



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Written Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
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by

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and

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SB 2782 – RELATING TO TEACHERS

Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Dela Cruz, and members of the Committee on Ways and Means, thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 2782.

The College of Education at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa supports SB 2782 that proposes establishing the educational assistant certification incentive program. Under the program educational assistants who hold associate degrees would be reimbursed for the cost of completing a state approved teacher license preparation program. In return the newly licensed teachers will return to continue to serve in schools determined by the department as hard-to-fill.

The College of Education already has existing articulation agreements with the relevant community colleges by which education assistants who complete their associates degree can directly enter elementary and secondary programs resulting in a bachelor's degree and recommendation to the Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board for licensure upon completing their course of study. A tuition reimbursement incentive program will enable highly effective education assistants an affordable pathway to becoming fully licensed teachers while addressing a persistent employment problem in the education workforce.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.