



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
KA 'OIHANA HO'ONA'AUAO
P.O. BOX 2360
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

Date: 01/28/2025

Time: 02:00 PM

Location: 309 VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

Committee: House Education

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Keith T. Hayashi, Superintendent of Education

Bill Title: HB 0841 RELATING TO RETIRED TEACHERS.

Purpose of Bill: Requires retirants rehired as teachers or administrators in teacher shortage areas or in difficult-to-fill positions to be paid at least the minimum salary for their experience and qualifications. Prohibits rehired retirants from receiving additional employment benefits. Directs the Department of Education to adopt rules to identify teacher shortage areas and difficult-to-fill positions.

Department's Position:

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) appreciates the opportunity to comment on HB 841 regarding retired teachers.

HB 841, Section 1 (d) (5) expands eligibility to include "difficult-to-fill positions." While some teaching positions may not be in traditionally hard-to-staff areas, they can still be challenging to fill.

Re-employing qualified retirees who want to return to teaching could help to address staffing gaps.

The Department recommends removing Section 1 (d) (5) (D). Under current practice, all teachers who return to service with the Department receive compensation at their previous salary level.

Additionally, the Department seeks clarification on Section 1 (d) (5) (E) concerning employment benefits. As Bargaining Unit 05 members, teachers receive specific benefits through their collective bargaining agreement. The bill should specify which benefits would not be available to returning retirees to ensure proper implementation and avoid potential conflicts with existing contracts.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on HB 841.



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TESTIMONY TO THE HAWAI'I HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Item: HB 841 – Relating to Retired Teachers

Position: Support with amendments

Hearing: Tuesday, January 28, 2025, 2:00 pm, Room 309

Submitter: Osa Tui, Jr., President - Hawai'i State Teachers Association

Dear Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica and members of the committee,

The Hawai'i State Teachers Association (HSTA) supports HB 841 with amendments, which allows retired teachers to return to work in teacher shortage areas or difficult-to-fill positions.

As you know, Hawai'i has a severe teacher shortage. We need an estimated 1,200 to 1,500 new teachers every year. This shortage is especially predominant in certain subject areas, such as special education, Hawaiian language, and STEM fields.

We believe many qualified teachers who have retired would consider returning to work. HB 841 would remove barriers and allow these experienced educators to return to the classroom. This would help to improve the quality of education in Hawai'i and reduce the workload of current teachers.

We would like to suggest an amendment to HB 841. The bill currently requires retired teachers to have been out of the workforce for 12 months before they can return to work. Due to our critical teacher shortage, we recommend that the 12-month requirement be eliminated.

We recommend passage of HB 841 with our suggested amendment.

Mahalo.