



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Labor & Public Employment

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By

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HB 18 (HSCR71): Relating to Education

Chair Sonson, Vice Chair Nakasone, and Members of the Committee:

The University of Hawai'i supports HB18 (HSCR 71), which authorizes the Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board (HTSB) to suspend its policies, rules, and standards when extenuating circumstances require. The bill also enables the board to amend certain fees and set or amend other charges related to the performance of its duties.

The State of Hawai'i's 18th Legislature enacted Act 240, which required a license to teach and transferred the authority for setting public school teacher licensing standards from the Department of Education (DOE) to the Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board, an independent governing body like those that exist for other professions. Since July 1, 2002, the HTSB has been responsible for teacher licensing.

This bill recognizes that the HTSB requires flexibility in its operations in dealing with licensing more than 12,000 teachers in the State and enables the Board to suspend its own rules to accommodate extenuating circumstances. Such flexibility will enable the HTSB to act more quickly in issuing licenses, addressing a pressing need in Hawai'i when new graduates and teachers new to Hawai'i apply for teaching licenses. Such changes will also enable the Board to act reasonably and responsibly when questions of license equivalence and revocation are considered.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.