



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committees on Education and Higher Education

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By

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HB1533 RELATING TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Chair Chang, Vice Chair Bertram, and Members of the Committee:

The University of Hawaii supports the intent of HB1533, which appropriates funds for additional positions to support a joint effort between the University of Hawaii at Manoa College of Education and Leeward Community College to recruit, train, and retain more teachers. This partnership was not included in the UH biennium budget request, and if the Legislature does fund this bill, we ask that it do so only after our full biennium budget requests have been funded.

For the past six months, faculty and staff at Leeward Community College (LCC) and the College of Education at UH Manoa (COE) have been designing and developing 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 new partnership focuses on communities on the Leeward Coast and Ewa plain.

LCC and COE propose a joint effort to achieve the following goals:

1. Provide a seamless career pathway from high school to community college to baccalaureate completion preparing education assistants and teachers to fill high need areas.
2. Reach out to community members to engage and support them in pursuing education degrees, with the anticipated result that these individuals will remain in their communities committed to educational improvement.
3. Streamline course offerings at both the community college and COE levels whereby each educational experience builds on the former, creating a highly flexible and effective teacher preparation program.

4. Increase the number of highly qualified teachers in hard-to-fill areas with commitment to remain in their respective communities.

LCC has demonstrated leadership in responding to local needs by developing a high quality Associate of Arts degree in Teaching (AAT). This highly innovative program was originally designed for the dual purpose of providing educational assistants in schools in the leeward area another pathway for meeting No Child Left Behind (NCLB) highly qualified status and to provide them with a career ladder opportunity to work towards their teaching credentials. It has since been modified and expanded, and is now offered to the general student population. LCC graduated its first cohort of 15 students with the AAT degree in May 2006. Currently, there are 46 potential teachers in the AAT degree program

The COE has the only nationally accredited teacher preparation program in Hawaii. This upper division program prepares students for the baccalaureate degree in education at the elementary or secondary levels, including numerous subject area specializations. Graduates qualify to licensure for teaching in Hawaii from the Hawaii Teacher Standards Board.

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 will 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.

We propose to organize these two programs into a seamless career pathway and to deliver the combined program on the leeward coast. LCC and COE will work together to recruit, train, and retain prospective education assistants, paraprofessionals, and elementary and secondary teachers by combining resources to reach out to community members interested in pursuing a career in education. LCC will provide education training resulting in an AAT degree. COE will accept LCC AAT degree holders into an upper division cohort specially designed for AAT graduates that will lead to state teacher licensure. Courses will be delivered in leeward communities through face-to-face, distance learning, and/or hybrid instruction. We anticipate that with active recruiting, joint counseling services, and on site delivery of programs, this joint venture will produce up to 30 teachers annually.

The main outcomes and impact are as follows:

1. A unique program sequence that will begin to enroll a cohort of up to 30 LCC AAT graduates in Fall 2007.
2. The project will be continuous and there will be an increase in enrollment, graduates, and placement in Leeward communities in subsequent years.
3. The project will serve as a pilot for the Hawai'i P–20 Initiative by streamlining teacher education and partnerships.

4. With the research and assessment component, the project will serve as a model in community-based teacher education in the state and in the country.

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 HB1533.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.