



STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
KA 'OIHANA HO'ONA'AUAO  
P.O. BOX 2360  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

**Date:** 03/13/2025

**Time:** 03:05 PM

**Location:** CR 229 & Videoconference

**Committee:** Senate Higher Education

**Department:** Education

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

**Bill Title:** HB 1345, HD1 RELATING TO TEACHER EDUCATION.

**Purpose of Bill:** Requires the Board of Regents to grant a waiver on all tuition and mandatory fees to a resident student enrolled in a four-year college campus of the University of Hawaii System with an education program or that offers an education degree for the semester or term that the student enrolls in a State-Approved Teacher Education Program. Effective 7/1/3000. (HD1)

**Department's Position:**

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) provides the following comments on HB 1345, SD 1.

The Department currently provides tuition stipends for University of Hawaii teacher education programs through various memorandums of agreement and funding provided through the Department's budget. Tuition stipend recipients commit to completing program requirements, attaining Hawaii licensure, and teaching in Hawaii public schools.

Should the intent of this bill be to provide broader tuition subsidies to teacher candidates, the Department would request additional positions and funding as long as it does not affect the Department's Governor-approved budget request.

With ongoing teacher shortage issues in Hawaii and throughout the nation, the Department supports efforts to help reduce the cost of teacher preparation. The Department respectfully requests continued funding for programs such as our Grow Our Own to maintain tuition stipends for candidates committed to working in our public schools.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on HB 1345, SD 1.



**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT TO HOUSE BILL 1345 HD1**  
RELATING TO TEACHER EDUCATION.

Senate Committee on Higher Education  
Hawai'i State Capitol

March 13, 2025

3:05 pm

Conference Room 229

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Aloha Chair Kim, Vice-Chair Kidani and Members of the Higher Education Committee,

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) stands in strong support of HB 1345 HD1. This bill reduces financial barriers to obtaining an education degree, helps to address teacher shortages, and strengthens the overall educational system. **We firmly believe that a tuition waiver, as outlined in HB 1345 HD1, is the more effective and beneficial approach for students versus the tuition subsidy in the proposed senate draft.** Unlike a tuition subsidy, which still requires students to cover a portion of their costs, the tuition waiver completely eliminates the financial burden associated with tuition and mandatory fees during the critical student teaching semester.

This bill directly aligns with OHA's Mana i Maui Ola Strategic Plan by removing economic barriers that may prevent Native Hawaiian and local students from completing their degrees. OHA's Economic Stability goals prioritize increasing economic opportunities and self-sufficiency for Native Hawaiians. By ensuring aspiring teachers can complete their student teaching semester without financial burdens, HB 1345 HD1 creates a sustainable pathway into the teaching profession—one that is critical for addressing Hawai'i's ongoing teacher shortage.

We urge the committee to **pass HB 1345 HD1** as it passed out of the House and thank you for your attention to this important issue.



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## ‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

### Legislative Testimony

### Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

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Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Higher Education  
Thursday, March 13, 2025, at 3:05 p.m.

By

Debora Halbert, Vice President for Academic Strategy  
University of Hawai'i System

#### HB 1345 Proposed SD1 – RELATING TO TEACHER EDUCATION

Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee:

While the University of Hawai'i (UH) supports the intent of HB 1345 Proposed SD1 and is actively working on plans to recruit additional students to become teachers, the UH has concerns with the bill as currently written.

HB 1345 Proposed SD1 aims to provide tuition waivers for resident students completing their student teaching requirements at a four-year campus of the University of Hawai'i with an education program or that offers an education degree for the semester or term that the resident student chooses to complete the student teaching requirement necessary to earn a degree in education. While this measure could be a crucial step in addressing the state's ongoing teacher shortage and ensuring that we develop a strong and sustainable pipeline of educators for Hawai'i's schools, the budgetary impacts of the lost tuition for the UH would need to be addressed.

The successful collaboration between Kamehameha Schools and Chaminade demonstrates that when tuition assistance is offered, students are much more likely to pursue careers in teaching, thereby increasing the number of qualified educators in our state. Thus, some method of providing tuition assistance would benefit our teacher pathways. However, without a clearer method of generating revenue to replace the lost revenue of these tuition waivers, there would be no way to adequately fund the proposal.

The UH is actively working to create robust teacher education pathways and a comprehensive recruitment strategy to attract and retain future educators. While we can support the intent of this bill as it would align with these efforts and enhance the state's ability to meet its educational workforce needs, there would need to be more discussion regarding the financial impact.

Thank you for your time and consideration.



1200 Ala Kapuna Street • Honolulu, Hawai'i 96819  
Tel: (808) 833-2711 • Fax: (808) 839-7106 • Web: [www.hsta.org](http://www.hsta.org)

**Osa Tui, Jr.**  
President

**Logan Okita**  
Vice President

**Cheney Kaku**  
Secretary-Treasurer

**Ann Mahi**  
Executive Director

### TESTIMONY TO THE HAWAI'I SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

**Item: HB 1345, Proposed SD1 – Relating to Teacher Education**

**Position: Support with amendments**

**Hearing: Thursday, March 13, 2025, 3:05 pm, Room 229**

**Submitter: Osa Tui, Jr., President - Hawai'i State Teachers Association**

Dear Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and members of the committee,

The Hawai'i State Teachers Association (HSTA) **supports with amendments** HB 1345, proposed SD1 which authorizes the Hawaii Department of Education to subsidize all tuition and mandatory fees for a resident student enrolled in a four-year college campus of the University of Hawaii System with an education program or that offers an education degree for the semester or term that the student enrolls in a State-Approved Teacher Education Program.

HB 1345, proposed SD1 could help address a critical issue facing our state – our severe teacher shortage. By alleviating the financial burden of tuition, HB 1345, proposed SD1 could incentivize more individuals to pursue a career in education, thus increasing the pool of qualified teacher candidates. This, in turn, would help ensure that Hawai'i's keiki have access to a quality education.

We note however, the University of Hawaii has issued over \$106 million in board-approved non-resident tuition waivers and has issued more than \$62 million in system-wide scholarships.

We believe the University has the capability of issuing similar waivers or scholarships to all resident students enrolled in an education degree during their semester or term that they choose to complete the student teaching requirement necessary to earn a degree in education. Taking care of our local students and improving our recruitment of public school educators should be a top priority.

That said, we recommend an amendment that could strengthen the proposed language.

1. On line 10, change the word 'may' to 'shall'. This change will ensure the tuition waivers actually get implemented.

It is very important to retain local teachers that are trained here in Hawai'i. We recommend passage with amendments.

Mahalo.



The Committee on Higher Education  
March 13, 2025  
Room 229  
3:05 PM

**LATE**

RE: **HB 1345, HD 1, Relating to Teacher Education**

Attention: Chair Donna Mercado Kim, Vice Chair Michelle Kidani and Members of the Committee

The University of Hawaii Professional Assembly (UHPA), the exclusive bargaining representative for all University of Hawai'i faculty members across Hawai'i's statewide 10-campus system, provides **comments** on HB 1345, HD 1, and the proposed SD 1, relating to teacher education.

While UHPA supports the intent to decrease the teacher shortage in Hawai'i by providing tuition waivers for students enrolled in a state-approved education program in a four-year program at the University of Hawai'i, UHPA has concerns as the bill fails to account for State Approved Teacher Education Program (SATEP) licensure programs at the Community College level.

Like all SATEP programs, those taught at the community college level include field components to its programs where students are required to complete months of student teaching to demonstrate proficiency on state licensure standards. Many of these students work as emergency hires or long-term substitutes, often in rural communities across the state, and will often go on to achieve baccalaureate degrees in education at a four-year campus. Although our community colleges provide a cheaper route to some educational licensure programs, its students deserve to benefit from HB 1345 as they work to decrease the teacher shortage.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. Fern".

Christian L. Fern  
Executive Director  
University of Hawaii Professional Assembly

**HB-1345-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/10/2025 9:11:39 PM

Testimony for HRE on 3/13/2025 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lilian Rebamonte-Smith	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony in Opposition to HB1345 HD1 RELATING TO TEACHER EDUCATION

I strongly oppose HB1345 HD1 RELATING TO TEACHER EDUCATION. While the intent to support teacher education is commendable, this bill's narrow focus on four-year college campuses within the University of Hawai'i System is detrimental to the broader landscape of teacher education in our state.

The proposed legislation would authorize the Department of Education to subsidize tuition and mandatory fees for resident students enrolled in four-year college campuses with education programs or degrees. However, this approach overlooks and potentially undermines the critical role played by two-year institutions, particularly Leeward Community College, in addressing Hawai'i's teaching needs.

Leeward Community College offers State-Approved Teacher Education Program (SATEP) licensure programs that serve state-wide communities in Special Education and Career and Technical Education. These areas have been identified as priorities for Hawai'i's education system. By excluding two-year institutions from the proposed tuition subsidies, HB1345 HD1 may inadvertently discourage enrollment in these vital programs.

Furthermore, Leeward Community College's teacher education program has been awarded full accreditation by the Association for Advancing Quality in Educator Preparation (AAQEP) through June 30, 2028. This accreditation underscores the quality and importance of the education provided by this two-year institution.

The bill's exclusive focus on four-year institutions fails to recognize the diverse pathways to teacher certification in Hawai'i. For instance, the state offers provisional licenses to teachers who have completed a bachelor's degree and a SATEP program, even without teaching experience. Many of these SATEP programs are offered by two-year institutions like Leeward Community College.

By potentially reducing enrollment in two-year SATEP programs, this bill could exacerbate teacher shortages in critical areas such as Special Education and Career and Technical Education. These fields are essential for providing comprehensive education to Hawai'i's diverse student population.

In conclusion, while supporting teacher education is crucial, HB1345 HD1 takes an overly narrow approach that may have unintended negative consequences. I urge the committee to reconsider this bill and develop a more inclusive strategy that supports all pathways to teacher certification in Hawai‘i, including those offered by two-year institutions.



**HB-1345-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 7:55:09 AM

Testimony for HRE on 3/13/2025 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brittini Ramos	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**Testimony in Opposition to HB1345 HD1 RELATING TO TEACHER EDUCATION**

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March 11, 2025

Thursday, March 13, 2025, 3:05 PM

Conference Room 229 & Videoconference

Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Chair  
Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair and Members  
Higher Education Committee  
Hawaii State Senate-State Capitol  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Honorable Senators Kim, Kidani and Members,  
**RE: HB1345, HD1 – Testimony in Strong Support**

**Aloha!** My name is Randall Francisco and I am writing in **strong support** of this bill which is intended to provide both a pathway into education and provide additional incentive for future educators as a profession. This legislation will also help to alleviate some of the critical teacher shortages in Hawaii which faces higher costs of living and other competitive issues unlike our mainland counterparts. Furthermore, due to the massive federal layoffs under the current administration, this timely legislation could provide the opportunity for laid off and or fired employees to consider becoming an educator.

While the legislation would greatly benefit youth it is also very timely as our Hawaii economy continues to work to address critical shortages in many fields given the decrease in population as well as individuals considering a new job, career and or profession. This legislation will certainly help individuals to also consider that the state of Hawaii is supporting individuals who are seeking a change and that they can consider education as a pathway towards their next, second or even third career/occupation.

I also ask that you consider the University of Hawaii Community Colleges as another entry point for those considering the profession and where potential students can begin their teacher preparation program such as at Leeward Community College prior to transferring to a four-year program at University of Hawaii at Manoa, Hilo and or West Oahu. For those on the neighbor islands and rural communities, the community colleges indeed provide an excellent start and place to begin their higher education into education pathway. Lastly, as this bill proceeds forward, please ensure that there will be funding to support this important and transformative legislation.

Thank you also for having the foresight in recognizing that education is indeed a great profession and deserves the same support as is currently recognized by the legislature and administration for those in considering entering the health care professions and industry. Mahalo Nui Loa and Selamat Po for the opportunity to testify and provide support to future educators in Hawaii. Aloha



Randall Francisco, Hanapepe, Kauai, HI  
Former President/CEO, Kauai Chamber of Commerce, Former President, Kauai Filipino Chamber of Commerce and Former Vice President, Filipino Chamber of Commerce Hawaii  
Former Assistant Professor, Kapiolani Community College and Dean, Leeward Community College

Committee on Higher Education  
The Hawaii State Senate  
415 S Beretania St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Re: OPPOSITION to Bill HB1345

March 11, 2025

Dear Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and esteemed members of the Committee on Higher Education,

My name is Erika Molyneux, and I am a faculty-member at Leeward Community College. The statements expressed are my opinions as an individual and do not represent the position of my college.

Please OPPOSE or ammend Bill HB1345, which Authorizes the Department of Education to subsidize all tuition and mandatory fees for a resident student enrolled in a four-year college campus of the University of Hawaii System with an education program or that offers an education degree for the semester or term that the student enrolls in a State-Approved Teacher Education Program.

While I support the idea of supporting teachers, as is, if this bill passes, it gives only financially help to students attending our four-year institutions, which may hurt enrollment here at our 2-year institutions! This includes Leeward CC's SATEP licensure programs at Leeward CC serving state-wide communities in Special Education and Career and Technical Education, both identified as state priorities.

For all these reasons, please either OPPOSE Bill HB1345 or expand it to include UHCC Teacher Education licensure programs. Mahalo nui for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Erika Molyneux', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Erika Molyneux  
Assistant Professor, New Media Arts  
Leeward Community College  
Resident of Kāneoʻhe, Hawaiʻi

**HB-1345-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 8:43:08 AM

Testimony for HRE on 3/13/2025 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Corey Adler	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

## Comments:

If this passes, it only financially helps students attending four-year institutions, which may hurt enrollment at two-year institutions. As an example, the Leeward Community College SATEP licensure programs in Special Education and Career and Technical Education, both identified as state priorities, would likely lose students, despite the fact that the 4-year universities do not have a CTE licensure program and the Spedical Education licensure program currently provides greater scheduling flexibility for aspiring SPED teachers to achieve their teaching certifications.

**HB-1345-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 12:33:12 PM

Testimony for HRE on 3/13/2025 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Donn Viviani	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and esteemed members of the Committee on Higher Education,

My name is Donn Viviani, and I am an assistant professor at Leeward Community College. The statements expressed are my personal opinions and do not represent the position of my college.

Please OPPOSE or amend Bill HB1345, which Authorizes the Department of Education to subsidize all tuition and mandatory fees for a resident student enrolled in a four-year college campus of the University of Hawaii System with an education program or that offers an education degree for the semester or term that the student enrolls in a State-Approved Teacher Education Program.

While I strongly support the idea of supporting teachers, as is, if this bill passes, it only provides financial help to students attending our four-year institutions, which may hurt enrollment here at our 2-year institutions! This includes Leeward CC's SATEP licensure programs at Leeward CC serving state-wide communities in Special Education and Career and Technical Education, both identified as state priorities. I have had a number of education majors take my classes to fulfill their science requirements, and they tend to be excellent and enthusiastic students- please also support these local students.

For all these reasons, please either OPPOSE Bill HB1345 or expand it to include UHCC Teacher Education licensure programs. Mahalo nui for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Donn Viviani

Assistant Professor of Oceanography

Leeward Community College

Mānoa, Hawai'i

Committee on Higher Education  
The Hawaii State Senate  
415 S Beretania St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Re: OPPOSITION to Bill HB1345

March 12, 2025

Dear Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and esteemed members of the Committee on Higher Education,

My name is P. Jayne Bopp; I am a professor of sociology and the accreditation liaison officer for Leeward Community College. The statements expressed are my opinions as an individual and do not represent the position of my college.

Please OPPOSE or amend Bill HB1345, which Authorizes the Department of Education to subsidize all tuition and mandatory fees for a resident student enrolled in a four-year college campus of the University of Hawaii System with an education program or that offers an education degree for the semester or term that the student enrolls in a State-Approved Teacher Education Program.

While I support the idea of supporting teachers, as is, if this bill passes, it only provides financial help to students attending our four-year institutions, which may hurt enrollment here at our 2-year institutions! This includes Leeward CC's SATEP licensure programs at Leeward CC serving state-wide communities in Special Education and Career and Technical Education, both identified as state priorities.

For all these reasons, please either OPPOSE Bill HB1345 or expand it to include UHCC Teacher Education licensure programs. Mahalo nui for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "P. Jayne Bopp". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

P. Jayne Bopp  
Professor and Accreditation Liaison Officer  
Leeward Community College  
Resident of Kāne'ohe, Hawai'i

Committee on Higher Education  
The Hawaii State Senate  
415 S Beretania St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Re: OPPOSITION to Bill HB1345

March 12, 2025

Dear Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and esteemed members of the Committee on Higher Education,

My name is Jean StavRue-Pe'ahi, and I am a Counselor in Leeward Community College's Teacher Education Program. I have been with Leeward CC for seventeen years, serving both the Wai'anae Moku and Pu'uloa (Pearl City) campuses. Please note that the views expressed are my own and do not reflect the position of the College.

I am writing to strongly urge you to oppose or amend Bill HB1345, which authorizes the Department of Education to subsidize all tuition and mandatory fees for a resident student enrolled in a four-year college campus of the University of Hawai'i System with an education program or that offers an education degree for the semester or term that the student enrolls in a State-Approved Teacher Education Program.

While I fully support efforts to assist future educators, this bill, if passed, would disproportionately benefit students at four-year institutions while potentially undermining enrollment at our two-year colleges. Specifically, this bill would negatively impact programs such as the SATEP licensure programs at Leeward CC, which serve statewide communities in Special Education and Career & Technical Education (CTE) — both identified as state priorities.

Additionally, the bill fails to address the needs of students from underserved communities who are working to "grow their own" teachers and need to begin their education at UHCCs for various reasons. Furthermore, it overlooks existing transfer articulation agreements between Leeward CC's Associate of Science in Teaching (AST) program and four-year institutions..

For these reasons, I respectfully request that you either oppose Bill HB1345 or expand it to include UHCC Teacher Education licensure programs, as well as students pursuing the Associate of Science in Teaching, based on the established articulation agreements.

Mahalo nui for your time and consideration.



Jean StavRue-Pe'ahi  
Counselor, Teacher Education  
Leeward CC  
Resident of Honolulu, Hawai'i



**HB-1345-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 6:25:40 PM

Testimony for HRE on 3/13/2025 3:05:00 PM

**LATE**

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michelle Igarashi	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This bill, which proposes subsidizing all tuition and fees for teacher education exclusively at four-year campuses, creates a deeply inequitable system. By excluding community college students, who often come from lower-income backgrounds and diverse communities, it exacerbates existing disparities in access to higher education and the teaching profession. This policy ignores the crucial role community colleges play in training future educators, particularly in addressing teacher shortages. Furthermore, it neglects the reality that many aspiring teachers begin their educational journey at community colleges, limiting their pathways to a four-year degree. The financial implications of this bill are also questionable, as focusing solely on four-year institutions may be a less efficient use of taxpayer funds compared to a broader approach that includes community colleges. Critically, this exclusion disproportionately impacts rural and underserved communities, where community colleges are often the primary source of accessible education and where teacher shortages are most severe. In essence, this bill sacrifices inclusivity and workforce needs for a narrow, privileged approach, ultimately undermining the goal of ensuring a well-prepared and diverse teaching force.