



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committees on Higher Education and Education

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By

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HB 1014: Relating to Education

Chairs Chang and Takumi, Vice Chairs Bertram and Berg, and Members of the Committees:

The University of Hawai'i supports the intent of HB1014, which attempts to change the performance standards commission membership and reporting schedule, clarify the intended purpose of the Hawai'i educator loan program and amend the loan forgiveness incentive provisions, and appropriates funds to the University of Hawai'i for the office of school redesign, teacher education and professional development, the master of education in teaching degree program, the Hawai'i Educational Policy Center, and the Hawai'i educator loan program. This is indeed an eclectic bill, which addresses a number of education programs and priorities of the University.

The bill includes items specific to the College of Education that are in the University's biennium budget request, although with modifications. The bill also includes items that were not included in the University's budget approved by the Board of Regents. Our support for these items is contingent upon appropriated funding, which does not supplant our priority biennium budget requests.

Many of the items in this bill emphasize the partnership of the Department of Education and the College of Education. We appreciate the Legislature's recognition of the importance of that partnership. I will attempt to address the multiple facets of this bill in the order in which they appear in the bill as best I can.

Section 1

In Section 1, items: 1) teacher education capacity, 2) Center on Disability Studies, 3) funding for mentor teachers, and 5) permanent special education faculty are included in the UH biennium budget request as approved by the Board of Regents. However, there are some slight differences.

Section 1 (1): The UH biennium budget request for increasing teacher capacity calls for one new position in FY'08 and another in FY'09 (for a total of 2 positions) to enable the College to increase capacity to produce teachers in high need areas of mathematics and science, and in anticipation of the need in early childhood education. These positions will enable the College to recruit and train more teachers statewide in these critical need areas.

Section 1 (2): The UH biennium budget request was for two new positions to support the Center on Disability Studies (CDS) in FY'09. HB1014 shifts the creation and funding for those two positions to FY'08. We support this shift with the contingency noted above. CDS is our most successful unit in the College in generating external contracts and grants, averaging \$8 to \$10 million per year. CDS provides research, training, and service to those with disabilities of all ages statewide. Their work is vital to the health and quality of life of our citizens. CDS can increase its productivity significantly with these new positions that we are unable to provide out of existing resources. Funding agencies are now increasingly scrutinizing the host institution's capacity and support for grant-funded projects. Allocating and filling these positions will address this need.

Section 1 (3): The UH biennium budget request was for funds to increase stipends paid to mentor teachers in FY'09. HB1014 shifts these funds to FY'08. We support this shift to earlier funding with the contingency stipulated above. This is an example of the partnership between the DOE and the College. We cannot produce teachers without the collaboration with the DOE in teacher preparation. Mentor teachers are highly qualified and carefully selected to supervise our teacher candidates while they learn how to teach and then do their student teaching. At present, we are paying the mentor teachers \$25 per semester for their critical contribution. At this low payment for a semester's work, it is increasingly difficult to secure mentor teachers. Increasing the stipend to \$125 per semester, an amount more competitive with other teacher preparation institutions operating in the state, will better support the teacher preparation partnership.

Section 1 (5): I will address this item out of sequence since it is the last of the four items included in the UH biennium budget request. The UH biennium budget request was for funds to pay for 8 special education faculty members in FY'09. HB1014 shifts these funds to FY'08. We support this shift to earlier funding with the contingency stipulated above. Recruiting and preparing special education teachers for Hawai'i's schools remains a challenge. For the past several years, the DOE has funded these temporary faculty positions through a Memorandum of Agreement with the College. With the imminent changes in funding allocations within the DOE to weighted student formula, and the subsequent shift of funds to schools, this arrangement is potentially in jeopardy. There are increasingly diminishing funds at the State DOE level to fund such agreements. If the MOA is no longer executed, the College will not have the funds for these special education faculty and the program for producing teachers will have to be reduced. Allocating the \$500,000 directly to the College rather than through an MOA provides stability for our special education teacher preparation program.

Section 1 (4): Funding for professional development schools was not included in the UH biennium budget request. We support this addition with the contingency stipulated above. Professional development schools are partnerships between institutions of higher education and P–12 schools that a) prepare new teachers, b) provide faculty development within the partner school, c) engage school and university faculty along with teacher preparation students in researching, developing, and implementing improved teaching and assessment practices, and d) improve student achievement. The Legislature supported the concept of professional development schools in the past, most recently in SB1642 SD2. Also, previously funds were appropriated for professional development schools, but not released by the Governor. Research evidence shows that the professional development schools model is an effective tool in improving faculty effectiveness in both partner institutions (university and school) and in retaining quality teachers, and therefore, we support this part of the bill.

Section 1 (6): Funding to support the Masters of Education in Teaching (MET) program was not included in the UH biennium budget request. We support this addition with the contingency stipulated above. The MET, begun in 1991, is one of the most successful models for teacher preparation in the College. The program accepts teacher candidates who hold an undergraduate degree in their subject field and provides a two-year masters degree that prepares them for Hawai'i licensure. In partnership with the DOE MET students work in K–12 schools from the beginning of their program. In the student teaching semester, MET students fill a vacant position in a DOE school. From the inception of the program, the DOE, through a Memorandum of Agreement with the College of Education, has provided stipend payments for the MET teachers during this on-the-job semester. Similar to the MOA supporting special education teacher preparation, with the imminent changes in funding allocations within the DOE to weighted student formula, this arrangement is potentially in jeopardy. If the MOA is no longer executed, the College will not have the funds for these MET student stipends and the program will have to be reduced or discontinued. Allocating the funds directly to the College rather than through an MOA provides stability. HB1014 also increases the annual amount of funding to cover stipends to be paid to MET teachers in the Native Hawaiian teacher preparation program Ho'okulaiwi. We welcome this addition for which the College does not have existing resources to expand the program.

Section 1 (7): Funding for the Office of School Redesign (OSR) was not included in the UH biennium budget request. We support this addition with the contingency stipulated above. HB1014 describes the intended functions of the OSR, which is currently housed in the College of Education. Initiated in 2003 as a joint effort of the College of Education and the DOE, OSR has been funded through 2007 by the DOE through a Memorandum of Agreement with the UH. With the imminent changes in funding allocations within the DOE to weighted student formula, this arrangement is potentially in jeopardy, as the DOE will no longer have discretionary funds at the state level to maintain such efforts. If the MOA is no longer executed, the College does not have the funds support OSR. Allocating the \$300,000 directly to the College will provide stability for OSR, further the partnership with the DOE, and provide external resources and support at a time when our public schools are struggling to reinvent themselves. We recommend minor changes in the language referring to OSR later in the bill. In summarizing the purpose

of the act, the bill calls for transferring the OSR from the DOE to the UH. OSR is already housed at UH, but receives its funding from the DOE through an MOA.

Section 1 (8): Funding for the Teach for America (TFA) program was not included in the UH biennium budget request. We support this addition of 4 positions that will enable the College to operate and expand the joint project, with the contingency stipulated above. The 2006 Legislature allocated two positions to the College of Education to enable the College to partner with the DOE and Teach for America to recruit DOE teachers in hard-to-fill areas. TFA successfully recruited 50 teachers in time to start the 2006–2007 school year, something that all the institutions of higher education operating in Hawai'i together were unable to do. The College in response modified its Masters of Education in Teaching (MET), Masters of Education in Special Education, and Post-Baccalaureate Certificate in Special Education to provide the required teacher preparation program for TFA recruits to meet Hawai'i teaching license requirements. TFA is currently recruiting another 50 teachers for the 2007–2008 school year. The College of Education cannot provide the additional classes needed to support 100 new teacher candidates without the additional positions and funding called for in HB1014. We appreciate your support in this area. However, a total of 4 positions, not the 8 that are proposed in this bill will be sufficient to meet current and projected needs.

Section 1 (9): The partnership between Leeward Community College (LCC) and the College of Education at UH Mānoa (COE) creates a new pathway for recruiting potential teachers from high need communities and preparing them to become fully qualified teachers who will remain in those communities. The program focuses on the Leeward Coast and Ewa plain. This partnership was not included in the UH biennium budget request, and if the Legislature does fund this request, we request that it do so only after our full biennium budget requests have been funded. LCC has developed a successful Associates of Arts in Teaching (AAT) degree to provide education associates and others interested in working in P–12 schools with appropriate qualifications. LCC estimates it can generate up to 30 graduates per year. These AAT graduates are a new target group to recruit into the COE to prepare them to be fully qualified teachers, thus addressing the teacher shortage by “growing our own” teachers from our own communities. COE proposes to modify its Bachelor of Education two-year program to accept the AAT graduates into a cohort specially designed to build on their AAT degree and experience working in P–12 schools. LCC and COE intend to operate the program within the communities from which potential teachers will be recruited. However, this effort cannot be accomplished without additional funds. With financial support, this program can be implemented by fall 2007. We appreciate the legislative support of this partnership as specified in HB1014.

Section 2

HB1014 Section 2 calls for the re-activation of the statewide performance standards review commission. If called upon, the University stands ready to fully participate in the work of the commission. We support the concept of periodic review and evaluation to determine if our educational standards are effective in achieving intended goals. Since the University prepares the majority of teachers in the State, it is in our interest, as well

as the interest of the DOE and State that the University be fully engaged in such a review. The last review and report was completed in 2006; therefore the next scheduled review is in 2010.

Sections 3 and 4

HB1014 Sections 3 and 4 relate to the Hawai'i Educator Loan Program to address the teacher shortage in Hawai'i by providing financial assistance for tuition and other costs. The Hawai'i Educator Loan program is also addressed in HB1530. We recommend deleting this part of HB1014 in favor of the language in HB1530.

Section 5

HB1014 Section 5 summarizes the amounts to be appropriated to various priorities identified in the bill. We support these appropriations as long as they do not supplant UH biennium budget requests.

Section 6

As with other items in this bill, funding for the Hawai'i Educational Policy Center was not included in the UH biennium budget request. However, we support the proposed funding in HB1014 insomuch as it does not supplant UH budget requests. The HEPC was founded in 1999 to conduct research and provide policy makers with objective, data-based information on which to make more informed decisions. Since that time, the HEPC has established itself as a valuable center conducting studies and preparing reports in support of improved education at all levels. The University supports HEPC, and we agree that a well-funded, independent education policy research center located at UH is desirable. HB1014 appropriates \$400,000 to the Hawai'i Educational Policy Center to support the work of the performance standards commission. HEPC was similarly identified by the 2005 Legislature to provide staffing for the Temporary Early Education Task Force. The proposed tasks are within the HEPC mission and, if funded, can be accommodated. We note that HEPC is particularly well situated to work with the organizations identified in HB1014.

Section 7

HB1014 Section 7 provides support for the teacher cadet program. The University fully supports the intent of this section which will further efforts to recruit the best students into education and to "grow our own" teachers. The preliminary work done by the Hawai'i Alliance for Future Teachers has been successful in working with a number of high schools in Hawai'i. HAFT has developed enthusiasm for teaching among high school students and provided a new way for the College of Education to reach out to recruit potential new teachers. The teacher cadet program is established and is supported by nearly all of the institutions of higher education involved in teacher preparation. However, HB1014 is not clear on which State agency will be responsible for administering the funds. This has been an issue in transferring funds for the teacher cadet program this year. Further, the current language of Section 7 is confusing in that it

combines recruitment, retention, training, and teacher support, functions generally attributed to teachers, with the teacher cadet program which focuses on high-school students. We respectfully submit that the intent here needs clarification.

Section 8

HB1014 Section 8 needs clarification. The language is vague, does not identify which institution is responsible for the proposed mentor program or what the program would accomplish and be held accountable for. The concept appears worthy of support. New teachers to Hawai'i need additional support and mentoring, but we find the current language too ambiguous to offer enthusiastic support.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.