



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I SYSTEM

TESTIMONY

(Written Testimony Only)

S.B. 2421: Relating to Teachers

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Education

January 30, 2004

By

Randy Hitz
Dean, College of Education
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S.B. 2421: Relating to Teachers

Chairman Sakamoto, Vice Chair Hooser, and Members of the Committee:

The University of Hawai'i opposes S.B. 2421.

We support the concept of master teachers and we commend the authors of this bill for supporting professional development and advanced training for teachers. The teacher shortage Hawai'i is currently experiencing is due in large part to attrition of teachers and good professional development programs can reduce teacher attrition. Just as importantly, the overall quality of instruction is greatly improved as teachers increase their knowledge and skills.

We oppose the bill in its current form because it appears to compete unnecessarily with masters and doctoral programs offered by the university and with National Board Certification (NBC). The university has created a wide array of advanced degree programs for teachers. The College of Education has programs in curriculum and instruction (including middle level education), early childhood education, kinesiology and leisure science, special education, educational psychology, educational administration, educational foundations, educational technology, and counselor education. The college offers some of its advanced programs on the neighbor islands. The Department of Education at UH Hilo has a new masters degree program for teachers. The Board of Regents and the Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board (HTSB) approve all of these programs. The National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education also nationally accredits the college programs.

S.B. 2421 requires the HTSB to develop qualifying examinations, a course of instruction, and comprehensive examinations. All of these are components of the UH advanced degree programs. Moreover, the legislature

strongly promoted National Board Certification the last two years to reward good teaching and to develop a corps of teachers who can exert the kind of leadership sought through S.B. 2421. Rather than establish an entirely new system to train and evaluate teachers' advanced knowledge and skills, it would be appropriate to build on the NBC process and the advanced training programs of the university. If funds are available to promote advanced training for teachers, it seems to us that it would be better to invest in the current system rather than try to create a new system.