



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Education and
House Committee on Labor and Public Employment

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SB 3252, SD2: Relating to Teachers

Chairs Takumi and Sonson, Vice Chairs Berg and Nakasone, and Members of the Committees:

The College of Education supports SB 3252, SD 2 as a high priority for the state's education system. Teacher recruitment and retention continues to be an important issue in the state's schools. A significant number of teachers leave schools during their first three years of employment. This bill attempts to put together a set of initiatives to address teacher workforce development in the state.

We are cognizant of the need to prioritize components as we face tight fiscal times, however, we want to reiterate that a comprehensive and long range program has more capacity to make significant difference. As its priorities in SB 3252, SD 2, the College recommends the following in priority order: Professional Development Schools, Mentoring and Induction for Teachers, Praxis preparation, and the Teacher Cadet Program. These priority recommendations focus on retaining existing teachers, helping them to teach more effectively, and promoting a "grow our own" teacher pipeline among Hawai'i high school students who are more likely to remain in the state for their future professional lives.

This past fall, College of Education leaders participated in discussions with a variety of education stakeholders, including the Teacher Education Coordinating Committee (TECC), and we have reviewed the information provided by the Hawai'i Educational Policy Center (HEPC) in its report on the teacher workforce in the state. We believe that one of the most pressing problems in our state is a need to attract and retain a quality teaching workforce. Many of the policies identified in SB 3252, SD 2 have the potential, collectively, to positively impact the teacher workforce and help to address the state's needs for highly qualified teachers. The data we have seen suggest that the priority for the state should be programs designed to retain

teachers and more fully develop their skills rather than simply aim to produce more teachers, particularly at a time when there is unused production capacity within existing teacher education programs.

The College of Education recommends targeting priority strategies that impact retention as having the greatest immediate impact on the continuing teacher workforce development problem. We recommend passage of SB 3252, SD 2 and investment of resources in priority areas.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.