name is Leimomi Ka‘aihili Leong and I have been a public school Hawaiian immersion teacher for 18 years. I am currently working at Ke Kula Kaiapuni ‘o Ānuenuē as a Special Education teacher. I am also a parent of 2 children who attend Hawaiian immersion education. I am testifying in favor of SB2819 - Relating to teacher compensation.

Being a public school teacher is not a job I got, it is a career I choose. Choosing to remain as a public school special education and Hawaiian immersion teacher, I also choose a smaller pay and my years of service have not been appreciated by compensating me for that time. My husband and I don’t have the benefit of inheriting property or money so as a household of 4+ we are still trying to be able to afford to purchase a home. Passing this bill will help to keep those of us seasoned teachers which is around 8,700 teachers. My family pleads for your support by passing this bill.

Legislature shouldn't get involved in a bargaining issue? It was the Legislature that put a freeze on pay increases during economic crisis years ago. It was HGEA that decided they did not want the automatic step increases and it was the Legislature that got involved and took away the automatic step increases. We are simply asking that the current Legislators put back the step increases that was taken away.

I would also like to ask your support in petitioning Gov. Ige to support the teachers that put him in office by supporting this bill. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 11:15:32 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brandon Cha	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of SB2819 SD2 HD2. I am a high school teacher from a school in the Leeward District. As a young teacher with many more years left to commit and serve to my school population, my salary schedule is of great importance to both me and my peers. I know many teachers who have stalled in their salary progression even as they accumulate years of service to our education department, due to less than optimal budget negotiations with the state government.

Teachers should be rewarded for their years of service or they will look to move to other job sectors with better pay and salary security. If we as a community truly think teachers are as indispensable as we say they are, then our salary schedule should be a constant priority, and not simply a luxury to be afforded when the state budget is favorable. Passing this bill will compel the state to prioritize teacher salaries and invest in our best resources for our keiki's education - our teachers.

Please vote in support of SB2819 SD2 HD2. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Dear Chair Luke, Vice-Chair Yamashita, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Matthew Ruiz, a teacher from Maui, and I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819, SD2, HD2.

These past three years have been the most stressful. Educators across our state have gone to great lengths to continue their teaching journeys, while some have decided to throw in the towel.

This year alone, our school saw two teachers leave the profession, one teacher who plans to leave at the end of the school year, one who decided their part-time job pays them enough to survive with a lot less stress, and a few who are ready to retire. We are looking at roughly around six teachers leaving the classroom in just one school year from just one school. Some were for better jobs, while others felt it was too much to handle.

We as teachers have been bent in many shapes and forms and stretched very thin, all while we took a slight pay cut due to the dropping of the 21+ PD Hours caused by the pandemic. Teachers who are up for retirement were stuck in the same salary step for years due to the compression, and for that reason, they felt retirement was a better option.

It amazes me that jobs at stores like Target and Walmart pay some of their leadership roles just about the same if not more than teachers, and yet teachers continue their work beyond the classroom without any “overtime” pay.

People always say the pay is not all that matters when becoming a teacher. However, how can we continue to expect our teachers to work 100 times harder for such little pay? How can we expect teachers to get so much more added to their plates for such little pay? How can we continue to say “teachers are growing the future of our society” for such little pay? How can we expect teachers to motivate students when many teachers are running on empty?

I humbly ask that you pass Senate Bill 2819, SD2, HD2, as many educators and I support it.

Thank you, Chair Luke, Vice-Chair Yamashita, and Members of the Committee, for the opportunity to testify.

Mahalo,
Matthew Ruiz

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 11:46:29 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
christopher castillo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice-Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee,

My name is Christopher Castillo, an EOEL PreKindergarten teacher at Waianae Elementary school. I am writing in support of Senate Bill 2819 SD2 HD2 relating to teacher compensation in the form of salary compression. I have taught at my school for eight years and I have to say that no one is rushing to fill the many open slots that we have.

These open spots are filled with unqualified individuals or people who have traveled from the continent. Often coming with the mindset, "Oh I get to teach in Hawai'i." Many of these unqualified or out-of-state individuals often don't stay which leads us back to where we started. This is happening to schools all across the state and although it has been said out loud that there is a retention problem, there hasn't been much done to solve it.

We currently have pay differentials for SPED teachers, hard-to-staff schools, and Hawaiian immersion schools. These differentials were created to "entice" teachers to either go to or stay in these positions. Yet these are also on the table to be discussed today. Covid has showcased more flaws in the education field where fewer people are joining the workforce while more people are leaving it. There is a large portion of the workforce that has put their heart and soul into this profession that is ready to call it quits.

During the pandemic, they were asked to pick up more responsibilities, go through ELL courses, as well as deal with covid-regulations that impacted their instruction. Although they have worked hard for many years, their pay does not reflect that. I, as a teacher for eight years, almost make as much as someone with more years of service than I do. If that large population decides to call it quits or retires, that is a large portion of the workforce that we don't have people to take those spots. Like many teachers, this group is feeling overworked and underpaid. But they've had to feel this way and face more challenges longer than a lot of us newer teachers.

We cannot continue to think that students are getting "quality learning" when open slots are filled with unqualified individuals or long-term subs. When there already are professionals in those positions that we could keep by fixing their pay. I ask you to please support Senate Bill 2819 SD2 HD2.

Thank you for your time

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 11:54:36 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Wendy Okamoto	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of SB2819 SD2 HD2.

Due to the important nature of this bill, I am compelled to include my own personal testimony in support of SB2819 SD2 HD2 . This is my 24th year of teaching in the Hawaii Department of Education (DOE). It has been my privilege to serve the students of Hawaii for many years.

During my tenure, I experienced a teacher strike and endured Furlough Fridays. These two events have severely delayed and compounded how pay does NOT commensurate with experience in the DOE. Knowing there are teachers with much less years of experience receiving similar pay is unjust. Not only will passing of this bill rectify this, but I personally know colleagues who will continue to teach and prevent teacher shortages.

On behalf of educators, I urge you to support SB2819 SD2 HD2.

Thank you for the honor to submit testimony.

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 12:06:53 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
C Conrad	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

There are many teachers considering leaving. It has been an exhausting two years. During the pandemic, many praises and appreciations were given to teachers. Now is the time to demonstrate the importance teachers have in our community. This can be demonstrated by prioritizing teacher salaries.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Chris

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 12:44:05 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Douglas Kainoa Dang	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose the intent of this bill and suggest all educational employees be considered to avoid disparate treatment

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 1:08:37 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Natalie Lum	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Honored Member of the House Finance Committee,

Please support Senate Bill 2819, SD2, HD2.

I have spent more than twenty nine years as public school teacher during which time I have taught 2nd grade, 3rd grade, 4-6 SpEd, CSAP, AGT, Library, and Technology. You would think that after investing so much time teaching, I would be at the highest pay level since I can retire in 2023. Having to write testimony is akin to begging for a pay raise I feel should have been due to me for the years spent compressed at class 7, level 7 and class 7, level 11. In order to provide for my family on a single income, I needed to find an additional job because this pay does not sustain a family of 3 with basic necessities. Senate Bill 2819, SD2, HD2 would give me back 1 year of compensation before I could retire with 30 years. The bill would provide me with a better retirement if I choose to retire or continue on with the Department of Education. Currently I am trying to decide if I should stay a few more years or retire from the DOE and work for another company with my education and training (RN, DMAT-Disaster Medical Assistance Trained at CDP in Anniston, Alabama, CERT-Community Emergency Response Team Instructor {Trained 1st Kalakaua Middle School CERT}, CPR instructor, MRC-Medical Reserve Corps Volunteer, Stop the Bleed Instructor, and more). I can easily find employment elsewhere outside of the DOE. Please vote to support the teachers who have been giving so much for so many years and support Senate Bill 2819, SD2, HD2. I am becoming too old to work 2-3 additional jobs to raise my family and keep up with inflation.

Thank you,

Natalie Lum

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2819. I have been a teacher at Radford High School for the past 10 years. I support this bill, because I know many teachers who have salaries that do not reflect their years of service, myself included. I speak frequently with my students about their future career choices, and often I'll ask them if they would ever go into teaching. They usually laugh and say, "No way." They are well-aware of the sacrifices teachers make and the unfair salaries we receive. What are you going to do about this? We already have hundreds of vacant positions we cannot fill. This is not a profession students want to go into. If significant change is not made to compensate teachers properly, soon there will be no teachers left.

Passing this bill is only the beginning when it comes to paying teachers fairly, but it is a good place to start. No one deserves to make the same amount of money for 10, 20, 30 years, and no other profession is treated this way. Please put teachers on the right track to make the amount of money we should be making based on our years of experience and dedication to our students. Please support this bill and help teachers get the pay they deserve. Numerous studies have shown that teachers who receive proper compensation for their work have better performing students in the classroom. Show our keiki we support our teachers and we value the education they receive. Show our community we value the hardworking teachers who dedicate their lives to this vital profession, though we can barely afford the rising cost of rent. Show us, the teachers, who are educating our future, that you care. Please support SB2819.

Thank you,

Christine Christe

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 1:13:46 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Julie Reyes Oda	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

Thank you, Hawai'i House Finance Committee, for hearing this bill on teacher compensation to address shortages in our profession. I am Julie Reyes Oda, math teacher, and department head at Nānākuli High and Intermediate School and HSTA Leeward President. Leeward District includes Pearl City, Waipahu, 'Ewa, Kapolei, Nānākuli, and Wai'anae. Nearly 1 out of every 4 teachers in the state teach in the Leeward District. I write in support of SB2819 SD2, HD2.

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 1:19:01 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kasey Vanderhoof	Individual	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

There are often many great things that go through the legislation for HSTA personnel such as pay raises, however the staff that support teachers in several capacities are under a different union (HGEA) and we are often left out of these legislative decisions. As support staff we are working with teachers daily to guide them through and assist them with data collection, teaching strategies, behavioral interventions and more in order to help them be successful as teachers and to help our students succeed. Throughout the pandemic, HGEA district employees were present at work day in and day out to help ensure as smooth a transition as possible through all of the COVID changes for our schools, our teachers, and our students, and this often meant taking on additional responsibilities and attending various types of new and additional meetings with a variety of people and positions. Employee retention and compensation for all DOE employees should be equally important and HGEA members, as well as other unions outside of HSTA, should be equally recognized and compensated through compression, differentials, and professional development hours as are our HSTA counterparts. HGEA members, as well as other unions outside of HSTA, should be included in Bill SB 2819. Thank you for your time and consideration.

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 1:20:37 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sandy Domion	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, 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 at, 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

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 1:38:44 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Claire Gearen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Sylvia Luke, Vice-chair Kyle T. Yamashita, and other members of the House Committee on Finance:

My name is Claire Gearen, and I am a teacher at Mililani High School. I write in strong support of Senate Bill 2819 SD2 HD2 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.

Thank you for hearing this measure. Something needs to be done about the lack of equitable compensation for public school teachers in this state.

I graduated from the Master's of Education in Teaching program at UH in 2000 and have taught in public schools ever since.

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

March 31, 2022

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Members of the House Finance Committee,

My name is Jodi Kunimitsu and I am a math teacher at Maui High School. I am writing in strong support of SB 2819, SD2, HD2, related to teacher compensation.

This school year is my 18th year as a classroom teacher in the HIDOE. However, I currently stand on the salary schedule at step 11. One might think I earned 10 steps in those 18 years, but actually, I began on step 5 of that salary schedule. This means, I only moved 6 steps in the last 18 years! That's an average of one step every three years. What's even crazier is that other people with different years of service than myself are also on the same step, because our step movements depend on negotiations. Negotiations depend on who is sitting on each side of the table.

Teachers deserve to be compensated fairly for the work that we do. There has been a certified teacher shortage for years. Just because positions can be filled with emergency-hires, it does not mean that the teacher shortage does not exist. Why aren't there enough certified teachers to fill the positions? It's because people can't afford to work for free, "out of the goodness of their heart." People need to make a living wage - and in Hawaii, we know that is far beyond what most people actually make.

Passing this bill could be helpful with the recruitment and retention of certified teachers to fill vacancies in our schools. As a veteran teacher, it is really difficult to encourage future generations to become teachers when we know that they will struggle to make a living on a teacher's salary, given the current salary structure. I cannot with a good conscience ask people to join a profession where you are treated like your own livelihood does not matter, even though I know these people would make excellent teachers and role models for our students.

I urge you to vote in support of SB 2819, as it will impact the quality of teachers that we are able to recruit and retain...and the future of public schools in Hawaii is dependent on its teachers. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Mahalo,
Jodi Kunimitsu

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 1:50:48 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Logan Okita	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2819, SD2, HD2.

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, HD2. Thank you for the opportunity to testify!

Sincerely,

Logan Okita, MEd, NBCT

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 1:51:34 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lisa Morrison	HSTA	Support	In Person

Comments:

I strongly support increased compensation for teachers.

March 31, 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 HD2. 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

Bill: Senate Bill 2819 SD2 HD2
Title: Relating to Teacher Compensation
Position: STRONGLY SUPPORT
Committee: Senate Committee on Education
Date: April 1, 2022 3:00pm

Aloha Honorable Chair, Vice Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Vickie Parker Kam, I have been employed as an educator for over 20+ years with the Hawaii Department of Education, HSTA active since 2004. I am writing today to strongly support SB2819 SD2 HD2.

We have presented testimony for years that the current pay scale does not accurately reflect the years of dedicated service teachers have provided to our keiki. We are asking you to support SB2819 SD2 HD2 to begin addressing this issue. We are proud of the work we do and the difference we make in students' lives, we also deserve a pay scale that reflects this dedication.

Immediate needs include:

- Fixing step compression, and creating additional classes on the salary schedule;
- Provide competitive salaries and benefits reflecting Hawaii's high cost of living;
- Reestablishing annual step increases, honoring current negotiated salaries;
- Provide funding for increased preparation time, teaching positions, and additional personnel.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify, and thank you again for your support of Hawai'i's teachers, students and families.

Sincerely,
Vickie LP Kam
HIDOE Educator
HSTA Board of Director, Leeward
(speaking as an individual)

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 2:31:27 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christine Russo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee,

My name is Christine Russo and I am submitting testimony in **support** of Senate Bill 2819 SD2 HD1, HD2.

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

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 2:33:22 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Heidi Randolph Maxie	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819. My name is Heidi Maxie and I teach at Castle High School. I have been in the classroom for more than 25 years. We have hit CRISIS mode. We need to be able to attract good teachers and keep them. I have seen very good teachers make the tough decision to leave the profession, because they could not afford to stay. Many teachers have left the profession so that they could provide for their families. It's unfortunate that someone has to leave a job that they enjoy, because they aren't earning a "living" wage. Many teachers who have chosen to stay have to work a part time job so that they can pay their bills.

Salary Compression would be a game changer. Teachers could potentially not have to have more than one job. They could come to school more rested and be more present for their students. Teachers could potentially STAY in the profession long term, because they enjoy what they do, AND they can handle their lives financially.

I am a math teacher. I have worked with a Co-Teacher now for more than 5 years, in an effort to provide more support to my students that have special needs. I don't think that I have ever had a Co-Teacher that was actually certified or highly qualified, as a teacher. They have all been very nice people, but being able to attract young people into the teaching field would ensure that more classrooms have highly qualified teachers. This would help our students with special needs to be better and properly cared for.

Our students deserve this. Our teachers deserve this. Our communities deserve this.

Thank you for doing what you can to help us.

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 2:34:37 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Steve Avellana	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To Whom It May Concern,

As an educator who is in the twilight my career, I have been unable to reach the highest level of teacher classification because the state does not recognize years of service. With over 25 years of teaching, I am still four steps away from the highest level of (14B). Without the passing the teacher compression bill, I believe I will never be compensated for the years of service I have given to the children of Hawaii. I should be, after 25 years, at my highest salary but unfortunately the state does not value years of service. Instead, my compensation must be negotiated in small incremental steps which still do not reflect the pay myself and my colleagues deserve. Rectifying this situation will greatly contribute to the retention of over 8700 teachers who find themselves stuck in a system that does not honor hard work, dedication, and years of service. I have already witnessed numerous colleagues retire or leave teaching early without being compensated for their years of service. Passing the teacher compression/compensation bill will go a long way in retaining teachers who have dedicated themselves to the children of Hawaii. These 8700 teachers represent years of experience which cannot be replaced. Please don't let these teachers leave the profession without honoring their years of service.

Respectfully,

Steve T. Avellana

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 2:50:30 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sherene Hong	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill number 2819 relating to teacher compensation. I am a fifth-grade teacher in the Kahuku District and have been teaching for eight years. I have reached taken all my required Professional development credits and unable to increase my salary due to the fact there are only seven class steps available. The seventh class is to obtain a Doctorate degree which I do not have, so I am unable to move further. The teacher salary compression has impacted every teacher in this state negatively. I have been working a second part-time job, as a server, my entire career as a teacher because Hawaii's teaching salary is not enough to pay rent, groceries, and other basic necessities. I know as a restaurant server; I am able to make more money as a full-time server than a full-time teacher. I am only able to survive as a teacher with my part-time job as a restaurant server. Furthermore, I know highly qualified teachers who have left the education system in Hawaii because all the extra hours on the weekend and weekdays exhausts them out and eventually led to resignation. Most people forget that teachers always take work home and have to plan every weekend. We work seven days a week but don't get paid for the extra overtime hours. The teacher shortage crisis in Hawaii is only getting worse, and it is essential to keep all the current teachers in their positions by increase our salary every year and increase opportunities for salary increase. Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819 and support the teachers of Hawaii. The Department of Education cannot afford to lose any more highly qualified teachers. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify.

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 2:52:32 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Erin Shimomi	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support the bill. It will help retain teachers with the rising cost of living in Hawaii. Teachers deserve fair compensation for years of service!

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 2:57:09 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Charmaine Doran	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha! Honorable Representatives and Committee members. I am Charmaine T. Doran, it is a honor to submit testimony to your committee on this important matter.

At the start of 2022, the Pearl City Neighborhood Board adopted a resolution in support of additional compensation for teachers including addressing compression, housing benefits, and differentials. This resolution was one of several legislative acts to support teachers adopted by the board over the years. Just like this honorable body, compensation for teachers is regularly discussed at City boards throughout the island. This is only necessary, because unlike the compensation packages for police, fireman, and others, which are handled much more routinely, teacher compensation is often forced into the public appeal arena. One year, the State abandoned its responsibilities to teachers almost entirely and tried to punt the issue of funding to the City. It was a sad “State” of affairs.

Today, is a new day and an election year. Before this committee is SB 2820, SD2, HD1 and SB 2819, SD2, HD2. Together these measures attempt to address the ridiculous practice of compression and to maintain teaching differentials. No other employee union would tolerate this level of unfairness among its senior members. Others already include differentials practices. If teaching is to remain a foundational part of our state education system, equitable compensation is an essential requirement. At the very heart of public service, first is contributing to the greater good. This is something teachers do every single day. Second, is job security and reasonable compensation for work and years of service. It is time about time that our teachers are afforded this very fundamental and innate principle of public and collective bargaining.

In closing, I ask that the members of this esteemed committee to keep in mind that almost 8,000 of Hawai'i teachers are minority women who without doubt deserve equitable pay and fair treatment.

I humbly ask for your support and passage of both measures

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 2:57:23 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
jackie	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill [SB2819, SD2, HD2](#). **I teach HS Algebra in the Maui District.**

I am in favor of funding discretionary salary adjustments for experienced senior public school teachers at the state public charter school teachers. This year teachers were the only state employees to take a salary reduction due to no professional development hours being compensated. The state dangled 2300.00 dollars to compensate teachers as we worked tirelessly through covid restrictions and then pulled it away. This caused many teachers undo distress in addition to a salary reduction. In the last two years I have seen 4 teachers resign and 2 move to the mainland due to not making enough to survive as a teacher in Hawaii. I am a verteran teacher of 25 years. I have been teaching on Maui for 8 years and cannot support my family with the current pay scale. My housing cost have increased 30 percent in the last year, I am struggling to keep up with inflation costs, even filling my gas tank is stressful and I cut cost as much as possible. I am currently taking a class to earn 3 credits of the 15 credits needed to move up a step to increase my salary but due to the stop in pd credit last year, I will not get the desperately needed pay increase I was expecting next year. In addition to cost of \$150 to take a course, 2 - 8 hours days of online instruction, the course requires over 75 hours of work to complete the required portfolio expectations every teacher has to complete before earning 1/5 of a step increase. I do not know any other profession that requires continual education that puts so much strain on one's time and will currently take 6 years to earn a step increase due to the pd freeze. I have not been unable to get a 2nd job to help with living expenses due to the demands on my time teaching via covid and taking classes to increase my pay. When I shop for groceries to feed my family I cannot get out of the store without a \$300 bill, this has doubled since last year and my groceries only last for 3 days. I am now carpooling to help with travel costs to and from work. The salary adjustment is desperately needed to keep qualified teachers in our state. A first year teacher that works right next to my classroom lives down the street in a two bedroom condo with 4 kids and cannot find adequate housing for her family. She pays \$3,000 dollars/ month which is 60% of her take home pay. She is facing a difficult decision to stay in Hawaii and teach or move to California where teachers can survive on their compensated salaries. I hope our legislature can truly look at the costs required to live in the state of Hawaii and compensate teachers for their dedication through covid and recognized that our future workforce depends on the teachers in our state.

Mahalo,

Jackie

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 2:58:42 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Audrey Franco	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am a teacher with Hawaii DOE. I have 24 years and 3 months of service. 4 years after I started teaching, we went on strike. A few years after that we got furloughed. And then Department Leave Without Pay. Currently, we are in a pandemic and many of us are contemplating leaving our lifelong careers to work elsewhere. I stuck with it through a strike and furloughs...but for the first time in my career, I am asking the question...."is it worth it?" For me, it always has been about the students. But realistically, people have to pay for their homes, and utilities and basic living needs. And they cannot do that if the pay is not comprable to the cost of living! The fact that dedicated, hard working educators would think of retiring to work elsewhere because we are not being given the respect and hence the pay we deserve is disheartening. I plan to life in Hawaii forever and I planned to teach as long as my body and mind would allow me. However, if the salaries are not compressed, I may be tempted to leave the profession.

I also have adult college aged children. My message always has been.....do not go into teaching, you won't get paid enough. If this compression goes through I may encourage not only my kids, but all of the students I teach.....especially if they plan to stay in Hawaii.

Sincerely,

Audrey Franco

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 2:59:25 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kerri-lynn K Slavens	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Kerri-lynn Slavens and I am currently the School Library Media Specialist at Maui Waena Intermediate School. This is currently my 30th year teaching in the State of Hawaii DOE as I have in the Waipahu Complex for the past 28 years as the School Librarian for both Waipahu Elementary and Waipahu Intermediate Schools. I am submitting testimony in support of SB2819. I would very much appreciate your support of adjusting the salaries of employees based on years of experience. In order to retain highly qualified and experienced educators currently in the field, I feel it is imperative to compensate our faithful employees fairly.

During my time in the State DOE, my fellow teachers and I have endured a strike, many contracts with no step increments, furlough Fridays, and increased demands of time and paperwork with no fair compensation. As teachers and school librarians, our main priority is the success of our students. In many cases teachers also spend a chunk of their own monies every year to support their students, taking away from funds that the teachers' own families could use.

As I know many teachers who are near their 30th year and are of retirement age, I hear many express that as much as they love their career, they just cannot afford to stay and will be choosing to retire to work another job instead. Our situation is dire.

Please support this bill.

Mahalo,

Kerri-lynn Slavens

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 2:59:59 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
JULIA C. MEW	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear House Committee Members,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB 2819. As a teacher of 26 years, I know the importance of maintaining experience teachers on staff. My school has lost 47 teachers over the past six years to retirement or other various reasons. Personally, I know many who retired that would have chosen to stay on longer but couldn't mitigate the high cost of living and followed other pursuits. It's so unfortunate in knowing the years of knowledge and experience that was lost when they had to make that decision. I have directly seen the impact their loss has made within our school. These losses make it difficult to carry out school-wide and departmental initiatives and therefore ultimately impact student learning.

With the pandemic affecting Hawaii public schools now for a third school year, we must also make sure we can retain educators who know our students best. Teachers worked through over a year of distance learning and diligently applied as many mitigating strategies to keep our students safe through the various Covid-19 variances and spikes.

Being paid a fair wage would convince me to stay on longer and prevent a teacher shortage. Compression on the teacher salary schedule must be corrected if we want to hold onto quality teachers for our students. They deserve nothing less.

Please vote in support of Bill SB 2819. Thank you for this opportunity to send in written testimony on my behalf and the behalf of our students.

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 3:01:14 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Amie Yee	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In support of SB2819.

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 3:03:47 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Heather Graeber	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support our teachers!!!

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 3:06:33 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kenneth Graeber Sr.	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support the teachers.

Thursday, Mar 31, 2022

To: The Committee Chair & Members, Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill:

- [SB 2819, SD2, HD2](#) Relating to teacher compensation (salary compression)
- [SB 3209, SD2](#) Relating to teacher professional development (21 hours)

My name is Julie and I have taught in public schools for over 12 years. As the cost of living continues to rise, living off a teacher's salary has been a struggle. I have seen many educators leave the profession because of the lack of pay. Supporting teachers for their years of service and commitment through these bills are some of the ways to retain teachers. The pandemic has definitely put a strain on incomes and have also forced teachers to move from our islands. These decisions will have detrimental effects on our teachers and state. Please consider these reasons, as these bills will greatly impact all educators.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill:

- [SB 2819, SD2, HD2](#) Relating to teacher compensation (salary compression)
- [SB 3209, SD2](#) Relating to teacher professional development (21 hours)

Thank you for allowing me to testify.

Sincerely,
Julie

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 8:52:22 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lauryn Castro	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee:

I am submitting this testimony in support of the Senate Bill 2819 SD2 HD2. My name is Lauryn Castro and I am a teacher at Kea'au Elementary School on the Big Island of Hawai'i. I have been teaching for 14 years and started teaching when I graduated college at the age of 22.

I was eager to start my teaching career right away and have experienced many things over the years. I have seen how cost cutting measures have impacted myself, colleagues, but most importantly the students. I worked through Furlough Fridays and have colleagues who were part of the 2001 teacher strike. It is important that students have highly qualified teachers, but we will continue to lose these individuals. I am afraid that our teacher shortage crisis may never come to an end.

This bill is so important to me and brings teachers like myself, some hope. Fixing the step compression issue will hopefully encourage teachers to stay in this fulfilling profession as well as entice our younger generations to join us.

Thank you so much for supporting this bill!

Mahalo,

Lauryn Castro

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 9:58:26 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Anjanette Naganuma	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice-Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee.

I, Anjanette Naganuma, am submitting testimony in support of SB2819 SD2 HD2.

I am a teacher at Lahainaluna HS on Maui and 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. Hawaii's teacher salary is well known to be the lowest in the nation when adjusted for the cost of living. Fixing salary compression is a step toward honoring the hard work of long-term dedicated teachers and hopefully avoiding having them flee to other states.

Thank you for your time and assistance with this matter.

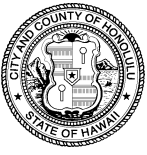
House Committee on Finance
Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair
Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Committee members,

My name is Cory Chun and I am submitting this testimony in support of SB 2819 and SB 2820. At the Waipahu Neighborhood Board's February 24, 2022 Regular Meeting, the Board adopted a resolution in support of increasing teacher compensation. The resolution is attached for your convenience. At the meeting, our board heard from Waipahu High School teachers who shared their experiences and struggles with balancing educating our keiki with making a living in Hawaii. Thank you for the opportunity to share this resolution with the committee.

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cory Chun". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.



WAIPAHU NEIGHBORHOOD BOARD NO. 22

c/o NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION ♦ 925 DILLINGHAM BOULEVARD SUITE 106 ♦ HONOLULU, HAWAII, 96817
TELEPHONE: (808) 768-3710 ♦ FAX: (808) 768-3711 ♦ INTERNET: <http://www.honolulu.gov/nco>

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING INCREASED COMPENSATION FOR HAWAI‘I TEACHERS.

WHEREAS, “*Children are the world's most valuable resource and its best hope for the future*”¹; and

WHEREAS, educating our youth is a tool to combat poverty, a source of economic growth, and a central tenet of our democratic society; and

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic reinforced the critical role of teachers in both our local communities and in broader society; and

WHEREAS, there are about 12,800 teachers in Hawai‘i of which nearly 8,000 are both female and minorities;² and

WHEREAS, despite the renewed importance of education and the significance of teachers during the pandemic, the State of Hawai‘i reduced the education budget drastically in 2021;³ and

WHEREAS, in addition, no base salary increases, or step movements, were authorized for teachers throughout the 2021-2023 contract period;⁴ and

WHEREAS, the *Hawai‘i Teacher Compensation Study and Recommendations*⁵ reported the following key findings in 2020:

- Hawai‘i Teacher Salaries Are Not Competitive
- Hawai‘i’s Compensation System Has A Limited Number Of Pay Steps And There Is Step Compression
- The High Cost Of Living In Hawai‘i Makes The Teaching Profession Less Sustainable; And

WHEREAS, according to the Hawai‘i Department of Education (HIDOE) the compressed compensation system with limited steps, means that the salaries of experienced teachers in Hawai‘i are almost equal to newer teachers with less experience; and

WHEREAS, the compressed compensation system is causing senior teachers to leave the profession; and

WHEREAS, throughout 2016-2021 HIDOE hired more than 5,000 teachers with roughly 20% hired⁶ from out of state; however, during the same period about 4,500 teachers resigned with more than 30% choosing to leave Hawai‘i;⁷ and

WHEREAS, vacancies and turnover continue to plague HIDOE which reported more than 200 teacher resignations last month and currently has over 250 outstanding vacancies;⁸ and

WHEREAS, the decreased investment in education, compressed compensation system, and non-competitive salaries, will likely remain significant factors in teacher turnover, shortages, and vacancies in Hawai‘i; and

WHEREAS, our children deserve a well-funded and effective education system that values its teachers and ensures that they are both highly qualified and professionally compensated; NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED that the Waipahu Neighborhood Board (Board) has advocated in support of teachers; and

¹ <https://www.jfklibrary.org/learn/about-jfk/life-of-john-f-kennedy/john-f-kennedy-quotations#:~:text=Kennedy%2C%201963-.%20Children,Kennedy>

² <https://www.hawaiipublicschools.org/Reports/EmploymentReport2020-21.pdf#page=8>

³ <https://governor.hawaii.gov/newsroom/office-of-the-governor-news-release-governor-iges-budget-calls-for-increased-funding-for-pandemic-response-critical-services/>

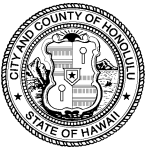
⁴ <https://www.hsta.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/HSTA-Tentative-Settlement-Summary-2021.pdf/>

⁵ <https://www.hawaiipublicschools.org/ConnectWithUs/MediaRoom/PressReleases/Pages/Compensation-Study-2020.aspx>

⁶ <https://www.hawaiipublicschools.org/DOE%20Forms/OTM/Hawaii%20Teacher%20Compensation%20Study%20and%20Recommendations.%20Final%20Report%201.20.2020.pdf>

⁷ <https://www.hawaiipublicschools.org/Reports/EmploymentReport2020-21.pdf#page=8>

⁸ <https://www.hsta.org/news/recent-stories/lawmakers-will-consider-bills-to-fix-salary-compression-end-salary-class-cap/>



WAIPAHU NEIGHBORHOOD BOARD NO. 22

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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board is in full support of a robust and competitive teacher compensation package that includes, at minimum, the following:

- Salaries That Commensurate With Teacher Years of Service And Experience
- Permanent Funding Of Differentials For Special Education, Hawaiian Immersion, And Other Hard-To-Staff Posts
- One-Time Workforce Stabilization Payment For Teachers
- Establishment Of A Housing Assistance Program For Teachers; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that in addition to adopting a competitive compensation package for teachers, the Board also requests that the Hawai'i State Legislature work to accomplish the following:

- Restoration Of HIDEOE Funding In The FY 2021–2023 Supplemental Budget⁹
- Strengthen Hawai'i's Teachers Ability To Negotiate Contracts
- Fund And Implement A Program To Increase Hiring Of Local Teachers; And

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that electronic copies of this Resolution be forwarded to Governor David Ige, the Hawai'i State Board of Education, the Superintendent of the Department of Education, Hawai'i State Teachers Association - Leeward President Julie Reyes Oda, Senate Committee on Education, Senate Committee on Government Operations, Senate Committee on Ways and Means, House Committee on Education, House Committee on Finance, Hawai'i State Legislature – Waipahu Delegation, and all City Neighborhood Boards.

Adopted by the Waipahu Neighborhood Board No. 22 at its regular meeting on February 24, 2022, by a vote of 10-0-0.

Respectfully Submitted By:

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Cory Chun", is written over a horizontal line.

Cory Chun, Chair

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 4/1/2022 8:00:22 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sara O'Rourke	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, 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-2

Submitted on: 4/1/2022 9:09:42 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Anthony Makana Paris	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Sylvia Luke and members of the House Finance Committee:

I supoprt the intent of SB2819 SD2 HD2, in my individual capacity.

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. The bill 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.

The Hawaiian wisdom tradition shares with us, “He i‘a no ka moana, he aho loa kū i ke ko‘a.” (612); translated as “a fish of the deep sea requires a long line that reaches the sea floor” where we understand that in order to obtain a good position in life, one must prepare. Hawai‘i’s teachers are critical to the preparation of Hawai‘i’s youth. This bill will help prepare our youth through moving our state towards providing competitive compensation for educators. Mahalo for the opportunity to share my mana'o. Have a wonderful day.

Me ke aloha,

Anthony Makana Paris

Kapolei, O'ahu

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 4/1/2022 10:09:23 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Inga Park Okuna	HSTA	Support	In Person

Comments:

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. I would like to ask for your support of SB 2819 to solve a problem you have been hearing about for so long and one that has impacted the majority of our teachers for even longer. Some people are saying that the legislature shouldn't get involved in collective bargaining but despite our objections, the legislature took away our automatic step increases and contributed to this problem -- so now we are asking the legislature to put it back.

Our teacher shortage has been exacerbated by so many teachers leaving the field -either for other jobs, for other states, or for retirement. The reasons they are leaving are varied, but financial reasons are frequently cited. Teachers who have worked more than 30 years and don't feel they have hope of reaching the top have given up. If they knew they could get their high-three (years) at the top of the pay scale, they more likely would have stayed. It took me over 32 years to reach the top of the pay scale. And exciting is was for me, the reality is the top isn't all that high in today's economy. Yes I know there are many other role groups in the schools who don't even get close to that, and I feel fortunate to have a job in this wonderful and challenging profession of making a difference in children's lives. However, my son just got hired as a computer software engineer and is making \$30,000 more than me and got an \$18,000 signing fee. He's gotten other job offers all with higher pay, stock options, signing fees and a one year bonus. This is before completing his BS in Computer Science (he is graduating in May). He tells me he is on the lower end of they pay scale.

Please support this bill, it will help over 8,500 teachers and it's past time to fix this pay scale compression problem. The legislature took away our automatic step increases, it seems only fair and right that the legislature reinstates them.

Thank you for all the work you do for our community!

SB-2819-HD-2

Submitted on: 4/1/2022 1:16:36 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Trudi Ah Sam	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819.

I am a School Counselor of 24 years with the Department of Education, Maui District.

My job as a School Counselor is extremely rewarding in so many ways. However, the current pay is not in line with my years of service. This along with the high cost of living, I am able to only rent from and live with my retired mother and my child. If provided a fair wage that is in line with my years of service, I'm hopeful that I can financially afford to one day soon live on my own and continue my work with students for many more years to come.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819

Thank you!