



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I SYSTEM

## TESTIMONY

S.B. 2057: Relating to Teacher Education

Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

February 26, 2004

By

Randy Hitz  
Dean, College of Education  
University of Hawai'i

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**S.B. 2057: Relating To Teacher Education**

Chairman Taniguchi, Vice Chair Kokubun, and Members of the Committee:

The University of Hawai'i supports S.B. 2057.

S.B. 2057 provides funding (\$1.4 million) for the College of Education to hire faculty and increase its capacity to prepare teachers for Hawai'i's schools.

The university is painfully aware of the shortage of qualified teachers in Hawai'i. The Hawai'i Department of Education (DOE) hired 1,363 new teachers in 2002-2003 and only 32% of those teachers came from the University of Hawai'i. Twenty-eight percent came from Mānoa and just over 4% from Hilo. The University system is a long way from meeting the DOE need for teachers.

The funding provided through S.B. 2057 will make it possible for the College of Education to rebuild its capacity and prepare more teachers. Because of limited resources, the College must currently turn away qualified teacher candidates in elementary education and in our Masters of Education in Teaching program. The proposed funding will make it possible for the College to accept all qualified candidates and increase its output of teachers. It will also stabilize our special education program and remove our dependency on Hawaii State Department of Education funding.

The seven special education faculty will essentially replace those currently hired on a temporary basis with funds provided by the Hawaii State Department of Education. The DOE has provided this support for the last five years as part of their effort to meet the need for more special education teachers. This partnership between the DOE and the College of Education has been successful. Over the last five years the college has more than tripled its output of special education teachers from approximately 35 per year to over 100. The college has also created two new programs in special education, and we offer these programs on the neighbor islands as well as Oahu in order to provide more options for teacher candidates wishing to enter the field.

The DOE need for new special education teachers each year is between 300 and 400. It is safe to say that for the foreseeable future the DOE will need more than the 100 special education teachers prepared by the College of Education. A more permanent state investment in the preparation of special education teachers is warranted. The DOE cannot and should not be expected to continue to subsidize teacher preparation. Teacher preparation is a university responsibility and it is appropriate that the university be provided the resources necessary to address the need for special education teachers.

The university also needs an additional position in educational administration in order to help the DOE meet the ongoing need for more school administrators.

Though the funding suggested in this bill is above the university's request, it is important, but it should not replace the priorities of the university. We appreciate the opportunity to provide this testimony in support of this bill.