

**JOSH GREEN, M. D.**  
GOVERNOR  
KE KIA'ĀINA



**WILBERT S. HOLCK**  
CHIEF NEGOTIATOR

**SYLVIA LUKE**  
LT. GOVERNOR  
KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA

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

Statement of  
**WILBERT S. HOLCK**  
Chief Negotiator, Office of Collective Bargaining

Before the  
**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION**

Tuesday, February 4, 2025  
2:00 p.m.  
State Capitol, Conference Room 309

In consideration of  
**HB 838, Relating to Education**

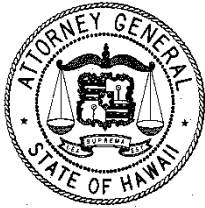
**(WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY)**

Chair Woodson, Vice-Chair La Chica and the members of the committee:

The Office of Collective Bargaining (OCB) respectfully opposes HB 838, which increases the bonus for teachers who achieve and maintain a current national board certification from \$5,000 to \$10,000.

Wages, hours, and other terms and conditions of employment are subject to negotiations as provided in Hawaii Revised Statutes, §89-9.

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



**+TESTIMONY OF  
THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL  
KA 'OIHANA O KA LOIO KUHINA  
THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE, 2025**

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**ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:**  
H.B. NO. 838, RELATING TO TEACHERS.

**BEFORE THE:**  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

**DATE:** Tuesday, February 4, 2025 **TIME:** 2:00 p.m.

**LOCATION:** State Capitol, Room 309

**TESTIFIER(S):** Anne E. Lopez, Attorney General, or  
Anne T. Horiuchi or Randall M. Wat, Deputy Attorneys General

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Chair Woodson and Members of the Committee:

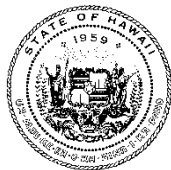
The Department of the Attorney General (Department) provides the following comments.

The bill increases the bonus for teachers who achieve and maintain a current national board certification from \$5,000 to \$10,000, and appropriates funds.

There appear to be typographical errors in the bill. In the appropriation section, section 2 of the bill, the bonus is stated to be \$15,000 instead of \$10,000. The Department recommends replacing "\$15,000" with "\$10,000" on page 2, line 18, to correctly reflect the amount of the bonus provided for in the bill.

In addition, the effective date section, section 4 of this bill, provides on page 3, line 6, that section 3 shall take effect on July 1, 2025. Section 3 of this bill contains only the Ramseyer instructions. A July 1 effective date has often been specified in bills for appropriation sections and, if that is intended for this bill, the reference to "section 3" should be changed to "section 2."

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



**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**HAWAII TEACHER STANDARDS BOARD**

650 IWILEI ROAD, SUITE 268  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96817

February 4, 2025

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

**PERSON TESTIFYING:** Felicia Villalobos, Executive Director, on behalf of the Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board (HTSB)

**DATE:** February 4, 2025

**TIME:** 2:00 pm

**LOCATION:** Conference Room 309 and Video Conference

**TITLE OF BILL:** HB 838 Teachers; Certification; Bonus; Appropriation; Retention; DOE  
**PURPOSE OF BILL:** Increases the bonus for teachers who achieve and maintain a current national board certification from \$5,000 to \$10,000. Appropriates funds.

**POSITION:** Supports HB 838

**Chair Woodson and Members of the Committee on Education:**

**The Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board (HTSB) supports HB838**, relating to teachers. The purpose of this Act is to increase the bonus for all teachers who achieve and maintain national board certification to \$10,000 and appropriate funds for the bonus increase.

HTSB supports our National Board Certified Teachers (NBCT) and agrees that incentivizing national board certification for teachers is a highly recommended, especially due to our state's high cost of living. Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to increase the bonus for all teachers who achieve and maintain national board certification to \$10,000, instead of the current \$5,000, and appropriate funds for the bonus increase.

With current qualified teacher vacancies in our public schools, including public charter schools, ranging from 1,000 to 1,200 at the beginning of each school year, retaining high quality teachers is a problem. This incentive helps keep our NBCT teachers here, and increasing the bonus for them will encourage even more of our teachers to pursue the rigorous process of becoming a National Board Certified Teacher while also encouraging them to stay. If we retain our highly qualified teachers, we will not have to worry about recruiting more teachers as much. These teachers would then be encouraged to mentor other teachers, especially with our upcoming efforts to begin a Registered Teacher Apprenticeship Program in Hawai'i.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill, and we ask for your support.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR



KEITH T. HAYASHI  
SUPERINTENDENT

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

**Date:** 02/04/2025

**Time:** 02:00 PM

**Location:** 309 VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

**Committee:** House Education

**Department:** Education

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

**Bill Title:** HB 0838 RELATING TO TEACHERS.

**Purpose of Bill:** Increases the bonus for teachers who achieve and maintain a current national board certification from \$5,000 to \$10,000. Appropriates funds.

**Department's Position:**

The Hawai'i State Department of Education (Department) provides comments on HB 838, which increases the bonus for teachers who achieve and maintain a current national board certification from \$5,000 to \$10,000. At this time, the Department has nearly 365 National Board Certified Teachers.

The Department recognizes that the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards is the highest professional distinction available in education for teachers and is an excellent recruitment and retention tool.

The Department supports including funding that will support these teacher bonuses as long as it does not impact the Department's current Governor-approved budget requests.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on HB 838.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR



MAKALAPUA ALENCASTRE, ED. D.  
CHAIRPERSON

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

<http://CharterCommission.Hawaii.Gov>  
1164 Bishop Street, Suite 1100, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813  
Tel: (808) 586-3775 Fax: (808) 586-3776

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FOR: HB 838 Relating to Teachers  
DATE: February 4, 2025  
TIME: 2:00 P.M.  
COMMITTEE: Committee on Education  
ROOM: Conference Room 309 & Videoconference  
FROM: Ed H. Noh, Ed. D., Executive Director  
State Public Charter School Commission

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Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica, and members of the Committee:

The State Public Charter School Commission (“Commission”) appreciates the opportunity to offer testimony in **SUPPORT of HB 838 with Amendments** which increases the bonus for teachers who achieve and maintain a current National Board Certification from \$5,000 to \$10,000 and appropriates funds to the Department of Education for the payment of this bonus.

While the current language does appear to include charter school teachers by stating that the bonus does apply to **“each public school teacher”**, the Commission would appreciate amending this measure by specifying that charter school teacher are included with the following (in **blue font**):

SECTION 1. Section 302A-706, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by amending subsection (a) to read as follows:

- (a) There is established within the department the teacher national board certification incentive program to recognize and support exemplary teaching practice by supporting public school teachers, including public charter school teachers, who have achieved national board certification under the certification program of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. The teacher national board certification incentive program shall provide:

(1) A ~~\$5,000~~ \$10,000 bonus per year for each public school teacher who maintains current national board certification;

(2) \$1,500 upon completing all components of the certification program of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards;

(3) A reimbursement of the remainder of the national board certification application fee upon achievement of national board certification; and

(4) An additional \$5,000 bonus per year for each public school teacher who maintains current national board certification and who teaches at:

(A) A school in a focus, priority, or superintendent's zone, or other similar designation, as determined by the department;

(B) A school with a high turnover rate, as determined by the department;  
or

(C) A hard-to-fill school [or hard-to-fill public charter school](#), as determined by the department."

The Commission is available to work with this committee, the DOE, and our public charter schools in moving this legislation forward.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.



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**Osa Tui, Jr.**  
President

**Logan Okita**  
Vice President

**Cheney Kaku**  
Secretary-Treasurer

**Ann Mahi**  
Executive Director

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

Item: **HB 838 - National Board Certified Teachers**

Position: **SUPPORT**

Hearing: **2/4/2025, Conference Room 229, 2:00pm**

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

Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica, and members of the committee,

The Hawai'i State Teachers Association supports HB 838 relating to education. This bill increases the bonus for teachers who achieve and maintain a current National Board certification from \$5,000 to \$10,000.

According to the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, Hawai'i currently has 789 total National Board Certified Teachers with 345 more pursuing this prestigious distinction. NBCT candidates go through a rigorous process of self-reflection on their teaching practice, often organized into cohorts to get through. It is often referred to as the most effective professional development that a teacher can go through.

It would be wonderful if more of our teachers were incentivized to pursue NBCT status so that our keiki can benefit from the experience and expertise that their teachers can gain as a result.

The Hawai'i State Teachers Association asks your committee to **support** this bill.

**HB-838**

Submitted on: 1/31/2025 9:07:59 PM

Testimony for EDN on 2/4/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Janice English	Waimea Middle Public Conversion Charter School	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha-

I support legislation to increase National Board Certified (NCB) Teachers. There are three such teachers on my school campus and I would welcome a visit from state representatives to observe these teachers in action.

Janice English

Principal, Waimea Middle Public Conversion Charter School

**HB-838**

Submitted on: 2/2/2025 11:37:45 AM

Testimony for EDN on 2/4/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Donna Soriano	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

## Comments:

My name is Donna Soriano, and I am a National Board Certified elementary school STEM teacher in Leeward O‘ahu, working at a hard-to-staff school for the past 10 years. I am writing in strong support of HB838, which seeks to increase the bonus for National Board Certified teachers from \$5,000 to \$10,000.

As an educator dedicated to providing high-quality STEM education to students in a historically underserved community, I can personally attest to the significant impact that National Board Certification has had on my teaching practice. The rigorous certification process has deepened my instructional strategies, strengthened my ability to meet diverse student needs, and reinforced my commitment to educational excellence.

However, recruiting and retaining highly qualified educators in hard-to-staff schools remains a persistent challenge. The current \$5,000 bonus serves as an incentive but does not sufficiently reflect the additional expertise, time, and financial investment required to achieve and maintain National Board Certification. Increasing the bonus to \$10,000 would not only help retain accomplished teachers in these high-need areas but also encourage more educators to pursue this esteemed certification, ultimately benefiting our students.

Investing in National Board Certified teachers is an investment in the future of Hawai‘i’s keiki. I urge you to pass HB838 to ensure that highly effective educators continue to serve where they are needed the most.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Hearing Date: February 4, 2025

Hearing Time: 2:00 PM

Hearing Place: Conference Room 309 via Video Conference, State Capitol

**RE: HB838 RELATING TO TEACHERS**

Dear Chair Representative Justin Woodson, Vice Chair Representative Trish La Chica, and members of the Committee on Education:

My name is Shelby Loo and I am a National Board Certified Mathematics teacher at Waimea Middle Public Conversion Charter School who resides with my husband -a Hawai'i County Police Officer, and our two children in the Hamakua district on the Big Island. I have been a teacher at Waimea Middle School for the past 20 years, serving as the sixth-grade level chairperson and currently the Math Department Head and a member of our School's Leadership Team for the past 17 years. I am submitting testimony in support of HB838.

The quality of our public education system depends greatly on the quality of our teachers. Pursuing my National Board Certification was the best professional development I have engaged in throughout my career. The process helped me analyze my teaching practice to determine areas of strength and areas for growth and identify strategies to improve in my areas of growth. Throughout the process I networked with other national board certified teachers and learned of new resources and teaching strategies, which improved my teacher toolkit. Designating funds to increase the compensation for nationally certified teachers would encourage more teachers to engage in this invaluable process. Teachers deserve to be fairly compensated for the work they put in to improve their craft and the increase in incentive would be a more even compensation for the time and effort required to pursue national board certification. I believe this change would help us retain and perhaps even attract more highly qualified teachers for our keiki.

We need your help to make this change.

Please vote in support of HB838.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Shelby Loo

6th Grade Mathematics Teacher, NBCT

Math Department Head, Waimea Middle PCCS

Kamuela, HI 96743

(808)887-6090

**HB-838**

Submitted on: 2/2/2025 9:30:59 PM

Testimony for EDN on 2/4/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rachel Furutani	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in support of bill HB838.

**HB-838**

Submitted on: 2/2/2025 9:35:36 PM

Testimony for EDN on 2/4/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
shelly cassler	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

## Comments:

Aloha, I am Shelly Cassler a National Board Certified Teacher on the island of Kauai. I urge the Hawaii State Legislature to pass this bill to increase the incentive for Hawaii's teachers to complete and maintain their National Board Certification. I was originally National Board Certified in 2014 and passed my Maintenance Of Certification in 2023. The time and effort put in to become National Board Certified is tremendous and comparable to a graduate-level college course while holding a full time job with the Hawaii Department of Education. I completed my National Boards because I believed that the program would make me a stronger educator for the students in my community. I learned to apply research based practices into my teaching and become more reflective and responsive which has resulted in more learning for my students. Hawaii's keiki deserve National Board Certified teachers. With the current Hawaii DOE pay scale and because the length of the certification has decreased from 10 to 5 years, there is little incentive beyond professional development to entice more educators to pursue this valuable certification. This proposed bill would show educators that their time spent in professional development to improve our students' future is valuable to this state. Please pass this bill to give our students the quality teachers they deserve.

**HB-838**

Submitted on: 2/2/2025 9:42:36 PM

Testimony for EDN on 2/4/2025 2:00:00 PM

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

## Comments:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB838, which seeks to increase the annual bonus for public school teachers who maintain current National Board Certification. As a National Board Certified Teacher (NBCT), I can personally attest to the rigorous process required to earn and maintain this certification. It demands deep reflection, continuous professional learning, and an unwavering commitment to student achievement.

National Board Certification is the highest professional credential for educators. Research consistently shows that NBCTs enhance student outcomes, improve instructional practices, and serve as leaders in their schools and districts. However, despite the proven impact of National Board Certified Teachers, the financial incentives to retain and support these educators remain insufficient.

The increased bonus proposed in this bill is essential for three key reasons:

1. **Retention of Highly Effective Educators in Classrooms** – The certification process is rigorous, and maintaining certification requires ongoing professional development and dedication. A meaningful financial incentive would encourage more teachers to pursue and maintain their National Board Certification, ensuring that students continue to benefit from the highest quality instruction.
2. **Acknowledging the Broader Impact of NBCTs** – Many NBCTs transition into roles outside the traditional classroom setting while continuing to influence student learning. Whether serving as instructional coaches, curriculum coordinators, or specialists, these educators use their expertise to support colleagues, develop high-quality programs, and enhance the overall learning environment. Their leadership drives systemic improvements that impact countless students beyond their own classrooms. They should not be excluded from receiving this bonus, as their work remains vital to the educational system.
3. **Promoting Equity and Excellence** – Increased financial support for National Board Certified Teachers will help attract and retain skilled educators in all communities, particularly in high-need schools where student achievement gaps persist. By incentivizing certification, we ensure that more students—regardless of their zip code—have access to highly accomplished teachers who are trained to meet their unique learning needs.

Maintaining National Board Certification is not just a personal achievement—it is a commitment to lifelong learning and excellence in education. By increasing the annual bonus and ensuring that NBCTs in all roles receive this well-deserved support, we are making a critical investment in the future of our students, our schools, and the profession itself.

I urge you to pass HB838 and show your support for the dedicated, highly skilled educators who make a lasting impact on student learning every day. Thank you for your time and consideration.

**HB-838**

Submitted on: 2/2/2025 9:42:39 PM

Testimony for EDN on 2/4/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Larry Veray	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in strong support of this bill and the language.

**HB-838**

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 7:38:02 AM

Testimony for EDN on 2/4/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Caroline Freudig	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Representatives,

Much thanks for already supporting our teachers who achieve National Board Certification with a \$5,000 funded bonus. I strongly believe that by increasing the \$5,000 to \$10,000, we will encourage more dedicated teachers to go through the rigorous and beneficial process of becoming a National Board Certified Teacher (NBCT). I went through this process and recently certified as an NBCT in December of 2023. I can assure you that this long and arduous process was extremely beneficial to my students and to my teaching practice. Thank you for taking the time to consider increasing the funding to \$10,000.

Mahalo,

Caroline Freudig

**HB-838**

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 8:51:33 AM

Testimony for EDN on 2/4/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jennifer Kramer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**HB-838**

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 11:05:57 AM

Testimony for EDN on 2/4/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kamuela Werner	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha:

I strongly support HB838.

Me ke aloha,

Kamuela Werner

Social Studies and Agriculture Teacher

**HB-838**

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 11:53:12 AM

Testimony for EDN on 2/4/2025 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

House Committee on Education

Representative Justin H. Woodson

Chair

Dear Honorable Chair Woodson,

My name is Tammy Holt and I am a veteran teacher at Waikiki Elementary School. I am submitting his written testimony in support of House Bill 838, Relating to Teachers. This bill increases the bonus for teachers who achieve and maintain a current National Board for professional teaching standard certification (NBPTS) from \$5,000 to \$10,000.

Hawaii Revised Statutes Section 302A-706 Teacher National Board certification incentive program, has not been amended since 2015 to address the need to develop, retain, and recognize teachers who have achieved exemplary teaching practices. National Board for Professional Teaching Standard certification is an extremely arduous and difficult process that only a very small percentage of teachers achieve. It is a costly out-of-pocket expense for teachers to initiate, can take several years to pass, and reimbursement is only possible upon passing all four components. The benefit of this process is that each teacher has undergone an extensive, rigorous, and the most respected professional certification available in K-12 education.

Increasing the bonus amount from \$5,000 to \$10,000 would greatly encourage more Hawaii teachers to complete the NBPTS program. Your support of this bill will deeply benefit the future education of our keiki.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to testify on this important matter of statewide concern.



**HB-838**

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 12:37:36 PM

Testimony for EDN on 2/4/2025 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

I strongly SUPPORT this bill.

Teacher retention is a huge problem here - especially when combined with our high prices for housing, food, everything! Pay them what they're worth; especially if they stay.

**HB-838**

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 1:17:50 PM

Testimony for EDN on 2/4/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Noelle Zimdahl	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To Whom It May Concern,

I support and kindly request that you all pass HB838 to increase the public school teacher stipend for maintaining current national certification. Hawaii continues to struggle to keep high quality teachers and passing this bill will show educators that they are valued by our state legislators. MAhalo for your support of our educators and our keiki's education.

Regards,

Noelle Zimdahl

**HB-838**

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 1:36:58 PM

Testimony for EDN on 2/4/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Judi Chang	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill.

## **HB-838**

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 1:42:57 PM

Testimony for EDN on 2/4/2025 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

### **Testimony in Support of HB838**

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

I am here today to express my strong support for HB838, a bill that recognizes and rewards the dedication of our educators who pursue advanced certification.

Over the past 20 years, only a little over 800 teachers in our state have earned this prestigious certification. This number is a clear indication of the rigor and commitment required to achieve such a distinction. These educators go above and beyond to enhance their skills, directly benefiting our students and the broader educational community.

The National Board Certification process is the best professional learning experience I have ever had. It pushed me to deeply reflect on my teaching practices, analyze student learning, and continuously refine my approach to instruction. This process helped me get to know my students better, allowing me to tailor my teaching to meet their unique needs more effectively. The skills and insights I gained have had a lasting impact on my ability to create meaningful and engaging learning experiences.

However, despite their exceptional dedication, **the stipend for this certification has not increased in two decades.** As costs of living continue to rise, maintaining the same stipend amount fails to adequately acknowledge the sacrifices these teachers make. An increase in the stipend would not only provide deserved financial recognition but also encourage more educators to pursue this challenging certification, ultimately raising the quality of education in our state.

By supporting HB838, we invest in our teachers, our students, and the future of our educational system. I urge you to pass this bill and show our educators that their hard work and commitment to excellence are valued and supported.

Thank you for considering this important legislation.

Jessica Kato, MEd, NBCT

**LATE**

**HB-838**

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 2:45:52 PM

Testimony for EDN on 2/4/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Andrew Crossland	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**I STRONGLY SUPPORT** this Bill which will incentivie our teachers to provide the best possible education to our keiki. I urge all members of the Committee to **VOTE YES** on this Bill.

**LATE**

**HB-838**

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 3:04:15 PM

Testimony for EDN on 2/4/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Charmaine Doran	Pearl city NB	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha! Thank you for considering this measure. HB838 offers a creative way to encourage teachers to strive towards the highest degree of professional certification. As an expensive and lengthy process, this measure seeks to reward teachers for their continued professional enrichment and brings the Hawai'i teacher profession more in line with many other careers.

mahalo for your favorable consideration

**HB-838**

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 3:34:13 PM

Testimony for EDN on 2/4/2025 2:00:00 PM

**LATE**

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
TERI SAVAIINAEA	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Woodson and Committee Members,

I support HB 838.

Thank you,

Teri K. Savaiinaea

District 45, Wai'anae Resident

House of Representatives  
The Thirty-Third Legislature, 2025  
State of Hawaii

**LATE**

Committee on Education

Kim and Jerry Virtudazo  
Ewa Beach, HI 96706

February 3, 2025

RE: H.B. 838 - Relating to Education

Representative Woodson, Representative La Chica, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Kim Virtudazo and I am a public school teacher at James Campbell High School. Today I am writing to you not only as a teacher but also as a parent of two public school children. I am here to provide testimony in support of HB 838, which would increase the bonus for Nationally Board Certified Teachers in the State of Hawaii.

My National Boards Certification journey took me three years to achieve. Prior to beginning the process, I thought I was a fairly good teacher. However, going through the process was the best professional development experience I've ever had in my 12 years of teaching. In this process, I became a more effective teacher - my student rapport is better and I have more engaging lessons. This process has challenged me to be a better teacher and to maintain the level of rigor and engagement in my class.

As a parent, I know the benefits of having a Nationally Board Certified teacher. My daughter's pre-K teacher, Mrs. Garcia, at Ewa Elementary is also a Nationally Board Certified teacher. Mrs. Garcia is one of the best teachers either or my kids have ever had. She is caring, effective, rigorous, and passionate about education and her students.

Completing the certification was grueling. For three years, I took countless hours away from my family to work on my certification. The process is another job in itself and something we have to do in addition to our daily teaching. Increasing the bonus would appeal to more teachers which in turn would benefit our students of Hawaii. This might also increase teacher retention since so many teachers are leaving the profession because of the pay. I humbly ask you to please support HB 838.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of HB 838.

Sincerely,  
Kim and Jerry Virtudazo  
Logan (13 years old)  
Lily (10 years old)

**LATE**

**HB-838**

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 6:21:16 PM

Testimony for EDN on 2/4/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jacob Wiencek	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

Developing and retaining a talented teacher workforce is critical for educational achievement. This seems like a good proposal to accomplish these goals. I urge this Committee to SUPPORT this bill!

**LATE**

**HB-838**

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 8:54:32 PM

Testimony for EDN on 2/4/2025 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

I am writing in support of HB 838. There are many benefits of having National Board certified teachers in the classroom. Studies show a positive affect on student learning, teacher retention and teacher effectiveness. The current bonus of \$5000 for teachers that certify and maintain certification has not been increased in 20 years! Unfortunately, we all know too well that prices of everything in Hawaii have increased drastically over the 20 year! I am currently working as an NBCT and I work 2 part time jobs in addition to teaching. I would love to be able to hustle less and get some of that time back to focus completely on my true calling and passion, teaching. Please consider this bonus increase to help keep our highly effective National Board certified teachers in Hawaii by increasing their bonus to \$10,000 per year.

**LATE**

**HB-838**

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 8:57:03 PM

Testimony for EDN on 2/4/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Logan Okita	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Logan Okita and I became a NBCT (Early Childhood Generalist) in 2012. Research done by the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards shows that students who are taught by a NBCT gain one to two months of additonal learning that school year. The impact is even greater for minority and low-income students. Increasing the bonus from \$5000 to \$10000 will acknowledge the impact that NBCTs have on our schools and students while encouraging others to pursue certification. Please support HB838.

**LATE**

**HB-838**

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 8:57:23 PM

Testimony for EDN on 2/4/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jamie Kubo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing to express my strong support for increasing the stipend for National Board Certified Teachers (NBCTs) from \$5,000 to \$10,000. This increase represents a crucial investment in our students and the future of education.

National Board Certification is a rigorous, performance-based assessment that identifies teachers who have demonstrated advanced teaching skills and knowledge. The process is demanding, requiring significant time, effort, and reflection on a teacher's practice. Achieving this certification signifies a teacher's commitment to excellence and their dedication to continually improving their skills to best serve their students. It is a testament to their expertise and a clear indicator of their ability to positively impact student learning.

Raising the stipend to \$10,000 serves several important purposes:

- **Recognizes and rewards excellence:** NBCTs have invested significant personal and professional resources in achieving this prestigious certification. A more substantial stipend appropriately recognizes their dedication and the value they bring to our schools and students.
- **Incentivizes pursuing National Board Certification:** A higher stipend will encourage more teachers to pursue this challenging but rewarding process. This will ultimately lead to a greater number of highly qualified teachers in our classrooms, benefiting all students.
- **Attracts and retains highly effective teachers:** In a competitive education landscape, we must offer competitive compensation to attract and retain the best teachers. A higher stipend for NBCTs demonstrates our commitment to valuing and supporting teacher expertise, making our schools more attractive to top talent.
- **Benefits students:** Research consistently shows that students of NBCTs achieve at higher levels. By incentivizing and supporting NBCTs, we are directly investing in improved student outcomes and ensuring that all students have access to highly effective teaching.

Every student deserves to be taught by a highly qualified and effective teacher. National Board Certification provides a clear benchmark for identifying such educators. Increasing the stipend for NBCTs is not just an investment in teachers; it is an investment in our students and the future of our community.

I urge you to favorably consider this increase and support the continued growth and recognition of National Board Certified Teachers in Hawaii

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jamie Kubo

**LATE**

**HB-838**

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 9:01:19 PM

Testimony for EDN on 2/4/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Farrah Krovoza	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**February 3, 2025**

**HB838 Relating to Teachers**

**Dear Honorable State House Committee,**

**My name is Farrah Krovoza and I work at Kilauea Elementary School on Kaua'i. I am a Nationally Board Certified Teacher (NBCT) - Generalist-Middle Childhood. I obtained my National Board for Professional Teaching Standards certification in 2008, then I successfully passed my Maintenance of Certification for 2018. I began working in the DOE in 2003, and have dedicated 21 years of my career to teaching the children in my community, (of which I was born and raised) and plan to continue working in this capacity as long as my health, both in body and mind, continue to allow it. I have served primarily as a 5th grade teacher during my 20 year tenure, but have also taught 3rd, 4th, and 6th grades.**

**I fully support HB838, Relating to Teachers. You don't need me to restate the research, which is present in the bill itself. Pursuing and maintaining National Board Certified status is a rigorous process that select teachers choose, because we know the value that it provides to ourselves, since it requires a deep level of commitment and reflection and professional responsibility, but also we understand the value and impact that it provides to our students. The added financial bonus goes a long way to motivate and retain the type of high quality teachers who seek and maintain NBTC status. With the continued rising cost of living in our state, the increased bonus is necessary and also sends the message to teachers that our community (and legislatures) respect and support the work that we do, and the fact that we chose to take a path that takes us above and beyond the normal expectations and maintenance of teacher licensure.**

**Personally, I am proud of my work to become an NBCT. I appreciate the respect that it carries. But financially, even after my long years of tenure, I am still struggling to make ends meet, and to support my two teenage children, with the rising cost of living in this state. An increase in the NBTC bonus pay would go a long way to help support my family.**

**Thus, I fully support the HB838 and humbly ask that you hear and pass through the reading to enact HB838. Thank you so much for this opportunity to submit testimony.**

**Sincerely,**

**Farrah Krovoza**

**HB-838**

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 9:20:28 PM

Testimony for EDN on 2/4/2025 2:00:00 PM

**LATE**

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

Comments:

Chair Woodson and Members of the Committee,

My name is Joy Paul. I am a teacher at Holualoa Elementary School in Kona on Hawai'i Island. I am submitting testimony in support of HB838, which seeks to increase the pay bonus for National Board Certified Teachers from \$5000 to \$10,000.

A National Board Certification is the highest certification to be obtained in the teaching field. As it's name suggests, it is a National Certification, placing those skilled educators in Hawaii amongst the top educators in the nation.

Hawaii continues to strive for stronger student outcomes. However, when considering cost of living, Hawaii continues to be one of the lowest-paying states for teachers. One of the best ways to improve student outcomes is to invest in highly trained, highly skilled educators. National Board Certified teachers have proven their effectiveness as educators through the rigorous certification process. Furthermore, they continue to demonstrate their effectiveness through a national maintenance program every 4-5 years.

Research consistently shows that well-trained teachers play a crucial role in closing the achievement gap for learners. However, the persistent shortage of qualified teachers has made it difficult to provide consistent, high-quality support.

By increasing the pay differential, this bill will attract and retain skilled teachers. Competitive compensation rewards the specialized training and expertise required to effectively support students and will lead to increased teacher retention and less turnover. Investing in our teachers directly benefits students, schools, and communities by promoting educational equity and improving long-term academic outcomes.

For these reasons, I urge the Legislature to pass this bill and fully fund the proposed pay differentials. Doing so will help ensure that Hawaii's students receive the educational opportunities they deserve.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of this bill.

Respectfully,

Joy Paul

National Board Certified Teacher

**LATE**

**HB-838**

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 9:22:41 PM

Testimony for EDN on 2/4/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dane Inouye	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

My name is Dane Inouye and I am a National Board Certified Teacher with 15 years of experience in the classroom. I am writing in strong support of HB838.

As a dedicated educator, I have invested significant time and effort in achieving and maintaining my National Board Certification. This rigorous process has not only enhanced my teaching skills but has also fostered my growth as a teacher leader and advocate for my students and profession. I consistently strive to go above and beyond in my role, and I believe it is essential that experienced and talented teachers like myself are appropriately compensated.

The rising cost of living has placed a significant strain on educators. Increasing the National Board Certified Teacher bonus is not simply about rewarding current NBCTs like myself; it's also a crucial incentive for all teachers. It signals that we value expertise and dedication in education. By increasing the bonus, we can encourage more teachers to pursue this challenging yet transformative certification.

The National Board Certification process pushes teachers to deeply reflect on their practice and continuously improve their skills. It's a demanding but invaluable experience that ultimately benefits our students. The more teachers who undertake this journey, the stronger our educational system will become. Investing in NBCTs is an investment in the future of education in Hawaii.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter. I urge you to support HB838.

**HB-838**

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 9:28:10 PM

Testimony for EDN on 2/4/2025 2:00:00 PM

**LATE**

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sherry Robello	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Justin Woodson, Vice Chair Trish La Chica, and members of the committee,

My name is Sherry Robello, and I have been a National Board Certified Teacher for the last 11 years. I am writing in strong support of increasing the bonus for teachers who achieve and maintain current National Board Certification from \$5,000 to \$10,000.

As a veteran elementary public school teacher, I have seen firsthand the positive impact of National Board Certification on teacher practice and student outcomes. National Board Certification is a rigorous, peer-reviewed process that demonstrates a teacher's commitment to excellence and their ability to effectively teach students. It signifies a high level of professional knowledge and skill.

Currently, the \$5,000 bonus serves as some incentive for teachers to pursue this demanding certification. However, the significant time, effort, and financial investment required to achieve and maintain this certification often outweigh the current reward. Increasing the bonus to \$10,000 would more accurately reflect the dedication and expertise of National Board Certified Teachers (NBCTs) and serve as a stronger incentive for teachers to pursue this valuable professional development opportunity.

This increase would have several positive effects:

**Attract and Retain Highly Qualified Teachers:** A more competitive bonus will attract highly qualified teachers to our state and encourage them to stay in the classroom. We know that high-quality teaching is the single most important factor in student achievement.

**Recognize and Reward Teacher Excellence:** NBCTs have demonstrated their commitment to excellence through a demanding and reflective process. A higher bonus would appropriately recognize their expertise and dedication.

**Improve Student Outcomes:** Research consistently shows that students of NBCTs achieve at higher rates than their peers. Investing in National Board Certification is an investment in our students' future.

**Encourage Professional Growth:** Increasing the bonus will incentivize more teachers to pursue National Board Certification, leading to a greater number of highly skilled educators in our schools.

I understand that there may be budgetary considerations. However, I firmly believe that investing in our teachers is the most effective way to improve our schools and ensure our students' success. The return on investment in National Board Certified Teachers will far outweigh the cost of the increased bonus.

For these reasons, I strongly urge the committee to support increasing the National Board Certified Teacher bonus to \$10,000. This is a crucial step in attracting, retaining, and rewarding excellent teachers, ultimately benefiting our students and our community.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Sherry Robello

**LATE**

**HB-838**

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 9:31:44 PM

Testimony for EDN on 2/4/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jennifer Sarpi	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writting this testimony in support of this bill. There are not very many incentives that encourage excellent teachers to demonstrate excellence in their field. I think that this incentive can help to attract and caintain high quality teachers in Hawaii.

Thank you,

Jen Sarpi

Suzanne Dadzie  
75-5660 Kopiko Street  
Suite C-7 #352  
Kailua Kona, HI 96740



Monday, February 3, 2025

Committee on Education  
Hawaii State Legislature  
State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Subject: Testimony in Strong Support of HB838 – Increasing National Board Certified Teachers in Hawaii

Dear Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in strong support of HB838, which seeks to increase the number of National Board Certified Teachers (NBCTs) in Hawaii by providing additional incentives and support for educators pursuing this prestigious certification. Our students deserve the best education they can get, and increasing the number of NBCTs in our schools is a proven way to enhance student learning and teacher effectiveness.

National Board Certification is one of the most rigorous and respected professional development opportunities available for teachers. It requires educators to demonstrate a high level of expertise, instructional excellence, and a commitment to continuous improvement. However, the challenging nature of the certification process, combined with financial and time constraints, has deterred many talented teachers from pursuing it. I believe that an increased annual bonus will help remove these barriers and encourage more educators to undertake this valuable professional journey. By increasing the number of NBCTs in Hawaii, we can ensure that more students benefit from the best teaching practices and research-based instructional strategies that National Board Certification promotes.

As a National Board Certified Teacher, I recognize firsthand what a truly transformative process it is to pursue National Board Certification. It was the most challenging yet most rewarding professional development that I have ever undertaken and it has had a lasting impact on who I am as an educator. However, the demanding process has made it difficult for many teachers to commit to it. I believe this bill can change that by making National Board Certification a more viable and attractive option for educators across the state. Additionally, it will encourage National Board Certified Teachers to remain in Hawaii and continue contributing to our schools and communities. Furthermore, it will support National Board Certified Teachers in maintaining their certification, ensuring that their expertise and instructional excellence continue to benefit our students over the long term.

Investing in National Board Certified Teachers is an investment in the future of Hawaii's education system. I urge the Committee to pass this bill and take a critical step toward ensuring that all students have access to the highest quality education possible.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Suzanne Dadzie

National Board Certified Teacher - English as a New Language

Kealakehe Intermediate School

Honoka'a, Kohala, Kealakehe, Konawaena Complex Area

**LATE**

**HB-838**

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 11:01:32 PM

Testimony for EDN on 2/4/2025 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha,

I fully support the increase of bonuses for NBCT teachers from 5 to 10 thousand per year. When I decided to go for my certification the bonus was 10K if you taught at a school in the "focus" category, which mine was. The year before I got certified, those categories were eliminated which reduce the bonus to 5k per year. I was disappointed to say the least.

Evidence shows teachers who go above and beyond and push themselves to get certified, most often with little to no institutional or financial support, will be highly effective teachers. I believe this to be true for myself and other NBCT's that I know personally. This is in part because the NBCT process requires a great deal of reflection and self-critique, which is an essential process for teacher self-improvement. It's the gold-standard in terms of encouraging effective teaching practices, and should be rewarded as such.

The process is somewhat streamlined now more than when I went through certification however it still requires hundreds of hours of 'extra' work on top of normal teaching. In addition, thousands of dollars out of pocket. So yes, NBCT teachers should receive an additional yearly bonus because it will encourage more teachers to get certified which means more excellent teachers in our classrooms.

Thank you,

Liz Laliberte

**HB-838**

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 6:24:17 AM

Testimony for EDN on 2/4/2025 2:00:00 PM

**LATE**

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kristilyn Oda	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

With nearly 20 years as a fourth grade classroom teacher, followed by five years at the state level supporting innovative teacher leadership, I've most recently returned to my elementary school to teach sixth grade students.

My journey as a National Board Certified Teacher (NBCT) began in 2003, a time when fewer than 50 educators in our state held this distinction, and only a handful in my specialized certification area of Middle Childhood Generalist.

Make no mistake. It is a struggle to make the decision to voluntarily scrutinize and strengthen my teaching on my own time. Only with the support of two colleagues on the same grade level, did I find the courage to take on this daunting process. Nearly a quarter of a century later, we continue to serve students in the classroom at the same school. The most important success story is not ours, but those of the thousands of students we taught collectively. I stand in strong support of HB838, as the proposed increase in financial incentives will be instrumental in raising awareness of the NBCT process and encouraging more educators to pursue this valuable professional pathway. I am passionate about my work as an educator and eager to share the transformative potential of the NBCT experience with anyone interested.

The rigorous NBCT process grew my confidence to make well-informed instructional decisions that prioritize both student achievement and well-being no matter what the general vibe was at the DOE. I leaned on the NBCT framework that is grounded in five core principles, known as Core Propositions:

- Teachers are committed to students and their learning.
- Teachers know the subjects they teach and how to teach those subjects to students.
- Teachers are responsible for managing and monitoring student learning.
- Teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience.
- Teachers are members of learning communities.

These foundational values, skills, and practices are integral to my daily work in a demanding and nuanced educational environment, enabling me not only to effectively lead my classroom but also to serve as a resource and mentor for my colleagues. The path to becoming an NBCT required hundreds of hours dedicated to planning, research, professional dialogue, video documentation, and reflective writing. My final portfolio included unedited classroom videos

and in-depth, timed essays demonstrating my ability to integrate multiple subjects as a Middle Childhood Generalist.

Extensive independent research conducted in numerous states consistently demonstrates that NBCTs experience significant professional growth, leading to increased teacher effectiveness. Importantly, these studies also show that the positive impact of NBCTs is particularly pronounced for students from low-income backgrounds. (I urge you to google NBCT research to review.) The fact that the past three out of four State Teachers of the Year in our state have been NBCTs speaks volumes about the substantial contributions NBCTs make at both the local and national levels. The potential of robust networks of NBCTs, actively engaged in sharing best practices, inspiring and mentoring colleagues, and exchanging mutual support, is immense.

The commitment to professional growth doesn't end with initial certification. The rigorous NBCT Maintenance process, which requires the submission of videos and extensive reflections every five years, ensures that I remain engaged, current, and continuously striving to refine my practice. Imagine the amplified impact if this network of highly qualified NBCTs were further incentivized to mentor and guide other educators, thereby expanding the reach of effective, research-based practices to even more schools and, most importantly, to our students.

**LATE**

**HB-838**

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 7:24:47 AM

Testimony for EDN on 2/4/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jill Fletcher	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To the Committee on Education, I am writing in support of this bill. Pursuing and gaining national board certification in my content area, pushed me to reflect on my practice more deeply than any other type of professional development or traditional academic program. With this incentive, more teachers may consider taking the national board certification journey.

**LATE**

**HB-838**

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 7:46:17 AM

Testimony for EDN on 2/4/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bryan Silver	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**HB838 TESTIMONIAL**

**To: Chair**

**Vice Chair**

**Committee**

**From: Bryan Silver**

**RE: HB 838 - Teachers; Certification; Bonus; Appropriation; Retention; DOE - In Support**

**3 Febuary 2025 2000 hrs**

**Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,**

**My testimony is in support of HB 838 relating to the Teachers; Certification; Bonus; Appropriation; Retention; and DOE. As a teacher at Kalani High School, I believe creating opportunities for teachers to study, work, and make a decent living without having to leave the state is critical to keeping Hawai'i's culture and communities alive. We are in a desperate shortage of teachers and encouraging teachers to raise the evaluation of their craft to provide the best possible standards of teaching to our Keiki. Currently, we have 638 teachers out of 13,000 teachers statewide that have earned this certification. Most**

teachers asked why they have not tried, too expensive \$2,500 for all the exams, and an additional \$500 for any exams that need to be redone if a teacher does not pass the exam the first time.

By providing more financial incentives for teachers it will increase the number of teachers attempting this long deliberate process to become a National Board Certified Teacher. The process gives a teacher an opportunity to take a meaningful look at their classroom practices and encourages them to seek new implementing strategies to produce a higher level of education for our students. The incentive package helps to elevate the stature of the award. Those teachers who do earn are seen as leaders in their community. Furthermore, teachers with this distinction stay in the profession longer and do not move schools, which maintains the much needed stability that our students count on.

I urge you to consider increasing this incentive package to get more teachers recognized and raise the level of all teaching in the state. Our keiki need teachers who are willing to put in the extra work to self-examine their own teaching practices and strive to be better for themselves and their students I am in full support of this Bill 838.

Mahalo for considering my testimony,

Bryan Silver

2025 Hawai'i State Teacher of the Year

**LATE**

**HB-838**

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 7:47:06 AM

Testimony for EDN on 2/4/2025 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Yvette Rapozo and I am a 2nd grade teacher on the island of Kauai. I am a national board certified teacher and only one of two at my school. It is a rigorous process and takes a lot of time and perseverance to get through. It is a very reflective process to go through and helps teachers improve their teaching practice. Due to the nature of the process, teacher become more aware of how they are teaching and how to continue to improve. That can only benefit their students.

I truly believe that teachers who go through the process really want what is best for their students. They want to continue to improve their instruction and learning for all students. Thus I feel teachers who pass should be compensated for their time and the additional dedication for improving their practice. It benefits their school and the additional incentive will get more teachers to go through the process. The additional incentive also keeps teachers with more expertise in the classroom longer. It is a great incentive to keep teachers from retiring early. I hope you consider giving these teachers and hopefully many more the incentive to improve their practice.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Yvette Rapozo

**LATE**

**HB-838**

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 7:51:07 AM

Testimony for EDN on 2/4/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Laura Cummings	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To achieve certification, National Board Certified Teachers (NBCTs) undergo a rigorous assessment process that evaluates their ability to plan, instruct, assess, and reflect on their teaching practices. This certification is widely regarded as the “gold standard” in teaching. NBCTs in Hawai‘i have taken it upon themselves to seek powerful professional developments and they demonstrate advanced teaching knowledge, skills, and practices through the rigorous certification process. All teachers are valuable, but in efforts to retain these highly qualified teachers and recognize their commitment, dedication, and evidence of impact on student learning, the differential for NBCTs should be increased.

Main points to be considered are:

Increased student achievement—Research consistently shows that students of NBCTs perform better academically compared to those taught by non-NBCTs. Districts and states that invest in NBCTs see measurable gains in student learning outcomes.

Professional leadership and mentorship—NBCTs often take on leadership roles, mentoring new teachers, leading professional development, and shaping school policies. Their expertise benefits not only their own students but also entire school communities.

Lifelong learning and commitment to education—Unlike initial licensure, National Board Certification requires deep reflection, self-improvement, and demonstrated impact on student learning. NBCTs invest significant time, energy, and personal resources into their professional growth.

Retention of highly qualified and effective teachers—Providing financial incentives for NBCTs encourages highly effective teachers to remain in the classroom rather than leaving for administrative roles or other careers. Competitive salaries for accomplished teachers help retain top talent.

Ultimately, paying NBCTs more is not just about rewarding individual achievement—it's about recognizing the direct impact that highly skilled educators have on student success and school improvement.

Thank you for your consideration,

Laura Cummings, NBCT

*2024 Teacher of the Year for the Castle-Kahuku Complex Area*