



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

Date: 02/07/2025

Time: 02:00 PM

Location: UH Manoa, Bachman Hall, Rm 106,
2444 Dole St

Committee: House Higher Education

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Keith T. Hayashi, Superintendent of Education

Bill Title: HB 1345 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 the College of Education at the University of Hawaii at Manoa for the semester or term that the student enrolls in a State-Approved Teacher Education Program.

Department's Position:

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) supports the intent of HB 1345 and appreciates the opportunity to provide comments relating to teacher preparation.

With ongoing teacher shortage issues in Hawaii and throughout the nation, the Department supports efforts to help reduce the cost of teacher preparation. HB 1345, seeks to assist in this effort by granting a waiver of tuition and mandatory fees for resident students during their semester of student teaching at the University of Hawaii (UH) at Manoa. The student teaching component of teacher preparation is a critical milestone in a teacher candidate's journey into the education profession. Alleviating the burden of cost for this component would benefit all parties involved.

The Department respectfully proposes that such tuition waiver be expanded to all UH campuses with state-approved teacher education programs, to include UH West Oahu and UH Hilo.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on HB 1345.



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

House Committee on Higher Education
Hawai'i State Capitol

February 7, 2025

2:00 pm

Conference Room 106

Dear Chair Garrett, Vice-Chair Amato and Members of the Higher Education Committee,

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) stands in strong **Support of HB 1345**, which would grant a tuition waiver and mandatory fee waiver to resident students enrolled in the College of Education at the University of Hawaii at Manoa for the semester or term in which they complete their student teaching requirement. This bill reduces financial barriers to obtaining an education degree, helps to address teacher shortages, and strengthens the overall educational system. Furthermore, it fosters a more culturally responsive teaching environment, ultimately benefiting all students across Hawai'i.

Aligned with OHA's Strategic Plan Mana i Maui Ola, this bill addresses the critical barrier of financial hardship, which often prevents Native Hawaiian students from completing education degrees. By providing financial relief during student teaching, HB 1345 encourages more Native Hawaiians and Hawai'i residents to pursue and complete teaching degrees, supporting the growth of a more diverse and qualified educator workforce.

This bill is not just about financial assistance—it empowers Native Hawaiians to contribute to the education system as teachers. Increasing the number of Native Hawaiian educators leads to more culturally relevant teaching, which improves educational outcomes for Native Hawaiian students and strengthens the broader community.¹

OHA's Economic Stability goals seek to increase economic opportunities and self-sufficiency for Native Hawaiians. This bill contributes to those objectives by supporting a critical career path—teaching—which offers long-term, stable employment. It enables

¹ Kamehamehapublishing. (n.d.-a). https://kamehamehapublishing.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/38/2020/09/Hulili_Vol7_10.pdf

Native Hawaiian students to enter a rewarding profession without the additional burden of tuition fees during their student teaching. By eliminating financial barriers, this bill also strengthens Hawaii's public education system and addresses the ongoing teacher shortage. Teachers are vital not only to the educational system but to the overall economic stability of communities.

Finally, increasing the number of Native Hawaiian teachers creates a positive cycle, as students are more likely to thrive in environments that reflect their cultural identity.² This bill not only directly supports Native Hawaiian students but also enhances the educational system by integrating Native Hawaiian values, culture, and perspectives into our schools.

We urge the committee to **pass HB 1345** and thank you for your attention to this important issue for the future of Native Hawaiian students and communities.

² Kamehamehapublishing. (n.d.). https://kamehamehapublishing.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/38/2020/09/Hulili_Vol7_10.pdf



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TESTIMONY TO THE HAWAI'I HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Item: HB 1345 – Relating to Teacher Education

Position: Support

Hearing: Friday, February 7, 2025, 2:00 pm, UH Manoa Bachman Hall

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

Dear Chair Garrett, Vice Chair Amato, and members of the committee,

The Hawai'i State Teachers Association (HSTA) supports HB 1345, which requires the Board of Regents to grant a waiver on all tuition and mandatory fees to a resident student enrolled in the College of Education at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa for the semester or term that the student enrolls in a State-Approved Teacher Education Program.

HB 1345 helps address a critical issue facing our state – our severe teacher shortage. By alleviating the financial burden of tuition, HB 1345 would 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 respectfully request the passage of HB 1345.

Mahalo.



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

Legislative Testimony

Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Higher Education
Friday, February 7, 2025, at 2:00 p.m.

By

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

HB 1345 – RELATING TO TEACHER EDUCATION

Chair Garrett, Vice Chair Amato, and Members of the Committee:

While the University of Hawai'i (UH) supports the intent of HB 1345 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 aims to provide tuition waivers for resident students completing their student teaching requirements in the College of Education at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. 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 for UH Mānoa 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, there would be no way to adequately fund the College of Education.

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 much more discussion regarding the financial impact. If these larger budgetary issues can be resolved, then providing tuition assistance to include UH Hilo and UH West O'ahu could be recommended as well.

Thank you for your time and consideration.