UNIVERSITY OF HAWAIʻI SYSTEM
Legislative Testimony

Written Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Education
Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection and Health
Friday, February 12, 2016 at 12:30 p.m.
by
Robert Bley-Vroman, Chancellor
and
Donald B. Young
Dean and Professor
College of Education
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

SB 2782 – RELATING TO TEACHERS

Chairs Kidani and Baker, Vice Chair Harimoto, and members of the committees, thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 2782.

The College of Education at the University of Hawaiʻi 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 Hawaiʻi 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.