



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
P.O. BOX 2360
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

Date: 02/19/2020
Time: 10:00 AM
Location: 211
Committee: Senate Ways and Means

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Dr. Christina M. Kishimoto, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION.

Purpose of Bill: Appropriates \$25,000,000 on a non-recurring basis to fund teacher compensation as negotiated and executed between the Superintendent of education and Hawaii State Teachers Association Bargaining Unit 5 for an experimental modernization project pursuant to section 78-3.5, or special education, hard-to-staff geographic locations, and Hawaiian language immersion programs, or some combination thereof. (SD1)

Department's Position:

The Department of Education (Department) strongly supports SB 2488, SD1, which provides funding for both the experimental modernization project (EMP) pursuant to Hawaii Revised Statutes Section 78-3.5, and additional teacher pay (salary differentials).

On December 5, 2019, the Board of Education (BOE) authorized Phase I of the strategic initiative to address long-standing issues within the Department that were obstacles for our students having equal access to a quality education. The BOE identified three specific areas to address: 1) special education, 2) hard-to-staff geographic locations, and 3) Hawaiian language immersion programs.

The Department appreciates the \$25,000,000 included in the SD1 for the salary differentials and looks forward to continuing the conversation to assess the necessary appropriations that will enable the successful implementation of Phase I of the strategic initiative.

As noted in the Department's budget briefing to the House Finance Committee and the Senate Ways and Means Committee, the Department will need \$10.2 million in Fiscal Year 2020 and \$30.7 million in Fiscal Year 2021. We believe the full amount is needed in order to address the issue of providing equity within our public schools.

Both the Department and the Hawaii State Teachers Association agree that addressing the pay compression issue and teacher pay differentials will positively impact both teacher recruiting and retention. As such, the Department is committed to Phase II of the strategic initiative which will focus the discussion on addressing this compression issue, a discussion which we look forward to having with valuable input from legislators, teachers, and the community.

We thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on SB 2488, SD1.

The Hawai'i State Department of Education is committed to delivering on our promises to students, providing an equitable, excellent, and innovative learning environment in every school to engage and elevate our communities. This is achieved through targeted work around three impact strategies: school design, student voice, and teacher collaboration. Detailed information is available at www.hawaiipublicschools.org.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



JOHN S.S. KIM
CHAIRPERSON

STATE OF HAWAII
STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION
('AHA KULA HO'ĀMANA)

<http://CharterCommission.Hawaii.Gov>
1111 Bishop Street, Suite 516, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Tel: (808) 586-3775 Fax: (808) 586-3776

FOR: SB 2488 SD1 Relating to Teacher Compensation
DATE: February 19, 2020
TIME: 10:00 A.M.
COMMITTEE: Committee on Ways and Means
ROOM: Conference Room 211
FROM: Sione Thompson, Executive Director
State Public Charter School Commission

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran and members of the Committee:

The State Public Charter School Commission ("Commission") appreciates the opportunity to submit this testimony in **SUPPORT OF SB 2488 SD1**. This measure appropriates \$25 million to the Department of Education to fund teacher compensation as negotiated and executed between the superintendent of education and Hawaii State Teachers Association Bargaining Unit 5.

The Commission appreciates the clarification provided by the Committee on Education that as members of the Hawaii State Teachers Association Bargaining Unit Five, public charter school teachers are included in this measure and eligible for the funding provided.

Based on inquiries with charter schools regarding the differential payments for hard-to-staff, Hawaiian Immersion, and special education teachers, the Commission anticipates that **approximately \$2.8 million** would be needed to pay charter school teachers eligible for these additional payments.

The Commission looks forward to collaborating with the committee, the DOE, other interested stakeholders, and public charter schools in moving this legislation forward.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



CRAIG K. HIRAI
DIRECTOR

ROBERT YU
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM
HAWAII EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH BENEFITS TRUST FUND
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
P.O. BOX 150
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96810-0150

ADMINISTRATIVE AND RESEARCH OFFICE
BUDGET, PROGRAM PLANNING AND
MANAGEMENT DIVISION
FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION DIVISION
OFFICE OF FEDERAL AWARDS MANAGEMENT (OFAM)

WRITTEN ONLY
TESTIMONY BY CRAIG K. HIRAI
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
ON
SENATE BILL NO. 2488, S.D. 1

February 19, 2020
10:00 a.m.
Room 211

RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

The Department of Budget and Finance (B&F) offers comments on Senate Bill (S.B.) No. 2488, S.D. 1.

S.B. No. 2488, S.D. 1, appropriates \$25,000,000, on a non-recurring basis, to fund teacher compensation as negotiated and executed between the Superintendent of Education and the Hawai'i State Teachers Association, Bargaining Unit 5, for an experimental modernization project pursuant to Section 78-3.5, HRS, or special education, hard-to-staff geographic locations, and Hawaiian language immersion programs or some combination thereof.

B&F notes that the cost for the teacher compensation plan will be a recurring expense; as such, the department prefers the Administration's measure, which has budgeted the estimated recurring costs for the teacher compensation plan.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.



DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR

MIKE MCCARTNEY
DIRECTOR

No. 1 Capitol District Building, 250 South Hotel Street, 5th Floor, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 2359, Honolulu, Hawaii 96804
Web site: dbedt.hawaii.gov

Telephone: (808) 586-2355
Fax: (808) 586-2377

LATE

REVISED

Written Statement of
MIKE MCCARTNEY
Director

Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism
before the
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Tuesday, February 18, 2020
10:30 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 211

In consideration of
SB 2697
RELATING TO TAXATION OF REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT TRUSTS.

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee.

The Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT) offers comments on SB2697, which would disallow dividends paid deduction for real estate investment trusts.

The department is concerned that the change in real estate investment trust policy may discourage business investments in Hawaii. Our position remains as it was last session, that disallowing dividends paid deductions can negatively impact investment in all areas of Hawaii's economy. The unintended consequences of imposing a corporate tax can negatively affect Hawaii's ability to attract investment capital, which creates jobs and ensures a sustainable economy.

This policy position from DBEDT is from an economic development position, and does not take into consideration the tax, fiscal and revenue policy, as it relates to the State of Hawaii.

We defer to the Departments of Taxation and Budget and Finance on fiscal and taxation aspects. We stand ready to do further analysis and review to inform decision making to ensure Hawaii's economic health.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.



KAMEHAMEHA SCHOOLS®

Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Time: 10:00 a.m.

Date: February 19, 2020

Where: Conference Room 211

TESTIMONY

By Dr. Kā'eo Duarte

Kamehameha Schools

RE: **SB 2488, SD1, Relating to Teacher Compensation**

E ka Luna Ho'omalua Dela Cruz, ka Hope Luna Ho'omalua Keith-Agaran, a me nā Lālā o ke Kōmike o nā Loa'a a me nā Ho'olilo o ka 'Aha Kenekoa! My name is Dr. Kā'eo Duarte, the Vice President of the Community Engagement and Resources Group for Kamehameha Schools.

Kamehameha Schools is in **support** of SB 2488, SD1, which appropriates \$25,000,000 on a non-recurring basis to fund teacher compensation as negotiated and executed between the Superintendent of Education and Hawaii State Teachers Association Bargaining Unit 5 for an experimental modernization project pursuant to section 78-3.5, or special education, hard-to-staff geographic locations, and Hawaiian language immersion programs, or some combination thereof.

Both national and statewide data trends show an alarming shortage of teachers in many subject areas and across all levels of education. According to HSTA, there were 1,029 emergency hires and vacancies in SY18-19 in our public schools. In special education settings, nearly 500 special education teaching positions are not filled by licensed teachers. For students that attend a Kula Kaiapuni, or Hawaiian language immersion program, 34% of teachers are qualified and licensed in Hawaiian language immersion. Furthermore, in hard-to-staff school locations, there's an overall teacher shortage in many different teaching subjects. This issue affects equitable access to quality public education for all keiki, especially our Native Hawaiian learners. We commend the creativity and determination of the legislature in assisting to recruit new educators and retain current educators in our public schools.

Founded in 1887, Kamehameha Schools is an educational organization striving to restore our people through education and advance a thriving Lāhui where all Native Hawaiians are successful, grounded in traditional values, and leading in the local and global communities. We believe that community success is individual success, Hawaiian culture-based education leads to academic success and local leadership drives global leadership.

‘A‘ohe hana nui ke alu ‘ia. No task is too large when we all work together! **Please advance this measure.**



HAWAII

AMERICANS FOR DEMOCRATIC ACTION

OFFICERS	DIRECTORS			MAILING ADDRESS
John Bickel, President	Melodie Aduja	Chuck Huxel	Stephen O'Harrow	P.O. Box 23404
Alan Burdick, Vice President	Juliet Begley	Jan Lubin	Lyn Pyle	Honolulu
Marsha Schweitzer, Treasurer	Ken Farn	Jenny Nomura		Hawai'i 96823
Doug Pyle, Secretary	Stephanie Fitzpatrick	Dave Nagaji		

February 15, 2020

TO: Chair Dela Cruz and WAM Committee

RE: SB 2488 SD1 Relating to Teacher Compensation

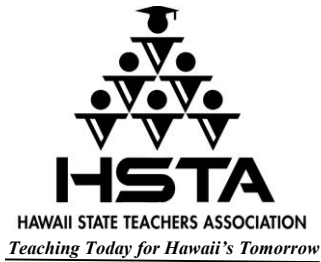
Support for hearing on February 19

Americans for Democratic Action is an organization founded in the 1950s by leading supporters of the New Deal and led by Patsy Mink in the 1970s. We are devoted to the promotion of progressive public policies.

We support SB2488 SD1 but would like to see it amended to double the appropriation for teacher pay. The most important interaction in education is between teacher and student. Therefore the most important part of the education budget is the one that ensures quality teachers. Unfortunately the state of Hawaii in recent years often had over 1000 positions not filled by fully qualified teachers. We are pleased the Governor is making an effort to give incentives to fill some areas with qualified teachers. This is a start. But a lot has to be done. Therefore we strongly support the intent of this bill and hope it will be amended to expand its scope.

Thank you for your favorable consideration.

Sincerely,
John Bickel,
President



1200 Ala Kapuna Street ♦ Honolulu, Hawaii 96819
Tel: (808) 833-2711 ♦ Fax: (808) 839-7106 ♦ Web: www.hsta.org

Corey Rosenlee
President
Osa Tui Jr.
Vice President
Logan Okita
Secretary-Treasurer
Wilbert Holck
Executive Director

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

RE: SB 2488, SD1 – RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

COREY ROSENLEE, PRESIDENT
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Chair Dela Cruz and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association **supports SB 2488, SD1**, relating to teacher compensation.

This bill appropriates \$25,000,000, on a one-time, non-recurring basis, or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2020-2021 to fund teacher compensation as negotiated between the superintendent of education and Hawaii State Teachers Association Bargaining Unit 5 in a memorandum of agreement that includes:

(1) An experimental modernization project pursuant to section 78-3.5 to address compensation equity issues and to make the necessary discretionary salary adjustments for approximately 6,300 experienced senior teachers by recognizing their professional service to the department of education through discretionary salary adjustments; or

(2) Additional teacher pay for the areas of special education, hard-to-staff geographic locations, and Hawaiian language immersion programs; or

(3) Some combination of paragraph (1) and paragraph (2);

provided that the moneys shall not be released until the memorandum of agreement is signed by the superintendent of education and Hawaii State Teachers Association bargaining unit 5.

In Hawai'i, teacher turnover is high, it is not just our new teachers leaving, and the number of teachers leaving continues to rise. Chronic teacher turnover, in turn, forces the department of education to rely on emergency hires and long-term substitute teachers, who are not licensed teachers, to fill vacancies resulting in thousands of



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Corey Rosenlee
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Vice President
Logan Okita
Secretary-Treasurer
Wilbert Holck
Executive Director

students each day in a class without a licensed teacher. Our teacher shortage problem is further clarified in the DOE's 2017-18 Employment Report, which shows that teacher voluntary resignations increased from 850 to 1,111 with only about 30% being due to retirement. It has only increased since then.

Unlike many school districts in the country, Hawaii educators' years of experience are not automatically taken into consideration to determine when they earn salary movements. Hawaii public school teachers only receive increased pay for years of service if those rates are negotiated with the state, which has rejected increases during economic downturns.

The current distribution of teachers on each level of the salary schedule is inconsistent and compressed, contributing to senior teachers leaving. In many cases, teachers who have a difference of 10 or more years of experience have the same salary. Current figures show 5,942 teachers with between 0 and 24 years of service are clustered near the same pay on the salary scale. That's why the problem is called compression.

This lack of equity causing the compression in teacher salaries is impacting the retention of licensed, tenured teachers who are essential to closing the achievement gap to ensure equity and excellence for each student.

During furlough years and times of economic downturns, tenured teachers with over 10 years of service have sacrificed higher salary increases when the steps were only adjusted up for newer teachers in efforts to recruit more during economic downturns, without a step advancement for teachers already working for years within the DOE.

Currently, only 53 percent of teachers remain in the Hawaii DOE for five years or more. In addition, about 1,000 long-term substitutes and emergency hires filling vacancies in classrooms are not graduates of a state-approved teacher education program. In fact, some of those subs and emergency hires are not even college graduates.

HSTA supports this bill that requests our state lawmakers to approve funding for a one-time salary adjustment as part of an Experimental Modernization Project for eligible teachers to address pay compression along with the teacher differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian Immersion, and hard to staff areas.



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Executive Director

HSTA believes the teacher shortage extends throughout the profession, which is why all educators' compensation should be increased and these are two steps that will help. Research shows that teachers become more effective the longer they are in the classroom.

A study published by the Learning Policy Institute in 2016 showed the following: Based on a review of 30 studies published within the last 15 years that analyze the effect of teaching experience on student outcomes in the United States and met specific methodological criteria, researchers found that:

- Teaching experience is positively associated with student achievement gains throughout a teacher's career. Gains in teacher effectiveness associated with experience are most steep in teachers' initial years, but continue to be significant as teachers reach the second, and often third, decades of their careers.
- As teachers gain experience, their students not only learn more, as measured by standardized tests, they are also more likely to do better on other measures of success, such as school attendance.
- Teachers' effectiveness increases at a greater rate when they teach in a supportive and collegial working environment, and when they accumulate experience in the same grade level, subject, or district.
- More-experienced teachers support greater student learning for their colleagues and the school as a whole, as well as for their own students.

We have to do more to encourage educators, especially those who have years and even decades of experience, to remain in the classroom. This proposal is part of a multi-phased plan to ensure that all of our keiki, regardless of where they live, what their special needs are or their ethnicity, are taught by highly qualified licensed teachers.

If the Legislature approves of the funding, HSTA believes public school teachers with 22 years or more of experience at the end of this school year would automatically be placed at the highest pay level. The HSTA believes nearly 3,000 of its members deserve to move up to that level.

We need the legislature's help to end the teacher shortage crisis by not only requesting differentials for our hardest-to-staff positions, but also supporting funding



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to address equity and compression in teacher salaries via the Experimental Modernization Project.

These are issues that HSTA has been advocating for years to change and we support this one-time pay adjustment to address the teacher salary compression, as we know it will help with the overall plan of recruiting and retaining licensed teachers. To do both differentials and address these compression issues in the pay scale for teachers, it would require 45 million more than this bill appropriates for a total of \$70 million, plus fringe costs. We ask that the amount appropriated is increased to cover both salary compression and the differentials.

To take care of the needs of our hardworking public school teachers, and to provide our keiki with the quality education they deserve, the Hawaii State Teachers Association asks for your support of this bill.



SENATE BILL 2488, SD1, RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FEBRUARY 19, 2020 · SENATE WAYS AND MEANS
COMMITTEE · CHAIR SEN. DONOVAN DELA CRUZ

POSITION: Support, with amendments.

RATIONALE: The Democratic Party of Hawai'i Education Caucus supports and suggests amendments for SB 2488, SD1, relating to teacher compensation, which appropriates \$25,000,000 on a non-recurring basis to fund teacher compensation as negotiated and executed between the Superintendent of Education and Hawai'i State Teachers Association Bargaining Unit 5 for an experimental modernization project pursuant to section 78-3.5, or special education, hard-to-staff geographic locations, and Hawaiian language immersion programs, or some combination thereof.

Our state is currently facing a chronic teacher shortage, which undermines student learning. For the 2019-2020 school year, the HIDOE experienced a qualified teacher shortage of 973 positions, 351 of which were in the area of special education. Additionally, we continue to lose approximately 50 percent of new hires after five years, with the number of teachers exiting the teaching profession increasing by more than 80 percent since 2010.

Low teacher pay exacerbates teacher turnover. Numerous studies, including those performed annually by WalletHub.com and EdBuild, have found that Hawai'i's teacher pay ranks last in the

nation when adjusted for cost of living. Moreover, a 2019 Economic Policy Institute analysis found that in the islands, teachers earn 19.1 percent lower pay than comparable college graduates.

Research also shows that as teacher pay increases, so, too, does student achievement. A Stanford University analysis found that raising teacher wages by 10 percent reduces high school dropout rates by 3 to 4 percent. Similarly, a Florida study showed that pay raises reduced teacher attrition by as much as 25 percent for hard-to-fill subject areas, with children's learning growth gaining from prolonged exposure to more experienced educators.

Put simply, competitive compensation correlates with greater success in recruiting and retaining qualified educators. Low teacher salaries, in contrast, deter potential applicants from entering and remaining within demanding teaching fields, including special education, in which work conditions require unique professional skill sets, but are inadequately compensated. Deficient salaries particularly intensify the teacher shortage in schools that are located in hard-to-staff geographic locations, where housing options are scarce, long commute times result in elevated fuel expenses, and fewer community amenities are available.

Hawaiian language immersion schools are also disproportionately harmed by the state's low-ranking teacher compensation. Of the department of education's 161 Hawaiian language immersion teaching positions, only 54 are filled with qualified and licensed Hawaiian language immersion teachers. The Hawai'i State Supreme Court ruled in August of 2019 that our constitution requires the HIDOE to make "reasonable efforts" to provide students with access to Hawaiian language immersion education, making the need to attract and retain qualified and licensed Hawaiian language immersion teachers an urgent priority.

To address our school system's teacher shortage, the HIDOE has partnered with Gov. David Ige and the Hawai'i State Teachers Association on a proposal to raise the pay of educators working in high-need areas. Their plan calls for pay differentials of \$10,000 a year for special education teachers, \$8,000 for Hawaiian immersion teachers, and \$3,000 to \$8,000 for teachers in hard-to-staff geographic locations, like West Hawai'i, depending on the severity of the need.

Our state must also “true up” the salaries of approximately 6,300 teachers who are being underpaid by thousands of dollars each year because they were not given step increases during periods of economic hardship. Ensuring that these teachers’ salaries correspond to the number of years of professional service that they have accrued would provide them with \$900 to \$17,000 in additional pay annually. That kind of money might keep them in our schools, allowing good teachers to become great classroom leaders and giving students a chance to achieve their educational dreams.

That said, **we urge you to amend this measure by appropriating an additional \$93 million for teacher compression and differential pay hikes, bringing the total appropriated by the bill to \$114 million when fringe benefits are included (with differential and step increases accounting for \$70 million in total, and fringe benefits amounting to an additional 63 percent of increased compensation).** Currently, the proposal appropriates only \$25 million to address salary compression and differential pay increases. That figure is only enough to fund differential pay raises for special education, Hawaiian immersion, and hard-to-staff positions, leaving no money remaining to rectify unfunded step raises. Failing to appropriate the full \$114 million would force the HIDOE and HSTA to either abandon their attempt to provide step raises to those in need or cannibalize the department’s own budget to do so, leading to dramatic cuts in essential programs and services.

It’s simple math: if you can’t afford to live in Hawai’i, you can’t afford to teach in Hawai’i. To deliver the schools our keiki deserve, we must pay teachers what they’re worth.

IRON WORKERS STABILIZATION FUND

February 19, 2020
10:00 am

LATE

Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Conference Room 211
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

Re: SB2488, SD1 - RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION.

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice-Chair Keith Agaran, and members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means:

We **SUPPORT** the intent of SB2488. The bill appropriates \$25,000,000 on a non-recurring basis to fund teacher compensation as negotiated and executed between the Superintendent of education and Hawaii State Teachers Association Bargaining Unit 5 for an experimental modernization project pursuant to section 78-3.5, or special education, hard-to-staff geographic locations, and Hawaiian language immersion programs, or some combination thereof.

This bill is a significant step towards providing enough funds to adequately address teacher salary compression and funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian immersion programs, and hard-to-staff positions. Many of the schools affected by the highest percentage of emergency hires and vacancies educate ironworker children, including Waianae at 86 emergency hires and Nanakuli at 27 emergency hires in 2019. We hear from our young people that they do not expect most of their teachers to be around for their graduations because they leave before then. Our young people deserve better. Please provide the needed funds to adequately staff our schools with qualified teachers that will be there for the long-run.

Sincerely,

T. George Paris
Managing Director

TGP: MP



841 Bishop St., Suite 301
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Telephone: 808 926-1530
Contact@HEECoalition.org

LATE

Committee on Ways and Means
Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

February 19, 2020

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee,

We **support SB2488 SD1**, appropriating \$25,000,000 on a non-recurring basis to fund teacher compensation as negotiated and executed between the Superintendent of education and Hawaii State Teachers Association Bargaining Unit 5 for an experimental modernization project pursuant to section 78-3.5, or special education, hard-to-staff geographic locations, and Hawaiian language immersion programs, or some combination thereof.

HE'E Coalition strongly supports this innovative project to address teacher compression. We have a crisis in teacher retention, with only 55% of our new teachers being retained after 5 years in the 2019-2020 school year.¹ We believe that this measure of compensating experienced teachers to the salary step that accurately reflects their years of service, and teachers of special education, hard-to-staff geographic locations and Hawaiian immersion programs will be a significant incentive for teachers to remain in the Department of Education.

Hui for Excellence in Education, or "HE'E," promotes a child-centered and strength-based public education system in which families, communities and schools are valued and empowered to help every student succeed. HE'E works to bring diverse stakeholders together to harness collective energy, share resources, and identify opportunities for progressive action in education.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Our support represents a 75% consensus or more of our voting membership.

Sincerely,

Cheri Nakamura
HE'E Coalition Director

¹ Hawaiipublicschools.org, Strategic Plan Dynamic Report: Teacher Retention



Academy 21
After-School All-Stars Hawai'i
Alliance for Place Based Learning
*Castle Complex Community Council
*Castle-Kahuku Principal and CAS
*Education Institute of Hawai'i
*Faith Action for Community Equity
Fresh Leadership LLC
Girl Scouts Hawaii
Harold K.L. Castle Foundation
*HawaiiKidsCAN
*Hawai'i Afterschool Alliance
*Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice
*Hawai'i Association of School Psychologists
Hawai'i Athletic League of Scholars
*Hawai'i Children's Action Network
Hawai'i Education Association
Hawai'i Nutrition and Physical Activity Coalition
* Hawai'i State PTSA
Hawai'i State Student Council
Hawai'i State Teachers Association
Hawai'i P-20
Hawai'i 3Rs
Head Start Collaboration Office
It's All About Kids
*INPEACE
Joint Venture Education Forum
Junior Achievement of Hawaii
Kamehameha Schools
Kanu Hawai'i

*Kaua'i Ho'okele Council
Keiki to Career Kaua'i
Kupu A'e
*Leaders for the Next Generation
Learning First
McREL's Pacific Center for Changing the Odds
Native Hawaiian Education Council
Our Public School
*Pacific Resources for Education and Learning
*Parents and Children Together
*Parents for Public Schools Hawai'i
Punahou School PUEO Program
*Teach for America
The Learning Coalition
US PACOM
University of Hawai'i College of Education
YMCA of Honolulu

Voting Members () Voting member organizations vote on action items while individual and non-voting participants may collaborate on all efforts within the coalition.*

The Thirtieth Legislature
Regular Session of 2020



STATE SENATE
Committee on Ways and Means
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair
State Capitol, Conference Room 211
Wednesday, February 19, 2020; 10:00 a.m.

STATEMENT OF THE ILWU LOCAL 142 ON S.B. 2488, S.D.1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

The ILWU Local 142 supports S.B. 2488, S.D.1, which appropriates \$25,000,000 on a non-recurring basis to fund teacher compensation as negotiated and executed between the Superintendent of education and Hawaii State Teachers Association Bargaining Unit 5 for an experimental modernization project pursuant to section 78-3.5, or special education, hard-to-staff geographic locations, and Hawaiian language immersion programs, or some combination thereof.

The ILWU Local 142 believes we should provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian Immersion, and Hard to Staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. They not only need this 25 million, but they will need 45 million more to fix it right the first time. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

Many of our members children attend public schools across Hawaii and we firmly believe they should have a quality public educational system. S.B. 2488, S.D.1 is a step towards improving our public schools by helping to keep and retain our hardworking teachers in Hawaii.

The ILWU Local 142 recommends passage of S.B. 2488, S.D.1. Thank you for the opportunity to share our views on this matter.

From: [Anna Crawford](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: TESTIMONY RE: SB 2488 Proposed SD1, RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION
Date: Sunday, February 16, 2020 7:31:01 PM

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Anna I am a teacher at King Kekaulike High School in The Baldwin-Kekaulike Complex on Maui Island. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, proposed SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard to staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides to do so. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been teaching in Maui for 18 years. When we we were furloughed I took a 9% pay decrease. At that time I could have left the the state for better pay but I feel devoted the the children of Hawaii. I had to go into debt to make it through the years we did not have any step increases of pay raises. I am only just now paying off that debt. For 15 years of my teaching career I worked a second job to afford to live in Hawaii pay off debt.

In addition, there are teachers at my school who have worked far fewer years than me who are on the same pay step. These pay inequities should be remedied. I could retire in 5 years but would stay longer in the profession with equitable pay. I feel that by funding the pay differentials Hawaii will retain more teachers, especially veteran and highly experienced teachers who are a true benefit to our students.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Anna Crawford, Kekaulike Complex, Maui Island

Sent from my iPad

From: [robin.wong](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Sunday, February 16, 2020 7:35:59 PM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

[WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020](#)

[10:00 a.m.](#)

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Robin Wong and I'm a 9th grade English teacher at Kauai High School on Kauai. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

Although I am in my mid-50s, four years ago I became a teacher as a second career. My husband is native Hawaiian and, after many years on the mainland, we decided to move "home." We have 20 school-age grandchildren on this island and I felt compelled to support them academically. Unqualified teachers, high turnover, and lack of true SPED support motivated me to make the financial sacrifice to become an educator on Kauai. What came as a shock was how enormous the challenge was to live earning under \$50k per year (I have a 4 year college degree and went through a year-long teacher training certification) and how tragically broken the education system is in Hawaii.

I work amongst some of the most passionate, well educated, devoted individuals who must live pay check to pay check or work a second jobs to provide an education to our next generation and beyond. How can such an honorable calling and profession be so disrespected and discounted by this society? If I didn't become part of it, I would really not have known how dire the situation is. Teachers need your support, your attention, and your financial assistance.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Robin Wong

Kauai, HI

From: [Katherine Shinsato](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Sunday, February 16, 2020 7:39:05 PM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Katherine Shinsato. I am a 2nd Grade Teacher at Waikele Elementary School in the Leeward District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

As a 3rd year teacher and recently married, I find it difficult to support myself in Hawaii. I have lived here all of my life and would like to remain close to my family and my husband's family, both of whom plan to continue to live on Oahu. We would also like to start a family soon and look at purchasing homes. However, between the cost of living in Hawaii, living on a teacher's salary, and the demanding responsibilities and daily life of being a teacher, it has crossed my mind to move to the mainland or leave the profession in order to support my future family with my husband. This would be heartbreaking, knowing that I would give up being close to our families or a career that I know is a calling for me.

Please fund to fix the salary compression issue. I hope to one day have a better teacher salary to support my family.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Katherine Shinsato, Leeward District, Oahu

From: [Jennie Hancock](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Sunday, February 16, 2020 8:16:06 PM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Jennie Hancock. I am a 5th grade teacher at Waikoloa Elementary and Middle School in South Kohala on Hawaii Island. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, proposed SD1.

My husband and I moved to Hawaii from Alaska in 2011 because while our salaries were good, we didn't have pensions or medical coverage upon retirement. Now that my husband, a wounded police officer, might have to medically retire we're left with the harsh reality that we might have to leave Hawaii because my salary isn't enough to support our family. As a 7th year teacher that has established myself in my profession and my community, I'm heartbroken that others and myself can barely make it here in Hawaii. The turnover in our area is a critical factor in the shortage crisis our complex area experiences, and the reason we received a hard to staff differential.

The shortage differential I received this semester helps a little bit, but the long-term viability of life in Hawaii for teachers is abysmal. We don't make enough money and we spend what little we do have on extremely high rent and supplementing our classroom budgets to improve our students' educational experience. Not only that, but for years the state budget was cushioned by the hard-earned step increases Hawaii educators were denied. It's not fair that I am

on the same step as a 17 year teaching veteran.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard to staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides to do so. \$70 million is a small investment that would make a huge impact on our public school system and our economy. Our teachers are worth it, as they are important for the future of our keiki.

Now is the time for positive change, and we need your help. Mahalo.

Jennie Hancock

68-3840 Lua Kula St Apt F203

Waikoloa, HI 96738

From: [Shelby Stern](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION
Date: Sunday, February 16, 2020 8:42:05 PM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Shelby Stern. I am a teacher at Pohakea Elementary School in Ewa Beach on O'ahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki, and quite honestly, the entire future of Hawai'i.

As the child of a DOE teacher who went through the time period of furloughs and budget cuts, I saw first hand how my family struggled to make ends meet during that time. What's unfortunate is that after all of these years, teachers who had to endure those hard times still have not been properly compensated to account for all of that time.

Now that I am a teacher myself, I also endure the hardships of making ends meet. My husband and I are both teachers and although on paper the numbers may look decent, the cost of living in Hawai'i makes it difficult for us. We don't live a lavish life. We buy only the essentials and we budget diligently in order to get by. Teachers put in so much of our energy into building up the students that we have in our classroom every day. It's truly time that we properly compensate teachers and build them up as well. We cannot continue to pour from an empty cup.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Shelby Stern, Leeward District, Oahu

From: [Kathleen Duhaylongsod](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Sunday, February 16, 2020 10:30:37 PM

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

Aloha, my name is Kathy Duhaylongsod and I am a teacher at Waipahu Elementary School, a 120-year-old school in the Leeward District on the island of O'ahu.

I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue and funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions is crucial. As a means to this end, the state Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe.

In these political climes, we often hear about the importance of education, yet here we are, still are fighting for this to come to light.

As an educator since 1988, I have witnessed these unkept promises to make education our state's priority. Now what has manifested in my 32 years of teaching in the Hawai'i State DOE is the very real reality of an increasing teacher shortage. Across our nation, teacher pay is 1.6 percent below its average earnings from 20 years ago. At the same time, teacher pay is 5 percent lower than 10 years ago, adjusted for inflation. As such, the HSTA continues to work tirelessly toward addressing the adversity which will be effected from a teacher shortage. Fixing the salary compression issue for our veteran teachers and offering differentials for our colleagues in Special Education, Hawaiian Immersion, and hard-to-staff positions in our rural communities are the solution.

We need your help. Please, let's make 2020 the year that hindsight will be 20/20 and used to address our public schools' future.

Mahalo a nui,
Kathy Duhaylongsod
Leeward District
O'ahu

From: [amy.shishido](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1. Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19 at 10 a.m.
Date: Sunday, February 16, 2020 11:01:21 PM

Chair Donovan Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Amy Shishido. I am a Mathematics teacher at Kawanānakoā Middle School in the Honolulu District. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, proposed SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard to staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides to do so. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I am affected by the salary compression. There were many years and several contracts where teachers were not allowed step increases. This is my 23rd year of teaching in Hawaii - always in a public school. I believe in public education. I was educated in public schools, kindergarten to 12th grade. Likewise for my daughter, who is in her 5th year of teaching Special Education at Benjamin Parker Elementary School.

Fixing the salary compression issue would make it possible for me to make ends meet each month with a little less worry. HSTA has stated that numerous studies show that teachers with more experience have higher achieving students. I haven't seen that research personally, but based on my experience, I would believe it to be true. I teach a tested subject and I am very proud of the scores my students earn every year on the Smarter Balanced Assessment and on the Hawaii State Assessment, prior to that. It is because of my years of experience that I know how to reach my students to bring out their best.

I urge you to please find a way to fund SB2488.

Thank you for your time,
Amy Shishido
Honolulu District, Oahu

From: [David Brown](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony to support SB2488, SD1, committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, February 19, 10 AM
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 6:26:59 AM

Dear Chair Dela Cruz,

My name is David Brown, I teach special education in Lahaina. I taught for 30 years in California before coming to Hawaii five years ago. This is a great place to live and work. However, most of my colleagues find it extremely difficult to stay very long and teach in Hawaii. The reason is very simple - high cost of living.

You can make a big difference by funding the bill to increase teacher salary. This will improve education all over Hawaii for thousands and thousands of children.

Thank you,
David Brown

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Kayleen Pieper](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 8:18:33 AM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Kayleen Pieper I am a kindergarten teacher at Kamali'i Elementary on the island of Maui. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been teaching on this island for 7 years now, yet make similar salaries to veteran teachers who have been teaching much longer than I have. The compression issue needs to be address, lest we lose more qualified teachers other, more affordable states.

Just last week, a teacher friend of mine announced that she was moving to Nevada. The DOE there had agreed to match her Hawaii salary there. Another tenured, qualified teacher gone because she could not afford to live here on Maui.

We all love our keiki and will go miles for them. Yet year after year teachers are not paid for the time and effort them put in to give our keiki an education they deserve.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Kayleen Pieper, Maui County, Island of Maui

From: [Cindy Deuz](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 10:58:51 AM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Cindy Deuz. I am a teacher at Red Hill Elementary in Central District on the island of Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, proposed SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

Teaching is my second career and it has been very rewarding to be able to see the growth our keiki make in a year. However, with the cost of living in Hawaii being so high, it has been extremely hard to make ends meet. My family and I have had multiple discussions about moving to the mainland where I would not need to look for a second job. My daughter is currently at UH Manoa pursuing a degree in education and even she is discouraged about the teacher pay. She will most likely stay to gain some experience but ultimately will need to move away to be more financially secured.

With the proposal for differential pay for Special Education teachers, she will now be applying for the dual BEd. and SPED degree while I will head back to school at Leeward Community College to begin the Advanced Professional Certificate in SPED program. I hope to be licensed by the end of this year. Since these differentials have been proposed, a lot of veteran teachers are pushing back retirement to be able to benefit from the pay compression fix and myself and others are going back to school to pursue SPED licenses. This not only benefits teachers but the future of Hawaii as students will be taught by highly qualified teachers and not by emergency hires or long term substitutes. Our students deserve the best because they are the key to anything and everything that matters. Please approve the funding needed to keep Hawaii's teachers in Hawaii.

We need your help.

Mahalo,
Cindy Deuz, Central District, Oahu

From: [Mike Landes](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 11:12:50 AM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Mike Landes. I am a teacher at Lahainaluna High School in Lahaina on Maui. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have taught in Hawaii for 16 years and am at the exact same salary step as my dear friend and colleague who has taught here for 26 years. This is not right. She has taught in the exact same school as me for 10 years longer than I have. Those additional 10 years have enabled her to be a much more effective teacher, and it is a travesty that she would not be compensated for her years of experience and that someone like me with substantially less experience would be making the same amount as her.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Mike Landes, Kihei, Maui

From: [Judy Waite](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 11:21:02 AM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE
RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020
10:00 a.m.

Dear Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Judy Waite. I am a 6th grade classroom teacher at Kilauea Elementary School, in Kapaa District on Kauai. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

I am asking that you please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe benefits. Our teachers are worth it, as we are important for the future of our keiki.

Research shows that teachers become more effective the longer they are in the classroom. We must do more to encourage educators, especially those who have years of experience, to keep teaching our children.

I have been teaching for nearly 20 years, and yet I am only at Step 10 - the same step as colleagues who have been teaching half that time. Unlike many school districts in the country, Hawaii educators' years of experience are not automatically taken into consideration to determine when we earn step movements. Hawaii public school teachers can only receive increased pay for years of service if those rates are negotiated with the state, which refused to provide funding for increases during economic downturns. I was also a victim of "Furlough Fridays," another misguided effort to use teachers and children to help balance the state's budget.

We veteran teachers are public servants and professionals. We adjusted, compromised, and suffered during those hard economic times, and we continue to suffer deprivations as Hawaii's cost of living becomes higher and higher. Many of my colleagues have left the profession, as the cost of living here has outpaced our salaries. I have seen educators quit in the middle of the school year, leaving students with long-term substitutes who aren't qualified.

At age 64, I am now eligible to retire, but would consider staying on if I were to receive a pay raise. Hawaii's "high 3" retirement formulation would, in combination with funding for this pay raise, encourage many veterans to stay on rather than retire. These kind raises will help ease the teacher shortage crisis, and will improve the lives of students because experienced educators will be more inclined to stay in the

classroom.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Judy Waite
Kilauea Elementary School
Kapa'a District
Kauai

From: [Cathy Fitzpatrick](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 11:23:06 AM

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Cathy Fitzpatrick. I am a teacher at Lokelani Intermediate School in Kihei on Maui. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I arrived 2 days before school started in August 1999 with the promise of a teaching position at Lahaina Intermediate School. I was embraced by the school and the community. Now, 20 plus years later, I am still here, still teaching Hawaii's keiki in the Hawaii Department of Education. I believe in public schools, and more so believe in Hawaii's children even though the state of Hawaii makes it very difficult for teachers to do so financially, especially those who have years of valuable teaching experience. As I see my colleagues in other states teaching salaries continue to go up year after year, I saw mine freeze as our state went through financial difficulties. I have been working second sometimes third jobs continually throughout my teaching career here just to keep afloat. I have babysat, tutored, waitressed, and been a cashier at various stores. I have a Master's degree in Education. Honestly, it is demoralizing.

When I heard about the fixing the compression issue, I am given hope. Hope that my skills and years of experience (including being a mentor teacher and voted staff member of the month several times and teacher of the year by our students) will be valued. This is incentive for me to continue working, continue teaching in the public schools, continue giving our keiki the best education I can provide. I implore that you pass this bill and keep teachers and the hundreds of other teachers like me in our

public schools. We need your help.

Mahalo,

Cathy Fitzpatrick

Lokelani Intermediate School,

Kihei, Maui

From: [Melissa Padilla](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 11:24:37 AM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Melissa A. Padilla. I am a teacher at James Campbell High School in Leeward District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our "haumana."

When I started teaching in 1992, I knew that I wouldn't be financially rich working as a teacher in Hawaii. When HSTA went on strike in 2001, seasoned teachers reminded younger teachers like me that they wouldn't benefit from the strike, but they were walking on the strike line to help those who were new to the profession. And when Hawaii's economy took a downturn in 2008, HSTA members (such as me) did not have step increases. Thus, we in Hawaii have a unique situation where a teacher's years of service does not reflect this distinction in a teacher's income.

Because of these financial challenges, I know teachers who worked a second or third job to earn enough income to support their families and live in Hawaii. Unfortunately, I've witnessed English teachers from James Campbell High School leave the islands for better opportunities on the U.S. continent either before the school year starts or at the end of the first semester. This means that students sitting in my English classes may have had an emergency hire teacher or a long term substitute teacher. The results of this disruption are catching students up with their language arts skills in reading and writing as well as their preparedness for college or career opportunities.

For me, I decided to pursue my National Board Certification in English Language Arts. Having already achieved Class 7, my becoming a National Board Certified Teacher (NBCT) was the only way to guarantee a raise or bonus in my past ten years of service in our public schools. Still, there has not been a significant change in teachers' pay. This is why I decided to renew my National Board Certification in 2019 and this certification will stay current for another ten years. I've been a lifelong learner so I could be a high qualified teacher for my students. My hope is that before I retire from teaching in Hawaii's public schools, my years of service will be fairly and financially compensated. And the educators coming into the profession will have a better future.

Now is the time to make a difference for teachers like me who had our salaries compressed and still continued to be a high qualified teacher in our public school students' classrooms.

We need your help. Mahalo,

Melissa A. Padilla, NBCT

Teaching in Leeward District, Oahu

Residing in Central District, Oahu

Proud graduate of Hawaii's Public Schools

From: [roberta shibuya](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 11:48:25 AM

Monday February 17, 2020

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Roberta Shibuya. I am a Kindergarten teacher at Waiakea Elementary School in Hilo on the Big Island of Hawaii and I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

We learned a lot about the Compression Bill last week at our annual Teacher Institute Day at Keaau High and I can tell you that both my husband and I (both DOE classroom teachers) and our 2 girls **AND** the 50+ kids in our combined classroom would GREATLY benefit from the passing of this bill.

My husband and I are one of the almost 6,000 teachers that are “stuck” in our “steps”. My husband has just made 20 years and I am at 13 years of service (I took 4 years of leave without pay to stay home with our 2 girls when they were born) yet we are still at one of the lower steps despite our years of hard work and devoted service to the DOE.

Most other states and other unions in our state have automatic step increases based on years of service. Yet in Hawaii, DOE teachers are required to accrue 15 extra credits to move up **ONE** class (we need to

move 7 classes = 15 credits X 7 classes - to reach the top of the pay scale). These classes are paid for out of our own pocket and each class costs somewhere between 150-300 dollars. So to move 7 class (105 TOTAL credits) and to be making what I should be making, this would cost me between \$5,000 to \$10,000 not to mention the CRAZY amount of time that it would require me to complete this case load in addition to running my kindergarten classroom and all that entails **AND** being a mom which I am sure you are well aware of, in and of itself is a full time job. Because of the financial burden and time it would take from my family, my husband and I have not been able to take much if any "classes" thus we are being paid very close to what a new teacher is making even with all of our years of service.

I love teaching and but soon my daughter will be heading off to college. My husband will have had 25 years in by then and I will be close to 20. We are probably going to leave the island and look for other teaching positions in another state. We will hold off on collecting till we are 62 years old to prevent penalties and we are very frugal so we will make it work. I am not one to toot my own horn but we are good solid teachers and are assets to our school, community, and to the kids that come in and out of our classrooms each year. However changing times have shown us that teaching is no longer a desirable profession. In fact we have outright forbade both of our daughters to go into teaching because of how tough the classroom has become.

Literally, at this moment, my husband is off to weedwack the grass at my mother's house. He is looking at me with his sometimes working

weedwacker. He said he wants to buy a “real” one but it is too expensive. We would also like to termite treat our house, but that too is expensive so we need to save up. We are **far** from extravagant people (please ask any of our co-workers if you don’t believe me) but we should be able to purchase basic tools and to maintain our house here in Keaau where I was born, raised, and went to school.

We would like to be able to give back more... to our home kids **and** to the kids in our classroom. Passing this bill would allow my husband to buy his weed wacker BUT it would also allow him to buy his **OWN** food coloring for school instead of stealing the red one from my pantry. I got stuck with the green because he used the red to make dinosaur toothpaste in his science class. I found this out when I was to making chi chi mochi for **Valentines Day**...who has ever heard of green for Valentines day? But we made do. With this funding, he could also buy his **own** raisins for his science classroom’s “dancing raisins” experiment instead of again taking our raisins from home which of course I didn’t realize until I was going to make a batch of oatmeal raisin cookies. You see this bill would not only help our personal household, It helps support our classroom as well. We are given \$500 a year for basic supplies but for the fun stuff...that comes out of pocket....Target does not take PO’s. All the conversation hearts I bought last week for our graphing, measuring, and experiments....came out of my pocket. The soil, seeds, and trays we use for plants...come out of our pockets. The mother's day gifts we will be making (fingerprint necklaces) will come out of my pocket. All this goes back into our classrooms. When we want to learn about math the

fun way....I go to Target and pick up a bag of jelly beans and a container of cheese balls. When we studied Johnny Appleseed in September, I went to KTA and bought 10 pounds of apples....at almost \$3.00 a pound. During winter, we made gingerbread houses and I bought much of the supplies (the rest were donated by generous parents). Yes we could have easily said NO to any or all of these projects but my husband and I and MANY MANY other teachers really want to provide a truly enriching and FUN FUN FUN learning environment for all our kids and that is not always free.

So Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee, I beg you to please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue. Our teachers are worth it and so are our ALL of our kids (home and school keiki). As one of my co-workers said so poignantly... "Teaching is the only profession where we steal things from our home to bring them to school to use"... that is the truth.

We appreciate your time and thank you so much for taking this into consideration.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Roberta Shibuya, I teach in Hilo I live in Puna, Hawaii

From: [Troy Aurio](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means,
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 12:45:31 PM

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is **Troy Aurio**. I am a **teacher** at **Momilani Elementary School** in the **Leeward District** on **Oahu**. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

My family and I are living paycheck to paycheck and we have to dip into our savings to cover basic living expenses. My family has recently grown and I now have two young daughters which is making our situation even harder. I've been in education for 14 years now and this is the first time I actually am questioning whether I made the right decision. I have discussed with my wife the possibility of a career change if that is what is best for my family. I love what I do but will not do it at the expense of my family. When I was single, I wasn't living lavishly but was able to cover my expenses every month. Now that I have a wife and two children to take care of, the amount I make is not nearly what my family needs to survive. The compression step increases would really help my family out to make ends meet. We teachers are not asking for extra, we are just asking for what we rightfully deserve. Pass this bill to help and support the hardworking dedicated educators of Hawaii as I believe many of them probably are in the same situation as me. Teaching is one of the best professions out there but if you can't make a living doing it, who's going to agree to do it. I'm sure if you were in my position, you would put your family first above everything right?

We need your help. Mahalo.

Troy Aurio

Leeward District, Oahu

From: [Travis Kashiwa](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means,
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 1:25:06 PM

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Travis Kashiwa . I am a 5th grade teacher at Momilani Elementary School in the Leeward District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been teaching for the past 15 years in the DOE. I love my job as I love working with my students. There is nothing more rewarding than seeing my students grow in and out of the classroom. However, the temptation to move over to teaching in the private sector has become more and more tempting. The pay they offer is far greater than what the state offers. It is my sincere hope that this bill is approved so that the DOE will not have seasoned teachers jumping ship or leaving the DOE.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Travis Kashiwa, Leeward District, Oahu

From: [Jessica Kauhi](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 2:31:33 PM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Jessica Crivello. I am a general education teacher at Pa'ia School in Pa'ia on Maui. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I currently teach at a school that hosts the Hawaiian Language Immersion program, Kula Kaiapuni. Every year I watch as the program struggles to fill their teaching positions with certified and qualified teachers. The differential will help alleviate this burden, a burden that is felt by the students.

I have also personally watched my colleagues who have been in the Department of Education for years leave mid-school year. I have watched the long term sub take his/her place, much to the disadvantage of the students. Fixing the teacher salary compression issue will help prevent that situation from occurring in the future. Although I personally will not benefit from it, I fully support it and beg you to do the same.

We need your help.

Mahalo,

Jessica Crivello, Pa'ia, Maui

From: [Lisa Nakama](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 3:41:16 PM

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Lisa Nakama. I am a second grade teacher at Momilani Elementary in Leeward District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

In the 13 years I've been a teacher, I have personally experienced the difficulty it is to financially make ends meet. The compression pay will help myself and my colleagues. In my previous school, I had worked with several teachers who had left the profession or moved to the mainland because of the pay. As a result of teachers leaving (sometimes in the middle of the school year), we were left scrambling to find qualified substitutes or teachers. It is extremely difficult to maintain growth, morale, and unity in a school when teachers are constantly moving.

As for the shortage differential, this is very important to strengthening the education system for our keiki. Shortages have allowed unqualified teachers to teach in areas that desperately need qualified faculty. This puts a burden on the team of teachers caring for keiki, stretching them to exhaustion. Many times we are training or completing tasks that the unqualified teacher is unable to do. With your support of this bill, I know students will benefit and the teachers will feel supported.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Lisa Nakama, Momilani Elementary, Leeward District, Oahu

From: [Harmony Seivert](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 3:46:29 PM

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Harmony Seivert. I am a Grade 5 Special Education Teacher at Waimea Elementary School, living in the Hamakua District on Hawai'i Island. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

My husband and I have lived on the Big Island for almost 14 years. We have struggled at times to make ends meet. I took a year off because I couldn't afford to put two children in childcare. I have helped my husband with his business, in the hope of increasing his income. I got my National Boards certification and am currently taking 9 credits to reclassify so I can grow my income. We currently rent three rooms in our home to cover our mortgage payment, and provide additional income. Every teacher in this state struggles to make enough money. On my grade level teach last year, 5/5 teachers had an additional job or taught classes after school. One teacher stocked inventory at a grocery store in the evenings. The other was a new dad and left right at the bell to wait tables after school. This is on top of all their responsibilities as teachers. Two of those teachers took non-teaching positions for this year. Please address salary compression for teachers. Good, dedicated teachers need to be compensated for staying in this profession. Think of the additional time they could dedicate to their students if their salary stretched farther. There are other more lucrative positions these highly educated people can take.

I have taught special education for 17 years. I studied special education in college and got my Master's in it. I came into this professional deliberately, because I felt called to it. I was recruited to teach here after teaching for 6 years on the mainland. There are days when I love my job, but there are days when I deal with extreme behaviors, demanding parents, and the threat of lawsuits. A student picked up his desk and threatened to throw it at me last year. I am trained to de-escalate strong emotions and talked him out of it. This is not uncommon in my line of work. I have seen many teachers leave the profession because of the stress from the additional paperwork, lack of support, and challenging students. One new teacher at my school lasted only 2 weeks. A long term sub had to cover the rest of the school year, which puts those students at a great disadvantage. I am often asked to help take over the caseloads of students who are left without a certified teacher. I have set up classrooms more than once for a long-term sub to start the school year in an unfilled position. These are extra burdens that many experienced special education teachers take on, because the law must be followed no matter what. No matter how much my heart is in this, I have checked the postings every year, considering other jobs I might

get to make life easier. Burn-out for classroom teachers is real, especially when an experienced teacher like myself still struggles to make ends meet in this state. I am so grateful for the differential for special education teachers. I cried when I heard the news because I have had a particularly difficult year. I had just told my union rep that I didn't think I could do this much longer. I came to Hawai'i in the aftermath of the Felix lawsuit. I know what can happen to this state when we can't fill special education positions with certified teachers. That was an expensive mess. I can tell you that the additional \$10,000 differential is keeping me in the classroom right now. It came at a critical time. I know it will attract other certified teachers back to the classroom. Please continue to fund such differentials for hard-to-fill positions.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Sincerely, Harmony Seivert

Hamakua District

Hawai'i Island

From: [Richard Stange](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 3:50:11 PM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Richard Stange. I am an English Language Arts AND Family and Consumer Science Teacher at Mililani Middle School in Central District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

As a first year teacher, it is extremely difficult to meet the cost of living in Hawaii on \$47,000 per year. To be completely honest, if I did not have relatives on this island, I would be forced reluctantly to move back to the mainland and teach there. That is an issue, because I am a University of Hawaii - West Oahu graduate. It would be a real shame if I cannot serve the land in which I earned all three of my college degrees. Not just hiring new teachers, but KEEPING teachers is a challenge. That is a challenge, because teachers cannot remain in a place where we cannot afford to live. That is an issue, because we have over 1,000 classrooms WITHOUT licensed highly qualified educators. Our kids deserve better than that. In order to support the kids, you must support their teachers.

Even as a first year teacher, I am already working a second job just to try to make ends meet with the rising costs of living in Hawaii. I only wish I could use that time I spend working my second job toward professional development so that I can be a better teacher for my kids. They deserve the best version of me

that I can possibly give them. However, economics are taking a part of me away from the children.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Richard Stange, Central District, Oahu

From: [Janel Yoshimura](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, committee on ways and means
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 3:51:38 PM

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Janel Yoshimura. I am a kindergarten teacher at Momilani Elementary School , Leeward District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian Lang. immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki. Fixing the compression issue will help me, a teacher of 25 years in the DOE, feel more appreciated and valued. Aside from myself, we need to keep the young graduates here on island if we want to provide our future children with the best scholars in education. If they all leave Hawaii for better opportunities like pay, no one can blame them. Please, let's keep those qualified teachers here in our state.

We need your help.

Mahalo,
Janel Yoshimura, Leeward District, Oahu

From: [Shelby Greene](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 4:12:27 PM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Shelby R. Greene. I teach at Kohala High School in Kapa'au on the Big Island of Hawai'i. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I'll be honest, living in Hawai'i is *difficult*. I moved to Hawai'i with my now fiancé in 2015, right after earning my Master's in Secondary Math Education. In my time at Kohala, I have served on ILT, data teams, and taken on additional responsibilities including managing our student emails and trying to help with various school goals.

Each year that we have lived in Hawai'i has amounted to about 1,000 of new credit card debt each year. The accumulation of debt (and interest charges) has been discouraging to say the least. I live about 2 miles from the high school, but to buy affordable groceries I have to drive at least an hour which is a lot of gasoline expense. We were fully prepared to leave the state at the end of this school year to try to restart in a new state that we can afford to live in. We have just made the decision to stay on island for at least one more as a result of the hard-to-staff differential.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Ms. Shelby R. Greene | B.S. Mathematics, M.S.Ed. Secondary Mathematics Education
Kohala High School | HKKK Complex | Mathematics Department Chair & Educator
Geometry | AP Calculus AB | AP Computer Science Principles | UH-M075 Intro to College Math

2021 Class Advisor

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Education is the most powerful weapon we can use to change the world. Nelson Mandela

Support My Students HERE: <https://www.donorschoose.org/Shelby.Greene>

From: [Eliza Shumway](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 4:13:38 PM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Eliza May Shumway. I am a music teacher at Hau'ula Elementary school in the Windward District of Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

As an educator and a mother, It's sad to see teachers leave their careers because it doesn't pay them enough to provide for their families. It's hard enough trying to work as a teacher and still have a second and sometimes even a third job to live in Hawaii. I value my children's education and want them to get the education they need to succeed. If teachers leave to find better paying jobs, who will teach our keiki? I'm afraid to see more and more teachers teaching our keiki who are not qualified or even certified to begin with.

We need your help. Mahalo,

Eliza May Shumway, Windward District, Oahu

From: [Len Ferguson](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 4:15:07 PM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Len Ferguson. I am a Special Education Inclusion Teacher at Nanakuli High and Intermediate School in the Leeward District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I was a substitute teacher for three years at Nanakuli High and Intermediate School until I went back to college (at the age of 68) to earn my teaching degree and certification. I have now been at NHIS for 8 years and have seen the revolving door of teachers coming and going. It is imperative that teachers get compensated sufficiently for their level of education, professionalism and dedication to service. Our students are our future and they need to have the confidence that there will be sufficient teachers in all content areas to lead them in their academic efforts. Please support SB 2488 SD1. Mahalo, Len Ferguson.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Len Ferguson, Leeward District, Oahu

--

Len Fergusen

lenfergusen@gmail.com

808.271.1167

808.744.9052

From: [shelly.cassler](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 4:19:59 PM

Chairperson Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Shelly Cassler. I am a first grade teacher at King Kaumualii Elementary School in on Kauai. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

Besides being a teacher, I am also a mother of two young children. I have a two year old in child care and a 6 year old in Kindergarten. Last year, my husband and I needed to pay tuition for preschool and child care fees. We are both public school teachers. Because of this, we ended up working two jobs which meant more time away from our own children, in addition to the 40-60 hours a week we already put in as educators. I believe that our career as educators should be sufficient enough to support our life here in Hawaii without having to work another job on the side. However, this is not the case and so many teachers have to work another job to supplement their income. Funding this bill would alleviate this financial strain on so many of Hawaii's teachers and their families. We need your help.

Mahalo.

Shelly Cassler, Kauai District, Kauai

From: [Sarah Waite](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 4:24:54 PM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488 Proposed SD1, RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

[WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020](#)

10:00am.

Senate Ways and Means Committee and Chair Donavan Dela Cruz:

My name is Sarah Waite. I am a Special Education Pre-K teacher at Royal School in Mc Kinley Complex on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in adamant support of SB 2488, proposed SD1.

Please! We need you to provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard to staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers.

Qualified Special Education teachers who are certified for the position they are teaching are in shortage because of the extra hours and added stresses that are a natural consequence of our job. It is just reality that this job has a number of extra responsibilities, including legal ones according to IDEA. SPED Teachers need to be supported, as they are often the lifeline - literally - for the students they serve. These students have some of the highest and most challenging needs, are at the highest risk, and by federal law are entitled to specialized instruction delivered by qualified teachers. For the safety and success of these students, as well as to protect the Department of Education from lawsuits stemming from neglecting to deliver FERPA under IDEA, Hawaii needs to retain qualified SPED teachers.

We spend many extra hours above and beyond our contracts to meet the demands of developing and implementing IEPs, developing individualized instruction, collecting and analyzing data on each student individually, developing behavior management strategies, and attending meetings. I myself am faced with all these challenges every

day plus am pressured by a deep concern for the welfare of these disabled students. Good Special Education teachers take this home with them every night and are always strategizing how to better serve these kids. If Hawaii wants to retain good SPED teachers, we have to be compensated commensurate to the extras that we take on.

This goes for long time, experienced, hawaiian immersion, and hard to staff area teachers as well. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides to do so. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our kids.

Thank you,

Sarah Waite, SPED Pre-K teacher, Royal School, Oahu

From: [Kathleen Nullet](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 4:25:27 PM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Kathleen Nullet. I am a national board-certified teacher and librarian at Kailua Intermediate School in the Windward District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

During my 24-year career, I have earned a master's degree and 3 teaching awards. I am committed to my teaching career and enjoy my work. It has been a meaningful career, but it does not seem that teachers are valued for their work. Veteran teachers bring experience and institutional knowledge to their schools. We mentor new teachers. We need to make this career attractive so exceptional people choose this profession. Our children deserve the best teachers.

Sadly, my son, like many educators' children today, did not choose a teaching career because the salary is too low and they would not be able to afford to live here

independently. My son chose nursing, an equally important career. He is earning a higher salary than I am after only 2 years into his nursing career.

Please properly fund teachers' salaries so we can attract and retain qualified educators who will be able to afford to live and work in Hawaii.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Kathleen Nullet, Windward District teacher

From: [DW.Ab](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 4:26:17 PM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is **Dwayne Abuel**. I am a **teacher/IT** at **Highlands Intermediate School** in **Leeward District** on **Oahu**. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have to work 12 months and have been doing this for over 17+ years with only 10 month pay. This is because I have fix and prepare computers for teachers, staff, and students. I do believe that teachers who are skilled in IT should do this because they know what teachers need more than just an IT person. Although the principal holds the key to a 12 month hire, I know for a fact that having the pay to compensate would help tremendously. I am getting closer to retirement and I need to still build for that, even though I have been putting in, my small pay does not cut it. I do buy things for my class and also to do IT work (my tools especially). The school does not provide any of the funds needed to do my job as it is so specific to what I can buy just to get a job done. HELP PLEASE!!! I have built all the infrastructure and done a lot of repair since 2004. When a network company came in to install all the new stuff, they were surprised that I did all the fixing and installs myself. My campus is huge. Thank you for your time.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Dwayne Abuel, Leeward District, Oahu

--

<----- Greetings ----->

Mahalo,

Dwayne Abuel

Life in this world is limited. Never be in the least bit afraid!

"The Proof of the Lotus Sutra" (WND, 1109)

A person, who no matter how desperate the situation,
gives others hope, is a true leader.

- Daisaku Ikeda

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<----- Greetings ----->

From: [Kiane Kanaha](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 4:27:31 PM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Kiane Kanaha. I am a Special Education Teacher at Kealakehe High School in the West Hawaii District on Hawaii Island. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million-plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our Keiki.

As an inclusion teacher, I spend every day not only supporting my students but the entire class over 30+ students in a small classroom. More than half of the student population at Kealakehe High School is on low income receiving free or reduced lunch. Which means many of which do not have the means to purchase paper, journals or pens. As a teacher, I have been consistently purchasing students' supplies out of pocket not because it is a student preference but because it is a need. Somedays I have to choose between buying myself food or more school supplies because the cost of living in Hawaii is rising. Teachers are constantly being pushed out of Hawaii because they are unable to afford living here. Having this increase in paying me to continue living here somewhat comfortably and continue to support my students financially.

We need your help.

Na'u,

Kiane Kanaha, West Hawaii, Hawaii Island

From: [Beth Fujikawa](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 4:37:08 PM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Beth Fujikawa. I am currently a Student Services Coordinator at Webling Elementary School in Central District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I began my teaching career 20 years ago as a special education teacher. My first year teaching, straight out of college, I went on strike. Although I fully supported the strike, it impacted me financially as I didn't have much of a savings built up. Although, I worked hard to earn my Master's degree and grow professionally by taking additional credits, I was further impacted by the furloughs. I quickly moved up within classes, but received minimal step movements. As a veteran teacher with 20 years of experience, I am currently at a step 11 - which equates to 12 -14 years of service.

In the past 10 years, I have seen numerous teachers change careers or move to the mainland, due to frustration regarding pay or promise of better pay elsewhere. I have seen some teachers quit mid-year, choosing not to return following winter break or even as early as fall break. Teachers deserve support and recognition for hard work. I especially feel that veteran teachers that have stayed in the profession deserve fair compensation.

I appreciate your time in reading my story and hope that you will feel compelled to support SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION.

All teachers need your help.

Mahalo,

Beth Fujikawa

Student Service Coordinator

Webling Elementary School

Central District, Oahu

From: [Joe Cassler](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 4:37:09 PM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is **Joseph Cassler**. I am a **teacher** at **Kauai High School** in **Kauai Complex** on **the island of Kauai**. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been a teacher for 10 years. In those 10 years I have done the things we're told to do to be responsible adults. My wife and I got married, we bought our first home, we had 2 beautiful girls, and we save money for retirement and our girls' college. Yet, we still mostly live paycheck to paycheck. I coach soccer at our high school as well as am a staff developer for an education group to make money on the side. My wife also works a second job as a photographer just so we have extra to pay for childcare, preschool, etc. We don't take extravagant vacations to Disneyland or Japan because we just cannot afford it.

Since we moved back to Hawaii from the mainland, median single-family housing has gone from \$643K to over \$800K. This means two things. 1. Salary compression has affected our state's teachers ability to afford housing in Hawaii. 2. There is more funds available to offset the salary compression that has stunted our pay since "Furlough Fridays" under Gov. Lingle. Please provide the funds to fix this salary compression issue and provide an opportunity to keep the best teachers in Hawaii.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Joseph Cassler, Kauai Central Complex, Lihue, Kauai

From: [Hana Mauldin](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 4:45:04 PM

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Hana Mauldin. I am a kindergarten teacher at Mountain View Elementary School in the Ka'u Kea'au Paho'a on Hawai'i Island. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

These changes would personally help me achieve goals, like building my own home, saving for retirement and build a savings for emergencies. This will also help my amazing coworkers who have been working longer than I have and are earning less than me. Please help support teacher better support their families.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Hana Mauldin, KKP Complex, Hawaii Island

From: [aurene.padilla](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Cc: [Aurene Padilla](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 4:50:31 PM

Chair Donovan Dela Cruz and Senate Ways and Means Committee,

My name is Aurene Padilla . I am a resource teacher for Central District, Leilehua, Mililani, Waialua Complex Area on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, proposed SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard to staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides to do so. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have wanted to be a public school teacher all of my life and this year marks my 24th year as a public school teacher. During my career I have faced a strike and Furlough Fridays. As a single mother I have taught summer school, tutored after school, taught at Leeward Community College, and have written curriculum at nights for my part-time job with Kamehameha Schools, all while coaching both of my kids' sporting teams, volunteering at their schools, and trying to raise them to be the best that they can be. My kids know not to ask mom for extras because as a public school teacher, money is tight. They often ask me why I have to work so hard, why teachers are paid so poorly, and why I don't get another job. The daughter of two public school teachers who always supported my desire to be an educator, I cannot say that I have been as encouraging with my own two children. It is just too hard to raise a family in Hawaii on a public school teacher salary.

I currently serve as the Induction and Mentoring Program coordinator for the Leilehua Mililani Waialua Complex Area. In my work I coordinate Induction and Mentoring Programs for 20 schools and guide 50 school level mentors who mentor roughly 150 teachers in their first and second year. My complex area has the second largest population of beginning teachers and each year there seems to be more. In my work I provide professional development and coaching support to mentors, beginning teachers and administrators. In addition, I have my own mentoring case load of about 10 beginning teachers.. I have had this job for the last 9 years. In my work I see experienced veteran teachers taking on leadership roles, helping beginning teachers on their own time while juggling their own classrooms, part-time jobs, families, being grade level chairpersons, club advisors, class advisors, and everything else under the sun in order to bring in extra income to survive in Hawaii. They are spread thin and barely keeping afloat.

My veteran colleagues and I, who have been teaching for 20 years and more will never get to the top of the pay scale at the rate the Department is moving us contractually. Twenty four years of service and I am only at Step 12. The teachers that I mentor in their first year start at Step 6. Teachers who I mentored when I first got this job nine years ago are somehow also at Step 10 and Step 11. How is this FAIR? Veteran teachers are tasked with leadership roles, they shoulder the burden at schools, they mentor newcomers, they are invaluable, yet their salary does not reflect that the state of Hawaii values their experience. I do not

believe that it was ever meant that a teacher would have to work for 30 years before they were able to reach the top of the pay scale, I think it is a disgrace that due to the lack of compression teachers with a vast difference of experience are currently on the same step. This travesty needs to be fixed in order to retain our veteran teachers and show incoming teachers that their hard work, dedication, and loyal service will be rewarded and they choose to stay in the profession for the long haul.

We need your help!

Mahalo,

Aurene Padilla, Leilehua, Mililani, Wailua Complex Area, Oahu, Hawaii

From: [Alyssa Bruns](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 4:52:51 PM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Alyssa Bruns. I am a 2nd Grade Teacher at Konawaena Elementary in Kona on Big Island. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have worked extremely hard to become a highly qualified teacher for our keiki. I started working in the schools as a volunteer and saw the need for teachers. I have recently earned my teaching certificate and master's degree. I am left with thousands of dollars of student loan debt while I am struggling to afford my rent in Kona. Meanwhile, I am still dedicated to provide the children of Hawaii with the education they deserve. It is no surprise to me that the Department of Education struggles to keep qualified teachers especially when they can make a better living in other fields. I am grateful for all of the support at my school. I don't know where I would be without the support of my mentor teachers. Without them, I don't know if I would have made it through my first year. Their knowledge and experience are invaluable for students and teachers alike. They also deserve to be justly compensated for their tenure.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Alyssa Bruns, Kona, Hawai'i Island

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From: [Cheyenne Watanabe](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 4:55:05 PM

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is **Cheyenne Watanabe**. I am a **2nd grade teacher** at **Waipahu Elementary School** in **Waipahu/Pearl City District** on **Oahu**. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have considered leaving the teaching profession altogether because the cost of living has outpaced my salary. My husband (who has lost his job due to an injury at work) and I, along with our 8 year old twins, are currently renting a two-bedroom, one bath with no hope of ever being able to afford to buy a home due to not being able to save enough for a down payment. Over my past 15 years of service in the DOE, i have repeatedly seen educators quit in the middle of the school year, leaving students with long-term substitutes who aren't qualified.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Cheyenne Watanabe, Waipahu/Pearl City District, Oahu

From: [tasha firestone](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 4:59:42 PM

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Tasha Firestone . I am a 7th grade teacher at Nanakuli Intermediate and High School in the Leeward district on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

Fixing the compression issue will help boost morale and commitment to the profession. I've been teaching for 12 years, and when I ask myself if I see myself teaching for the next 20, the answer is currently no. My husband recognizes how much I do for my students, how much hard work and dedication and overtime goes towards them, but he continues to encourage me to change to the health field where I will have more time for my own family. Every little bit helps, we're expecting our 2nd baby in July, and I would like to be able to spend the year raising my own baby instead of paying one of my paychecks to someone else to raise my baby during a crucial developmental time. Teachers also use our own sick leave for maternity leave. (I have so many teacher friends CRYING on their first day back because they cannot afford to take off more than 6 weeks, and as much as we love other babies, it would be nice to be financially secure enough to take off enough time to spend time with our own babies.) We live humbly and save a lot in order for this year off with baby to happen. And my husband works A LOT of overtime to make this happen. He works for the fire department, and in our household and professions where we are always caring for other families, I hope the community is able to also take care of the people who help keep our keiki safe and educated on the daily. There is a mental and emotional drain that happens A LOT to teachers on the west side. Our west side babies have hard lives, and they deserve the best, most loving, committed teachers.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Tasha Firestone, Leeward district, Oahu

From: [Gerry Clarin](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 5:01:58 PM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Gerry Clarin. I am a teacher at James Campbell HS in Leeward district on the island of Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

The cost of living here in Hawaii has outpaced my current teacher salary. I have seen many teachers leave our state because of the high cost of living, especially rent. I personally know many teachers who planned on staying in the profession if their salary was more competitive. We don't need more teachers leaving the profession or retiring early. The Science department here at Campbell HS currently has 3 long term substitute teachers. We need to fix the current teacher shortage by retaining high quality teachers.

I also have a niece from Washington thinking about becoming a teacher here in Hawaii. When she heard how much I got paid for 20 years of teaching she's reconsidering. Our keiki deserve good teachers and we need to do everything we can to keep the ones we have and encourage those who want to teach and make a difference here in Hawaii.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Gerry Clarin Ewa Beach Hawaii James Campbell HS

From: [Jodi Yoshimura](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 5:05:13 PM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

[WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020](#)

[10:00 a.m.](#)

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is **Jodi Towata** am a **proud 29 year veteran state office resource teacher residing** on **Maui**. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

As I near the end of wonderful career, I have no regrets. I have served hundreds of Hawai'i keiki and their families. As a public servant, I understand that we serve the people and our jobs will not fund an extravagant lifestyle. I chose this career that I love and I have seen the shortage of teachers increase over almost three decades. I personally only saved and purchased my first home after 27 years working for DOE. I am fortunate to share my life with a fellow educator and we love our life but we live frugally. We ask only that the years of service be valued and that funding for fixing salary compensation be fully funded. I continue to be a firm believer in public education. We must continue to show our support and encourage the best and the brightest to join us in making Hawai'i and our great nation in lifting our students to be the best they can be. Please help us by making education and our keiki a priority.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Jodi Towata

State Officer Resource Teacher, Induction and Mentoring

Sent from my iPad

From: [Ben Macklin](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 5:07:21 PM

Aloha Chairman Dela Cruz,

Aloha, members of the Senate Ways and Means committee. My name is Ben Macklin, I am a 54-year-old English Teacher at Kealakehe High School on Hawaii Island. I taught in higher education for 15 years, and in public school in Texas for 4 years before moving here to teach in 2017. I write to you in hopes that you will begin to support educators as a class of professionals on par with state engineers, attorneys, and accountants. As a group, we are highly educated professionals who continually adapt to changes in our culture and teaching norms through professional development, just like continuing educational opportunities of other professions. Hawaii public school teachers should be better compensated because we are currently are under-compensated for the role we play and the job we are asked to do.

In the classroom, the average High School teacher is asked to manage the educational advancement of Hawaii's children. Additionally, I am asked to differentiate my instruction and scaffold my lesson for English Language Learners, Special Education students, as well as provide a solid education for the general student population, many of whom are dealing with terrible situations at home. I am a counselor, disciplinarian, data manager, diplomat, and oftentimes, a parent, in addition to being a teacher of increasingly complex students who are distracted by smart-phones and social media. Senators, my fellow teachers and I are the shock-absorbers for society as we receive students who come to us from many rough backgrounds.

All of my peers grade and lesson plan at home, after hours, and juggle those duties with working second or even third jobs. Personally, I teach all day, drive a bus, and my third job is pool maintenance. Many educators live with other families, drive 20year old cars, and some even go one or two days without food so that they can make it to the next paycheck. I challenge you to try to "make it" in Kailua Kona on 3200/month take-home, and that is after I have reclassified through professional development classes that I had to pay for!

I urge you to create a professional standard of a certified educator, with highly qualified status and 3 years of experience or more at a starting salary of at least \$63,000. Monetary incentives for advanced degrees, working in difficult positions or remote assignments, ought to be added onto the base. SB2488 is a beginning toward an actual professional goal, however, please stop bandaging the problem and create a professional standard that will attract and retain highly qualified and motivated teachers. Professional teachers are the single best contributor to student success.

My wife and I are always tempted to move back to Texas because of finances. That alone is the only factor we face that makes it difficult to stay here. However, my wife and I also feel as though we are benefiting the students of Hawaii by bringing years of experience and skill in the classroom. Please do what you can to make Hawaii's teachers a professional class of public employees.

Mahalo Nui,

Ben Macklin, Ph.D.
Kealakehe High School
Kailua Kona

From: [IRENE BARBER](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, 2/19 at 10:00am
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 5:10:53 PM

Aloha Chair Delacruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee-

My name is Irene Barber. I am a teacher at Mountain View Elementary School in the Kea'au District on Hawai'i Island. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

I am requesting that you provide enough funds to fix the teacher compression issue as well as provide the differentials for special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions for the hardworking teachers in the state of Hawai'i. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides, for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I am a veteran teacher, with 29 years of experience all in the state of Hawai'i. I have personally experienced the effects of not receiving regular step movements over the course of my career. Please note that teachers with 16 years of experience (13 years less than I) are on the same salary step. Also noteworthy is that teachers with only 13 years of experience are just one step below that. It's shocking! I am planning on retiring in the next four years, after 33 years of service, and relocating to find a new teaching job or other career path.

I currently work in a hard-to-staff and poverty stricken complex. These students need to have qualified teachers who don't give up on them and who model hope for the future. Pay raises for teachers will attract new and qualified candidates who can afford to live here for the long term. It will provide for certified teachers in classrooms, as opposed to students having substitute teachers with no teaching experience. It will also encourage experienced educators to stay in the classrooms here in Hawai'i, all for the good of our students academically and socially. Our children deserve nothing but the best. Should the compression package be appropriated, I may decide to stay in the teaching field, here in Hawai'i.

We desperately need your help now to make a strong commitment to our educators and students in our beautiful state of Hawai'i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

-Irene Barber

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

From: [Kim](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB 2488
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 5:12:32 PM

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is **Kim Holokai** I am a **Kindergarten Teacher** at **Wailuku Elementary** in **the Baldwin Complex** on **Maui** I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future .

I have been teaching for over ten years in the same grade level and have seen 7 different teachers leave the school and return to the mainland due to Hawaii's high cost of living. The only reason I am able to stay in this profession is because I live with family members. This is not the lifestyle I wish to have. I would like to be able to rent or purchase a home for myself and my two daughters however this is not something I am able to do if I stay in this profession. I am always hoping things will change so I can continue to make a difference in children's lives but if things don't change soon, I may have to do what's best for my own children and find a profession that pays me adequately.

It is also disappointing when efforts are only put into recruiting new teachers and giving them bonuses, but us senior teachers who have been though furloughs were never given any type of bonus.

I also believe the children of Hawaii deserve to learn the Hawaiian language. My school has either had no Hawaiian teacher or one that leaves in the middle of the year. It is a new teacher every year. This is mainly because this position is part time with no benefits. Please help us give our children an education they deserve!

Mahalo for listening,

Kim Holokai, Baldwin, Maui

Sent from my iPhone

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1, RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Susan K. Suzuki. I am a teacher at Konawaena Elementary School in the Kona District on the Island of Hawaii. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard to staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki and community.

I have been a Hawaii public school teacher for over 31 years and I am very concerned for the teaching profession and our students. The number of qualified teachers in our state is decreasing every year due to low salaries and the high cost of living. This is very unattractive to the younger generation of teachers since they cannot afford a home and pay back student loans. We have many outstanding teachers at Konawaena Elementary School, however, over the past 7 years we've had a high turnover rate and faculty consistency is not there for our students who are the future of Hawaii.

We desperately need your help. Mahalo!

Mrs. Susan K. Suzuki
Kona District, Hawaii

From: [Mara Saltzman](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 5:16:52 PM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 A.M.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Mara Saltzman. I am a special education teacher at The Volcano School of Arts & Sciences, Public Charter School on the island of Hawaii. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

Living on the compressed salary for years has caused me to fall behind on my student loan payments and other bills. My colleagues are in the same position. Teachers cannot afford suitable housing. Teachers are grossly under paid in this state. The cost of living is rising and salaries for teachers are not rising by very much. Teachers are leaving the state of Hawaii for this reason. This has led to hundreds of classrooms without certified teachers being taught by unqualified substitutes.

The hard-to-staff differentials this year were not paid to charter school teachers who are not DOE-paid, leaving a huge inequity in pay for charter school teachers. All charter schools as state agencies should be paying their teachers the same for the same qualifications. This inequity should not stand.

There are Hawaiian immersion schools with classrooms that have teachers that do not speak Hawaiian. This makes little sense. Pay people what they deserve and positions will be filled by qualified individuals.

Putting unqualified teachers in classrooms to fill the openings with warm bodies is hurting the keiki, who deserve better than that. Students with learning challenges deserved qualified teachers. When schools are forced to hire substitutes for special educators, other special educators' workloads and caseloads double. Mine did this year. My caseload is double what it should be, and what it was 10 years ago. People are rapidly quitting teaching in Hawaii because of this situation. Offering the pay differentials and undoing the salary compression will keep experienced educators in the classrooms.

Please save education in Hawaii and fund this bill with \$70 million as to not further short-change the

Hawaiian students, the learning- challenged students, and the hardworking teachers.

Sincerely,
Mara Saltzman

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

From: [Duane Tominaga](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 5:24:51 PM

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is **Duane Tominaga**. I am a teacher at **Highlands Intermediate** in **Pearl City** on **Oahu**. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I've been teaching special education for twenty years and I went into teaching to make a difference in the lives of my students. I've spent countless hours at home each week working on IEPs, scheduling IEP meetings, developing lesson plans, grading work and doing all of the other teacher stuff for twenty years. To say that I've been appropriately compensated and appreciated for all that I've done would be far from the truth. Throughout the twenty years, I've had the privilege of working alongside tremendous, caring teachers. I've also, unfortunately, seen those very same teachers leave the profession due to the low pay. As with all of my colleagues, I believe that it's time that Hawai'i does whatever it takes to bring in and retain quality teachers that our children deserve. We need your help.

Duane Tominaga

Highlands Intermediate

Pearl City District

From: [C. McClung](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways & Means, Wednesday, February 19, at 10 am.
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 5:25:56 PM

Dear Senate Ways and Means Committee Chairperson, Donavan Dela Cruz,

I strongly support fully funding SB2488 at \$70 million, because all of our children deserve to have a licensed teacher in the classroom. The full \$70 million is the amount that's needed to assure the salary adjustment to fix compression, along with continuing the hard-to-staff, SPED and Hawaiian language immersion shortage differentials. It is so clear that damage is done by a system wide shortage that puts too many substitutes and unqualified teachers in front of our children. Students are at risk for not receiving the services and classroom support necessary for them to learn and thrive at school. Please fight for our students and pass SB2488.

Many Thanks,

Cynthia McClung
Kapaa, HI

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TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Jade Pham. I am a special education teacher at Kaimuki High School in Honolulu District on Oahu. *I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1. Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.*

I am a home-grown teacher; I was raised in Palolo Valley Homes, defied the statistics of low-socioeconomic conditions, and chose to return to my community to empower students with disabilities, english learners, and at-risk youth. I love my job and I understand the essential role that I play every single day with the children that I am privileged to educate. My job is multi-faceted in that I play the role of teacher, parent, mentor, and older sister in the lives of many without supportive adults at home. I often feel alone in my ambitions to shed a light on a seemingly broken community, especially when all of my economic and emotional resources are consumed by my career.

As a third-year teacher, I have to emphasize that the differential is essential to retain new and veteran educators in the special education field. In my first two years of teaching at a Title I school, I was assigned to teach mixed classes of 10-12th graders between four content areas (english, science, social studies, math) in addition to a personal transition plan class and reading workshop class. I managed a heavy caseload of 20 Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) but was unable to meet the services and minutes of student IEPs that are required by federal law. Many new special education teachers share a similar experience. There are NOT enough teachers to provide individualized instruction to our most vulnerable population of youth. After receiving my Master of Education degree in 2019, I considered leaving the teaching

profession. I saw many of my younger colleagues transition into other careers that might better support the cost of living here in Hawaii.

The future prosperity of our local communities lies in the foundation that we build for our keiki. Through a free and appropriate public education for all, we are equipped in the fight to bridge the gap for marginalized children. The question is, WHO will provide this education? To recruit and retain homegrown teachers, we must make the teaching profession attractive. The differential I received in my past three paychecks has helped me to pay my rent, be more attentive to my students, and spend more time volunteering for Ho'ola Na Pua, a nonprofit that fights sex trafficking. If funding for the differentials is not provided, I will not be able to continue to support myself as a teacher in Hawaii. I like to always think, "If not me, then who? If not now, then when?" My students can testify to the difference that their teachers are making in their lives. Can you testify to the difference that teachers are making in Hawaii? We must look forward and set things in motion to build and sustain our community. We cannot look back ten years from now and consider what we could have done differently to revert this shortage crisis.

We need your help. My story pertains to the special education shortage, but I ask you to please help to provide funding for the differentials and salary compression. With utmost sincerity, I challenge you further by joining me in this profession as a classroom teacher.

Mahalo.



Jade Yim Pham, MedT
Social Studies, Special Education
Entertainment Academy
Kaimuki High School

(808) 733-4900 ext. 261
(808) 428-4425
jade.pham@k12.hi.us
jpham@kaimukihs.k12.hi.us

From: [Bridget B](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 5:30:59 PM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE
RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Bridget Braun. I am a Third grade teacher at Konawaena Elementary in the West Hawaii complex on the island of Hawaii. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

Living on the Island of Hawaii is extremely expensive and it is difficult to do at our current salaries. I am a first year teacher who moved here from the mainland. I love teaching here and getting the opportunity learn about the island and the culture. Unfortunately it makes it difficult when the cost of living is so high and our salaries are so low.

We need your help. Mahalo.

From: [Georgianna Hashimoto](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 5:31:23 PM

My name is Georgianna Hashimoto I am a Special education Teacher at Ha'aheo Elementary School in Hilo on the Big Island. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our children.

For me personally we need more teachers to stay in our field. I am very exhausted with late nights of writing IEP's and daily meetings and deadlines. I also feel we need permanent special education teachers and general education teachers to feel valued. As a native Hawaiian how can I tell my students to be a teacher when there are only a limited amount of native Hawaiians who are financially valued in our field. We love our job but everyone needs validation.

We are teaching everyone's most valuable asset, their child, your child. Are we not worth it? We need your support and need a voice to help us to heard.

Be that voice!

We need your help. Mahalo.

Georgianna Hashimoto

Hilo, Big Island

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Allison Tanaka](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 5:31:25 PM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE
RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020
10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Allison Tanaka. I am a teacher at Lehua Elementary School in Leeward District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

My husband and I are both public school educators. He is an elementary school librarian at Kailua Elementary and I am a special education preschool teacher working with deaf and hard of hearing students. He began teaching in 1995 and I switched from teaching at a private school to the DOE in 1999. We are both affected by the salary compression.

We have spent many years living frugally so that we could raise our two boys in Hawaii and be close with our families. We pulled through tough economic times hardships at work. Fixing the salary compression and differentials will help my husband and I to both remain public school teachers.

Retirement is not in our near future. We would love to continue to work with our students instead of considering working in school districts on the mainland where housing and the cost of living is affordable. My coworker is leaving in a couple of weeks to relocate to Nevada. She told me that in Las Vegas, she can rent a nice house, and live off of her teaching salary while her husband stays home to care for their two young children. My school will miss her. Her students will miss her.

Being a classroom special education teacher, I am also affected by the SPED differential. There is such a shortage of qualified SPED teachers. Because I am certified in Deaf Education, I am considering transferring to the Hawaii School for Deaf and Blind. I know that many of the current teachers there are not licensed to teach in Hawaii, yet they continue to work year after year. Many of the teachers there who were certified, have returned to the mainland. There has always been such a high turn over rate at that school that I understand why it is hard-to-fill. Please provide funding for additional teacher pay.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Allison Tanaka, Leeward District, Oahu

From: [Kanoë Clarin](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wed Feb 18
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 5:33:32 PM

My name is Shannon Clarin. I am a Social Studies Teacher at Ewa Makai Middle School in the Leeward District on O’ahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

My husband and I are both veteran teachers. Lately, I have been thinking about changing professions or moving off island due to the high cost of living here on O’ahu. I love my job, but I have to be honest about our financial struggles. It’s hard to make ends meet. My husband and I work very hard. We are passionate about what we are teaching. We love teaching in the community that we live in because these students are our neighbors. We believe that it is our responsibility to help students reach for their dreams and help make our community better by being caring and kind members of our Ewa Beach Community. I believe that teachers make such a huge impact in Hawaii and they should be compensated for all of their hard work and dedication. I love Hawaii. I am Hawaiian and I love living here. I just want to be able to live in the land of my ancestors and continue to educate our youth without having to worry about whether I could afford to live here. I’m still paying my student loan and I wish that teachers would have 100% loan forgiveness, but because there is no such thing, I pay a lot of money every month to pay off student loans. All the teachers I know are struggling financially. Most of my coworkers have a second job to make ends meet. Please give keikis the schools they deserve and help teachers to stay in this profession.

We need your help.

Mahalo,

Shannon Clarin

Ewa Makai Middle School

Leeward District, O'ahu

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Donna Vierra](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 5:52:15 PM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is **Donna Vierra**. I am a **Student Activities Coordinator and Leadership Class teacher** at **H.P. Baldwin High School** in the **Maui District**. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been a public school teacher going on 30 years this year. Early on in my career I took all the classes I could to get me up to Class 7. I have been on step 14 for so many years I can't even remember. My salary is dependent on new contracts and small wage increases. The cost of living in Hawaii keeps going up but our salary doesn't.

As a Student Activities Coordinator of 20 years, I have seen many new teachers from the Mainland and Hawaii come and go. They leave teaching because of the small salary and

high cost of living. We can attract them, but once they have to pay bills, they struggle to live here, then move to the mainland in as little as a month to 2 years. This creates chaos In the school mid- year and classes have to be staffed with long term substitute teachers who are not qualified to teach the subject matter.

A solution would be to attract our own local kids to teach. But the only way to do that is to make teaching attractive by offering higher pay so they can afford to live here. My own daughter cannot afford to move back here because of the high cost of living.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Donna Vierra, Wailuku, Maui

From: [Jennifer Grant](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1 Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb 19th, at 10 am
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 5:57:39 PM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Jennifer Grant. I am a history teacher at Farrington High School in Honolulu District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been at Farrington for 12 years. I started here as a sped teacher but after 6 years of being overworked and underpaid for the sped duties I switched over to a general education position. The special education differentials are much needed for those in sped. I have thought about going back because it is a substantial amount. My husband currently teaches in special education and having that extra money has definitely helped our family. Paying \$10,000 a year more for sped teachers will save money for the state in the end because I feel like more sped teachers will stay in the classroom.

Ever since I left the private sector to go into teaching, I have had a second job as a consultant. I have been very lucky to be able to retain this extra income which helps to cover our mortgage. I am one of those teachers that has been affected by the compression.

I got my masters in sped upon entering DOE and then worked really hard to get to class 7 with 2 kids under the age of 4 at the time. Even with doing this, I still won't be much further ahead salary wise as my current student teacher who will be entering DOE as a first year teacher in July. Many times I have thought about leaving the DOE for another job because of the cost of living and I really would love to just have one job. The differentials plus the compression being fixed would allow me to quit that other job and just focus on teaching which is my passion.

I humbly ask you to fund this bill so we can continue to have experienced teachers in our classrooms who want to stay and do what they love.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Jennifer Grant
Honolulu District
Oahu

From: [Jenny Wada](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 6:07:25 PM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Jennifer Wada, I am a Student Services and 504 Coordinator at Kaunakakai School in Maui District on the island of Molokai. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

As an educator on Molokai for the past 26 years, I have witnessed a high level of staff turnover due to the unique combination of cost of living and new teacher recruits not understanding the inherent costs associated with the remote nature of our beautiful island. Gas is \$5.04/gal for the cheap stuff, a gallon of milk \$8+, a loaf a bread \$6+, and rent, more than you'd guess; I'm sure you get the picture. I am grateful for those who relocate to Molokai to teach, however, the cost of travel for medical appointments, "breaks" or shopping (to load up on reasonable home supplies from Costco) is something that most don't factor in to the cost of living here. I can't tell you how many "newbies" leave here after just a short time. The pay differentials will certainly have a positive impact on retaining new teachers and our most experienced teachers.

Just this year at our school we had two teachers, one readying to retire, the other determined to leave Special Education for the general education classroom. Their leaving would have left a void to be filled by...who? We currently have 4 classroom teacher positions filled with day to day hire

substitute teachers, with no certified teacher or certified SPED teacher candidates on the horizon. Both of these valued and experienced teachers made the decision to remain in their current positions when the differentials were announced. I know the decision these two teachers have made will positively impact the success of the keiki they now serve and those they will serve in the future.

I can't tell you how important the differential is to retaining our most effective and experienced talent so our keiki have the best opportunity for a bright future.

We need your help.

Mahalo,

Jennifer Wada, Maui District, Molokai

From: [Briana Martinez](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Teachers our children deserve
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 6:08:40 PM

Dear Senate Ways and Means Committee Chairperson, Donovan Dela Cruz,

I strongly support fully funding SB2488 at \$70 million, because all of our children deserve to have a licensed teacher in the classroom. The full \$70 million is the amount that's needed to assure the salary adjustment to fix compression, along with continuing the hard-to-staff, SPED, and Hawaiian language immersion shortage differentials. It is so clear that damage is done by a system wide shortage that puts too many substitutes and unqualified teachers in front of our children. Students are at risk for not receiving the services and classroom support necessary for them to learn and thrive at school. Please fight for our students and pass SB2488.

Many Thanks,

Briana Martinez - Special Education Teacher
Kapaa, HI

--

Kindergarten Teacher
(808) 241-3150 ext. 133

Inclusion is not simply about physical proximity. It is about intentionally planning for the success of all students.

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From: [Elizabeth Conroy-Humphrey](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 6:11:13 PM

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is **Elizabeth Conroy-Humphrey**. I am a **6-12 academic guidance counselor** at **Lana'i High & Elementary School** in **Maui District** on the island of Lana'i. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have lived on the island of Lana'i for 20 years. I have not been able to purchase a home and have spent money into rent and have nothing to show for it. Both my husband and I work 3 jobs in order to pay our rent, electric, water, rubbish, sewer, rubbish, groceries, fuel for vehicles and have very little left over for any extra. We have daughters who chose the military route after high school as we could not afford to live in Hawaii and also send our children to college without acquiring monumental amounts of debt. Although I have worked 20 years in the DOE I still will need to work 15-20 more years in order to survive once I do not have a regular paycheck coming in. On the island of Lana'i we always start the school year with vacant positions or emergency hires that do not have any teaching backgrounds and usually end of quitting not far into the school year living our students without a teacher. Our current 6th grade students have been the class that every year had a multiple teachers leave or no certified teachers for these students. The parents of these children have no other option as we are the only school on the island. Not even a private or charter school as an alternative option. In general keeping teachers on Lana'i is a challenge. We have huge turn over every year as the cost to live is so high and housing is limited.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Elizabeth Conroy-Humphrey

Academic Guidance Counselor
Lana'i High & Elementary School
Maui County
Lana'i Island

From: [Maile Yasui](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, February 19, 2020
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 6:16:11 PM

Chair Donovan Dela Cruz and members of the Senate Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Maile Yasui. I am a teacher at Momilani Elementary in the Leeward District on the island of Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, proposed SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard to staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides to do so. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I've been teaching for 23 years. In the last few years, I've also become a National Board Certified Teacher. I've been fortunate enough to teach at a great school that supports me in being a highly qualified teacher. Our school has been supportive by sending me as well as other teachers, to workshops that help us "stay on our teaching game" so we can continue to be more innovative and effective in our craft for teaching students. I feel these supports have worked for both my class and our school because our school has been successful on annual State Assessments. I love teaching and I love learning with my students. As much as I love it, it still requires a lot of effort on my part to keep my teaching innovative and effective for my students. Keeping up with technology, reading educational journals/articles, practicing new and improved upcoming reading and writing strategies, and planning weekly lesson plans require lots of time outside of school hours. Not to mention the extra duty of coaching after school intramural sports for the love it. Lately, I've been wondering if all the extra planning and extra hours required to do a good job at teaching/coaching really worth it? My pay hasn't changed much over the many years of teaching. My accountant reminds me every year that my W-2s don't seem to change much -- and I find doing my taxes every year depresses me and makes me feel unappreciated. As I get closer to retiring in 7 years, these are the thoughts that run through my head all the time.

Should I continue to teach beyond 30 years? If I had to consider all the time and the effort I put into planning, teaching, and coaching and the lack of payment compensation for it -- no, I wouldn't teach beyond 7 years.

The sad thing is that I love to teach. Teaching keeps my mind and my heart young. It keeps me innovative and helps me be "up to date" in what is going on in our world. I think teaching is a great career, but still very unappreciated. If funding is

provided to fund the above bill is approved, I would definitely stay on and continue teaching in Hawaii. I am already a highly qualified teacher, and I would gladly continue to work to keep up my highly qualified certifications. I love to teach and I love working with our children of Hawaii. Please fund SB 2488, SD1 - and I will work beyond my 30 years to educate Hawaii's keiki.

We need your help.

Mahalo,

Maile Yasui, Leeward District, Oahu

From: [Justine Malek](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 6:17:37 PM

My name is Justine Malek. I am a Special Education Teacher at Kula Elementary School in Kula on Maui. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I graduated from UH Manoa in Spring of 2018 and immediately entered the teaching community at Kula Elementary School in the Fall. I have known since I was a young child that someday I would be a special education teacher and my journey to this point has had its ups and downs. Since beginning as a teacher I have been renting from my parents to reduce the cost of living as I could not afford a rental on my salary.

In order to afford even my parent's rent in addition to my monthly expenses, I had to take on a second job and now work as a waitress at a nearby restaurant. After doing the math, if I were to leave the teaching profession and work full time at the restaurant, I would be getting a pay raise! This seems insane to me as working as a waitress I do not require a college degree or previous work experience.

I was so grateful when I heard about the SPED differential that is beginning this year. With this I have been able to begin saving for a future house and other investments (while keeping my second job). Prior to getting this news, I was seriously considering leaving the profession or at the very least leaving the state to work elsewhere. I have personally experienced how difficult and how rewarding it is to be a teacher. In my heart I know that I will always be a teacher however I do not know if I will continue to teach in Hawaii. I do know that the differentials are highly needed to maintain our teachers on island and have been blessed to have a fantastic team this year. I truly hope that you will see how much these differentials are needed and help us keep our fantastic and dedicated teachers on island!

We need your help. Mahalo,

Justine Malek

From: [Yvette Rapozo](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, February 19, at 10:00am
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 6:22:40 PM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Yvette Rapozo. I am a 2nd grade teacher at Kapaa Elementary School in Kapaa on Kauai. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

We currently have about 600 classroom being occupied by unqualified teachers and the DOE needs to hire roughly 1,200-1,300 new teachers each year due to teachers leaving our state/profession or those retiring. Which contributes to our teaching shortage. The average teacher salary is \$65,000 which isn't much when you factor in the cost of living here in Hawaii. The DOE's effort to recruit teachers from the mainland is a wasted effort each and every year when they come here and realize it's so expensive and leave after a year or two. If teachers here in Hawaii got paid a larger wage, we could keep more teachers each year instead of losing them. This would also help young teachers gain more experience here and become better teachers over the years which will only help our students become more successful and better educated.

I myself is caught in the salary compression. I have taught in Hawaii for 14 years. I went through teacher furloughs and saw my salary go backwards instead of upward for many years and this problem was never corrected. I work

two jobs just to get by. I am barely covering my monthly expenses. I have earned my Master degree and took many classes to get to class 7 on the pay scale. I also recently received National Board Certification to gain the monetary incentive to help with expenses. There isn't anymore I can do to raise my salary. Please help me and others like me to increase our salary and receive the salaries we deserve. We would like to stay in Hawaii and continue to teach, but if something doesn't change soon, the problem will continue to get worse since we will have no choice.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Yvette Rapozo, Kapaa, Kauai

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

From: [Kana Naipo](#)
To: [WAM Testimony; Kana Naipo](#)
Subject: SB2488, SD1
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 6:27:02 PM

Aloha e Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Blayne "Kana" Naipo I am a high school Social Studies & Digital Media teacher at Castle High School on the island of Oahu in Kaneohe. **I was born and raised here on the Windward side.** I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been teaching for 14 years and sad to say I am still at class 3 on my pay scale. I have two Masters degrees and a huge student loan debt, which by the way, the Fedloan process, is extremely cumbersome and difficult to follow. Ugh!!! It's a continuously annual endeavor that does not make it easy for any of us teachers. Teaching was and still is my passion but to be honest I just don't know how long I can last? With a (family) home mortgage, credit debt, and living expenses I am forced to work a second job for DLS. on the weekends to make extra money \$. I am looking into actually changing my career. **Though to support my colleagues whom I know has been struggling I am asking for your support.... for your kokua, for your' voice to speak on behalf of those teachers who give selflessly for our keiki. Please help.**

Mahalo

Kana Naipo

From: [Charimhel Rarallo](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 6:41:48 PM

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Charimhel Rarallo. I am a full-time Fourth-grade teacher at Nanaikapono Elementary School in the Leeward District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

Personally, the support would help out my family's financial issues. My family consists of my dad (84) and I (24). My family's income is coming from my dad's Social Security pension and my teaching salary. It used to include my mother but she passed in December of 2019 because of cancer. Paying for my parents' doctor bills, the funeral and the monthly bills, will not be covered by a mere beginning teacher's salary and my father's pension. This is my second year of teaching and at a hard-to-staff school.

The differentials that I received because I'm at a hard-to-staff school is very much needed for my students. It is the middle of the year and my classroom is out of paper towels, tissue boxes, and almost out of hand sanitizers/soap. I moved into this classroom this school year and the cabinets were bare. So the class depended upon the supplies that the students bring in, which is not much. Because these supplies affect the students' hygiene, it very much affects their health, which most importantly affects students' learning. In my first year of this career, preparing for the upcoming school year, I was told that there will be students who come and lack supplies. Our school gets supplies for the classroom but it's not a bottomless supply and it most certainly does not include paper towels, tissues, and sanitizers. Even with the provided "extra" supplies, we still run out of composition notebooks, pencils, crayons, and folder paper near the end of the school year. If the students can't get it from home, and the school is doing what they can but it's still not enough, then I go out of my way to buy the supplies my students need because I know that these supplies will make a difference in the students' learning.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Charimhel Rarallo
Leeward District, Oahu

From: [Bridgette Beatty](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 6:48:51 PM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Bridgette Beatty. I am currently an elementary teacher, previously I taught life and earth sciences also, at Lana'i High and Elementary School in Maui District Canoe Complex on Lana'i. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard to staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I taught on Lana'i for more than 4 years, moved back to the islands and taught on Maui for 2 years, then recently moved back to teach again at Lana'i High and Elementary School. We all know the cost of living in the islands is higher than the mainland. Living on Lana'i, the cost goes up even more, as everything is brought in by barge, what little is grown here is very expensive to purchase, and a trip to Costco costs a minimum of \$200 just in travel costs to and from Maui prior to actually purchasing any food or merchandise.

Upon moving back to the islands 3 years ago, I thought living on Maui would be more cost effective. It is only slightly more cost effective on groceries and gas, however, the cost of housing is outrageous. Living on a teacher's salary, I do not qualify for much, so the available houses are literally decaying, mostly unsafe, and extremely costly to rent. The rent I paid ranged from 50%-80% of my salary. My family was hungry. We live on an extremely tight budget with no room for even extra gas to go to the beach (which is free) for fun. Prior to moving back to Lana'i we looked into a

tiny home, camping, and honestly, being homeless. Aside from Lana'i being home, I chose to move my family back to Lana'i knowing I would get housing due to teaching on a hard to staff island. In addition to limited housing available to rent at a modest rate I have no vehicle as I cannot afford one. This does, however, present its own problems far too often.

I have worked an outside business for the majority of my time employed as an educator simply to put enough food on the table for my family. This first increase in pay was the first time my family has not had to eat instant ramen for dinner every night for a week prior to the next paycheck simply because we could not afford anything else.

It is of extreme importance to adjust the pay of veteran teachers' who have not been given regular step increases during hard economic times. I myself, having been back teaching in Hawai'i for the past 3 years and having taught for more than 7 years in the islands, am actively looking at options to get me out of the teaching profession. I choose to be a teacher, and enjoy it at times, but it honestly is more stressful and dissatisfying than ever. The pay being tens of thousands of dollars below the cost of living here makes it even less appealing to stay in education.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Bridgette Beatty, Maui Canoe District, Lana'i

From: [Jeffrey Iverslie](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 6:58:12 PM

RE: SB 2488 Proposed SD1, RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

Chair Kidani and members of the Education Committee:

My name is Jeffrey Iverslie. I am a teacher at Konawaena Elementary School in Kona District on the Big Island. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, proposed SD1. Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compensation issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard to staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides to do so. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been working at Konawaena Elementary School for 17 years as a special education teacher. In that time frame, I have worked with 34 different special education teachers. While some were unable to deal with the geographic isolation of our beautiful island, the vast majority were unable to support themselves and/or their family on the current pay structure. I believe that passing SB 2488 and adequately funding special education, Hawaiian language immersion and hard to staff positions will provide needed incentives for teacher retention which is vital to address the educational needs of our students.

We need your help.

Mahalo,

Jeffrey Iverslie
Kona District
Big Island, Hawaii

From: [Jessica Blair](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 7:12:04 PM

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Jessica Blair. I am an AVID electives teacher and the AVID coordinator at Hilo High school in the Hilo-Waiakea Complex of the Big Island. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

Funding the differentials will make a great deal of difference for my family, as we recently moved back to the islands, and I had to take a pay cut as a teacher to do that. Living in Hawaii, as I'm sure you're well aware, is very expensive. I chose to move home because I really believe in the community here and the students at my school (my alma mater) and I want to make a difference in our community, but it has been difficult for us since we've been back. We are fortunate to have family support, but we left behind our lives both socially and career-wise to be here. I make much less now than I did in Oregon, and my husband had to change fields altogether to find work.

In the long term, my salary will never reach what I could have made in Oregon, but with the step increases over time, perhaps I will be able to offer my keiki the life I think they deserve.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Jessica Blair, Hilo-Waiakea, Big Island of Hawaii

From: [Gretchen Romerdahl](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020 10:00 a.m. Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee: My name is [INSERT NAME]. I am a [INSERT POSITIO...
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 7:20:31 PM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Gretchen Romerdahl. I am a 4th grade teacher at Kamali'i Elementary School in Baldwin-Kekaulike-Maui on Maui. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I am a product of Hawai'i public school and now teach at the same elementary school I attended as a child. I also work two other jobs in order to provide for my family. The cost of living in our state is so high that it is impossible to make ends meet with our current salaries. Despite my attachment to Hawai'i public schools and our Kamali'i 'ohana I have begun to look outside of Hawai'i for employment opportunities. I love our keiki and our schools, but our current salaries are not sufficient enough to support our 'ohana. We need additional funding so dedicated, home-grown teachers like myself are not forced to leave the islands in order to support our 'ohana. Schools on the mainland value my years of experience and offer salaries that reflect that, when Hawai'i unfortunately does not.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Gretchen Romerdahl, BKM, Maui

From: [Dezha-Lynn Hermosura](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 7:37:36 PM

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Dezha George I am a inclusion teacher at Kapolei Elementary in the Leeward district on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

As a teacher who has been teaching in the DOE for 10 years, I have served where the needs were in my school, having taught every grade level from K through 5 in general and special education settings. I have also served as a resource teacher as a SPED/AVID Coach. I know that my passion lies within teaching, but in recent years, I began to question whether teaching in the DOE was the best decision for myself and family. After giving much of myself to the profession, I began to ask myself if the load was worth it. Over the years, I have not been able to take as many PD courses as I would have liked in order to work my way up the pay scale.

The primary reason being that I needed to constantly assess my capacity in each season, knowing and drawing healthy boundaries around work and family. With confidence, I know that I have given my best to my career, and more importantly, the keiki and their families. Although I continue to invest in the future of our keiki in the community through other avenues, I do know the privilege and platform classroom teachers have to make an impact. As much as my desire would be to remain in the classroom, there are still other factors that need to be considered.

The funding considered in this bill may not be the end all answer, but it definitely will be a step in the right direction and will bring some kind of encouragement and acknowledgment to the many adults who pour out into the lives of our future generation. I know I speak on behalf of many teachers who feel the same.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Dezha George, Leeward District, Oahu

From: [Landy Shiroma](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 7:53:06 PM

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Landy Shiroma and I am a 1st grade teacher at Moanalua Elementary School in the Central District on the island of Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been teaching in Hawaii for over 31 years and am soon ready to retire. I began teaching for 7 years on the island of Molokai and saw that even 30 years ago, the keiki in these rural areas need and deserve qualified teachers. I had the honor to see a few of my former students who are now in their 30's, with successful careers and small businesses. Even more so today than 30 years ago, our world has many more challenges and our keiki need so much more in order to "make it" and be successful in life. By giving them a good start with a qualified teacher, we can at least know we did our best to provide for these well deserving keiki. A salary differential for rural areas and fixing the salary compression issue would be ways to keep as many qualified teachers in the classrooms. I myself, would be planning to retire next year. However, with the possibility of the pay increase with the salary compression issue, I, as well as several others at my school, would definitely stay to teach a few more years.

Thank you for taking time to read this and your help and consideration in this matter.

Mahalo,

Landy Shiroma, Central District, Oahu

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Claire Oshita](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Equity
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 8:11:32 PM

I've been teaching for 33 years and JUST made it to Step 14b. My step increases were also frozen for many years. However, HSTA didn't put any proposals on the table for teachers with the most longevity. Shouldn't we be compensated too?

Local fireman are fairly compensated for years of service, but seasoned teachers are not well respected.

February 17, 2020

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee,

My name is Gayle Lee and I am a Student Services Coordinator in Ewa Beach on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, proposed SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue. The department will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been teaching for 24 years in Hawaii and I am one of those teachers who got “stuck”. I am on Step 13 and I know that there are some teachers who have been teaching for a shorter period of time that have surpassed me in steps. It is a struggle to know this and not feel valued for the years of solid service that I have put into this profession. My colleagues and I have worked diligently to support our students in Hawaii’s public schools. By working together to balance the interests of all the stakeholder groups and reflecting on how we will use the money received to best meet the needs of our students, our schools and our communities, I am confident we will allow for a greater number of students to achieve excellence.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Gayle Lee, Leeward District, Oahu

From: [Lauryn Hirano](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 8:20:37 PM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Lauryn Castro. I am a 3rd grade teacher at Keaau Elementary School in the KKP District on Hawaii Island. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been a teacher for 12 years and believe that we need to fix our salary compression issue. This will help support my family and help keep me as a public school teacher. I have seen far too many teachers either leave this profession or remove themselves from public education due to this issue. I also also hear teachers tell family members not to get into teaching because, "is it not worth all the time and lack of money." Teachers who teach with all their heart including myself, should feel like their pay meets the effort that we put in. It should compensate for the amount of hours that we put into planning and the amount of out of pocket expense that we put into our keiki. We are the teachers for our future leaders and they deserve nothing but the best. We will continue to be the best for them but would like to humbly ask for your support.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Lauryn Castro, KKP Complex, Hawaii Island

From: [Darlene Ewan](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: SB SENATE 2488 Testimony Letter
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 8:23:24 PM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Darlene Ewan. I am a Deaf Education Teacher under Hawaii Special Education Department at Hawaii School for the Deaf and the Blind in Honolulu School District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

With salary raise, it is appropriate for Hawaii School for the Deaf and the Blind to receive a salary raise. We are a school with full of students that are required to meet the individual needs under IDEA.

We also have problem with retention of our teachers and support staff. They often don't stay to teach at the school due to low salary. This causes us to teach several different subjects in one week.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Darlene Ewan, Honolulu School District, Oahu

--

"Failure will never overtake me if my determination to succeed is strong enough."

Note: My native language is American Sign Language, while I am multilingual, you may notice English translation errors. Contact me if you have any questions or need clarification.

From: [Barb Van Der Kamp](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 8:26:32 PM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Barb VanDerKamp. I am a 2nd grade teacher at Ka`ohao School in Windward District on O'ahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funding to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

As a veteran teacher I've been honored with the opportunity and responsibility of mentoring student teachers from our own Universtiy of Hawai`i. I've nurtured them while they've re-energized me and given my students gifts different from my own. They were all so amazing and dedicated and talented; I was so proud to have them enter our teaching force. A few of them have stayed "at home" but several of them felt they had to move to the mainland to make enough to live on their own, as they should be able to. I've had several colleagues do the same thing- leave Hawai`i after a hard divorce or spouse losing a job situation caused them to be unable to afford our high-priced housing and cost of living.

I believe that addressing the compression issue would help the latter and in the long term help the former too. Long time teachers with all the value of years of experience and tricks in their bag will feel recognized and financially rewarded for sticking it out. Young educators getting into our field will see that our state treats educators fairly and with the respect only a reasonable wage

allows.

Keeping good people here, and happy in their work, is what will make a difference in sad story that has been education in Hawai`i. Be the legislators that make the difference- Build the teachers, build the students, build our state.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Barb VanDerKamp

Windward District, O`ahu

From: [Olivia Malcolm](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: SB 2488, SD1
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 8:28:44 PM

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Olivia Malcolm. I am a Sped. ED teacher as ASL Specialist at Hawaii School for the Deaf and the Blind in Honolulu School District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

Sharing my personal experience, I moved to Hawaii in 2016 and began my first career at HSDB. I had no idea how long I would be staying here. It depended on the salary. I have taken some PD classes and did a reclassification once. I love my job because of how rewarding it is to educate deaf children in same time being a role model for them as a deaf woman. It was great but I was still uncertain about my future. Now with the pay differential for Sped. Ed teachers and hard to staff schools, I became certain of my future. I ask you to support this bill to continue the compensation for myself and everyone else involved. We benefit this greatly.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Olivia Malcolm, Honolulu School District, Oahu

From: [Ken I](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 8:31:15 PM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Mitchell Ishihara. I am a School Counselor at Hokulani Elementary School in the Honolulu District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers.

The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

The cost of living and low salary have resulted in quite a few of my colleagues leaving the professions of teaching and school counseling. A few have chosen to go to the mainland and a few have gone into other professions for better opportunities and pay.

We need your help!

Mahalo,

Mr. Mitchell Ishihara, Honolulu District, Oahu

From: [Holly Nakamoto](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: SB 2488 SD1
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 8:33:32 PM

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Holly Nakamoto. I am a Kindergarten teacher at Konawaena Elementary School in Kealahou on the Big Island. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

We need Your help,

Holly Nakamoto,

Konawaena Elementary School

From: [Valerie Harmon](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Please Support SB2488 SD1
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 8:33:46 PM

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Valerie Harmon. I am an Art Teacher (the name of the course specifically is, Literacy through Art) at Kalakaua Middle School in Kalihi in the Farrington District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in Title I schools. located in low-income, hard to staff districts, such as the middle school where I teach.

I am a dedicated teacher who spends half of my personal time week-ends, evenings, and early mornings preparing my classroom. I tutor students after school and am committed to student academic and emotional growth at my school. I have worked for the DOE for many years, however, I need to make a decent living. It is not fair that I retire on a meager retirement. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

Rather than giving all new monies to new teachers in hopes that they will stay.. this bill should provide a pay raise for teachers that have been the backbone of Hawaii's Department of Education. Fixing this salary injustice will give teachers the incentive to want to remain in this profession, and know that we can continue as Hawaii's teachers and not be forced to look for another job where we will be satisfactorily compensated for our time, professional abilities and experience.

We need your help. Please give teachers the raises they deserve. Mahalo and Thank you!

Valerie Harmon

HSTA Head Representative for Kalakaua Middle School

Kalakaua Middle School

821 Kalihi St.

Honolulu, HI 96819

From: [Shawn Chang](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 8:34:49 PM

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Shawn Chang. I am a Special Education Resource Teacher at Windward District Office Special Education Department in Windward District on the island of Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki. I have been teaching in the DOE for over 20 years. I have held teaching positions in the elementary level, high school level and district level. I work with veteran teachers and newly hired teachers. I have seen teachers come and go for many reasons, but one common reason is the lack of pay to be able to live may survive with putting a roof over their heads. It makes it harder when a single person has to work multiple jobs in order to afford a room to sleep. Did you hear me? "A room to sleep". A teacher's salary is not nearly enough to purchase a house in Hawaii. Two teacher's salaries is barely enough to support a family of four. It's a no brainer why our children of Hawaii lose the best teachers. Because our best teachers are either too stressed trying to survive in Hawaii, or they leave for an easier life off island. I may be one of those teachers considering moving away because it's just too hard to stay afloat financially and emotionally. I've been teaching for 20 years and have gone a number of years without moving up the pay scale yet new teachers who just started, make nearly as much as I do. Is that fair? I feel neglected and abandoned by the people who should have our best interest in mind. You politicians. And please don't think of raising the taxes on anything. That just feels like a slap in the face and will only negate any raise.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Shawn Chang, Windward District, Oahu

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Mitchell Kimura](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 8:38:18 PM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Mitchell Kimura. I am a science teacher at Kalani High School, here in Honolulu, Hawaii (Oahu). I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been teaching for about fifteen years, and have experienced the Furlough Fridays, when Ms Lingle told us there was absolutely no money for us--and the best we could do is just maintain (teacher) positions or not lay anyone off. Well, since then, there has not been many of those step increases; and I, personally, can cite many examples of fellow teachers... "good" teachers... "veteran" teachers... that have already left the profession because of the low pay. My wife and I always talk about what we can do to "make ends meet." I already am working about 60+ hrs/ week, as I have a second job. Do not get me wrong: I love teaching and love "making a difference" in students' lives, but, well, financially speaking, it's tough. You know I thought some of you (legislators?) went on trips to see how other countries or cities "do education"? I believe in Finland the teachers have masters degrees, and get paid accordingly? They are paid well, and that is why they can attract quality people. I and many of my colleagues have masters degrees, but uh... are not paid a matching salary. Another example: Did you know in Japan it is illegal for a secondary teacher to

take on another job? When I asked why, the teachers would respond: "The government wants teachers to focus on teaching." Can you beat that! The government knows of and wants teachers to focus on their profession! Wow! What a concept! Now if we in Hawaii actually DID that, if we PAID teachers enough so that THEY COULD FOCUS ON TEACHING AND NOT HAVE TO TAKE ON A SECOND JOB, maybe then we would actually see major transformation in education! Maybe then our math & science (as measured by PISA international tests) and everything else could match that of Finland & Japan! I just want to say teachers are not dumb (at least the good ones) and "you get what you pay for." If you want quality education, pay for it! In the long run you will attract and retain quality educators... that's just "common sense." Anyway, please help. Thank You.

Sincerely,

Mitchell Kimura, Kalani High School, Honolulu, HI

From: [David Wells](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 8:38:38 PM

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is David Wells. I am a Science Teacher at Volcano School of Arts and Sciences in the district of Ka'u on the Big Island. I am submitting testimony **in support of SB 2488, SD1.**

I am a third-generation teacher in the Islands. As a teacher I am proud of what I do and believe my efforts strengthen my community here in the district of Ka'u. I also have 5 brothers and have watched how they have increased their finances in the last 10 years. Sometimes I even work weekends for one of my brothers to make some extra money. He has asked me to join him at his business, but I do not want to leave teaching, but I do think about it. Teaching is very stressful and it can be a struggle financially raising my family of five so the thought does cross my mind. Please support this bill as the money will be going to strengthen our students, community and state.

Mahalo for your time.

David Wells, Ka'u district, Big Island

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*David Wells
Middle School Science Teacher
Volcano School of Arts & Sciences
P.O. Box 845
99-128 Old Volcano Road
Volcano, HI 96785
Ph. 808-985-9800
Fax. 808-985-9898*

From: [Bo Frank](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 8:57:42 PM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

[WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020](#)

[10:00 a.m.](#)

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Lawrence Frank, I am a secondary teacher at Radford High School in the central district on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been teaching for twenty years and my partner for fifteen. Teacher salary compression has hurt our family tremendously. We adopted three children and have pursued masters degrees to earn more money in the Hawaii DOE to provide for our children. Unfortunately as two educators with masters degrees we still cannot provide for our family without both of us working second jobs? What profession do people with masters degrees have to work second jobs to survive? Let me tell you the answer is, in education, teachers with masters degrees work second jobs to survive in Hawaii and that fact is terrible!

Many teachers have continued to teach through financial struggles and Hawaii's economic hardship, teacher salary compression during those times did not provide step movement for many years of service. Thus we are making the

same amount of money with peers that half half of our experience. I would love to attend my children's games or be home for family dinner but sadly I can't afford to do that on my current teacher salary and must instead work a second job at night! Please help with compensation for teacher salary compression that has not rewarded many of us for our dedication to the children of Hawaii and please consider our years of service.

We need your help.

Mahalo,

Lawrence Frank, Radford High, Oahu

Sent from my iPhone

From: [laila aldred](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 9:08:06 PM

Aloha,

My name is Laila Popata, I am the librarian at King Kekaulike High School on Maui. I have been a teacher for the D.O.E. since 2004. I am writing to urge the legislators to provide funding for teacher compensation. Please provide enough funds to fix the salary compression issue.

When I arrived in Maui from teaching in California, my years of experience were not counted toward my salary step. Now that I have been here teaching for 16 years, I have hardly made any salary steps based on my years of experience. This is frustrating and difficult. I have a mortgage to pay and many bills to cover. I know I could leave the state and I would make a significant amount more than I do now. A well established colleague is leaving at the end of this school year to move to Washington because of the significant increase in her salary leaving Hawaii will have.

I have seen many fellow teachers leave Hawaii because the salary is not enough to buy a home. We lost a great science teacher last year to New Mexico because of salary. She left in the middle of the year, the kids were very upset. We have a huge turnover of staff every year because teachers are not paid fairly. Now we have the opportunity to fix the salary compression issue and reward teachers who have demonstrated their commitment to our schools and keiki. My two boys are in public elementary school. They have open postings at their school because of the teacher shortage. We have no substitute teachers at the high school because all the substitutes have been hired for full time positions. As a parent and an educator, I know first hand that we have a teacher shortage crisis and part of this shortage is due to the salary compression issue. Teachers are leaving the profession or leaving the state because their salary does not reflect their years of service or expertise.

Our schools need to compensate our teachers fairly and funding for ending salary compression would be a step in the right direction.

Thank you.

Laila Popata
Makawao, Maui

From: [KEKOA CUMMINGS](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 9:10:58 PM

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Christina Cummings. I am a 3rd Grade teacher at Kualapuu PCCS in the Maui District on Molokai. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million-plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our Keiki.

I am a licensed & highly qualified teacher and have been for the last 10 years. However, the struggle to continue in this profession is becoming overwhelming. The immense amount of pressure due to a teacher's workload is unrealistic. We are not being compensated or paid adequately for the meetings, administrative requirements, paperwork, and staying after the students have left for hours and hours or taking home our work, are just a few additional stresses we deal with every day.

In addition, the cost of living far exceeds teachers' finances due to the salary compression that has affected my colleagues and I within the last decade. When SB 2488, SD1 is passed my family of 6 will eventually be able to afford the daily necessities such as our own home, food, gas, clothing, etc. to survive.

On the other hand, the differentials will help to compensate for the extended & excessive amount of time and money that I, and my colleagues, spend beyond the regular workday & the budget provided us. As a teacher, I spend the time & money to ensure that my students are provided a free adequate education. Please help me continue to do this for the children of Hawaii.

It would be heartbreaking to have to leave the teaching profession or Hawaii altogether because of the insufficient amount of pay needed to afford Hawaii's rising costs. The children suffer the most when there are unqualified teachers in the classroom. Your decision to pass the bill will retain highly qualified teachers in ALL of Hawaii's schools. SB 2488, SD1 makes it happen.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Christina Cummings, Maui District, Molokai

From: [Juan Espinal](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020 10:00 a.m.
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 9:29:06 PM

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Juan Espinal. I am a 5th Grade teacher at Konawaena Elementary in West Hawaii on Hawai'i Island. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1. Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I help schools because the kids that attend these schools deserve it. I have been volunteering hundreds of hours after school over the past 7 years volunteering to head coach our school's elementary track team. Each year, close to 80 students have been affected by my hard work and dedication to providing a positive, free, and memorable after-school experience to a community that lacks opportunities for many of its students. After all these years, this January found me stepping down due to my inability to volunteer any longer.

I noticed that though I work a third after school job teaching job, though I record an education podcast, though I live with 6 roommates to save on expenses, I still found myself over \$7,000 in credit card debt and no where closer to owning a home that could help me continue to do the work I love and respect so much. I've left my volunteer positions and have dedicated myself to starting a second job at a local resort to work in tourism. I will be ensuring that banquet goes at the Four Seasons Hualalai have a pleasurable vacation experience on the time that I previously provided to the students of the island ensuring a positive educational experience.

The differential pay has alleviated many immediate stresses on my life and have helped me to determine better ways to provide for my family. I believe continuing to fund these payments will help us teachers that work and service hard to staff positions. There is a palpable teacher shortage crisis, and you can help alleviate the daily struggles felt by our communities by ensuring teachers are compensated fairly for the difficult work that has been done, is being done, and will continue to be done.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Juan Espinal, Hawai'i Island

From: [dereksurfkona](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony to support SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday Feb 19th
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 9:29:49 PM

I am Derek Monell, a Economics, personal finance and AP World History teacher at Kealakehe High School in Hawaii county. Please start the process of compensating experienced teachers for their hard work trying to prepare our young adults for either the rigors of college and career. This bill is a start and I sincerely hope you will look further to fully fund decompressing the pay scale and incentivize teachers to work at hard to fill schools. The Teach For America (TFAs) in Hawaii is a farce. Our retention rate for TFAs is minimal and it destroys a school's / principals ability to build a cohesive teaching team. Fixing the pay compression should help retain teachers just as they feel comfortable and experienced to guide Hawaii's students. Please stop the political lip service to education and actually fund a step to really make a difference.

Mahalo

Derek Monell

Sent from my iPhone

JSarubbi

From: [Tammy Phillips](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Words of Support for SB 2488
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 9:36:43 PM

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Tammy Phillips I am a teacher at Hawaii School for the Deaf and the Blind in Honolulu School District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million-plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our Keiki.

Mahalo

Tammy Phillips
HSDB
Middle School ELA Teacher
Curriculum Coordinator
304-216-1076

"It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men." Fredrick Douglas

From: [Clint Labrador](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 9:37:00 PM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Clint Labrador. I am a Special Education Teacher at Kaunakakai Elementary School on Molokai. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

As an 18 year veteran HIDOE teacher on Molokai, I feel that these pay differentials are critical to retaining high quality teachers who enrich the lives of our keiki, and who contribute to a more positive future for Molokai. Over my 16 years as a special education teacher, I have seen numerous teachers come and go, unable to keep up with the cost of living and the demands of a high-needs demographic. Teachers on Molokai work with a large number of students suffering from a wide variety of traumas. This can lead to second-hand trauma, particularly when experienced over a long and continuous period of time. The pay differential goes a long way in helping SPED and Molokai (hard-to-staff, tier 4) teachers feel valued. I also work with several veteran teachers who were going to retire due to the stress of working with such a high needs population in addition to being held accountable to a statewide metric that does not reflect what is actually happening in our classrooms. However, because of the differentials, these same veteran teachers are choosing to stay and work with the keiki, finally feeling validated as the professionals they are.

I am invested in the future of Molokai, as a person and a professional. While the cost of living is high, I do what I need to do, budgeting for gas prices up to \$5.04 per gallon, and food prices twice as high as those in Honolulu. As with many local teachers, it can seem as if I am living paycheck to paycheck. As a divorced father who does not receive financial assistance, it is difficult to raise a family on a single income with inflated prices. In receiving the differentials (both for teaching SPED and for being a teacher in a hard-to-staff location), I feel validated as a professional. The pay differentials allow me some financial reassurance in continuing to raise my family here on Molokai, and not needing to relocate. By investing in this bill, you are investing in the future of Hawaiians, since all of our Molokai schools are 80% Hawaiian or more. Please consider passing this bill, as it will significantly impact the HIDOE's ability to recruit and retain highly qualified Kumu on Molokai.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Clint Labrador, Maui District, Molokai

From: [Gerlinde Schmidt](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 9:45:51 PM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Gerlinde Morris. I am a Special Education Teacher at Hilo Union School in Hilo on Hawai'i. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Gerlinde Morris

Hilo, Hawai'i

From: [Eryn Kawamoto](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 9:46:36 PM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Eryn Muraoka. I am an Instructional Coach at Pohakea Elementary School in Leeward District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I started as a public school teacher in 2009 under Linda Lingle's administration where the DOE teachers were furloughed. Since this was my first full time job, I didn't suffer financially as many of my co-workers did. Fortunately, throughout the years, I have been able to receive step increases every 2 years. This has provided me the opportunity to buy a residence and support my family. Many of my co-workers weren't as fortunate as I was and have suffered financial loss and continue to suffer due to the compressed step increases.

As educators, we put in many hours outside of the designated "work day" sacrificing time with our loved ones and for some their physical and mental well-being. Everyone I have the pleasure of working with does not go into this profession for the money but to make a difference in the lives of our children, our future. In order to be the best we can be, we need to be supported by our community and state. Start treating us as professionals and give teachers the respect they deserve.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Eryn Muraoka, Leeward District, Oahu

From: [Sheri Preston](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 9:50:09 PM

My name is Sheri Preston. I am a Special Education Teacher at Kohala Middle School in the North Kohala District on Hawai'i Island. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

North Kohala is the place to be and I have loved teaching here for the last 6 years. We are a wonderful small community and our kids are the best. My family love it here, also, and we do not plan on moving. We enjoy the slow-pace and isolation but with that we are finding it very hard to purchase a home here. The pay differentials for Special Education teachers and hard-to-staff schools will help towards us setting roots here permanently.

Every year that I have taught at Kohala Middle we have not had the same faculty. In the Middle school years, relationships between teachers and students are so important. We have had many good young teachers come and go due to the high cost of living and housing issues. The pay differentials will help keep the great teachers we have and in turn build a strong faculty and staff to better teach and serve our keiki.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Sheri Preston, North Kohala, Hawai'i Island

This is a staff email account managed by Hawaii Department Of Education School District. This email and any files transmitted with it are confidential and intended solely for the use of the individual or entity to whom they are addressed. If you have received this email in error please notify the sender.

From: [Alec Shimizu](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488 SD1 Committee on Ways and Means
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 9:52:27 PM

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Alec Shimizu, I am a 25 year veteran of the Department of Education. I was a teacher in the elementary classroom for 17 years and for the past 8 years I have served as a new teacher mentor in the Farrington/Kaiser/Kalani Complex Area in the Honolulu District on `Oahu. I am submitting testimony *in support of SB 2488, SD1*.

For years during the recession, educators across the state did without step increases because we understood that the economy was down and we wanted to do our part to ensure that our students continued to receive the best education possible. While it was a difficult decision to make, we willingly sacrificed for our students for one simple reason - because our students mean everything to us. Very few professionals invest their personal time and money in their jobs to the extent that teachers do, which is why the salary compression issue is such a serious one. It affects scores of teachers (like me) who have a wealth of experience and have done without pay increases for years, and who continue to be sorely underpaid. For years we've heard that education is a priority to our lawmakers; I urge you to make *educators* a priority by fixing the salary compression issue and funding this bill.

I'm sure you're well aware that morale among teachers is at an all-time low, but by funding this bill you will do more to increase our morale than any legislative body has done in decades. It's not just about compensating teachers for their sacrifice during tough economic times, it's about setting a precedent that the legislature in Hawai'i values educators not just in word - but in deed. As a 25-year veteran of the DOE, I am currently being paid just a few thousand dollars more than some of my counterparts with less than half the years of experience that I have. It is a widely-known and research-based fact that teachers' expertise increases with experience. Yet with all the experience I have, I am what's called a "short-timer" by educators; I have about 5 years left until I'm eligible to retire. I had always believed that I would stay in education well beyond my minimum 30 years because teaching is my passion and I want to invest in Hawaii's future. But the truth is, I feel undervalued, I am underpaid, and I am tired of feeling this way.

You have the power to change all of that. You have the opportunity to positively affect thousands of teachers across our state and show them that they matter to you. I urge you to fund SB2488, SD1.

Thank you,
Alec Shimizu
Honolulu District
`Oahu

From: [Alison Hayama](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 9:56:16 PM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is **Alison Hayama**. I am a **teacher** at **Ka'ewai Elementary School** in the **Honolulu district** on **Oahu**. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I am a veteran teacher of 26 years and I have been robbed of regular step increases during the hard economic times. Please fund the additional funds needed to address the compression issue so I may continue to work another 3-5 years and participate in committees necessary to close the achievement gap as well as mentor new teachers. Along with many teachers in this compression group, we are depending of this funding in order to bring equity to our pay.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Alison Hayama, Honolulu District, Oahu

From: [Joyce Vea](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Cc: [Rep. Daynette Morikawa](#); [Sen. Ronald D. Kouchi](#)
Subject: SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways & Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19 at 10 am
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 10:09:14 PM

Dear Senate Ways and Means Committee Chairperson, Donovan Dela Cruz,

I am Joyce B. Vea and I am writing in support of the teacher compensation bill (SB2488 SD1). I have been with the HDOE for 12 years now as a school counselor, and while the students have always been THE BEST PART OF THE JOB, everything else (including our current compensation pattern/trend has been less than satisfying).

I started with the DOE as a 24 year old in 2008 - so I actually came in at the time of "furlough Fridays" and "directed leave without pay". This meant that I, as a recent graduate with a Master's Degree in Education and over \$30K in school loans, I took a 5% pay cut for a number of years. It was a truly humbling time for me - it became apparent to me then that educators were not valued; at least not the way I had valued all of my teachers growing up. I always bragged that I felt I had THE BEST TEACHERS at Kekaha School and I wanted so bad to be one of those people that were intelligent, professional, and really making a difference in our communities. I was left wondering if I should have majored in another field - because I had the capability to do so - as opposed to following my heart.

Our school, Waimea Canyon Middle, is impacted every year with the amount of turnover that happens among the teacher ranks. I have personally seen so many amazing colleagues as valuable assets to our community leave our school but I can't blame them for making the "smart" choice of moving away for better pay. I feel that fixing the compression issue will have a direct and immediate impact on our retention and recruiting issues. I, myself, will benefit by moving up 2 steps on our pay scale - this is something that I've earned and has been long overdue. I get upset for my older colleagues when they tell me that they don't think they'll ever reach step 14B - they've already put in 20+ years. How can teachers be overlooked time and time again??? A change in our pay scale to take into consideration years of service makes sense and will keep teachers loyal to Hawaii's public schools.

Please pass this bill to help restore faith and confidence in current educators - so that our profession as a whole can feel valued in society again. And please pass this bill for the future of Hawaii - our children. They deserve qualified individuals who want to make Hawaii home and who will commit their life to teaching the next generation of professionals, politicians, innovators, and educators. I will tell you firsthand that students are not interested in our profession - they not only see the amount of work and dedication it takes to be a solid educator, they are aware of the dismal compensation that our professionals make in comparison with other fields of work (they hear it at home, on the news, from their teachers, etc). For instance, my waitress friend likes to remind me that with tips, we make about the same amount per year. This is our reality, this is a slap in the face, this is telling kids that taking out student loans to be a teacher is not worth it - this means that growing our own teachers will continue to be difficult. Change needs to start now; do not table this discussion for another 5 years. Change starts with you!

As a proud immigrant from the Philippines, a proud public school graduate, a proud educator of West Kauai, and a concerned community member and now parent of 2 keiki, please consider passing this teacher compensation bill. Please help to change the outlook of our

profession - the profession that touches and reaches every other profession. Do not get caught up in the "Who" and "How"; at the heart of every dilemma, we need to always focus on the "Why". If current and future generations of Hawaii's children is not enough of a "Why", then understand that the status quo is something that will have a negative impact in our communities for decades to come.

Thank you for your time and consideration on this matter.

Sincerely,

Joyce B. Vea

From: [Glen Eastman](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 10:16:02 PM

Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m

Chair Donovan Dela Cruz and members of the Senate Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Glen Eastman and I am a Special Education teacher at Pomaikai Elementary School on Maui. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard to staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides to do so. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

My background is in Special Education. I have been teaching Special Education for 5 years and I can see why it has become more and more difficult to find Special Education teachers to fill the needs of our students. Modifying curriculum, designing specialized instruction, writing IEPs, collecting data, monitoring IEP progress, staying after school for IEP and behavior plan meetings, implementing behavior interventions, collaborating and planning with gen ed teachers and service providers, and responding to crises/extreme behavior meltdowns are just an example of some of the day to day tasks that I handle. It takes a very unique psyche and set of skills to be a Special Education teacher In Hawaii. It is a tough job that less and less people want to do. In my 5 years of teaching at our school we have had maybe 20-30 student teachers come through our school. 0 have been special education student teachers. We can recruit special education teachers from the mainland but all the ones that have come to my school just move back to the mainland. For these teachers the pay in Hawaii isn't worth it. The responsibilities aren't worth it. The cost of living is too high. 1 bedroom apartments that used to be long term rentals for young professionals are sold to the highest bidder on airBNB. Even in paradise they decide that it just isn't worth it. While supply dwindles, the demand for these teachers is greater than ever not only locally but nationally. Other states have already begun increasing pay for hard to staff areas including Special Education as they understand how important Special Education teachers are. Hawaii must compete with that. Add in the legal liability if IEP plans are not followed for the state and it puts an even greater burden on the importance of a quality Special Education teacher. Attracting and retaining Special Education teachers should be at the top of the state's list of things to do, and it should start by paying them more. Another Felix case would be devastating for not only the state but our keiki.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Glen Eastman, Pomaikai Elementary School, Maui

From: [Kevin Agtarap](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 10:31:25 PM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE
RE: SB2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020
10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Kevin Agtarap. I am a fourth-grade teacher at Kaimiloa Elementary School in the Leeward District on the island of Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issues, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hard-working teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been a teacher in the Hawaii DOE for the past 16 years. I love this profession, but more so because I get to impact so many students throughout the years. However, since coming into this profession, I've really begun to feel the stress and financial burden this profession has in order to just survive in Hawaii. On numerous times I have contemplated moving to the US mainland where the cost of living is much affordable with the pay that educators receive.

Two years ago I graduated with my Master's Degree in Education thinking that would give me a boost in my salary. That degree has given me an increase in pay, but not enough to survive in Hawaii with the high cost of living. Since then, I have taken on a second job to help bring in income that I desperately need. The sad part of this is that my second job takes away time that could be used to focus on my family, to plan for my students, and to have time for myself. It's a hard task that I battle, but it's necessary at the moment. Adjusting veteran teachers' pay who were not given regular step increases during these hard economic times would release that high burden I feel everyday. It would give myself peace of mind knowing that I can make it here in paradise and not having to leave my friends and family behind for better opportunities elsewhere.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Kevin Agtarap, Leeward District, Oahu

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From: [Nanna Lindberg](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 10:36:50 PM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

[WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020](#)

[10:00 a.m.](#)

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Nanna Lindberg. I am a science teacher at Maui High School in on Maui. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of of Hawai'i.

My husband and I just started a family and quickly realized we can't make it here. We are on the verge of moving from Hawai'i. Even though none of these measures will benefit me personally, I speak in support of it. It will benefit my husband and fellow colleagues.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Nanna Lindberg

Maui

From: [Kat S](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 10:37:46 PM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Kathlene Suzuki. I am a general education kindergarten teacher at Makalapa Elementary School in Central District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

This is my first year of teaching at a public school. I have previously taught at a private school for eight years. I just was not able to continue work for such a low paycheck with hardly any benefits. I switched over to public school because I wanted better pay and better benefits. Although it is a little better than where I was, it was not a big difference.

I think that for me to stay in this profession, I would need to have this salary compression issue corrected and resolved. I know of many teachers who have left the profession because it did not pay enough. I myself, was also considering it too, many times. I became a teacher to impact the future generation, and I want to continue teaching because it's my passion. It would be a shame to see many people like me, passionate and dedicated teachers, leave Hawaii because of low pay salaries.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Kathlene Suzuki, Central district, Oahu

From: [Amie](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 10:41:11 PM

Dear Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means:

My name is Amie Yee and I am a 12-month teacher serving in the role of a Student Services Coordinator at Ala Wai Elementary School in Honolulu District on Oahu. I started working in the Department of Education in 1998 as a part time ESL teacher, then became a full time special education teacher since 2004. I became a Student Services Coordinator since 2011 because it allows me to work 2 more months, from a 10-month to 12-month teacher position in order to supplement my income. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, proposed SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard to staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides to do so. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

This will also really help my family not only financially but to also allow me to spend more quality time with my children and elderly parents. Currently, my husband and I not only work at our full time jobs, but we also have to do part time jobs and work on small projects on the side in order to supplement our family's income. The cost of food and overall living in Hawaii is very expensive, that even switching from a 10-month to 12-month teacher position does not cover all of the necessary costs. However, we continue to work extra hard because we want to stay in Hawaii to take care of our elderly parents at this time. Please help fix the salary compression issue so that we can continue to feel secured and proud as educators in Hawaii, without having to search for other more promising professional options on the mainland.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Amie Yee, Honolulu District, Oahu



From: [Corinne Shinn](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020 10:00 a.m.
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 10:43:14 PM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Corinne Shinn. I am a Special Education Teacher at Pearl Ridge Elementary School in Central District on the Island of Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I am a special education veteran teacher of twenty-two years, whose pay was not given regular step increases during hard economic times. I am planning to retire soon but would consider staying a few more years if there are pay increases.

Back in December 2019. I had signed my retirement papers. I had intended that my last day in the Department of Education would be December 30, 2019. It is unusual for an educator to quit in the middle of a school year, but the workload was overwhelming. Our special education department was left with 2 veteran teachers (myself and another teacher), and 4 emergency hires. Although just short of my 25 years, I was tired of being overworked and underpaid. However, due to the differential for special education teachers, I decided to stay for the remainder of the year. I would consider staying if funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue and

continued funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education is approved by the legislature.

More than a dozen special education teachers that have worked alongside me have left to become general education teachers. Perhaps with the pay differential and fixing the compression issue, special education teachers will be more likely to stay. I am a testament to that.

For the sake of our keiki, please support SB2488, SD1, Relating to Teacher Compensation.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Corinne Shinn, Central District, Oahu

From: jordananncourtney@hawaii.rr.com
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 10:44:32 PM

Testimony Before the Senate Ways and Means Committee

RE: SB2488, SD1 Relating to Teacher Compensation

Wednesday, February 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and Members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Ann Young. I am a first grade teacher at Konawaena Elementary School in South Kona, Hawaii District on Hawaii Island. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD 1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue and provide the funding for the pay differentials for teachers in hard to staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more that this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have 30 years of service teaching here in Hawaii. I have not yet reached the highest pay scale because step increases were frozen for many years. I am still living pay check to pay check. For nine years I was a single mom of two children. My daughter is currently in her first year of college made possible by scholarships, federal student loans, and assistance from her step-father. My son is less fortunate and currently working so he can save money for his higher education. Fixing the salary compression issue and the differentials will help significantly. Salary adjustments will help ease the teacher shortage as I have seen many highly qualified teachers, both family and friends, leave the profession in its entirety or move to the mainland United States. I am also more inclined to continue teaching beyond my 30 years.

Thank you for your time. We are in need of your help. Mahalo!

Ann Young, South Kona Hawaii District, Hawaii Island

From: [Jeff Fukushima](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 10:47:59 PM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is **Jeffrey Fukushima**. I am a **4th grade teacher at Noelani Elementary School** in **Honolulu District** on **O'ahu**. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been a teacher in the Hawai'i State Department of Education for 20 years and my very first year in the profession we went on strike. As a result, we were given a new contract with improved salaries. But as I continued to teach throughout the past 20 years there was a period of time where I did not receive fair compensation for my years of service, meaning that there was no increase in my salary. As younger teachers began to join the profession, I have found myself making a salary that is comparable to theirs, yet I have many more years of teaching experience. I love what I do, teaching the children of my community, but to see my years of experience and success in building future leaders of Hawaii not be compensated in pay is at times disheartening and suppresses my drive to give them my best. During my tenure, I have also seen 2 of my colleagues in my grade level, who were great educators, leave the State School system in order to pursue higher paying education jobs. This happened over the course of 5 years, and I was deeply affected by it, because in turn it made my job harder to have to recreate

new relationships with my new partner each time in order to provide the best education to the students.

With your help in funding the proposal to compensate and adjust the salary compression for veteran teachers, I feel that as I continue to teach through the next 15 years, the salary for veteran teachers such as myself will drive us to continue to do our best in educating the students of Hawaii. By keeping veteran teachers like myself in the state education system, we will be able to continue to move towards reaching the goals we all have for our system. Also, instead of losing this group of teachers, we will retain these teachers who are important leaders to the younger, upcoming generation of teachers which we have the responsibility to guide and lead them to sustain our profession and Hawai'i's state education system.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Jeffrey Fukushima, Honolulu District, O'ahu

From: [Pattie Kunitomo](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Support for SB2588, SD1 Cmte on Ways and Means
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 10:55:52 PM

Aloha Chairperson Dela Cruz,

My name is Pattie Kunitomo. I am a third grade teacher at Konawaena Elementary School in Kealahou, Hawaii. This is my 29th year of teaching on the Big Island. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

It has been brought to my attention that it is important to share my support to encourage proper funding to address pay differentials and teacher shortage to help our public schools and Hawaii's greatest resource - our children.

As an "inclusion teacher" I have 4 students with Individual Educational Plans (IEP) that stay in my general education classroom for most of the day to provide them the opportunity to learn alongside their peers despite their special learning needs. From day one of the 2019-2020 school year until the almost the end of the second quarter, I had no Special Education teacher to help me to create the accommodations and modifications for these students' lessons. One student has short term memory loss and forgets letter names and sounds daily. Another is a victim of early childhood trauma and reacts violently to negative situations. The other two have severe emotional challenges and hyperactivity. Running from class is not uncommon. There is an educational assistant assigned to help me but not to design specialized curriculum. When our school was finally able to locate a mainland teacher willing to come to Hawaii to fill the vacancy, we celebrated! But the situation was still not ideal since she was not special education trained! I am working extra hard to support her in modifying lessons. It is not her fault that it isn't getting done. She doesn't know how.

In addition to my four students, the teacher down the hall has 3 more students with HIGHLY challenging needs. She and I are the inclusion teachers because we have an emergency hire teacher who is not certified filling a position and a brand new teacher all the way from Massachusetts in another. In the fifth classroom, we are so fortunate that a teacher was willing to take a position with us despite having to drive from Waiohinu which is an hour's drive away.

It's not just the students with the IEPs who suffer without a certified special education teacher. As inclusion teachers, we end up preparing for our special needs students for much of our preparation time. If these students are not actively engaged, the

disruption to our classrooms is overwhelming. Thus, the general education students do not get all that they too deserve.

Imagine a school where all teachers are trained and certified for the content they need to teach. Every student would be able to access learning at the highest levels. Our children are our greatest resource to the health and economic vibrancy of our communities. Without quality teachers, or even just teachers, educating our communities to maintain a thriving community will be difficult. Let's invest in our children by investing in the people who help them become successful.

Thank you for your time, service, and consideration!

Sincerely,

Pattie Kunitomo

Grade 3 Teacher

Konawaena Elementary School

From: [Cheryl Tam](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in Support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 11:05:12 PM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Cherylee-Ann Tam. I am a kindergarten teacher at Konawaena Elementary in the Hawaii district on the Big Island of Hawaii. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

I am writing this email to ask for your support to please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have taught in Kona for thirty-two years, have just turned fifty-five last September, and am looking to retire soon. The salary compression issue has left me frozen in steps for so many years, and I have directly been impacted by lower pay and NOT being able to survive comfortably throughout my many years of teaching. I am fortunate to have married, and have another income for my family, but we still struggle. I do NOT understand how I could be struggling and overloaded with debt, when I am almost at the top of the pay scale. Presently, I will not be able to afford to help my daughter with her college education next year. Something has to be done to compensate and retain the dedicated teachers who have given up so much for our keiki.

My daughter, who will be majoring in English with an minor in the Hawaiian

culture and language, thought about teaching, but sees how much work is required, with really no compensation to match the work done. When she helps me on breaks, with extra-curricular activities, planning for lessons, and working 10-12 hour days, and on weekends, she thinks I am making a lot of money.

She found out while applying for colleges that this was not the case. However, when I talked with her that I was getting extra pay for our hard to staff area and may get more when the salary compression is fixed, and that teachers may actually be compensated rightfully, she was elated.

Michelle, my daughter, wrote a paper about teachers and what they do for children, and now she can see that teachers are starting to get what we deserve. She knows how the compensation would help us greatly, and also entice college students to enter the teaching field. She even mentioned that she may want to be a Hawaiian history and language teacher with her degree, which she never mentioned ever before.

As for me, I am excited to find out what can happen if SB2488 is fully funded. I would teach more years, because I would feel valued and feel motivated to keep up the hard work. My daughter may end up teaching! I love teaching and would love her to share the experience with her, but when you are not seen for many years as a valuable asset, and struggle financially along the way, your heart does get heavy and begins to hurt.

Please help fund these differentials and fix our salary compression issue. Our keiki will be the winners and you will have teachers who are happy to teach these winners, with smiles and a happy heart.

We, teachers, really need your help. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,
Cherylee-Ann Tam
Konawaena Elementary
Hawaii Island

From: [Trishtan Nakata](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Cc: [Sen. Ronald D. Kouchi](#)
Subject: SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways & Means, Wednesday, February 19 at 10am
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 11:15:17 PM

To the Senate Ways & Means Committee,

I am writing to support the teacher compensation bill (SB2488 SD1). I was born and raised on the island of Kauai and have personally experienced positive impacts from the numerous teachers that were a part of my upbringing on Kauai. I have had relatives, neighbors, and close family friends as educators growing up and now I have friends in the field as well as teachers, counselors, and administrators. I feel that the education profession is one that is undervalued in today's society. Educators are committed not only to teaching our children (the next generation of professionals, innovators, politicians) but they inspire our keiki to become life long learners. I am a proud public school graduate and it is concerning when I hear about the great turnover that is happening at the schools that I once attended. Educators, especially those who have stayed loyal to the Hawaii Dept. of Education, should be compensated fairly. It is the only way to not only attract certified teachers, but to keep them. Please keep in mind that your decisions today will impact Hawaii's generations to come. If you do not pass this bill, the message you want the public to see is that teachers/educators are not valuable and more importantly, our keiki do not deserve the best teachers & counselors - they will make do with long-term subs year after year. Please support this bill and give our teachers a fair living wage so that they can stay and share their gift and expertise in our local schools.

Sincerely,

Trishtan Nakata

From: [hari.messer](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Monday, February 17, 2020 11:30:41 PM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020 10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Hari Messer. I am a math teacher at Waimea High School in Kauai District on Kauai. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been at Waimea High School for eight years. It seems that annually we have at least one educator quit in the middle of the school year leaving students with long-term substitutes who aren't qualified. If this happens to a student in 9th grade, they spend the rest of their high school career trying to catch up. This is particularly evident in my subject, which is math.

I am planning to retire in two years but would consider staying a few more years if our pay increases. Salary adjustments will help ease the teacher shortage crisis and improve the lives of students because experienced educators will be more inclined to stay in the classroom.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Hari Messer, Kauai District, Kauai

From: [Lorena Wong](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 1:57:41 AM

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Lorena T. Wong. I am a Spanish Teacher at Moanalua H.S. in the Central District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

Help put a stop to the chronic teacher shortage and the lack of qualified teachers in the State of HI. We need to move forward, not backwards, which is what is occurring. By providing the \$70 million plus fringe, our kiki will get better education since teachers will not leave their jobs, much less in the middle of the year, which is a regular occurrence for new hires. New hires return home for the holidays, only to never return, because they realize they cannot make a living teaching in HI.

Our keiki deserve to have qualified teachers in their classrooms, not just Emergency hires, GED's and whomever they can find to fill the spot as a teacher. Many teachers are nearing retirement, however, if they see they will be compensated for their dedication and time as a career teacher, their retirement can be postponed, allowing more qualified teachers to continue moving our keiki forward. There are many locals on-island willing to teach, but they have to be able to provide for their families. I love teaching Spanish and empowering our youth to move forward in life and to be a part of this global world that we now live in. Hawaii deserves to NOT RANK SO LOW on test scores. This will only get worse by not adequately compensating teachers.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Lorena T. Wong
Central District on Oahu
3chinitos@gmail.com
(808)639-1841

From: [Kristina Lee](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: support of SB 2488, SD1
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 5:00:56 AM

Dear Chair Donovan Dela Cruz,

My name is **Kristina Lee, but you know me as “Tina Ohta”** I am a **STEAM CTE Teacher** at **Moanalua Middle School** in **Central District** on **Oahu**. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been teaching in our public school system for 21 years, and have had offers to teach elsewhere at private schools and writing curriculum for outside educational organizations. But I have never left the DOE. I have moved around within the DOE. I worked at the State Curriculum and Instructional Office under Kathy Kawaguchi, god rest her soul. And she taught me a lot about pushing innovation in our schools.

I believe in our public school system and the education we provide our students. We are products of this system. Go Leilehua!!! I believe in this system so much my kid goes to public school and she is a fabulous well rounded person.

Good teachers are essential to keeping this system current so our students can compete in the world. So they can be the movers and the shakers of our future. But if the paycheck is bigger somewhere else, they may not hold fast to their convictions. We live Hawai'i, life here is expensive, teaching in a public school is a choice, and we need to keep as many good teachers as we can.

We need your help. Mahalo, your friend.

Tina Ohta

Sent from my iPhone

From: lyon@hawaii.rr.com
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: SB2488, SD1
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 5:35:00 AM

The Senate Ways and Means Committee will hear [SB2488, SD1](#) on Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m. at the Hawaii State Capitol, Room 211.

Aloha Senate Ways and Means Committee and Chair Donovan Dela Cruz,

My name is Elizabeth DeLyon. I am a teacher at Haiku Elementary School on the island of Maui. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, proposed SD1. Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard to staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides to do so. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

Teaching is my joy. I have been teaching in Hawaii for 25 years and have twice Nationally certified in Early Childhood. I am only 56 years young, so I've decided to consider staying in education beyond retirement age because our state still has hundreds of classrooms without qualified teachers. I have seen so many unfortunate situations in the schools throughout the years on my own island. Numerous classrooms have been too difficult to fill with highly qualified teachers. No Hawaiiana teachers, unqualified Special Education teachers are just a few of the terrible situations we have witnessed over the years - A Security company was hired and classrooms 'held' in the cafeteria just to be able to say to parents that there was an 'adult in the room', teachers teaching without degrees, and so much more. Children deserve better. But to keep qualified staff, we need to pay teachers better.

I have had the honor of training over 20 teachers in my Hawaii teaching career and have unfortunately seen so many of the teachers leave the profession because of poor pay and not being able to make ends meet here in Hawaii. This is heartbreaking not only to the system, but the teacher who trained them for a for four months for a \$200 stipend. Training teachers is a selfless, time consuming job. 3/4 of the teachers I personally have trained, left within the first five years after teacher training. It breaks my heart to watch as us dedicated teachers train these educators for 1/2 of our school year, and then have them leave the teaching profession within five years. We must do something now to retain the professionals we have and attract new teachers to fill the positions. We need to be aggressive and have a plan that will work for now and our future.

I have spoken to many teachers who are at retirement age, like myself, and would be willing to put in five to ten extra years if we were compensated as proposed. Please take this consideration seriously and help our schools get out of the state it is now and help make our schools great. A salary adjustment could help ensure that we have highly qualified teachers for our keiki and begin to rebuild our educational state here in Hawaii. We are willing, are you?

We need your help, and the children deserve a better educational system.
Mahalo for your time and consideration,

Elizabeth DeLyon

Island of Maui

Blessings of Peace and Grace

Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.

2 Peter 2

From: [Perry Buchalter](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1,
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 5:36:20 AM

I am one of the Teachers who has been stuck at step 11 for over ten years. As a 23 year veteran High School teacher, I've seen salary jumps go to the bottom and the top in trying to make Teacher wages competitive. With our recent, most generous pay raise of 14%, I finally made it to Step 12 but as I check the cost of living in Hawaii I see that this raise takes me from the poverty level to low income and yet I am supposed to convince my students on a daily basis the importance of education. I do love my profession and this Step movement will go a long way towards having me postpone my upcoming retirement as I was looking elsewhere for higher pay.

I trust you will do the right thing by us long time Veteran Educators and vote this bill through before once again raising starting pay to attract new teachers.

My most humble appreciation for your consideration,

--

Perry S. Buchalter, NBCT
BA, Fine Arts/CTE Department
Molokai High School

From: [Yvonne Kauihou](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 6:21:56 AM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Yvonne Kauihou. I am a Mathematics and Science teacher at Mililani Middle School in Central District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

In my personal case, it is important that veteran teachers' pay who were not given regular step increases during hard economic times be fully funded. I am planning to retire soon but would consider staying a few more years if my pay increases. The salary adjustments will help ease the teacher shortage crisis and improve the lives of students because experienced educators will be more inclined to stay in the classroom.

We need your help. Mahalo nui.

Yvonne Kauihou, Central District, Oahu

From: [Denise Kelekolio](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee of Ways & Means, Wed Feb 19 at 10am
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 6:43:19 AM

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Denise K. Ku'uipo Kelekolio. I am a kumu papa 'ekahi at Ka 'Umeke Ka'eo in the Hilo District on Hawai'i Island.

I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers.

The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been a Hawaiian Immersion teacher (kumu Kaiapuni) for 23 years and have been in the trenches as a PTT with the early pioneers for 7 years prior to my becoming a licensed kumu. It is a huge commitment to be a kumu Kaiapuni statewide as resources and curriculum are not readily available and many of us have taken years and countless unpaid hours to develop, research, collaborate and deliver our lessons steeped in our culture all through the medium of our native tongue. I have attended many workshops and professional development opportunities across the State since the mid nineties, fortifying my knowledge & language base to create and provide a quality education for keiki & 'ohana that choose kula Kaiapuni. Our programs have always struggled to be in existence - from the devious & often hostile environments administrators who housed kula Kaiapuni within a DOE campus would create while "balancing" the School's budget to the current inequality of per pupil allocation for those of us who have opted to convert to or become Charter Schools. I implore you to make a pono decision by compensating all those kumu affected by this bill.

Na'u no me ka ha'aha'a,
Denise K. Ku'uipo Kelekolio
Hilo, Hawai'i

Sent from my iPad

From: [Eileen Carr](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 6:48:03 AM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Eileen Carr. I am a teacher at Manoa Elementary School in Honolulu District on O'ahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide \$25 million in funds to begin to address the teacher salary compression issue, and to fund pay differentials for teachers in hard to staff positions, special education, and Hawaiian language immersion in charter schools and the DOE. This bill can help change the course of education for the better, across the Hawaiian Islands. \$25 million is far less than it will eventually take to fully fund these critical measures, but this initial deposit will serve as a gesture of good faith on the part of the Hawai'i State Legislature.

How many of you attended public schools? How many of you rose to the positions of leadership that you now fill in part thanks to the dedication and support of devoted public school teachers? How many of you are now prepared to stand by our sides, defending our hard work and value? Our schools are critically understaffed, and our keiki absolutely deserve better. Every classroom across this state deserves a highly qualified, motivated teacher at its helm. Voting in support of measure SB 2488 will demonstrate your commitment to Hawai'i's public school teachers and the future of our state. If we continue to keep HIDOE salaries repressively low, and in fact the lowest in the United States, then we will surely continue to struggle with decreasing numbers of qualified individuals willing to work as public school educators.

I am a 20-year veteran teacher who is acknowledged as an 8th year teacher by the HIDOE. I moved to the HIDOE from the NYCDOE 4 years ago, and in addition to losing years of service, took a \$20,000 annual pay cut. A salary adjustment that honored more of my years of service would go a long way in making me feel like a valued member of our educational system and society here in Hawai'i. At the end of this school year, I will be moving from Honolulu to Molokai. I am fully aware that the move will entail huge changes in many ways, and one of the most significant changes will be that of the student population. Students on Molokai experience trauma at a far greater rate and severity than my current students at Manoa Elementary School. Their home experiences are likely to be less stable than those of

my current students, and as such, their social and emotional needs will be more challenging. The shortage differential for Tier 4 Hard-to-Staff schools will support teachers such as myself in these trying circumstances.

Our state is as strong as its public schools. Please show your support, and help Hawai'i's teachers to know that their work is valued and their futures are more secure.

We need your help. Please support measure SB 1488.

Mahalo,

Eileen Carr, Honolulu, O'ahu

From: [Laura Gregg](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488 SD1, CWM, Wed 2/19/20 @ 10:00 am
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 6:52:31 AM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Laura Gregg and I am a school counselor at Makawao Elementary School in Upcountry Maui. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of a well educated population.

I have been an educator in Hawaii for sixteen years and I have four adult children who all attended Hawai'i public schools. As you are well aware, the cost of living in our beautiful state is one of the highest in the nation. I would love to continue to work for the Hawaii DOE, but I am finding it increasingly difficult and often consider relocating to a less expensive state. Over the years, I have seen many teachers do so; lower teaching salaries here are noted as one the primary reasons for this. An adjustment to reflect time in service would positively influence experienced teachers, including myself, to stay. All of my children live on the mainland, largely because employment opportunities are greater in other states. However, I have been keeping them informed of efforts to improve teaching salaries. With that in mind, my eldest daughter is considering a return to Hawaii to pursue a teaching career. More reasonable, competitive salaries would make that possibility much more likely.

Hawaii's teachers and students need your help! Please pass this bill.

Respectfully,
Laura Gregg, Makawao Elementary School, Kekaulike Complex, Maui

From: [Merry Kay Kiyan](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 7:23:02 AM

Dear lawmakers,

My name is Merry Kiyan and I was born and raised in Hawaii and have been a teacher for 24 years. I currently teach first grade at Mountain View Elementary school on the island of Hawaii.

Even though I work full time as a public teacher, I also work part time with the DOE in order to make ends meet. I have always had to do this in order to provide for my family.

Please fully fund the compensation for veteran teacher compression issues. I have worked hard for the keiki of Hawaii my whole life and I cannot tell you how much I would appreciate this being addressed.

Aloha,
Merry Kiyan

From: [Paula Paula](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 7:33:48 AM

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Paula Evans. I am a STEM teacher at Mokapu Elementary School in Kailua-Kalaheo District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

I have been working for over 30 years as a teacher. When economic times in Hawai'i were hard, our steps were frozen and we received salary increases incommensurate with years of experience. Our veteran teachers cannot afford to work and live here. If you value education as I do, and understand that a strong education system is the cornerstone of a healthy country and citizenry, I know you will support compensating veteran teachers by fixing the salary compression issue.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state we value our hardworking teachers. The DOE will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million. Our keiki deserve the BEST teachers, and the work to have highly-qualified teachers in every class never ends. You can help right now; please support this bill!

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

Paula Evans

Kailua-Kalaheo District, Oahu

From: [John Van Plantinga](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 7:36:04 AM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is **John Van Plantinga**. I am a **special education teacher** at Maui High School in Maui Complex on Maui. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I feel that I am one crisis away from not being able to live on Maui. I own a home but must rent part of it out to help cover the mortgage. Housing is too expensive and I cannot manage to save even though I am at the top of my current compensation level, step 7, which means that I have taken many courses resulting in additional credits for coursework to increase my pay.

I just cannot understand why our students are left to fend for themselves when our profession attracts those who are either dedicated to teaching our keki but often our profession at this payscale attracts anyone willing to work for poverty wages. Lets attract the best teachers for our students and put our priorities in the right place. We need your help. Mahalo.

John Van Plantinga

--

Mahalo!

John Van Plantinga

Maui High School

Work Place Readiness O-101

john.vanplantinga@mauihigh.org

(808)727-4156

The Hawaii State Department of Education ("HIDOE") does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, age, color, national origin, religion or disability. This requirement extends to all of HIDOE's programs and activities, including employment and admissions as applicable. In addition, the HIDOE does not tolerate acts of harassment on the basis of race, sex, age, color, national origin, religion, or disability. Any student who believes that he or she has been subjected to harassment on the basis of race, sex, age, color, national origin, religion, or disability, is encouraged to report such harassment. Students and parents may report allegations of discrimination or harassment to the Principal, Mr. Jamie Yap at 727-4000, or via email at jamie_yap@notes.k12.hi.us; OR to the HIDOE's Civil Rights Compliance Office at (808)586-3322.

From: roeleno@juno.com
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Re: SB 2488 SD1
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 7:36:28 AM

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Romeo Eleno. I am a teacher at Lanai High & Elementary School in Maui District on the Island of Lanai. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1. I am asking to please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue as well as provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in hard-to-staff positions, special education, and Hawaiian language immersion to show that our state value our hardworking and dedicated teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

As a veteran teacher of 27 years in the public schools, I am still not being respected and treated as a professional when it comes to my years of experience as a classroom teacher. This year LHES had the highest uncertified teachers in our school and I feel our students deserve better. Years ago when the teachers were hit with Furlough Fridays, it put me back almost \$8000 behind in what I should be getting as a licensed veteran teacher. I had to pick up a second job in order to afford paying for rent and basic needs to live in a State where the cost of living is extremely high. I also had to adjust the way I shop for my school clothes by patronizing second hand stores to afford decent clothing. Here on Lanai, our gas prices has never gone below \$4.50 for years now and I last filled up my tank at \$4.89 per gallon.

To keep our teachers teaching in Hawaii, we need to correct the injustice that happened years ago by supporting this bill. Our children deserves better with qualified teachers in each classroom and I also believe that our teachers deserve better in order to take care of ourselves so that we can provide a quality education to our students. I humbly ask for your support.

We truly need your help, Mahalo!!!

Romeo Eleno
Maui District, Island of Lanai

From: [Linda Nakata](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 7:42:49 AM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is **Linda Nakata** I am a **Classroom Teacher** at **Momilani Elementary School** in **Leeward District** on **the island of Oahu**. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I am asking you to please support us. Our teaching profession counts on you! There are so many teachers that I know that have left teaching or want to leave because of the low pay and low respect we receive as compensation for our efforts. I myself have questioned whether I want to stay or leave the profession because of pay. It is sad when a friend of mine and I started working at around the same time, she as a postal

worker and I as a teacher for the DOE. When we started working 20 years ago, I was making a little more than she was since I had my PD and started at a Level 3. The sad thing is over these 20 years, my friend's pay has steadily gone up and now she makes so much more than I do. It is sad when a college graduate with a PD makes less than a postal worker who did not graduate from college. We need this to change. Please help us correct this inadequacy.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Linda Nakata

Leeward District

Oahu

From: [Sharon Sano](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Teacher compensation
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 7:44:30 AM

Dear Chairman Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee

My name is Sharon Sano. I am a kindergarten teacher at Momilani Elementary School in the Leeward District on the island of Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki. As a veteran teacher, it is important to remember that we were not given regular step increases during economic hard times, but yet I found a way to manage financially with two adult children in college. My daughter considered the field of education, but the harsh reality is that she switched gears and decided to pursue a career in business instead because she has seen first hand the demands of a teacher and the ill-paid wages. Please support our teachers and the future of education.

We need your help!

Mahalo,

Sharon Sano

Leeward District, Oahu

From: [Jenna N](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 7:46:16 AM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Jenna N. I am a teacher at Chiefess Kapiolanai Elementary School in the Hilo/Waiakea Complex on Hawaii Island. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

Fixing the salary compression issue and differentials will help teachers, librarians and counselors to remain in public schools to help all of our students have a great overall quality educational experience. It will help teachers from leaving the profession in our state.

Adjusting veteran teachers' pay who were not given regular step increases during hard economic times will help those who may be working second jobs to make ends meet or just trying to make ends meet. Many are considering leaving or not even entering into the teaching profession altogether because the cost of living has outpaced your salary. I have worked in a school where we had a lot of Teach for America Teachers that came for two years because they got their graduation school funded for, came on a two year "vacation" and then left.

They weren't committed to staying in the Hawaii Public school system for the long haul and our students lose out on quality teachers that are invested in their future. It's frustrating to have to always anticipate a high turn over of staff every

couple of years and not be able to build a strong faculty where we can plan long term for building a solid foundation/relationships of professionals for our schools, professional development or other needs for our schools to be as successful as they could be. I have seen and heard of too many positions having to be filled by long term substitutes or Teach for America teachers, who have no background or mindset of investing in a quality education for our keiki.

The salary adjustments will help ease the teacher shortage crisis and improve the lives of students because experienced educators will be more inclined to stay in the classroom. We don't want to keep seeing temporary programs fill in our needs and think they are helping to make a lasting difference when we have a revolving door of adults who invest for two years or a few years, and then find something else. We need your help.

Mahalo.

Jenna N, Hawaii Island

From: [Joanna Lee](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 7:53:28 AM

My name is Joanna Lee. I am a teacher at Washington Middle School in the Honolulu District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, proposed SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard to staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides to do so. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been in the DOE system a long time, 34 years to be exact, and I have seen much injustice for the young teachers initially and now, the veteran teachers. Back in 1985, I made about \$15,000.00 on Lanai to gain tenure, then returned to Oahu. Lanai was always a "hard to fill" position every year so an "extra incentive" would have been appreciated back in the day. Years later, funding was allocated to help these "hard to fill" positions but not in my favor. Then I witnessed the compression of the salary schedule to assist the young teachers to enter the teaching profession, again not helping my situation. Years go by and these young teachers are leaving about the 5th-7th year because they say they "can't make it financially in Hawaii." My words to them are "don't marry a teacher" or you really won't make it. Now I am the senior teacher on campus watching teachers around me retire. I stay for my students, and financially as a divorcee with three college children. I also stay because I would like to see if I will be able to benefit as a veteran teacher. It surely doesn't make sense that someone with my years of experience is dealt the same cards (salary) as someone with a decade less of experience. Some examples of this injustice are heard at faculty meetings and core/team meetings after school. They almost ALWAYS refer to me/us for advice and counseling, as well as heading the school leadership committees. Good veteran teachers are leaving unfortunately for this lack of recognition and for our "old school thinking" when teachers viewed it as their ONLY job. Today, the

teachers tell me that teaching is just “one of their jobs,” hence there may be a lack of devotion and commitment on their part as it is not physically or mentally possible to put your “all” into this profession. I hope that you hear my voice and “do the right thing.” There isn’t enough money to do what needs to be done but you can pick and choose what’s more important, if YOU feel it is important. Thank you for reading my message and we really do need your help to fund this bill.

Mahalo Nui Loa,

Joanna Lee, Honolulu District, Oahu

From: [Braddah Av](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 7:55:50 AM

My name is Avory Abordonado. I am a Teacher at Wheeler Elementary School in the Central District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I've been teaching 17 years here on O`ahu. My wife is also a teacher and we still struggle with costs of living. We only were able to finally buy our own house two years ago barely, and that was because we barely qualified for a 0% down loan. We also have a 16 month old daughter and struggling with daycare. We're hesitant about having one more due to day care costs. Often times we've watched our former students having multiple kids and yet, my wife and I struggle to have one.

Fixing the salary issue for here in Hawaii will not only help us, but all teachers who are in the same boat as us. Constantly teachers like me look for other jobs/opportunities because our salary is not enough. New highly qualified teachers that are hired from the mainland leave after a year or two because they can't afford to live here and often find other teachers to rent/live with. If Hawaii want to keep it's teachers, the salary issue needs to be fixed.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Avory Abordonado

Central District, Oahu

From: [jenningse001](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 7:57:19 AM

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Erik Jennings . I am a special education teacher at Lahainaluna High on Maui. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki and schools.

Every day thousands of students in a classroom without a highly qualified certified teacher. Over my 15 years teaching in Maui, I have watched many excellent teachers have to leave this profession due to not being able to start a family of their own on the teaching salary. Many other teachers have to work a second job to make it in the islands. Much of their time spent at their second job would probably be used in preparation for teaching and collaborating with parents but unfortunately working a second job leaves many teachers with no time to do this.

Thank you for your time

Erik Jennings

Sent from my T-Mobile 4G LTE Device

From: [Lisa Galloway](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488 SD1
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 7:57:42 AM

Aloha e committee members,

I strongly urge you to support salary increases for Hawaii teachers. I work at the hardest to staff school, where attrition is so severe that students don't take teachers seriously if they're new, and staff struggle to help newcomers every year. This takes time and energy that feel wasted, and directly effects our students' success.

Teachers have yet to recover from a salary freeze begun many years ago, and we continue to burn out capable people who want to stay. If we reverse this trend, you will enjoy better educated generations serving you in your retirement, and your families here in Hawaii, in the future. If we keep doing what we've always done, the problems will persist or worsen.

Thank you for your consideration.

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From: [Brenda Palumbo](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488 SD1, Committee on Ways and Means Wednesday, Feb 19 at 10 am.
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 7:58:29 AM

Dear Senate:

Please fund bill SB2488 SD1 which will allow our teachers' pay to catch up with their years of experience and dedication to this profession. Not to mention it will help retain teachers in positions that are hard to staff.

It is time that the State of Hawaii pays teachers at the class/step they have earned and not penalize them any longer.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Let's get this done!

Brenda Palumbo
English Language Learner Teacher
Lana'i High and Elementary School

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From: [Cindy Bagley](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in Support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday Feb. 19, at 10 am
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 8:14:50 AM

- I am requesting support to make the necessary salary adjustments for approximately 6,300 experienced senior teachers by recognizing their professional service to the Department of Education through discretionary salary adjustments,
- Additionally I am requesting funding for additional teacher pay for the areas of special education, hard-to-staff geographic locations, and Hawaiian language immersion programs, or a combination of both requests.
- As a special educator on the Big Island of Hawaii, I believe we are over extended with unrealistic expectations to complete a burden job within the contrast of a single job. We are expected to manage a caseload of 14-20 students within an inclusion setting without supports of additional time to meet with classroom teacher for planning, time to modify curriculum for our diversified learners and time to plan, attend and complete necessary IEP processes. There are not enough special educator who are willing to undertake such an exhausting job who can afford to live in a high living conditions and necessary to work two jobs to afford to live here therefore we are never caught and feel unsuccessful so they leave our school and island to return to the states where they are more money and less responsibility in an affordable living conditions.
-
- Sincerely, Cynthia Bagley, Konawaena Elementary school, Big Island Hawaii

From: [S.M. Yamauchi](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 8:26:25 AM

Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.

Chair Kidani and members of the Education Committee:

My name is Shirley Yamauchi, Kapolei Middle School, gr. 7 English language arts and I've been teaching for twenty years. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, proposed SD1.

Spending \$25 million on compression and the shortage differentials next year is a good start, but \$70 million is the amount that's needed to assure the salary adjustment to fix compression happens along with continuing the hard-to-staff, SPED and Hawaiian language immersion shortage differentials.

It is important to adjust veteran teachers' pay that was not given regular step increases during hard economic times. Though I am at year twenty, I am at step 11 and this is not right. I feel I should be at 14A or 14B, not at step 11. Other US states consider years in the classroom annually, instead of a contractual movement.

My financial advisor told me that I cannot really retire until I am at 55 years of age, 30 years of service or age 62. Social security full disbursement is at age 67. I am none of the above. Ligaya Ricafrente of Campbell HS is 78 years old and still in the classroom, she travels by utilizing her mobile lark. Will this happen to me as well?

Prior to 2013, I had considered moving to Washington State, though I was born and lived in Hawaii since 1974. I met my current husband and changed my plans about moving to WA. I still think of leaving Hawaii daily, especially when I see affordable homes with yards, on Zillow. I was only able to afford my Makakilo townhouse after the sudden death of my father, the sale of my Hawaii Island home, and the financial support of my unmarried aunt in Japan. This is isn't right. Teachers should not have to wait for elderly relatives to pass away, in order to purchase a home.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue and fund the pay differentials for teachers in hard to staff positions, special education, and Hawaiian language immersion for charter schools and the DOE. This bill can help change the course of education for the better on the leeward coast. Charter Schools and the Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides to do so. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Shirley Yamauchi, HSTA Leeward Chapter President, Kapolei Middle School teacher.

Oahu, HI

Shirley M. Yamauchi

<https://yesforourkeiki.com/why/>

<https://www.stitchfix.com/referral/13325745>

<http://www.isecretshop.com/register/1112247>

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS
COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Dr. Laura Farris. I am a Special Education teacher at Kaimuki Middle School in Honolulu District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have twenty years experience teaching special education and regular education in Washington state. I brought that experience and my expertise to Hawaii sixteen years ago and have remained in the teaching field. When I moved to Hawaii I took a 30% cut in pay compared to the mainland salary. Due to the shortage of monetary compensation I have also had to take on a second job. I also teach as a local college in the Education Department trying to recruit and educate teachers. This gives me little time to take care of my health or see family members. Often I am tired from having to go to many Special Education meetings and complete so much paperwork. I live from paycheck to paycheck and worry about covering expenses. I know this is true of many of my

colleagues. By compensating teachers, librarians, and counselors to a level we can afford the high cost of living in Hawaii, and showing you really do care about the public school system, you need to find the money in the budget.

I have a doctorate degree because I want to keep improving myself and improving the quality of education in this state. Please find it in yourselves to want to better the system too. There are so many unqualified teachers that I have had to help mentor and they still feel overwhelmed and quit. We had one of our non-experienced math teacher's walk out of the classroom in the middle of the day in December of this school year due to frustration. We cannot have situations like this where students are left unsupervised and feeling quit upon. Please consider funding to attract and keep good professional teachers. You need us and we need your support.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Dr. Laura Farris, Special Education Teacher, Honolulu District, Oahu

From: [Veronica Gray](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 8:41:46 AM

I am submitting this email in support of bill SB2488 SD1. I have been a HIDEOE employee for 18 years. I am a divorced mother of two grown daughters, and I have 2 granddaughters. I have to work evenings and weekends at a second job, in addition to my teaching career, to make ends meet. Passing of this bill will provide the step movements I (and other veteran teachers) have been denied and greatly need. Thank you.

Respectfully submitted,

Veronica Gray
Student Services Coordinator
Haiku Elementary School

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From: [Juvy Cabanilla](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 8:46:53 AM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Juvy Cabanilla and I am a full release mentor for beginning teachers at the Baldwin Kekaulike Maui Complex in the Maui District. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I'm a single mom with two children attending Pomaika'i School. I've been a teacher since 1997 and I came in at a time where salary steps were frozen. Teachers who were hired years after me make the same salary. In order to make it here in Hawai'i, I need to have 2 part-time jobs. I've highly considered moving to another state.

We need your help. Please consider funding the teacher salary so that teachers like myself can live in Hawai'i.

Mahalo.

Juvy Cabanilla,

Maui District

From: [Todd Tashiro](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony for SB 2488,SD1
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 8:52:13 AM

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Todd Tashiro. I am a teacher at Momilani Elementary School in the Leeward District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been teaching for 33 years and I am able to retire next school year. I love my job and teaching has been a great profession for me, but our pay has always been the lowest for any person with any college degree. On top of that, It has been getting harder and harder to teach every year because of all the new standards and implementations that are constantly coming into the DOE. Everyone is always wanting more from us with less pay. Since the beginning, especially through 3 strikes, I have never been compensated for any of my pay, but I always kept teaching because I would put my students first and because I cared for their future. It would be nice to once and for all get something back and be compensated because we stuck it out through thick and thin. It would surely be nice to finally get compensated for all that we do in this career and to the future of our teachers. If not, it seems that our profession will take a downward spiral and many of us will just get out of the profession or just do something else. I am confident that our legislators will do the right thing, before it's too late.. We really need to make it right this time.

We need your help!

Mahalo.

Todd Tashiro, Leeward District, Oahu

From: [Delia Lozano](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB 2488 SD1
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 8:55:48 AM

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Delia Lozano. I am a teacher at Hawaii School for the Deaf and the Blind in Honolulu School District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Delia Lozano,
Honolulu School District, Oahu

--

Delia

* Live, Learn, Laugh, Love, Life *

From: [Alapa'i Kaulia](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 9:20:48 AM

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Alapa'i Kaulia. I am a Science teacher at Ke Kula 'O Ehunuikaimalino in the West Hawaii complex on Hawai'i Island. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I am currently licensed under the Office Of Hawaiian education with a provisional license with the intention that these teaching gaps will be filled with a Highly Qualified Teacher (HQT), hopefully one day myself. If this is the type of salary that you will be supporting I look forward to continue my higher education and filling the position with a future (HQT) teaching license. I believe that immersion teachers should have this differentials as they have to transcribe or create majority of their curricula as there is not a developer to create these for the kumu. If their were developers than they should If you able to help find these funds then I believe that this will help to close the gaps in teaching.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Alapa'i Kaulia, West Hawai'i Complex, Hawai'i Island

From: [Jennifer Rikert](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#); [Sen. J. Kalani English](#); [Rep. Justin Woodson](#); [Rep. Troy Hashimoto](#)
Subject: SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 9:21:34 AM

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Jennifer Rikert. I am a special education mentor teacher at **Baldwin Maui Kekaulike District office where I service special education teachers at all schools on Maui**. I was a teacher at Kekaulike High and Maui Waena Intermediate. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been a special education teacher on the island of Maui for 16 years. I moved here from New York with my then husband who was also a teacher. We took an \$8,000 pay cut each in comparison of our teaching jobs in New York, but we thought we could make it work financially with two incomes. Over the years, I watched many single teachers stay no more than 5 years and resign with the DOE because living single on Maui as a teacher with loans will eventually catch up with you. Newly divorced, I carry a mortgage on my own with no help, no family nearby. I have to rent out all available rooms, including my garage in order to pay the bills. It is not how I saw my life at 47, and I can't see an easy retirement if my salary continues as it has in the past with minor salary increases. (I cannot get the special education differential of \$10,000 because I am not a classroom teacher, but I mentor new special education teachers.) Every day I consider moving back to the mainland where my aging mother needs help and the guaranteed improvement of my quality of life.

While working with my beginning teachers at various schools across the island, they tell me about their financial struggles. I remain silent, as I have nothing positive to say about how it will get better, or to just hold on. I too, am a victim of low pay in an ever increasing cost of living in the islands. Countless students of all ages tell me that they can count on just one hand the teachers they've had in the past are still on the island teaching. I have a colleague who received teacher certification on the mainland, returned to the islands to give

back to her home town, only to discover that she can't survive financially in her own hometown, in her own elementary school.

The special education and Hawaiian Immersion differentials is an amazing step in the right direction. But it can't stop here. Please, we need your support and advocacy so the children of Hawaii keep the quality in their education and community!

Jennifer Rikert
(808) 419-1379

From: [Linda Jones](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488 SD1, Committee on Ways and Means Wednesday, Feb 19 at 10 am.
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 9:22:08 AM

Aloha,

My name is Linda Jones and I am a licensed tenured teacher working at Lanai High and Elementary School.. I am a product of the public school system in Hawaii. I graduated from Radford High School, the University of Hawaii at Manoa (B.A. in Speech/Communications), and Chaminade University (R.I.S.E program/licensed sped teacher)). Currently, I am a SPED teacher teaching general education Language Arts. I am a representation of the teachers you are targeting. I have only taught in Hawaii... but have taught everything from public to private schools from adult education to middle and high school for over 20 years.

I am testifying to the need to fund the initiatives brought before you by the HSTA and superintendent. In 2009 during the recession teachers were frozen at the steps they were on. I was frozen at step 6 for over a decade. I truly did not mind, at the time, helping my local economy. However, we are enjoying a very healthy economy now and the teachers should be reinstated to where they should be... after helping out the entire state make it through the hard times.

I have served my communities and children for over 20 years. The union negotiated and got me to step 11 (from Step 6 where I have been frozen in 2009)... but as I am a veteran, local teacher I should be at step 14a.!

I am so appreciative of the measures that have recently been taken to increase teacher pay. But until all teachers are recognized and paid for their professionalism and experience, the job at task remains incomplete.

Recently I was moved from Step 6 to step 11..from 2009 to 2020! My experience and years should have me at the top of the scale. But even that small increase has allowed me a bit of breathing room! I can pay my bills and have a bit more left for me to save. Because I can pay my bills my FICA score has improved. Because my FICA scores increased I have improved credit. Because I have improved credit I have room to breathe!! Relief from not living paycheck to paycheck!

I am able to retire as I have the years and age. And that is what I was planning to do. However, to do so I will have to leave the state I grew up in and is my home. I cannot afford to buy a house on Lanai., and my small savings would be better spent on the mainland where my funds could purchase a nice house to retire in. But not in my hometown of Honolulu!, or in the state I have called home for 50 years.. But with the step increases, placing me where I should be on the scale, I will remain teaching at least for 5 more years. Without the compression to put me where I am supposed to be, I will retire soon. With compression and sped and hard to fill I could make enough money to retire in my home state of Hawaii.

If the goal is to retain experienced, homegrown teachers, this bill will enable me and others to stay in the profession. especially since I could go back into Special Education!

I ask that you approve this bill and let the teachers know they are valued and especially thankful to us for suffering through furlough Fridays and being frozen on steps for 11 years!

The time is now to do what is right for those who have remained and desire to remain, and those who will want to become teachers, or move here to be in the profession of education; to instruct and nurture the Keiki of this state.

Hawaii should always be at the forefront of change and lead the nation in paying their teachers what they are worth! No one will want to leave! Everyone will want to come to Hawaii to teach for many many years!

Sincerely,
Linda Jones.
20+ year Veteran teacher

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From: [Christina Ellis](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 9:25:09 AM

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Christina Ellis. I am a special education district resource teacher for the Ka'u-Kea'au-Pahoa complex area in Hawai'i District on Hawai'i island. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

In my current position, I train and provide support for all teachers who work with students with disabilities (both general education teachers and special education teachers) in 14 public and charter schools in our complex area. Currently, the low pay and lack of certified special education teachers makes this job very difficult. We often have teachers leave mid-year and many of the schools that I work with have high numbers of new staff every year. It is also scary watching our veteran teachers leaving in droves because they are able to earn more money outside of DOE.

I also have two children who attend a Hawaiian immersion school who need teachers both strong in the language as well as their content areas. I strongly believe that legislation needs to be put into place to address salary compression and fair pay for our shortage areas. Please, please, please finance these initiatives to help save our schools, teachers, and keiki.

If you have any questions you may contact me via phone 808-987-3352 or via email christinaellis3@gmail.com.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Christina Ellis, KKP complex area, Hawai'i island

From: sakduen@hawaii.rr.com
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 9:32:11 AM

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Lynn Sakamoto-Duensing. I am a Special Education teacher at Momilani Elementary School in Pearl City on Oahu I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

After 20 + years of teaching special education in Hawaii I finally felt appreciated by this year's shortage differential, mahalo. I currently service 15 students in K-6th grades, I have been told that this is a two teacher work load, and I am the only special education teacher K-6 in this school. I service students that are in my room half a day and deliver all their academics, as well as students that are seen several times a week in a lesser capacity both inclusion and pull out. I have to attend all meetings for Student Service Teams (new student referrals), eligibility, Individual Education Plans, peer reviews, etc. They involve my having to develop plans and input information, in a time sensitive manner, into our computer system. This is in addition to servicing students. I arrive around 6:30 am and usually stay till 4pm.

As mentioned earlier I have been here for 20+ years, previously teaching in the mainland. I am at the end of my teaching career and thought of retiring this year. Being in the DOE since 1996 I have seen very small pay increases. Adjusting veteran teachers' pay who were not given regular step increases during hard economic times will also make a difference in my retirement delays.

We need your help.

Mahalo.

Lynn Sakamoto-Duensing

Leeward District – Pearl City/Waipahu

Oahu

From: [Ella Joy Grande](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 9:34:54 AM

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Ella Joy Bolosan. I am a Special Education Teacher at Wheeler Elementary School in Leilehua-Mililani-Waialua on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

Prior to transferring schools this school year, I worked as a Special Education teacher in Makaha Elementary School for five years while living in the Downtown Honolulu area. My passion for providing quality education and love for children in the Waianae community was greater than the troubles of commuting for a total of two hours each day to get to and from Makaha. I am in support of this SB 2488, SD1 because all teachers deserve the to be viewed as being in a profession that is respected with a salary to show that. We work countless hours in what seems to often be a thankless job, and in my case, like many others, spending money out of my own pocket to make sure my students deserve quality and meaningful education. We invest hours inside and outside of schools, spending more time and effort for our students than our very own families at times. Many teachers work and have worked two jobs, myself included to make ends meet. It's time we are given the financial support to come close to being able to afford cost of living in Hawaii. It's time we support our teachers with not only the "Wow, you're a teacher. I don't know how you do it" comments, but the salary to back that up. Funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions will ease some financial burden on teachers, which will hopefully allow us to be able to take care of ourselves and our families more. The state needs to take care of it's teachers if we are expected to take care of our keiki.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Ella Joy Bolosan, Leilehua-Mililani-Waialua, Oahu

From: [Susan Chew](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 9:38:38 AM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Susan Chew. I am a kindergarten teacher at Lanai High and Elementary School in Maui District on Lanai. I submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I am fortunate to be a teacher for 20+ years on Lanai. Through that time I have seen teachers come and go and the only people it really hurts are our children of Lanai. Salary compression will encourage teachers to stay in education and provide stability and a foundation for our children. Showing the value to veteran teachers' has long been missing. By adjusting veteran teachers' pay who were not given regular step increases during hard economic times is a step in the right direction.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Susan Chew
Kindergarten Teacher
Maui District
Lanai High and Elementary School

From: [Miki Kubo](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020 10:00a.m.
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 9:43:23 AM

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is **Miki Kubo**. I am a **26 year teacher** at the **Baldwin-Kekaulike-Maui Complex Area** in on **Maui**. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I am an Induction and Mentoring Program Coordinator and a New Teacher Center Trainer for new mentors. I highly respect our profession and commitment to our students. Working closely with beginning teachers and their veteran mentors allows me to see/observe and discuss their commitment and sacrifices to our profession as well. Numerous times I have heard of beginning teachers leaving after a semester or a year. I understand that everyone has a story and these teachers have to make the best decision for themselves and their families. Let's make it harder for them to leave our islands by supporting them as well as all teachers with a generous salary.

As for the the salary compression and differentials, we need to have veteran teachers remain in place until we can get an handle on the thousands of teaching lines which are not filled with qualified "teachers". We don't need to invest in "warm" bodies to "baby-sit" our students. We need highly qualified TEACHERS with the knowledge, skills and pedagogy to be in front and besides our students on a daily basis; pouring into them not only academically, but socially, and emotionally as well. Mantras and slogans are always great to say and hang from banners, but to put the words into action is very difficult. I am asking you to please take on the difficult task of honoring and valuing our students by supporting the people who stand before them day after day...please support our Hawai'i State teachers.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Miki Kubo, BKM Complex Area, Maui

From: [Paul McDonnell](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION (support)
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 9:47:55 AM

Dear Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Paul McDonnell. I am a teacher at Hawaii School for the Deaf and the Blind in Honolulu School District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please make sure that there are funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide continued funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our extra-hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki and the state in the long haul.

I have been teaching here at HSDB for 13 years now. Had I stayed in California where I taught for years before moving here, I would have earned considerably more over the years and would not be working 3 different part time jobs on top of teaching full time that I currently do in order to comfortably make ends meet. Sometimes it feels almost pointless as I rarely have any free time after my work hours to provide additional support to our students, or on the weekends to enjoy life. I was actively looking for a different full-time job when the differential pay came through - JUST in the nick of time. Now I'm happily teaching without looking elsewhere for a better paying job, and am tapering off my part time work hours. The quality of my teaching as well as the time I have to give to my students outside of my work hours is increasing. It's making me feel better about my chosen profession - everybody is winning!

Please make sure that this remains in effect, and bring on the fixing of the compression issue - I went for several years without seeing any pay raises (which I was used to seeing in California on a yearly basis). Once this is in place, I believe I will be able to completely stop working my part time jobs, and

am very much looking forward to that. I also believe we will finally be able to attract good teachers to this school and elevate everything all around. Thank you for your support with this!

Paul McDonnell, Honolulu School District, Oahu

From: [Tiffany Eason](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 9:47:56 AM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE
RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020
10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Tiffany Eason. I am a Grade 4 teacher at Waialua Elementary School in Central District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been a teacher at Waialua Elementary for my entire 25-year career. I was born and raised in Waialua, and my husband and I are raising our 2 teenaged boys there as well. They are the 4th generation in my family to call Waialua home. Needless to say, I have deep roots in my community and am proud to teach in the community in which I live. Waialua is a small town that still revolves around the ideals established in the days of the plantation. Hard work and dedication are highly valued. This is why it is so sad that many of my fellow teachers and I are not being adequately compensated. We are struggling to support our families and make a decent living. I did not ever think I would be practically living from paycheck to paycheck after 25 years of service. We frequently have to tap in to our home equity line of credit to pay basic household expenses like car insurance and appliance repairs. After giving more than half of my life to teaching, I am now looking at other employment options in order to meet the financial needs of my family.

My school strives to provide a high caliber education for all of our students. We have received 2 National Blue Ribbon Awards in the last 10 years. This type of recognition does not occur without the commitment and dedication of the faculty and staff. The continuity of our staff has been integral to our students' success. A large portion of our staff has been in Waialua since the 1990s. We are all victims of compression. If we lose our seasoned teachers, we will not be able to sustain this level of achievement.

At this point in my career, I am questioning how much more personal sacrifice I am willing to continue to make and how this sacrifice is impacting my own family. While I believe our children deserve the best, I also know that teachers need to be compensated for all that they do. Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers.

I am also writing on behalf of my son, Kyle, who is currently a junior at Saint Louis School. Kyle will be starting his fourth year studying Hawaiian language next year. He, like many of his peers, is not sure what he wants to do post-high school at this time. When I shared with him the possibility of funding for college if he were to pursue teaching and Hawaiian, he was excited at the idea. He had not considering a career in education prior to our conversation. The incentives being proposed by the DOE and HSTA open up opportunities for our local youth will help to fill many areas of need in our educational system. We have to make a better effort to grow our own teachers who have ties to our communities and a connection to our culture.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Tiffany Eason, Waiialua Elementary School, Central District, Oahu

From: [Leimomi Kaaihili Leong](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 9:49:17 AM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Leimomi Ka'aihili Leong. I am a Special Education Teacher at Ke Kula Kaiapuni 'o Anuenue (a Hawaiian Immersion School) in Honolulu District on O'ahu Island. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I was placed in a Special Education line because there are less than 10 people in the entire state who are licensed in Special Education and proficient in the Hawaiian language, and maybe less than 5 of them are still teaching in Hawaiian immersion.

With this differential pay, I am highly encouraged to remain working in the public school system versus leaving to work in the private school or high education where I would not be happy but paid better to support my family in Hawai'i.

I highly support our Superintendent's proposal for compensating teachers who remain committed to the students in public education with a differential pay to help support our families as we continue to choose to live in a place with the highest cost of living and the one the lowest pay scale for teachers.

Mahalo for your support in finding solutions to retain highly qualified teachers in our public education system.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Leimomi Ka'aihili Leong, Honolulu District, O'ahu

From: [Kari Odo](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 9:50:09 AM

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Kari Odo. I am a Special Education Teacher at Hahaione Elementary School in the Honolulu District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

Our school has 4 Special Education Teachers for about 50 special education students with a broad range of needs from Specific Learning Disability, to Autism, to Oppositional Defiance Disorder, to ADHD, to genetic disorders—the list goes on. Everyday, there is potential to be screamed at, hit, spit on by a number of our students. We are asked to plan and differentiate for this wide range of students, behaviors, interests and needs. It is sometimes difficult to reason why we continue to come to work, when we could all easily get jobs elsewhere, with better pay and working conditions. We all stay because we love these kids and we know that we can help them to have the best possible school and future experiences. With the increase in pay to match the effort and work we put into our jobs, we might be able to get more dedicated and experienced Special Education Teachers to enter and stay in the field.

We need your help. Thank you so much for your time and consideration.

Kari Odo, Honolulu District, Oahu

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From: hughey2000@aol.com
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB 2488 PROPOSED SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Feb 19, 10am
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 9:50:23 AM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE
RE: SB 2488 PROPOSED SD1, RELATING TO TEACHER
COMPENSATION
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020
10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and Members of the Committee:

My name is Justin Hughey. I am a teacher/community member in Wailuku on Maui. **I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, proposed SD1.**

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian immersion, and hard to staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The department will need 45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fridge.

My wife and I had our first child last year. Even though I have a Masters degree and she has a PHD, we don't make enough as teachers to pay for daycare. Hawaii has one of the lowest teacher salaries in the country, when factored in the cost of living. We started comparing our salary to other states. In Washington State I would make \$105,000 and my wife would make \$81,505. That is roughly \$71,000 more in combined income than what we were paid in 2019. This state doesn't provide a salary that offers an incentive for our keiki to go to college and become teachers. Why should our kids go into debt for a job that doesn't pay rent? We shouldn't be importing teachers, our state government should ensure the teaching profession is worth pursuing, for the people who are born and raised here. For 10 years I worked 4-5 nights a week, leaving school when the bell rang to serve tables until I literally broke my back with a bulging disc. I was out of work for a year and a half.

Chair Dela Cruz you just wrote an editorial in the Civilbeat about the School to Prison Pipeline. You can't begin to solve that problem without a certified teacher in every classroom. I would like to thank you for hearing this bill. In

the Book Hawaii Pono, the teacher shortage has been going on since 1911 even though King Kamehameha III said, “Chiefs and people, give ear to my remarks! My kingdom shall be a kingdom of learning.” There has not been a serious attempt by our state government to properly address the teacher shortage until now. I thought hell froze over when I witnessed the Governor, Board of Education, Superintendent and HSTA link arms together to seriously address the teacher shortage. The last piece to solving this century old problem is the legislature allocating the funding in this bill. I hope all parties takes a victory lap by passing this bill... this session.

This is about every child having a real shot at life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. When a teacher resigns or moves away, my principal complains about not having any teachers to hire from the list of qualified applicants. Allowing people with only a high school diploma to teach our keiki is unacceptable. My son deserves a certified teacher and so does every other child in Hawaii.

Mahalo,
Justin Hughey
37 Poniu Circle
Wailuku HI, 96793
Second & Third Grade Special Education Teacher
King Kamehameha III Elementary
Lahaina, HI

From: [Lynn Melena](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020 10:00 a.m.
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 9:50:59 AM

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Lynn Melena. I am a resident of Volcano and a former Governing Board member at Volcano School of the Arts & Sciences in Puna District on Hawai'i island. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

As a community Governing Board member actively involved with VSAS over the past 5 years, I have observed how difficult it has been to staff and retain qualified teachers in our community and elsewhere. How can we expect our teachers to provide our keiki with the educational quality we expect if teachers are not provided with a living wage? Specifically, teachers should receive timely and regular step increases. We must stop the brain drain that is happening in our state where talented aspiring teachers have no choice but to move out of state. The students are the ones the most hurt. Another point—Hawaii, in comparison to other states, is highly unionized. When people feel devalued, they tend to organize. Perhaps if teachers were compensated equitably, union involvement may be less confrontational and even diminished. Let's put our children first. And the ones who can make that happen are our teachers.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Lynn Melena

Puna District, Hawaii island

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE
RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020
10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is James Kim. I am a special education teacher at Roosevelt High School in the Honolulu District on the island of Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1. Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I am honored to have the unique opportunity of teaching in the same area that I grew up. Being a first generation immigrant and growing up in the neighborhood of Makiki provides distinct insight into the challenges that face the youth in our community. The fact that I have a connection with the neighborhood of Makiki creates a sense of legitimacy that is difficult to deny and helps me to forge strong and meaningful relationships with my students. This happens when I speak to my students about their lives. They know that I have lived through some of the same experiences and struggles that they are going through now and this alone gets them to stop and consider what I have to say.

Teaching at Roosevelt High School allows me to guide my students through some of the typical struggles of growing up. More importantly, teaching at Roosevelt allows me to inspire the next generation of neighborhood kids to get an education and to strive to be more than they think they could be. I want to continue to help those who are growing up in much the same way that I did. This is what gives me meaning and purpose. By providing funding for teacher raises and differential pay, teachers like me can continue to do our life's work in the place that we love so dearly. With so many leaving the Hawaiian Islands due to cost of living and low pay, our way of life and the values that we hold dear are being threatened. Teaching allows me to pass on the values that have molded me into the person that I am... please allow me to continue what I love to do

We need your help. Mahalo.

Mr. James Kim, Special Education Teacher, Honolulu District, Oahu

From: [Roberta Yamamoto](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: SB 2488, SD1
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 9:54:34 AM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Roberta Yamamoto. I am a Librarian at Castle High School in Windward District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

While it's too late for me to benefit from the compression, I would like to see our veteran teachers be rewarded for their loyalty to our public schools and keiki by staying with the school system.

We keep recruiting from the Mainland, but those teachers go back (sometimes mid-year) because they are overwhelmed by our high cost of living. (Seriously, their eyes bug out at having to pay over \$5 for a gallon of milk or loaf of bread.) Pay differentials will help attract qualified special education teachers to our islands, even to the hard-to-staff areas.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Roberta Yamamoto, Windward District, Oahu

From: [Taylor Hoku Hayden](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: SD1
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 9:55:18 AM

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Taylor Hoku Hayden. I am a mother of two school aged boys, children's' book author, and small business owner on O'ahu Island. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers.

My 10-year old son has Sensory Processing Disorder and would not be where he is today without the help of his Special Education teachers. We moved from Alaska home to Hawai'i so that both our sons could learn in an enriching cultural and language immersion environment, and both attended Kula Kaiapuni 'O 'Anuenue. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our invaluable teachers are worth it. Our keiki are worth it. Our future depends on it.

We need your help. Mahalo.
Taylor Hoku Hayden
Nu'uuanu District, O'ahu Island, Hawai'i

From: [Jim OBrien](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wed Feb 19, at 10:00 AM
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 9:56:00 AM

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is James O`Brien. I am a teacher at King Kekaulike H.S. , Maui district , Island of Maui. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion and hard to staff positions to show that we as a state value our hard working teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have personally worked with countless students in high school for the past 15 years. Many are behind academically and need more and highly qualified teachers to help them succeed.

We need your help. Mahalo

James O`Brien

Maui District

Maui Island

From: [Kauai Taylor](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: SB 2488, SD1
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 9:57:58 AM

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Janel Kau'ikahokuokekai Hayden. I am a mother of two school aged boys, USAF Veteran, and Air Traffic Controller on O'ahu Island. I serve in both my sons' parent teacher boards. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers.

My 10-year old son has Sensory Processing Disorder and would not be where he is today without the help of his Special Education teachers. We moved from Alaska home to Hawai'i so that both our sons could learn in an enriching cultural and language immersion environment, and both attended Kula Kaiapuni 'O 'Anuenue. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our invaluable teachers are worth it. Our keiki are worth it. Our future depends on it.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Janel Hayden

Nu'uau District, O'ahu Island, Hawai'i

From: [Paul Luuwai](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: SB2488, SD1
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 9:58:06 AM

The DOE and state of Hawaii has spent much time and resources trying to recruit and retain new teachers. They are forgetting about the veteran teachers who have stuck it out year in and year out. I applaud the department for there efforts on recruitment, we need the young and new teachers in our schools. Without a livable wage why would anyone want to teach in Hawaii.

The maui news came out with an article saying if you earn \$67,000 / year you are borderline low income. If that is truly the case, how can someone in their right mind want to teach.

Please give the veteran teachers what they deserve. Give us a decent wage so we do not have to work a 2nd or 3rd job as i do. We all got into teaching for the love of working with young people. To enhance a students knowledge and the love of learning.

Hawaii has been a disgrace for decades. Do what is right for our youth, our state and most importantly our haumana

sincerely

Paul K Lu'uwai
29.6 years of teacher in the DOE

From: [Joan Lewis](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 9:58:31 AM

Aloha e Chair Dela Cruz and Committee Members;

I am writing to ask your support for the components of SB2488, SD1 that are currently a part of the HSTA Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) with the state of Hawaii. Although I appreciate any consideration for both Special Education and Hawaiian Language Immersion, I am uncertain about possible ramifications for salary issues outside of the contract. As such, I strongly support the components that can be found within the current CBA.

As a 31 year Leeward District teaching veteran, I have lived with a salary schedule that appears to recognize years of service without actually doing so. I am young enough to have seen what annual increments meant to the generation of teachers before me, old enough to understand what the impact of the current conditions is having on our teaching force, and the exact right age to know that should I retire at the end of this school year, with over 30 years of service, I will fall short of reaching the top of the salary schedule.

On the one hand, I have tried to make my peace with this, but on the other hand, I am not sure there is an understanding of how damaging the status quo is for the teachers involved or for the profession. Further, I don't know if there is any discussion about how the current situation undermines any and all attempts to address the teacher shortage.

There are a number of veteran teachers who are so frustrated by the salary stagnation that they will tell their students, their own children, and anyone who will listen; "Don't go into teaching." Even those who are not so vitriolic are demoralized that they get paid no more than teachers who are several years their junior when it comes to teaching experience. And those of us who are trying to live with it have no good answer for the arbitrary and capricious nature of our own salary schedule. None of us can offer solace or any kind of guidance to younger staff members who are hoping that salary growth can be a part of their professional journey. And, as our specific profession does not include the kind of promotions seen in other bargaining units, there is no way that teachers can stay in the classroom and expect increased compensation for it over time.

In 2001, the state of Hawaii committed to do something different. As part of our strike settlement, the following language was added into our contract:

Article XX - Salaries: M. The parties recognize that annual incremental step movements are a viable recruiting and retention tool. Teachers who are not at the top of the salary schedule and who have satisfactory evaluations shall move to the next highest step of the corresponding class at the beginning of each school year. Annual incremental step movements are subject to funding.

While passage of SB2488, SD1 does not guarantee funding for this agreement in perpetuity, it does go a long way to helping make this a reality that teachers can plan for and build careers around.

There is another contractual provision that your support would go a long way in addressing.

*APPENDIX VII MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN STATE OF HAWAII
BOARD OF EDUCATION AND HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION
(RECRUITMENT/RETENTION INCENTIVE FOR HARD-TO-STAFF LOCATIONS)*

This Memorandum of Understanding is effective as of July 1, 2017 by and between the State of Hawaii, Board of Education and the Hawaii State Teachers Association. In an effort to provide stability and continuity in the learning communities of hard-to staff schools, the parties mutually agree to a differential for licensed teachers, including public charter school teachers, employed in the following geographical areas and campuses, shall be paid a hard-to-staff incentive as follows:

An annual differential of \$3,000 shall be paid at the following geographical areas and campuses:

*Hana Complex
Keaau Complex
Lanai Complex
Molokai Complex
Kau Complex
Nanakuli Complex
Pahoa Complex
Waianae Complex*

The funding for the retention incentive shall not come out of public charter school per pupil allocations. This Memorandum of Understanding shall expire on June 30, 2021.

As this provision is already in the contract, I would ask that you consider this amendment: raise the amount to \$12,000.00 per year. I ask for your consideration of this increase for the following reasons: 1) These complexes are found in some of the more remote and economically challenged areas in the state. Gas prices, grocery prices, and simple wear and tear due to lengthy commutes could be offset economically by having \$1000.00 per month added to the paycheck. 2) The hard to staff areas are generally staffed by teachers new to the profession and/or new to the state. This increase could do double duty of supporting these most financially vulnerable teachers.

I know that there is much to consider, and your support for this profession and these communities cannot always be measured in dollars and cents. In this case, however, I think the investment in making our salary schedule reflect service recognition and consideration of supporting both our communities and our early in their career educators is necessary. I also think it will help the state better position itself in the field of education.

Thank you all for your careful consideration of this matter. If I can provide further information, please do not hesitate to contact me vial email: joankamilalewis@gmail.com or by phone:808-561-1988.

Thank you again,

Joan Kamila Lewis
Kapolei High School

91-1018 Kaimalie Street, R4

Ewa Beach, HI 96706

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2020 7:20:31 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Leanne N. Teves	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is **Leanne N. Teves**. I am a **Student Services Coordinator** at **Iroquois Point Elementary, Leeward District** on **Oahu**. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

The additional funding will allow me to receive more in regards to my salary. This will help me to continue to live in the state of Hawaii enduring the increasing daily living costs. I was born and raised in Hawaii on the Island of Oahu. I am so proud to be employed by the state in this capacity; giving back to people that reside the place of my birth. As a Student Services Coordinator, a position created in 1999 as part of the Felix Consent decree, I take pride and find joy in helping families receive appropriate services to address their child's needs. The purpose for the position was to have a central point of contact for twelve months at the school to help families navigate through the system in obtain services. It is my hope that the increase with the salary will allow a good retirement as well; which is not far away.

We need your help. Mahalo for your time in reviewing my written testimony.

Leanne N. Teves, Leeward District, Oahu

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2020 1:15:12 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Hope McKeen	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Kidani and members of the Education Committee:

My name is **Hope McKeen**. I am a teacher at **Ka 'Umeke KÄ• 'eo Hawaiian Immersion Public Charter School** in Hilo on **Hawaii**. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, proposed SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard to staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides to do so. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I am a single mother that has to work 3 other jobs to just break even. 2 years ago I considered leaving the teaching field for more lucrative work in other industries. Please support myself as well as the other 6300 teachers that need the modernization of the pay scale.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Hope McKeen

Hilo

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2020 2:57:39 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Joy Loudermelt	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support this bill.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education , Hawaiian Immersion, and Hard to Staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. They not only need this 25 million, but they will need 45 million more to fix it right the first time. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2020 7:19:10 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Una Burns	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is **Una Burns**. I am a **HS teacher** at **WHEA** in **Kona** on **the Big Island**. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

It is really important to adjust veteran teachers' pay who were not given regular step increases during hard economic times. Many teachers planning to retire soon I know of will consider staying a few more years if they get this crucial and deserved pay increass. Some of our younger teachers already have left & some now consider leaving Hawaii or the teaching profession because the cost of living has outpaced their salary. I have frequently seen educators quit in the middle of the school year, leaving students with long-term substitutes who do a wonderful job but really aren't qualified. Please help ease the teacher shortage crisis and improve the lives of students because experienced educators will be more inclined to stay in the classroom and new hires will see that they are valued. Bring the aloha back to the classroom.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Una Burns, Kona Big Island

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2020 7:20:49 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ryan Kishida	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Greetings. My name is Ryan Kishida. I am a teacher at Waimea Canyon Middle School on Kauai. I'm submitting testimony in support of SB2488 SD1.

I have been a teacher for 17 years. In all those years, I have only gone up 6 steps, from step 5 to 11. These steps would normally be used to reward and recognize years of service in other states. However, I have only been able to rise to the steps due to contract negotiations. In other words, my reward and recognition has not been due to years of service and experience. It has been through the whims of negotiations committees.

Oddly enough, my wife, who has a similar level of education as me, started a new job last year. Her starting pay was nearly the same as mine, a teacher at class 7, step 11 with 17 years. It makes you wonder if the State of Hawaii is really interested in retaining experienced teachers for the keiki.

So please support your teachers who support Hawaii.

Thank you.

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2020 8:09:58 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
KATHERINE ROSEGUO	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha. I have been a teacher for nearly 20 years here in Hawaii and I believe that this bill would encourage our experienced teachers to stay in Hawaii where they are needed. All teachers struggle and make hard choices about where to live and whether or not to continue teaching. Education is the hope for our future. Please support the future of Hawaii

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

Aloha kākou, ‘o au nō ‘o Kēhaulani Medeiros, he kumu papa ‘ekolu au ma ke Kula ‘o Nāwahīokalani‘ōpu‘u ma Puna ma ka mokupuni ‘o Hawai‘i. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion (including charter school teachers), and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. The original amount did not include funds for the charter school teachers so we are humbly asking to be included in the money being sought. Our teachers, including charter school, are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

The Hawaiian medium education schools have been working hard to educate our children in our precious Hawaiian language while simultaneously instilling the skills needed to be integral parts of the Hawaiian community. Our charter school teachers spend a lot of time outside of school time in creating lessons for the students since there is not a lot of resources available to them. Fellow teachers and I spend a lot of our own money to create these lessons. We do it for the love of our students but it can be a burden since we are on a tight budget. Any extra money that can be added for Hawaiian language immersion would be a great help to pay down bills and student loans taken out while attaining my teaching and master's degree. I feel that this will also help to recruit and retain teachers in the Hawaiian language immersion schools. We are in dire need of more Hawaiian language teachers for our immersion schools and this might help to increase our numbers.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Kēhaulani Medeiros, Puna, Hawai‘i Island

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2020 9:03:40 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Katherine Wood	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is **Katherine Wood**. I am a fourth grade general education teacher at Kea'au Elementary in the Kea'au-Ka'u-Pahoa Complex on Hawaii Island. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

I returned to teaching after 25 years away and this is my first full year teaching. It is challenging, rewarding work. I come in early; I stay late; I plan on the weekends. I love it but it is challenging. Last March after I had first returned to teaching, my husband was taking my two sons to the park so I could do some planning and grading. My youngest son(4) said, "Mama, why aren't you coming to the park?" My older son (then 7) said, "She can't. Mom's a teacher now. Teachers don't have time to go to the park." Ouch! Both of his amazing kindergarten and first grade teachers had children they didn't get to see as often as they wanted. Here he was, at the ripe old age of 7, I'm 2 months into my "new-again" career, and he's already figured out that great teachers spend a lot of extra time to be great and that extra time is sometimes at the expense of their own children. It's sad but true.

I worked in the corporate universe for a long time. Raises were based on a combination of work ethic and years of service. Many of my new peers, seasoned veterans, are not making much more than I am when their level of skill, experience, and competence is so much greater than my own. I know I'll get there too, but it's a shame these exemplary teachers haven't been able to enjoy regular pay increases as befits their experience and years of service.

Kea'au Elementary is in the hard-to-staff area. While I don't presume to know all the trials and tribulations our administration has endured to assemble our great staff, I know that many of my peers are doing their best to manage a multitude of responsibilities beyond the scope of their actual job description. They work long hours because they care about the success of our haumana. As a teacher benefitting from their support and mother of 2 school aged boys I am grateful for their sacrifices.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking

teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

Teaching our keiki is our most important responsibility as they will be the ultimate custodians of our collective future. Please ensure that all of us working to provide that education are fairly compensated.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Katherine Wood, Kea'au-Ka'u-Pahoa Complex, Hawaii Island

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2020 9:11:00 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
De Austin	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Senate Committee,

I am a middle school teacher on Maui, currently teaching, and without my husband's income, we would not be able to continue to live on Maui.

In fact, if I did not have a second income, I would move off-island, like so many of my teaching colleagues.

Is that what we are saying to our teachers? We are saying you must have a second income through a partner or spouse or second job, and only then, may you live on Maui and teach our children? Are we saying that teaching is not a valued profession, so to be educated, therefore is not valued? Do we continue to support the plantation mentality of Hawaii's past: our children, our brothers and sisters on-island, are only here to be of service to our tourist-driven economy but not to be leaders, educators, inventors, computer geeks, business owners, farmers, mechanics, technicians, scientists, doctors, politicians?

A society that invests in education invests in a better future for all.

Please focus on our children, who are the future, and their teachers, who shape their minds and their potential.

Thank you.

Dezireen Austin

Maui Waena Intermediate School

Kahului, HI

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2020 9:43:39 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Michael Kline	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Michael Kline. I am a Special Education preschool teacher at Kilauea School in Kapa'a district on Kaua'i. I have been a National Board Certified Teacher since 2003. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki. I have worked in the Department of Education for 20 years now and am 58 years old. I love teaching; it is my calling. I have taught Special Education preschool for 16 years now and am an experienced teacher, who is their first teacher. I would love to teach til I am 70 years old.

However, the demands of Special Education and of Special Education preschool have become overwhelming. I work hundreds of hours outside my work time in order to meet all of the demands -- writing IEPs, attending meetings, recording data, doing progress reports, creating behavioral support plans, updating my students with autism programs, preparing the Special

Education budget for my department, writing PO's, etc. My three brothers work in the private sector as a doctor, tv producer, and legal assistant. They are paid for all the long hours they work including overtime. This shows respect for what they do. Why am I not paid for all that I do? Why have I been stuck in Class 7 (and the resulting same salary) for several years now? Why did my salary actually decrease since 2009 and only got back to where it was a couple of years ago? Why did I have to not only be responsible for my own preschoolers three years ago, but also for several other 2nd-4th graders in another Special Education classroom who had a full time substitute the entire year because there was no other Special Education teacher? I did my best, but I know the students could have learned a lot more. Unfortunately, I have begun to think about retirement and leaving the state because of these circumstances here in Hawai'i. However, if I continued to receive the shortage differentials that Special Education teachers started receiving in January and also received the compression pay, I probably would continue teaching. I would feel more respected. The hundreds of extra hours would be worth it. These kinds of raises will help ease the teacher shortage crisis and improve the lives of students because experienced educators will be more inclined to stay in the classroom. Please help us out. Please keep experienced teachers in the classroom. Please do not keep passing this issue down the road. Let's solve the teacher shortage issue once and for all to benefit our keiki and let our Hawai'i schools shine.

Michael Kline

Special Education Teacher

National Board Certified Teacher in Exceptional Needs since 2003

Kilauea School

Kapa'a Complex

Island of Kaua'i

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2020 10:02:52 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Sandra Barnett	Testifying for HSTA	Support	No

Comments:

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

[WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020](#)

[10:00 a.m.](#)

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is **Sandra Barnett**. I am a **teacher** at **Momilani Elementary** in the Leeward District on **Oahu**. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I am a veteran teacher of 30 years in the Hawai'i public school system. My plans are to retire in the next two years, even though it would mean doing something I love to do...teach! My plan is to stay for 2 more years because of my National Board Certification, but if I could receive a pay increase, I would definitely remain in the teaching profession as a full-time educator. Substitute teaching would be an option if I retire soon, but the rewards of watching the children learn and grow on a daily basis, for 10 months, cannot be replicated. The rewards also go way past the classroom...everytime a former student comes to visit or recognizes me in public or a parent/grandparent stops to thank me for teaching their child, it reminds me that teaching is not just a job, but a way of life.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Sandra Barnett, Leeward District, Oahu

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2020 10:58:42 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Elissa Fiedler	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Elissa Fiedler. I am a Kindergarten teacher at Kahakai Elementary School in Kailua-Kona on Hawaii Island. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I came here to teach in 2016, and in only four short years I have seen more teachers than I can count come and go from this island. Almost always, one of the top reasons for leaving is the financial burden caused by low teacher salary and high cost of living. Another top reason is simply that rural life on Big Island can be tough for a lot of people. Many teachers I know moved to Oahu, if not off the islands all together.

I can tell you for a fact that it takes at least two years for a teacher to really begin to master their craft and make a big impact on the students in their classroom. Losing teachers after only a couple years is such a disservice to our keiki, who deserve the best education possible. A better education IS possible! We need to provide teachers with adequate pay. These differentials will help tremendously. We need them to be fully funded! Additionally, our community is so much stronger when teachers are rooted and stay for many years. Teachers who are rooted in the community are able to build trust with families, and are also able to provide far more culturally relevant teaching. We need teachers to stay. We need teachers to be able to afford to stay.

My first year teaching I was only able to survive because I had savings from a previous career in Washington, D.C. In my third year of teaching I knew I was committed to my job and this island, and wanted to buy a house. I learned that on a teacher's salary, I would not qualify for a loan for even a foreclosed, 2-bedroom house in very poor condition. Teachers should be able to qualify for a loan for very basic housing! The proposed differentials will make a difference for me personally, and I know they will make a difference for other teachers as well.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Elissa Fiedler, Kealakehe District, Hawaii Island

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2020 11:21:32 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Cathy Fitzpatrick	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Cathy Fitzpatrick. I am a teacher at Lokelani Intermediate School in Kihei on Maui. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I arrived 2 days before school started in August 1999 with the promise of a teaching position at Lahaina Intermediate School. I was embraced by the school and the community. Now, 20 plus years later, I am still here, still teaching Hawaii's keiki in the Hawaii Department of Education. I believe in public schools, and more so believe in Hawaii's children even though the state of Hawaii makes it very difficult for teachers to do so financially, especially those who have years of valuable teaching experience. As I see my colleagues in other states teaching salaries continue to go up year after year, I saw mine freeze as our state went through financial difficulties. I have been working second sometimes third jobs continually throughout my teaching career here just to keep afloat. I have babysat, tutored, waitressed, and been a cashier at various stores. I have a Master's degree in Education. Honestly, it is demoralizing.

When I heard about the fixing the compression issue, I am given hope. Hope that my skills and years of experience (including being a mentor teacher and voted staff member of the month several times and teacher of the year by our students) will be valued. This is incentive for me to continue working, continue teaching in the public schools, continue giving our keiki the best education I can provide. I implore that you pass this bill and keep teachers and the hundreds of other teachers like me in our public schools. We need your help.

Mahalo,

Cathy Fitzpatrick

Lokelani Intermediate School,

Kihei, Maui

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2020 12:02:49 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Roberta Shibuya	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Monday February 17, 2020

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Roberta Shibuya. I am a Kindergarten teacher at Waiakea Elementary School in Hilo on the Big Island of Hawaii and I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

We learned a lot about the Compression Bill last week at our annual Teacher Institute Day at Keaau High and I can tell you that both my husband and I (both DOE classroom teachers) and our 2 girls AND the 50+ kids in our combined classroom would GREATLY benefit from the passing of this bill.

My husband and I are one of the almost 6,000 teachers that are “stuck” in our “steps”. My husband has just made 20 years and I am at 13 years of service (I took 4 years of leave without pay to stay home with our 2 girls when they were born) yet we are still at one of the lower steps despite our years of hard work and devoted service to the DOE.

Most other states and other unions in our state have automatic step increases based on years of service. Yet in Hawaii, DOE teachers are required to accrue 15 extra credits to move up ONE class (we need to move 7 classes = 15 credits X 7 classes - to reach the top of the pay scale). These classes are paid for out of our own pocket and each class costs somewhere between 150-300 dollars. So to move 7 class (105 TOTAL credits) and to be making what I should be making, this would cost me between \$5,000 to \$10,000 not to mention the CRAZY amount of time that it would require me to complete this case load in addition to running my

kindergarten classroom and all that entails AND being a mom which I am sure you are well aware of, in and of itself is a full time job. Because of the financial burden and time it would take from my family, my husband and I have not been able to take much if any “classes” thus we are being paid very close to what a new teacher is making even with all of our years of service.

I love teaching and but soon my daughter will be heading off to college. My husband will have had 25 years in by then and I will be close to 20. We are probably going to leave the island and look for other teaching positions in another state. We will hold off on collecting till we are 62 years old to prevent penalties and we are very frugal so we will make it work. I am not one to toot my own horn but we are good solid teachers and are assets to our school, community, and to the kids that come in and out of our classrooms each year. However changing times have shown us that teaching is no longer a desirable profession. In fact we have outright forbade both of our daughters to go into teaching because of how tough the classroom has become.

We would like to be able to give back more... to our home kids and to the kids in our classroom. Passing this bill would enable my husband buy his OWN food coloring for school instead of stealing the red one from my pantry. I got stuck with the green because he used the red to make dinosaur toothpaste in his science class. I found this out when I was going to making chi chi mochi for Valentines Day for school...who has ever heard of green for Valentines day? But we made do. With this funding, he could also buy his own raisins for his science classroom’s “dancing raisins” experiment instead of again taking our raisins from home which of course I didn’t realize until I was going to make a batch of oatmeal raisin cookies. You see this bill would not only help our personal household, it helps support our classroom as well. We are given \$500 a year for basic supplies but for the fun stuff...that comes out of pocket....Target does not take PO’s. All the conversation hearts I bought last week for our graphing, measuring, and experiments....came out of my pocket. The soil, seeds, and trays we use for plants...come out of our pockets. The mother's day gifts we will be making (fingerprint necklaces) will come out of my pocket. All this goes back into our classrooms. When we want to learn about math the fun way....I go to Target and pick up a bag of jelly beans and a container of cheese balls. When we studied Johnny Appleseed in September, I went to KTA and bought 10 pounds of apples....at almost \$3.00 a pound. During winter, we made gingerbread houses and I bought a lot of the supplies (the rest were donated by generous parents). Yes we could have easily said NO to any or all of these projects but my husband and I and MANY MANY other teachers really want to provide a truly enriching and FUN FUN FUN learning environment for all our kids and that is not always free.

So Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee, I beg you to please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue. Our teachers are worth it and so are our ALL of our kids (home and school keiki). As one of my co-workers said so poignantly... "Teaching is the only profession where we steal things from our home to bring them to school to use"... that is the truth.

We appreciate your time and thank you so much for taking this into consideration.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Roberta Shibuya, I teach in Hilo I live in Puna, Hawaii

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2020 1:16:58 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Michael Press	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

My name is Michael Press. I am a teacher at Ilima Intermediate in Ewa Beach on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, proposed SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian immersion, and hard to staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. **The department will need 45 million more than this bill provides to do so. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.**

I moved to Hawaii in 2018 for the express reason of teaching at Ilima. I believe in the mission of my school and of my principal. I have actively recruited other highly qualified educators from my friend on the mainland using Hawaii's focus on the whole child as ammunition. I must confess that I am shaken by our state's lack of focus on the whole teacher. It is just my wife and I in our one bedroom apartment. While my job is rewarding the pay is not. We are struggling to make monthly rent and food. I have watched bills in the Congress that would be gamechangers for my family, go to defeat or to be tabled never to see the light of day. I must make a choice very soon. Do I stay at a place I love and sacrifice my families wellbeing or move back to the mainland and add to the Teacher shortage crisis. Please help me to stay!

We need your help. Mahalo.

Michael Press, Campbell Complex, Oahu

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2020 1:47:26 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Meicha D'Auria	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

[WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020](#)

[10:00 a.m.](#)

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Meicha D'Auria. I am a Middle School Special Education Teacher at MAUI Waena Intermediate in Baldwin-Kekaulike Complex on Maui. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

In my own experience, I relocated from Washington State because of my love for the Hawaiian islands and its beautiful people. For four years I have taken an almost \$15k to \$20k pay cut, because my love for the people and island was so great. As I have progressed in my career and now want to start a family and settle down, it has become increasingly more difficult to afford to live on the island while serving our keiki in the public school system. In order to develop my skills as an educator, I need to be educated on the latest research and seek to better myself in terms of a graduate degree. However, I am unable to do so because I am living paycheck to paycheck and unable to afford to hone my craft. In addition, because there is minimal incentive to stay because of the lack of recognition that teachers who have stayed for countless years receive.

As I have sacrificed over the years to stay on our beautiful island (sacrificed time with family overseas, better salaries etc) I have watched many incredible teachers moving off island because the pay and cost of living were so detrimental. I have been able to stay because I have maintained 4 jobs (teaching being just one of them), in order to balance my paycheck. I do not know of a single teacher who does not have a second if not third source of income. While this

level of dedication may help balance the budget and bills, it means that I am not able to give my students my complete attention and time as I am constantly running and going from job to job. The emotional and psychological impact is incredibly great, and my students deserve me at my best. Our children are our future, and their teachers need to be completely devoted to their holistic education and growth. Only when we prioritize our children by supporting our teachers, will our world improve for the better! Thank you for your time and consideration.

We need your help. Mahalo,

Meicha D'Auria, Baldwin Complex, Maui HI.

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2020 3:45:02 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Amber O'Reilly	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Amber O'Reilly. I am a teacher at Kahuku High and Intermediate School in Windward District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Amber O'Reilly, Kahuku High and Intermediate, Oahu

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2020 4:18:06 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Claire Gearen	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Donovan Dela Cruz and Members of the Senate Ways and Means Committee,

My name is Claire Gearen, and I have taught at Mililani High School since 2007. I am one of approximately 6,300 teachers impacted by compression on the HIDOE salary schedule.

I strongly support SB2488 SD1.

While I feel a strong sense of place living in the neighborhood where I was raised (Maikiki), in 2017 I considered moving to Portland, Oregon. When the current teachers' contract was ratified, I decided to stay. The modest raises that we received meant that I could afford to make Hawai'i my home. I sold my 1997 vehicle and began commuting by bus and foot. I have so far been able to live within my means by eliminating transportation costs (I rent a parking stall for the income to pay my bus fare); however, increases in fixed expenses are putting pressure on my budget once again.

After 20 years of teaching and 13 years with Hawai'i Public Schools, I should be able to afford a vehicle were I to choose to drive, and I should have the income to buy nutritious food at the grocery store. However, in the first 10 years that I taught for the HIDOE, I moved only 2 steps. Upon hire, I had expected to move a step every year. I was not informed that step increases in the HIDOE are not automatic. Over that 10 year period, I estimate that I earned \$50,000 less than expected (after taxes). It is difficult not to be angry, and I did process a lot of anger in 2017 when I reached the 10 year mark and made this calculation.

In 2019 I missed a rare family reunion because I did not have the savings to fly to Chicago. I was one of only a handful of family members missing out of 56 in attendance,

and the gathering honored my father on his 70th birthday. I ask that legislators work to appropriate funds to support the HIDOE's Experimental Modernization Project. I ask that if I continue to teach in Hawai'i Public Schools, that I will earn pay commensurate with my peers in comparable districts.

The Experimental Modernization Project would offer a small fraction of the amount I calculate I have lost working for the HIDOE, yet the increase in pay would improve my quality of life measurably. I could afford to attend potlucks and I wouldn't have anxiety when paying grocery bills. I would be able to afford the occasional travel to visit relatives.

Supporting the Experimental Modernization Project is an investment in good jobs in every neighborhood of Hawai'i. If the 13,500 teacher positions in Hawai'i become an attractive career choice, we help to build a vibrant economy that positively impacts every community.

Again, I ask for your support of SB2488 SD1.

Mahalo for your public service,

Claire Gearen

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2020 4:22:36 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Trisha Gibson	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Trisha Gibson. I am a teacher at Aiea Elementary School in Central District on the island of O'ahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

This is my sixteenth year teaching in Hawaii. I actually left the DOE after 8 years of teaching due to another career opportunity that paid more money. I returned back to the DOE because this work is my calling. I have contributed another 8 years to this noble profession, but the financial stress is a real concern. As a teacher, I have had to work two jobs to financially support myself here in Hawaii. I recently retired from my second part-time job due to physical fatigue and I am currently living solely on my teacher's salary, barely making ends meet. Fixing the teacher salary compression issue in our state would greatly help me continue to do the work I love doing which is supporting teachers and students by providing quality public education in Hawaii.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Trisha Gibson, Central District, O'ahu

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2020 5:13:04 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kevin Hoag	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Kevin Hoag. I am a teacher at Konawaena Middle School in Kealakekua on the Big Island. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been teaching for 20 years and am at the same pay step as someone that has half the teaching experience that I do. Experience does make difference. I have become a better teacher every year. I learn what works, what doesn't. I learn from my mistakes. I know how to respond to the students needs in a more effective way. There is no substitute for experience.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Kevin Hoag, Konawaena Middle School, Kealakekua, Big Island

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2020 5:22:43 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jade Pham	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2020 5:41:30 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ryan Mandado	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chairman Donovan and Members of the Committee,

My name is Ryan Mandado and I'm the Chief Academic Officer of DreamHouse 'Ewa Beach Public Charter School. I'm a Special Education teacher by trade and I was the Special Education Department Head of the largest department in the state.

As someone who supported 30 Special Education teachers, I know how hard they work. In total, my teachers serviced 300 students with special needs - from medically fragile facilities to inclusion in general education. The amount of work they do each day is beyond the contractual work hours. There is not enough time within the week to complete all things necessary in order to ensure all the paperwork is completed.

I'm writing in support of this bill because of the differential pay Special Educators will receive. I believe with this pay differential, we will be paying Special Education the salary they deserve and also help to reduce burn out and recruit high-quality Special Education teachers. We started this school year with 600 vacant Special Education classrooms. This should be a state of emergency.

Once again, I am in full support of this bill.

Mahalo,

Ryan Mandado

Chief Academic Officer

808-931-0442

ryanmandado@gmail.com

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2020 5:57:59 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Heidi Randolph Maxie	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

Aloha, my name is Heidi Randolph Maxie. I am a teacher at Castle High School in the Windward District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue to show that we as a state value our hard working teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our children.

I have been teaching since 1997. I have been teaching for over 20 years and am still not at the top step. Something is very wrong. I enjoy what I do and I think that it important to invest in the next generation. So I stay. I think about leaving. My family and friends tell me that I should leave. That I need to look out for myself. I am widowed. I lost my husband unexpectedly in 2017. Finances are tight, but I see value in what I do. So I stay. Not everyone feels the same way. Not everyone is able to stay.

We are in a state of crisis. I would love to have you spend a day with me. See what it's like in the trenches. See how many students are not under the supervision of a highly qualified teacher. See how many of our students are not getting what they deserve. Hear about the many teachers that have left for jobs that pay better. Meet the teachers that work 2 and 3 jobs so that they can continue teaching. I have seen good teachers leave the profession because they were not able to provide for their families financially. Good teachers. Highly effective teachers. Hard working teachers. Teachers that wanted to stay...but just couldn't. Because of the pay.

Our students deserve so much more. Our communities deserve so much more. The future of our state depends on how well we take care of the next generation. Our students need to be empowered, encouraged, and equipped. If we can do this, our state has a chance. To be better. To do better. To be something that we all can be proud of. But it starts with our teachers, the people that take care of our children. Please help us. I love this place and want it to be in good shape for many years to come. I want it to be better than it is today. We deserve it, and so do our children.

We need your help. Thank you.

Heidi Randolph Maxie, Windward District, Oahu

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2020 5:59:55 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ana Ramirez	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.

My name is **Ana Lucia Ramirez** I am a **World Language Teacher** at **at Maui High School** in **Maui** on **Maui** I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

Have been working as a teacher for the past 12 years. I love what I do, my students are my inspiration. I have always dreamed with buying a house, here in Maui. But unfortunately, with my salary it has been impossible. I have two sons, and I wanted them to go to school, and therefore, I never had the money to even think I could buy a house. By fixing the salary compression, it will ones more, give me hope of owning my house and the possibility of staying in Maui. Sooner or later you are always thinking of where to go and buy a house. Is there affordable housing in Maui? I do no know? And what is the definition of affordable? Based on my salary?

Mahalo,

Ana Lucia Ramirez

Maui

Maui County

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Benjamin Duke. I am a High School Math and Writing teacher at West Hawaii Explorations Academy PCS on Hawaii Island. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been teaching for the past 20 years (the last 13 in Hawaii) and see the value of our public education in the growth and transformation of the students I have worked with. It has been a struggle to make it work in Hawaii, especially now that I have a family with two children. Salary compression in Hawaii has resulted in far less salary growth than I would have seen had I continued teaching in Washington, DC public schools. Now that my children are getting older, I have to begin thinking about the cost of their higher education. It has been nearly impossible for me to put away any money over the years and I think teachers should be fairly compensated for their important role we play. By passing this legislation, this will keep our most qualified public school teachers, librarians, and counselors here in the state working with our most valuable resource- our keiki.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Benjamin Duke

West Hawaii Explorations Academy PCS

Hawaii Island

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2020 6:37:44 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lynn Nagata	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee,

I am Lynn Nagata, certified in special education and general education, 35 years total teaching experience, now teaching Inclusion 3rd grade at Kea'au Elementary School on Hawaii Island. I taught 2 years in South Carolina and 21 years in Palm Beach County, Florida before returning to Hawaii in 2009. With 23 years of experience, the DOE started me at 6 years level! And at that time, I was also National Board Certified in Special Education. I took a \$20,000 pay cut to return to Hawaii and that was not right!

I'd like to speak to two issues that this bill is trying to solve: pay compression and special education. First, the compression has affected me because I was only given 6 years of "experience" and I have not gotten yearly raises. If I wasn't a local, I would have left the teaching profession and moved back to the mainland. Second, as a special education teacher in 2009, the DOE personnel manager told me, "You are the only certified special education teacher to come across my desk in years! There are many positions you can apply for."

Please support SB2488 so teacher pay compression can be addressed and differentials for Special Education can be funded. Certified teachers do make a difference to our keiki!

Thank you. Lynn Nagata, B.Ed/P.D. UH - Manoa, M.Ed. University of Florida,

Inclusion 3rd grade, Kea'au El., Hawaii Island

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2020 6:40:36 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Tina Marie Myers	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Tina Marie Myers. I am a special education teacher at Manana Elementary School in Leeward District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been teaching special education in Hawaii for ten years; the last five years I have been in a fully self contained classroom working with high needs students. As special education teachers, we have numerous demands placed upon us as we teach our students to be as independent as possible. We work with students as they learn to express their emotions and communicate with others appropriately, which may include dealing with intense behaviors at times. In addition, we give a lot of time beyond the bell to care for our students that come early or leave late due to bus schedules and we often stay beyond the contracted day to accommodate parent meetings. The differential has helped with my decision to continue teaching and remain in special education. It will definitely help to recruit and retain teachers in these positions that usually have a high turnover.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Tina Marie Myers, Leeward District, Oahu

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2020 6:44:49 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
phaedra ranges	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Phaedra Robinson. I am a special education teacher in Honolulu district on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

I have been a special education teacher working in the field of special education here in Hawaii since 1998. It is my love for Hawaii and for my students that has kept me here despite the incredibly low pay and lack of support for special education here in our public schools. It is an incredible hardship to teach here long term and to make a difference when you are living paycheck to paycheck.

Over the past 2 decades, I have seen numerous attempts to attract and retain teachers here in Hawaii fail to do so and waste innumerable amounts of money, energy and public support. All this effort that should have been invested into keeping our teachers who are here already with salaries comparable to the mainland and in cities as expensive as ours is to live.

I plead with you to please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue and provide the funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state

value our dedicated and hardworking teachers and the students and families they work with. I have been told that the Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus. Please, please do this so that we can retain our current teachers who would like to teach here to their retirement, to reward us for our dedication and years of service, help to attract good teachers from the mainland, fill the positions in the outer islands and geographically isolated areas, and strengthen our Hawaiian immersion programs. We need this!

The nation is watching us now to see what our state will do to support our teachers and public schools. Please show us, and the nation that you care about improving the current state of education in Hawaii. Happy teachers make happy students and happy families!!!

Thank you for your time and for representing teachers and students of public schools,

Phaedra E. Robinson, Ph.D.

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2020 6:57:33 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Christine Putzulu	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee

My name is Christine Putzulu. I am a teacher at Daniel K. Inouye Elementary School in Central District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff-positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I know that our Special Education teachers work under tremendous stressful conditions on a daily basis. They tirelessly work with students who require a range of special needs that moment-to-moment demand their attention in the classroom. I witness their struggles as they give up time to eat a duty free lunch because there is no one to cover their class to care for their students. They make personal sacrifices to care for their students. I applaud these individuals who serve beyond the capacity of their expectations, because they genuinely CARE.

I feel there is a strong need for us to support the Hawaiian Immersion Programs to ensure that the Hawaiian culture and language will thrive and never die. Please help us to continue to educate our children to appreciate ancient ancestors who shared their knowledge and life-giving lessons rooted in Aloha. We need to give this gift to our children so that they can perpetuate the spirit of Aloha.

It hurts when my dear friends and colleagues struggle to make ends meet. They are forced to make the hard decision to uproot their family and relocate to another state where their income would afford them a decent lifestyle. Where housing and the simple basic pleasures of life are affordable. Living in Hawaii where the cost of living is extremely high makes it difficult for families to live on salary they receive from the DOE. Many are (2) income earners. Let's work at giving our teachers an income that will allow them to stay in Hawaii.

We need your help. Mahalo!

Christine Putzulu, Central District, Oahu

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2020 6:56:38 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Pamela Petras	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Pamela Petras. I am a special education teacher at Kalihi Kai Elementary in the Farrington complex, in the Honolulu district, on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education (DoE) will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I graduated from college in the late '90s and worked for many years in fields outside of my undergraduate major. I always did my best in these positions, but felt the work was unfilling. After moving to Hawaii in 2011, I began volunteering at [Life 360 Network, Inc.](#) a non-profit that mentors youth who live in some of the largest housing communities on Oahu. I've witnessed so many of the dangerous influences for kids growing up in the housing. I'm proud to know that the work at Life 360 does helps youth stay in school, stay out of gangs, away from drugs, and exposes them to different, safer ways to live. As a result of this organization, I decided that I wanted to do something to make more of a difference in the lives of local at-risk youth.

I was accepted into UH's post-baccalaureate certificate program in special education (SPED) to become a teacher. Due to the shortages in SPED teachers in Hawaii, the cost of the 2 year program was covered by a stipend. My thanks goes out to legislators, DoE and UH who continue to support this program. I completed the program in spring, 2019 along with several other highly qualified teachers, and I was thrilled to be hired as the DoE SPED teacher in a pre-k, Head Start, inclusion classroom. I currently teach in a setting where I am making a difference in the lives of kids facing economic hardships and learning difficulties. Being a SPED teacher is the most challenging job I have ever loved.

I worked a second job for the first four months as a teacher, but due to the enormity of my new teaching career, I left to use that time to continue learning how to be the best

teacher possible. While I depended on this income, I chose to find room in my budget to make it work. The differential I received starting in January is helpful.

There are differing opinions on how to handle the teacher shortage. I believe that approving SB 2488, SD1 to fund the existing differential to keep teachers in the worst shortage areas, while also using the differential as a recruiting tool is smart way to address the teacher shortage in Hawaii. While not all of the teachers benefiting from the differential are submitting testimonies, I can assure you that they appreciate the efforts being made to retain highly qualified teachers.

Approval of SB 2488, SD1 supports solving the teacher shortage, while also fixing the compression issue affecting our most experienced teachers in Hawaii. As a new teacher, I look forward to the days when I consider myself an experienced teacher, because I will more easily and quickly implement the evidence-based strategies needed to teach students. I will fill out paperwork more quickly, leaving more time in my day to focus on my students. I will have more knowledge to offer parents who want to know what they can do at home to help their struggling child. I will know by heart the standards and objectives that generally developing 3, 4 and 5 year old students meet, and will have a number of strategies to ready to get my special education students as close as possible to these standards, while meeting their individual needs. Most importantly, approving SB 2488, SD1 will continue to keep some of these experienced teachers in the classroom, which thereby benefits our students and our communities.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Pamela Petras, Honolulu District, Oahu

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2020 6:58:12 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Robyn Kaito	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Robyn Kaito. I am a District Induction and Mentoring Resource Teacher in Central District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

This funding is very important in order to retain quality and experienced teachers. In my current position, I work with many experienced teachers who also are school based mentors at their school. They take on the professional duties of mentoring new and probationary teachers with little compensation. These mentors provide support, guidance, and strategies that help new teachers teach effectively. These experienced teachers often have second jobs like myself. It is very difficult to offer the time that these new teachers need from a mentor if their mentor has to rush off after school to their second jobs. More times than not, like them, I spend hours on the phone (late at night-after returning home from my second job as a tutor) talking to new teachers who need support. I am not alone.

It is a very precarious position to be in... we keep telling out mentees how valuable a role they play in the lives of their students, yet the salary compensation doesn't reflect that. We say how much we are there for these beginning teachers- yet many mentors have to rush to other jobs in order to make ends meat. If experienced teachers are compensated with a fair salary, we can fully support our new teachers and offer the time they need to learn from the expertise that only experienced teachers have. Please help these experienced teachers earn enough to not have to seek other employment after school hours.

Please consider adjusting veteran teachers' pay who were not given regular step increases during hard economic times. The salary adjustments will help ease the teacher shortage crisis and improve the lives of students because experienced educators will be more inclined to stay in the teaching profession and share their expertise and knowledge with new teachers who rely on their mentoring.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Robyn Kaito, Central District, Oahu]

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2020 7:45:55 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kelly Tanimura	Testifying for HSTA	Support	No

Comments:

My name is Kelly Tanimura. I am a teacher at Holomua Elementary School in Leeward district on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, proposed SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue and fund the pay differentials for teachers in hard to staff positions, special education, and Hawaiian language immersion for charter schools and the DOE. This bill can help change the course of education for the better on the leeward coast. Charter Schools and the Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides to do so. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

If teachers are provided with these funds, it will help to retain teachers who are debating retirement. It will also help to retain new teachers who are thinking about quitting the profession who are struggling with the monetary difficulties of being a new teacher. Being a special education teacher who is mentoring an emergency hire who is also pursuing an education degree, hopefully having these mentoring types of programs will also help new teachers stay with the profession. Keeping highly qualified teachers in the profession who feel supported will definitely have a positive impact on the students. It will ensure that quality instruction is delivered to all students with fidelity. Keeping teachers also helps with continuity amongst the staff at the school level which also impacts student learning and achievement. So please support SB 2488!

Thank you for your help and support!

Kelly Tanimura, *Leeward district*

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2020 7:53:55 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jill Jacobs	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Jill Jacobs I am a third grade general education teacher in an inclusion room at Kealakehe Elementary School in Kona on the island of Hawaii. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

This is my seventh year teaching in Hawaii. This is also the first time in those seven years that I have not had to talk student loans or work second or even third jobs to make ends meet. The first three years I lived in Hawaii I took the make on my student loans to make ends meet. Now I am loaded down in debt simply to try to make ends meet. The last three years I have work a second job and at time even a third so that I could continue to teach in Hawaii. This pay difference allows me to stay in Kona and keep teaching without having an additional job.

Therw have been many times I have had to truly think about if staying here is possible. Without this pay difference I would not be able to continue teaching in Hawaii. I would have to move back to the mainland so that I do not have to work a second job. One job should be enough for teachers.

Please fund these pay difference so that teachers can work one job.

Thank you

Jill Jacobs

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2020 9:00:15 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Logan Okita	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Logan Okita. I am a first grade teacher at Nimitz Elementary in Central District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I am a National Board Certified Teacher and in my 14th year of teaching. While I am not impacted by the shortage differentials and will likely not see a tremendous pay raise if the state addresses the teacher salary compression issue, I see its value and how it will help my colleagues and our students. Many of my colleagues who I have looked up to as mentors are impacted by compression. I should not be at the same level of the salary schedule as those who started teaching before I graduated from my teaching program or were my teachers in high school. If the funding is provided for the Department of Education to fix the teacher salary compression issue as well as the pay differentials, teachers will feel valued as professionals and for the work that we do to create Hawaii's future.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Sincerely,

Ms Logan Okita, MEd, NBCT

District 10, Oahu

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2020 9:08:37 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Maryam Ayati	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Maryam Ayati Dillabaugh I am a teacher at Kaiser High School in Honolulu on Oahu I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been a teacher for 20 years, 10 of those years were in California. My husband is a firefighter here in the City and County of Honolulu. I have always been an independent person and now I find myself dependent on my husband's income. Should anything happen to my husband, I would not be able to support myself or my two children. My income does not cover the cost of my mortgage, a small 960 square foot house in Palolo Valley. I was paid \$35,000 less than what I would have been paid if I had stayed working in California. I didn't enter the teaching profession for the income. My youthful ideology has been replaced with the bitter truth of what a high cost of living in Hawaii and a teacher salary actually mean. I came from a high cost of living county in California. After ten years of working in the DOE, I am finally making the salary I made in California prior to obtaining my Master's Degree in Education.

My husband works tremendous amounts of overtime and has a second job so that we can afford to live here. I have found myself discouraging students from wanting to become teachers because it is not feasible to be a teacher and be able to support yourself on our island.

The personal sacrifices are beyond the 10- hour workdays and working weekends. I have two elementary children that spend 3-6 hours on the weekend in my classroom. They know the drill, they have bag ready the day there and plan ahead of time which one gets to use the “golden” (yellow) dry erase marker first. Anyway, these are dry erase markers I have purchased for myself. (I received a box of dry erase markers as a gift from a family member for Christmas because they know all too well how much money I spend on my classroom. Every year, I have close to \$2,000 in receipts for what I spend on my classroom. That’s not ok! One year, my husband’s car broke down after 20 years of driving it. We had saved enough for a down payment. That same year my laptop crashed and I needed to purchase another one. We used some of the money we saved for his car to purchase a lower model to help pay for the computer I used for school. (I finally got a school issued computer this year!)

We spend way too much time and money on a job that keeps taking more and more from us as a family. The world loves teachers and thanks us for our sacrifices until they have to pay us and then all of a sudden we are asking for too much. I am sick and tired of being told that I get my summers off and it must be nice because many others have to work. First of all I do not get paid for those months. I may get a paycheck but it is not for working those days. However, I do work over the summer. In the summer of 2018, I worked 5 out of the 7 months we were off. I went to 3 trainings and came to my classroom to work on curriculum and planning. There is no way I can perform as a quality teacher if I just worked the contract hours. We are asking for a salary that reflects our profession, our education and our years of service.

I never thought my salary would dictate how I felt as a professional. But it does. When we were told we were getting a step increase at the beginning of this year, I accidentally looked up what it would be under a 12 month employee. I was pleasantly surprised. My salary didn’t seem so bad. Still not great but respectable. My attitude was different. I kept telling my colleagues to look it up, that the increase was nice! My confidence and attitude changed drastically. You can imagine how it felt when I realized how much less I was actually getting.

The stress of this job is one thing. Add that to the financial stress as a result of our salaries and you do not have happy adults teaching our children. Our family is invested in the DOE. Our children attend DOE schools.

1. state has to make education a priority. Truly. Teacher pay is part of that. I want my children to have quality educators! I want to be proud of my profession and encourage others to make the same sacrifice for our future.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Maryam Ayati Dillabaugh, Honolulu District, Oahu.

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2020 9:12:55 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Osa Tui, Jr.	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means,

It is an honor to be able to submit testimony today in **STRONG SUPPORT** to **FULLY FUND** SB2488 SD1. I have been the registrar at McKinley High School for over 10 years and a math teacher at McKinley and Castle High for another 10.

I am one of the unlucky ones who came in right when regular salary step movements became quite irregular. Now in my 22nd year of service to the Department of Education, I am on the same salary step as educators with 14 years of service and it'll take another 10 years at a minimum at the current rate to make it "to the top." Others with over 30 years of service are only finally making their way to the top of the salary schedule. This is not right and only promotes low morale within the ranks of our bargaining unit.

When the Department decided this semester to begin addressing shortage areas with shortage differentials, a glimmer of hope finally began to permeate. Never have our educators felt the bureaucracy move with such alacrity to make something happen to so dramatically and positively affect their lives. This will most definitely have an effect on addressing the shortage of teachers in critical areas including special education, Hawaiian immersion, and hard to staff areas. Chatter abounds as educators await the opening of the Teacher Assignment and Transfer Period commencing in two weeks.

The opportunity is now for you, our legislators, to be the heroes that are so desperately needed. Change for the better is so tantalizing close and we look to you to make this a reality. Make it so that our keiki will have qualified teachers in all of their classes and that they can look to those teachers and finally want to aspire to become teachers themselves one day.

Mahalo.

Osa Tui, Jr.

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2020 9:14:28 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Dyani Fujita	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Dyani Fujita. I am a general education teacher at Keonepoko Elementary School in the Kea'au-Ka'u-Pahoa district on the Big Island. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

In my 11 years of teaching in the KKP district, I received my Masters in Education, and completed countless hours in professional development- all to better myself

in the work that I do. Because of this, I've gained more debt than it's worth with the step movements I've made. I still don't own a house. I live on a month-to-month basis. How does any teacher survive? Every year I ask myself if this is all worth it, or if I should change the profession I'm so compassionate about.

I'm obviously not the only one to go through this, as this is why I'm submitting my testimony. If shortage differentials were applied in the worst shortage areas, it will help to alleviate teachers like me. It will most likely motivate other educators to stay in the field, and at the same time, help make educators feel more appreciated. Also, if teachers stay, this will provide more consistency for the students. If teachers stay, then that would mean less new-teacher training each year. Then, schools could focus on improving, growing, and shining instead of struggling to stay afloat.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Dyani Fujita, Kea'au-Ka'u-Pahoa District

February 17, 2020

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE
RE: SB 2488 Proposed SD1, RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

Aloha mai e Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee,

My name is Rebecca Kapolei Kiili I am a teacher at King Kekaulike High School in the Hawaiian Language Immersion Program (HLIP) on the island of Maui. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, proposed SD1.

Providing funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue along with providing funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian Language Immersion, and hard to staff positions are sorely needed to demonstrate that our state values education and the teacher workforce. It is a bold step that I hope all of you will take to fix the teacher shortage problem that has been persistently plagued our profession for too many years.

I am a teacher impacted by the salary compression issue because furlough Fridays were instituted at the beginning of my career. As a brand new teacher to the field, it was somewhat embarrassing to see national headlines criticizing and mocking Hawai'i as a state that did not value education because it cut out school days to balance the budget, all at the expense of our teachers, students, and families. Fixing this salary compression issue will set this issue to rest as it is a one-time only compensation. This will ensure that seasoned teachers stay in the classroom as well as prevent larger gaps in the already persistent teacher shortage problem. Please fund this to fix the issue once and for all.

I am also impacted by the pay differential for Hawaiian Language Immersion teachers. My entire teaching career of 16 years has been in the HLIP in both the elementary and high school campuses. We have lost a lot of teachers over the years due to low pay and heavy workloads. Private schools are offering higher pay and a more balanced workload that make those teaching positions much more attractive to some individuals. This makes the success of our HLIP across that state even that much more challenging for those of us who remain committed to the HLIP vision, mission, and goals. In my 16 years of teaching, I have had to spend extra hours translating curriculum material and developing a lot of my own instruction materials because they are not readily available for purchase. I feel like the differential pay is well deserved and long overdue for all my extra time, energy, effort, and investment.

If it is not enough that I have had to translate and create my own curriculum for my students, I have also had to endure challenges with being deemed non-highly qualified for my teaching position in high school because of federal laws like No Child Left Behind. Although I graduated

from a State Approved Teacher Education Program (SATEP) and earned my Kaiapuni teaching license, there are a lot of misaligned policies within the DOE between state and federal mandates. When I transferred to the high school, I was placed on the non-highly qualified list. Because of this non-HQ designation, I have had to take on the extra burden of earning the HQT designation to fit into the federal requirements which costed me more money after I graduated from college with two Bachelor of Arts degrees and my Teaching Certificate from an accredited teacher education preparation program.

I paid for a Praxis exam of \$200 which I failed to pass by 8 points. I paid for Professional Development courses and had to work my way up to earning enough credits which costed more money out of my pocket. I paid for the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards process and did not pass the content knowledge exam. I have had to pay all these extra fees out of pocket as an Immersion teacher. It is unfair that we have all these extra hoops to jump through and have added costs because we teach in Immersion. Where is the equity?

In my high school teaching line, I was assigned to teach all four grades and in three subject areas which is beyond my contractual assignment with only one preparation period for teaching eight subjects in one school year. All of this without any extra compensation for all the extra work I put in. Hawaiian Immersion teachers often work way beyond the work day. We are still bound to completing all the duties and mandates required by all teachers on top of these other responsibilities. One example is planning for the annual graduation ceremony. This one event takes over fifty hours to plan with parents and then an entire weekend to execute with very little sleep. We go above and beyond the call of duty and acknowledging our value is long overdue. We are truly deserving of this pay.

I realize that the Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides to do so. Our teachers are worthy of this pay and I hope that all of you will be bold in your leadership like the BOE, DOE, HSTA, and our Governor when they worked together to propose these initiatives.

Hawai'i's keiki deserve the best teachers. Funding will retain the best teachers and compensate those who have already given so much to the profession. Please don't let us down.

With gratitude, humility, and respect,

Rebecca Kapolei Kiliti, Maui

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2020 9:38:54 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Joseph Valente	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Joseph Valente, and I am a teacher in Hilo, Hawai'i at Ke Ana La'ahana PCS.

Please support this bill. Teachers are a crucial part of your community. Think about this: How could you or your colleagues go to work on daily basis if you were given the responsibility of supervision and instruction of your own children or grandchildren, nieces and nephews of your 'ohana? Without teachers, society as we know it would collapse.

We work hard for our community. Its time for you to work hard for us and give us what we deserve as professsionals.

Thank you for reading my testimony.

Sincerely, Joseph Valente

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2020 9:39:02 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Clint	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Clint Labrador. I am a Special Education Teacher at Kaunakakai Elementary School on Molokai. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

As an 18 year veteran HIDEOE teacher on Molokai, I feel that these pay differentials are critical to retaining high quality teachers who enrich the lives of our keiki, and who contribute to a more positive future for Molokai. Over my 16 years as a special education teacher, I have seen numerous teachers come and go, unable to keep up with the cost of living and the demands of a high-needs demographic. Teachers on Molokai work with a large number of students suffering from a wide variety of traumas. This can lead to second-hand trauma, particularly when experienced over a long and continuous period of time. The pay differential goes a long way in helping SPED and Molokai (hard-to-staff, tier 4) teachers feel valued. I also work with several veteran teachers who were going to retire due to the stress of working with such a high needs population in addition to being held accountable to a statewide metric that does not reflect what is actually happening in our classrooms. However, because of the differentials, these same veteran teachers are choosing to stay and work with the keiki, finally feeling validated as the professionals they are.

I am invested in the future of Molokai, as a person and a professional. While the cost of living is high, I do what I need to do, budgeting for gas prices up to \$5.04 per gallon, and food prices twice as high as those in Honolulu. As with many local teachers, it can seem as if I am living

paycheck to paycheck. As a divorced father who does not receive financial assistance, it is difficult to raise a family on a single income with inflated prices. In receiving the differentials (both for teaching SPED and for being a teacher in a hard-to-staff location), I feel validated as a professional. The pay differentials allow me some financial reassurance in continuing to raise my family here on Molokai, and not needing to relocate. By investing in this bill, you are investing in the future of Hawaiians, since all of our Molokai schools are 80% Hawaiian or more. Please consider passing this bill, as it will significantly impact the HIDOE's ability to recruit and retain highly qualified Kumu on Molokai.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Clint Labrador, Maui District, Molokai

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2020 9:54:59 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jeffrey Temple Stabile, Jr.	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha, Sirs and Madams of the Senate,

I am Jeff Stabile, a Special Education Teacher who has worked with the deaf and hard-of-hearing population in Hawaii since 1999. I was initially hired to teach secondary mathematics at the Hawaii School for the Deaf and the Blind on an emergency basis, though I was fully credentialed and licensed in California for multiple subjects K-6 and Special Education K-12, and soon thereafter satisfied the requirements to be licensed here within Hawaii. Following the passage of NCLB, I was declared highly qualified to teach secondary math based on my experience and education, and I also took the Praxis exam to become highly qualified in Life Sciences, as the school I was teaching at, HSDB, needed a science teacher.

Over the past 20 years, working at HSDB, Ewa Beach Elementary, and Waimalu Elementary, I have seen a huge number of my colleagues in Special Education leave their positions, the district, and the profession.

I do not find this surprising. I had been warned during my teacher education at Cal State Northridge that the profession was rife with burnout, and I had seen it happening while I worked as an ASL Interpreter prior to becoming a teacher.

Special Education requires teachers to put in a great number of hours above and beyond our contracted work time to prepare and report on Individualized Education Programs, run meetings, and perform data collection and analysis to justify extra support for students who need it and as a part of Behavior Support Programs.

Special Education teachers often serve as a lifeline for students and families who get little support in the general community, with teachers providing a great deal of emotional support to both students and families while getting little support of our own other than what we provide for each other or find in our personal social circles -- and virtually none from the educational system in which we serve.

In the case of educators of the deaf, we often need to step in and take on what are usually familial responsibilities (examples: I was recently asked by a parent to talk to her child about not disclosing personally identifying information on social media; I have been

asked by parents at IEP meetings to tell their children to "do their homework;" a colleague of mine had to explain to a pubescent student why she was bleeding and reassure her she was not going to die).

As all the above hopefully demonstrates, Social Education teachers are a valuable, and increasingly scarce, commodity who are faced with ever-increasing demands on their time, their expertise, and their emotional health.

Affording them the differentials proposed by SB2488, SD1, will help the DOE attract and retain teachers in much needed geographical and specialty areas. I strongly urge you to support our teachers so that they may continue to support the students who need it most, and who depend on these teachers to provide the kind of support they all-too-often do not get from anyone else.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Jeff Stabile

Teacher, Hawaii School for the Deaf and the Blind

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2020 10:24:06 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Megan Landes	Testifying for HSTA	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is **Megan Landes**. I am a third grade teacher at Princess Nahienaena in **Lahaina District** on Maui. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

Our students deserve teachers that can be teachers. There are many of us that work second and third jobs just to afford to live in these islands. My husband is a teacher too. He works a second job just so we can pay our mortgage. As teachers we should be able to focus solely on our students and not worry about rushing off to a second job. Please make it possible for families like mine to stay and be the educators we hope to be for the students that need us.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Megan Landes

Lahaina, Maui

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2020 10:25:05 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Sandra Afuso Fernandez	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Sandra Afuso Fernandez. I am a teacher at Ma'ema'e Elementary School in Honolulu District on the island of 'Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue. The Department of Education will need additional funding to ensure that teachers who were consistently overlooked and undervalued for many, many years will finally receive the pay that they deserve. Our veteran teachers are worth it as they are important to the future of all of our children in Hawaii.

I have been teaching in Hawaii for the past 20 years. When was little, I always admired my teachers and aspired to be one when I grew up. Through college, people would tell me that teachers don't make money and would struggle to make ends meat, but still decided that teaching was for me. Little did know that I would end up working a second job for 15 years to supplement my income as a teacher.

There has been many times that I have second guessed my decision to become a teacher through the tough economic times where we had furlough Fridays, pay freezes, step freezes, and spent time lobbying at the State Capitol to gain the attention of law makers to value teachers. Perhaps it is time for me to finally consider leaving a profession that I love because it is a struggle to provide for my family due to Hawaii's high cost of living outpacing my teacher salary. Or perhaps it is time that I consider "retiring" at the age of 45 and explore other opportunities to provide for my family.

As a veteran teacher who has been teaching for 20 years, I have seen many highly experienced teachers retire and replaced by "rookie" newbie teachers who need time and experience to hone their teaching skills. Being an effective teacher takes years working with students and parents, understanding curriculum, and really knowing how to make a difference in students' education. Valuing experienced teachers with salary adjustments that they deserve will keep them in the classroom longer and ensure that students have qualified teachers.

We desperately need your help to correct a great disservice to our veteran teachers. Now is the time to show teachers that they are valued.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Sandra Afuso Fernandez

(Honolulu District, 'Oahu)

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2020 10:35:17 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Teresa Parsons	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Teachers should be paid more for their work. Please ensure administration is NOT included. Only classroom teachers!

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2020 11:03:48 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jeffrey Mermel	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

I am IN SUPPORT of SB2488, SD1.

My name is Jeffrey Mermel, a 44 year resident of Hawaii and I vote.

I am a director of the Governing Board of Volcano School of Arts and Sciences and know that several of the teaching staff will be affected by your vote.

Please provide sufficient funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue !

Please provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in Special Education, Hawaiian language immersion and Hard-to-Staff positions....

The state of Hawaii has the lowest pay for teachers in the 50 states.....We could do better !

Thank you for your consideration,

Aloha,

Jeffrey Mermel

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2020 11:04:25 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Phillippe Galicinao	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Phillippe Fernandez Galicinao. I am a teacher at HÄ• lau KÄ« MÄ• na New Century Public Charter School in Honolulu on O’ahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, proposed SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard to staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides to do so. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I am a secondary mathematics and science teacher and certified in 6-12 STEM, 6-12 Science and 6-12 Mathematics. I have a MEd in Curriculum Studies and and a student in the PhD in Education in Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Hawai’i at MÄ• noa. I work full time and am at the highest classification on the pay scale. Unfortunately, I still need to have a supplementary job teaching culture-based STEM with Kamehameha Schools Kilohana, Waialua program during the Fall, Spring, and Summer intersessions. Despite my full time teaching in the Hawai’i State Department of Education and part-time teaching with Kamehameha Schools, I am still struggling to pay my mortgage, Federal student loans, graduate school expenses, medical bills, and day-to-day expenses.

Unfortunately, my story is not an uncommon one. My teacher colleagues have very similar stories to tell about multiple jobs in addition to their full-time teaching careers just

to make ends meet. Many of us have graduate degrees and have worked hard to take graduate classes and professional development courses (PDE3) to earn a livable wage. Every year, that livable wage seems to increase while teacher pay has remained historically stagnant and did not keep up with inflation or cost of living in Hawai'i.

I was born in Honolulu, raised in Kā• ne'ōhe, and have lived in Makiki and Mā• noa for the last 13 years. I teach and work in the community that I live in and every year I contemplate if I should leave the teaching profession because although I know how important it is to have local teachers represented in the classroom in Hawai'i, expenses are making it difficult to remain in the profession.

Teachers need to be compensated like any other profession. Teachers are the foundation to a society and education is the foundation to a successful democracy. The legislature needs to make it a priority to support teachers and prevent the worst teacher shortage in recent history. Without a livable wage, teachers will leave the profession and students will not want to become teachers when they graduate.

We need your kā• kua.

Mahalo,

Phillippe Fernandez Galicinao

Kumu, Hā• lau Kā• Mā• na New Century Public Charter School

Honolulu, O'ahu

Student, PhD in Education: Curriculum and Instruction

College of Education, University of Hawai'i at Mā• noa

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/18/2020 12:38:59 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
kim deas	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

[WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020](#)

[10:00 a.m.](#)

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Kim Deas. I am a Early Childhood Special Education Teacher at Solomon Elementary School in the Central District on Oahu. I am respectfully submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

Please support this bill to provide for our students and support the best education they deserve!

We need your help. Mahalo.

Kim Deas, Central District Special Educator, Oahu

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/18/2020 1:26:11 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lori Sasaki	Testifying for HSTA	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

ALOHA! My name is Lori Sasaki. I am a kindergarten teacher at Momilani Elementary School in the Leeward District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

I have been a teacher here in Hawaii for over 30 years. I have taught at Waianae High School, Ma'ili Elementary, Waikele Elementary and now, at Momilani Elementary School. I absolutely love my profession. I love teaching young students and making a positive difference in their lives.

My current age and years of service qualify me to retire. However, if my fellow veteran teachers and I will be able to benefit from fixing the salary compression issue, I know that many of us will make the commitment to remain doing what we love for years to come. Our students deserve to have a qualified, certified, experienced teacher in every classroom. Paying teachers what they deserve will not only help to retain excellent teachers in Hawaii's classrooms, it will also allow young, new teachers to teach and make a living here in Hawaii rather than move away where teacher compensation is much more enticing.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Lori Sasaki, Leeward District, Oahu

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Maria Guardino. I am a teacher at Kawanānakoā Middle School in Honolulu on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, proposed SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard to staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides to do so. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I am proud to share that I am in my 16th year of teaching in Hawaii's public schools. What saddens me the most though, is that in my 16 years, I have seen many, many teachers leave. Yes, some to other schools or to become administrators, but the majority of the teachers who have left, chose another profession or left the island to pursue higher salaries as teachers in other states. When teachers leave, it affects the continuity of the relationship teachers have built with their grade-level teachers, their teams of teachers and other structures of student support. Teacher retention is so important to maintaining the culture, morale and solidity of a school. Maintaining a positive learning environment directly affect our students, emotional and educational well-being.

Please support SB 2488.

Mahalo.

Maria E. Guardino
Honolulu, Hawaii

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is **Stacy Sugai**. I am a **Counselor** at **Waipahu Intermediate** in **Leeward District** on **Oahu**. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

This is my 26th year at Waipahu Intermediate as a school counselor. I am currently a class 7 step 12. There are teachers at my school who have worked 10-12 years less than me who are on step 11. This is due to step movements being frozen several times throughout my career and it seems very inequitable! I, like many other educators, have a second job to be able to afford to live in Hawaii.

I believe fixing the salary compression and compensating for experience will encourage many veteran educators to stay in the profession. Veteran teachers are crucial for the success of education. There are so many things in counseling and teaching that only experience in the field will bring. These things, books cannot teach you. Seasoned educators don't just educate their students, they educate and support their colleagues too.

Please continue to make education in Hawaii a priority for the future of our Keiki; for the future of Hawaii.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Stacy Sugai, Oahu, Hawaii

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/18/2020 7:22:49 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Inga Park Okuna	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chair Donovan Dela Cruz,

We need your help. My name is Inga Park Okuna I am a teacher at Kalihi Uka School in the Honolulu District and a parent of a sophomore at Roosevelt High School. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, proposed SD1.

I am sure you have heard about our teacher shortage crisis in Hawaii. If we do not fix this problem now, it will only get worse. Students need qualified teachers to get the education they deserve. If we provide quality teachers, I believe we can improve our society by leaps and bounds. The impact of a good education for a child is life-changing. I am fortunate to work in a wonderful Title 1 school in Kalihi Valley. We know our students and their families and provide a lot of supports for them. But even in such a delightful community, we have had teachers leave because they can't afford to live in Hawaii. The high turnover in our schools means that we continually have to hire new teachers, and there aren't enough to go around. We have had to rely on long-term substitutes and despite their (and our) best effort, our students' behavior and academic achievement suffered. It really isn't fair to our children. Multiply our experience by several hundred and imagine the severe impact on Hawaii's keiki.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard to staff positions which will demonstrate that we, as a state, value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need at least \$45 million more than this bill provides to do so. Help us to keep qualified quality teachers in our schools, and help Hawaii's keiki to be able to thrive.

Mahalo.

Inga Park Okuna, Honolulu District, Oahu

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/18/2020 7:30:45 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Adrienne Hale	Testifying for Member of HSTA	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Adrienne Hale. I am a fourth grade teacher at Holualoa Elementary School in the Kona District on Hawai'i Island. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

Several of my colleagues have struggled with the cost of living in Hawai'i. One of my team teachers who moved here from the mainland has been teaching in Hawai'i for the last 6 years and has had to move 4 to 5 times in order to have a place that was affordable. She is often sharing a home with others to be able to afford the rent. She loves our community and our keiki and that is why she has chosen to stay. In our school and the others in our district it's common for substitute teachers to be subbing for an entire year as we are a hard to staff district. Please continue to advocate for shortage differentials and for salary adjustments in order to attract and retain qualified teachers in the State of Hawai'i. Our teachers, students, and community deserve it!

Mahalo,

Adrienne Hale, Hawai'i Island

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/18/2020 7:44:25 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Josh Blaha	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

Aloha my name is Josh Blaha. I am a Special Education teacher at Lahaina Intermediate Middle School in the Canoe Complex in Lahaina, Maui. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I moved to maui coming up on 4 years and did not know what I would choose for my second career. I spent 12 years in Las Vegas previously to this managing and operating Nightclubs on the strip for Tao and Hakassan Group. After a short time here I felt a very deep connection with the island and community in Lahaina. I went and got my sub license and began working within 2 weeks. I worked everyday with the exception to a few the second half of the school year. Most of my days were at Lahaina Intermediate where the principal offered me a job working as a SPED teacher the following year as a Emergency Hire. I have multipe bachelors in Psychology and Sociology with a emphasis in clinical counseling and a minor in English. These did not suffice a teaching credential. I enrolled in a teaching program and in a year and a half obtained my teaching credential from an accredited program. I am now in my second year of full time teaching at the same school working as a hight qualified special education teacher.

These raises have made it possible for my wife and I to finally go into contract to purchase a condo, which we are in the process of doing right now. We wouldn't be able to even do this or get approved for a loan if the raises would not have go into effect for the hard to staff and special education increase. My wife and I haven't even been able to start a family and line in Lahaina where we live based on the high cost of living and lower salary of a teacher. My wife works as a concierge at a hotel and works a second job as a server 3 days a week. I also work a second job managing short term rental properties and work the extended school year with kids at the elementart school for extra income so that we were even able to save enough money for a down payment.

The pay differential is what made it possible for us to get approved for the loan and hopefully start a family if they don't go away.

I also want to speak for the teachers that need and deserve the compression money for their pay increase in steps. I work directly with two teachers in the inclusion setting that have both been drastically affected by this. One has been teaching here for 17 years the other one for 15 years. They are both highly effective teachers and just them getting the hard to staff money has drastically helped them. They both definitely deserve to have their steps adjusted based on their hard work, molding the young minds of the youth and to be able to live a sustainable life here supporting their families to a satisfactory level.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Josh Blaha, Canoe Complex Lahaina, Maui

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/18/2020 7:53:48 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Anthony McCurdy	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Anthony McCurdy and I am a teacher at James Campbell High School in Ewa Beach in the Leeward District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in strong support of SB 2488.

I am in my third year teaching here in Hawaii with ten years prior experience teaching in New Jersey. Twelve of my thirteen years have been in teaching special education.

Please support our teachers, our schools and our keiki by fixing the teacher salary compression issue. This is a real issue that creates an unfair and difficult situation for a very large number of our veteran teachers. We are struggling already with low salaries and high living costs, but to treat our veteran teachers this way is absolutely horrible and we need to fix this immediately.

I also urge you to continue to fund the pay differentials for special education, hard to staff positions and Hawaiian immersion teachers - the short-term fix we received this spring has made a difference to many teachers I've spoken with and I expect it will help ease some of the issues we face for many schools such as Nanakuli and Waianae. While this is not a permanent and perfect solution, it definitely helps. Ironically, I've been asked many times if I'm going to go back to special education now that the pay differential is in place, but I prefer to be where I am and teaching what I love. I hope at some point the legislature will see fit to help teachers like me who should be paid more as highly educated, hard-working professionals but who do not fit into one of the differential categories.

The DOE will need additional money beyond the \$25 million allocated in this bill and I urge you to fund the full amount of \$70 million that will be needed to fix the salary compression issue and continue the pay differentials for our struggling teachers. This is not a matter of wanting to get rich - this is a matter of doing the right thing for our teachers and ensuring quality education for our keiki. We have a lot of problems to address in our state, but this is a top issue that we need to address so we can slow or even stop losing qualified teachers and improve our schools.

Please support us.

Mahalo,

Anthony McCurdy

Leeward District

Oahu

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/18/2020 8:02:42 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kim Johnston	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Kimberly Puanani Johnston and I am a former teacher at Kualapuu School on Molokai. As you know, the island of Molokai is very rural and it is difficult to attract and retain quality teachers to staff our schools. I am in favor of SB2488 SD1 to fund the hard-to-staff incentive.

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/18/2020 8:12:05 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Samantha Tomori	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488 Proposed SD1, RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2020

2:45 p.m.

Chair Donovan Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Samantha Tomori. I am a teacher at **Kea'au Elementary** in the **Keaau-Kau-Pahoa Complex** on the Big Island. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, proposed SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard to staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides to do so. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I live in the Hilo complex area and commute to a school in the hard-to-staff complex, Keaau. The hard-to-staff bonus has kept me in this complex throughout my 12 year career, as opposed to moving to a great school 5 minutes from my house. Working in a high poverty complex has many challenges. Many of our students have suffered severe trauma and come to school with behavioral and social-emotional challenges. We endure numerous lockdowns due to custody issues and have even lost two students who have been murdered by their own father. Our teachers suffer secondary trauma and compassion fatigue on top of the numerous stressors associated with teaching in general. Since we work with such a high needs population we lose many great teachers and have difficulty filling positions, particularly in special education. This results in a greater workload for the teachers who have stuck around. I sincerely hope you understand the need that's facing our education department right now... the need to retain highly qualified teachers to address this teacher shortage crisis.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Samantha Tomori, District of Hawaii, Island of Hawaii.

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/18/2020 8:14:56 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kathleen Booth	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020 10:00 AM

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

Thank you for taking the time to read my testimony. My name is Kathleen Booth. I am a teacher at Connections Public Charter School in the Hilo district on the island of Hawaii. I have been teaching first grade for 13 years and although I love my job, I find it getting more and more difficult with each passing year. This is why I support SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

This teacher shortage is having a negative impact on our charter school. It is making it harder for us to find and hire qualified, licensed teachers to fill our classrooms. This will not improve unless we compensate the teaching profession. In the years I have been teaching I have worked far too many hours for the amount of money I am paid. I work nine hours a day and I do my prep on Saturdays. When I was telling one of my first graders recently that he would make a great teacher one day he responded, "Do teachers make good money?" It was obvious that he didn't think they did or had at least heard talk about how they do not. I assured him by the time he graduated college teachers would be making more money.

We need your help! Mahalo!

Kathleen Booth

Hilo District

Hawaii

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/18/2020 8:27:19 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Sandy Domion	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is **Sandy Domion** I am a Librarian/GT Teacher/ Yearbook Creator/ E-School Online Instructor at **Maemae Elementary** in **Honolulu** District on **Oahu**. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have over 21 years in the DOE. I am currently an elementary school librarian which also includes being the Gifted and Talented Teacher and sole creator of the school yearbook. I am also an E-School instructor teaching English and Expository Writing during the school year and in past years, summer also. I also work 25 hours at Whole Foods nights and weekends. I come home at 11 p.m. weeknights and wake up at 5 a.m. to get ready for the next day. I don't get a chance to eat dinner with my family on most nights and they have come to regard this as normal. This does not include the unpaid hours I spend during spring break to create my school yearbook. I am currently on step 11 and with the funding of the salary compression issue, I would move up to Step 14b. I have ten more years to go before I am eligible to retire but I'm tempted each year to quit before that. The cost of living is high in Hawaii and I have lived here all my life. Funding this salary compression would make a difference in how much longer I would stay in the DOE and continue to teach. By working three jobs, that leaves less time for me to focus on my family and my main job as a librarian. Those of us caught in this salary compression have felt unheard and forgotten for many years. I didn't go into teaching for the pay, but I have to say that I heavily discourage my own children from going into this profession and definitely don't marry another teacher or they'll never be able to own a house or send their children to college or go on vacations unless they go into debt. Something must be done to value and respect our current years of service as well as set a precedent for those who are interested in joining the profession and keeping them there.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Sandy Domion, Honolulu, Oahu

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/18/2020 8:32:05 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
joshua noga	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is **Joshua Ioane Noga** I am 8th grade teacher at Kailua Intermediate School. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I am a new teacher and I support our veteran teachers getting their fair share of pay raises including the differentials for our special education teachers. Mahalo for your consideration please support SB 2488 SD1.

Joshua Noga

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/18/2020 8:33:53 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Alfred Perez	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is **Alfred Perez**. I am a **Resource Teacher at Pu'unene School in Maui for the Baldwin-Kekaulike-Maui District**. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

It's extremely difficult making ends meet here in Hawai'i. My wife and I are both teachers. I don't have opportunities to work overtime. I do my best to make extra money by teaching professional development classes here and there but it is not enough, especially when you have a child. Please consider funding the salary compression. It will make a difference and help your public school teachers. Every little bit counts.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Alfred Perez, Maui District Resource Teacher

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/18/2020 8:56:27 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Beate Arendale	Testifying for DOE	Support	No

Comments:

RE: SB 2488 Relating to Teacher Compensation

Chair Kidani and members of the Education Committee:

My name is Beate Arendale. I am an AP Literture teacher at Kekaulike High School in the Maui District on the island of Maui. I am submitting support of SB 2488, proposed SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue. The proposed \$25 million is not enough to fund the effort of providing the veteran teachers with adaquate compensation to retain them for the years prior to their retirement. The teacher shortage is nationwide and Hawai'i is not able to recruit or retain teachers because of the high cost of living in the state. Therefore, the Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides to do so. Our teachers are vital to the economic future of Hawai'i.

I have been working as an English teacher in the DOE since 1997 and have attended 5 Advanced Placement Workshops to prepare our gifted students for the exam. Over the years, I have used my own funds to help students succeed working a second job as a driver's education instructor in order to obtain the necessary funds. I am still in debt from earning a Master's Degree in the Art of Teaching in 2012. Furthermore, my daughter wanted to become a French teacher in Hawai'i but was told she could not do her student teaching on Maui after spending 7 years at UH Manoa to earn a Master's Degree in French Literature. She now lives in San Franscico working in sales instead of education making more money than veteran teachers.

Please help us end the teacher shortage crisis in Hawai'i.

Sincerely,

Beate Arendale

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/18/2020 8:59:28 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Waianela Boiser	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

Aloha, my name is **Waianela Boiser**. I am a **Special Education Teacher** at **Kapa'a High School for 22 years on the island of Kaua'i**. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

Honestly speaking if it weren't for my family I would not be able to live in Hawaii as a teacher. I live off of one income and as a professional I am not able to afford to buy a house. I have earned a doctorate degree in education, but have a student loan of 150k. People may say we do it for the keiki, but I need to earn a professional salary. I have been in education in Hawaii at the time of the strike, and furloughs and sad to say I have not gone up in pay.

Teachers are at the foundation of educating our future and yet we do not have the salary to suggest we are valued.

Mahalo

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/18/2020 9:02:30 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Dulcy Dawson	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is **Dulcy Dawson**. I am a **Special Education Teacher** at **West Hawaii Explorations Academy** in **Kailua-Kona** on **Hawaii**. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been a Special Education Teacher for over 25 years in 3 different states. I have never seen a shortage and a liability anywhere else in my years. The current differentials would encourage certified teachers to stay with the special education students that need the certified experienced teachers the most.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Dulcy Dawson

Big Island

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/18/2020 9:11:46 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kareen Takushi	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is **Kareen (Kalina) Takushi**. I am a **Special Education Teacher** at **Kipapa Elementary School** in the **Central District** on **O'ahu**. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

First of all, I love teaching our keiki and I would teach no where else but Hawai'i. I have been teaching for almost 24 years. I find it very rewarding to see my students thrive and be successful. Although money is not everything, fixing the salary compression and differentials will help me to further dedicate more time to my students instead of having to rush to a second job. I am fluent in the Hawaiian Language and certified in Special Education. I am one of a very few teachers that have this expertise. With these differentials I am considering teaching Special Education to Hawaiian Immersion students which is my personal passion. My last teaching position was as a Special Education teacher at a Hawaiian Immersion school, but I had to make a decision to transfer to a school near home because commuting was very expensive and I couldn't afford a better working vehicle. With the salary compression and differentials, I would be able to make ends meet and be in a school where I can speak my native language daily and teach the students in this immersion environment. Please consider passing this Bill for our well deserved teachers and our keiki.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Kareen (Kalina) Takushi, Central District, O'ahu

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/18/2020 9:32:53 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Anjanette Naganuma	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Anjanette Naganuma. I am an English Teacher at Lahainaluna High School on Maui. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I am a homegrown teacher. I grew up in Lahaina and graduated from Lahainaluna High school. I currently live in Lahaina, where short-term vacation rentals account for about 50% of all rentals on the westside. It is incredibly hard to find affordable housing and many teachers at my school must commute daily from Kihei, Central, or Upcountry, often a minimum 45min commute in good traffic that can stretch to an hour and a half in poor traffic. Fires and storms sometimes close the one highway that connects the westside to the rest of the islands. The differentials for hard-to-staff schools such as those in Lahaina are a step in the right direction for attracting teachers who are willing to commute or may find a place to stay in Lahaina. Pay differentials and decompression of salary steps helps to ensure that bills can be paid and that teacher standard of living can move from "just making it" to **thriving**. Students deserve teachers who are not overworked and burdened by multiple jobs to survive. Hawaii teachers, particularly

teachers like me who are born-and-raised in the islands want to stay, but if teachers cannot afford to stay, teachers will continue to leave.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Anjanette Naganuma, Maui District, Maui

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Rodelyn Gonzales. I am a School Counselor at Waipahu Intermediate School in Leeward District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

There are a lot of different students that are in our school system that need the support of experienced school counselors. Experienced or seasoned counselors have years of knowledge that would help students to receive services that will support them to become contributing and successful individuals. I firmly believe that my experience as a school counselor that has been working with students and their families for over 26 years is beneficial in supporting our students and their families. Having experienced counselors working with students and their families will help in obtaining the assistance a student may need. The knowledge and experienced of a seasoned school counselor will also help in providing different options that may be available for the student and their families. Fixing the salary compression issue/or differential will help and keep experienced school counselors that have a wealth of experience and knowledge in our school system. We need your help. Mahalo.

Rodelyn Gonzales

Leeward District

Oahu, Hawaii

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/18/2020 9:58:07 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kama Kaaikaula	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is **Kama Ka`aiakula** I am a **teacher** at Lahaina Intermediate School in **Canoe complex** on **Maui**. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

By fixing the compression issues and /or differentials this will make it fair for veteran teachers. I have three colleagues that have been teaching for eight years longer than I have, but we are on the same pay step. this is absolutely not fair to these veteran teachers. Also by fixing this problem it will help to retain teachers knowing that their pay steps will be set.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Kama Kaaikaula, Canoe District, Maui

From: [Kahele Asing](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 10:00:12 AM

Aloha, my name is Kahele Asing and I am a Hawaiian Language Immersion special education teacher and have been so for the last 19 years. I just recently got the pay differential in my pay checks, and am so extremely happy about this and so is my family.

There has been many times that I contemplated jumping ship and going -- Kamehameha to teach and have seen many of my fellow colleagues do the same in the past. This letter is in full support of the pay differential that we are receiving and would like to make this a permanent incentive for other sped and Hawaiian immersion teachers as well as future Hawaiian immersion teachers that may now dare to teach special education whereas before they may not have.

The pay differential is great and to make it permanent would be even greater.

mahalo for taking the time to read this.

Me ke ahonui,

Kumu Kinana Papa M - 3
Kula Kaiapuni 'o Anuenue

This e-mail is being sent by a student or employee of Kula Kaiapuni 'O Anuenue.

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/18/2020 10:01:40 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kauai Trainer	Testifying for Laupahoehoe Community Public Charter School	Support	No

Comments:

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Kau'i Trainer. I am a School Counselor and Teacher at Laupāhoehoe Community Public Charter School on Hawai'i Island. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

Even though our school does not qualify for a hard to staff area, because we are included in the Hilo Complex, our school has extremely high staff attrition. We won't get the differential, but we still support the bill that will give hard to staff schools more incentives for qualified teachers to work in hard to staff areas. We know what it's like to have to fill positions with unqualified teachers. Our students have a long history of being disappointed. Even on the administrative level, we have gone through seven directors in the last eight years! Think of what this kind of loss does to a school and to a community.

We also support the extra support for Hawaiian language immersion and special education. It is a sad state of affairs when our most needy members of the community

are those who don't get enough support. For a Hawaiian, I know that most of my school's special education students are of Hawaiian ancestry. In 2019, 37% of all SPED students (across every island) were of Hawaiian ancestry, more than any other ethnic group. In Hawaiian language immersion schools, the bulk of students are also of Hawaiian ancestry. Is this a trend in education? That students of Hawaiian ancestry receive the least amount of support from government? I have attached a report from OHA's Research Division to look at many of the important issues regarding education for students of Hawaiian ancestry. It appears to me that the status quo is not good for my people. Was it ever? Please go to OHA's website to learn more about the educational issues that impact students of Hawaiian ancestry (<https://19of32x2yl33s8o4xza0gf14-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/A-Native-Hawaiian-Focus-on-the-Hawaii-Public-School-System.pdf>). The data is disturbing.

You have the opportunity to change the legacy of inequity in education, not only for students of Hawaiian ancestry, but all students. What is good for Hawaiians, is good for everyone. Support SB2488 to support current, qualified teachers and incentivize the creation and movement of future, qualified teacher to the programs that need the most support.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Kau'i Trainer, Counselor and Teacher

Laupāhoehoe Community Public Charter School

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/18/2020 10:07:20 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Terry Low	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is [INSERT NAME]. I am a [INSERT POSITION] at [INSERT SCHOOL] in [INSERT DISTRICT] on [INSERT ISLAND]. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I am mnow a retired teacher, but when I started teaching on Kauai in 1994 I thought I would get an annual step increase in pay like I did in California. I didn't understand that would not be the case until I actually started teaching here. It made living on Kauai very difficult. I think I survived only because I was eligible to go to Class 7 due to the education I had completed prior to moving to Kauai. Few teachers have that option. I never reached the top step on the payroll after teaching her for 24 years. Please fix this so teachers are able to stay in Hawaii.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Terry Low, Kauai

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/18/2020 10:51:23 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Chris King-Gates	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020 10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Chris King-Gates. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

I am writing in support of fully funding the pay differentials for all highly qualified teachers in all public schools across the state of Hawaii including public charter schools. Please provide enough funds to fully fund the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value the education of our keiki.

As you are well aware, there is currently a vast shortage of qualified educators in the state of Hawaii resulting in several teaching positions being filled by long term substitutes. One of the primary reasons for this is that pay for educators in Hawaii is among the lowest in the nation when adjusted for cost of living. The proposed bonuses are not a long term solution to this issue, but they do provide some much needed recognition of educators filling important educational roles. These bonuses should be distributed to all licensed teachers regardless of their path to licensure as well as whether they work in a department of education school or a public charter school.

Thank you for your consideration,

Chris King-Gates, Hawai'i Island

LATE

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/18/2020 11:01:11 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jennifer Sarpi	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Jennifer Sarpi. I am a Student Services Coordinator at Pearl Ridge Elementary School in Central District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

Paying veteran teachers a fair compensation will allow teachers to stay in Hawaii and give our youth the education that they deserve.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Jennifer Sarpi

Central District

Oahu

LATE

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/18/2020 11:29:56 AM
Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Sharon Saronitman	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Senate Ways and Means Committee Chairperson, Donavan Dela Cruz,

I strongly support fully funding SB2488 at \$70 million, because all of our children deserve to have a licensed teacher in the classroom. The full \$70 million is the amount that's needed to assure the salary adjustment to fix compression, along with continuing the hard-to-staff, SPED, and Hawaiian language immersion shortage differentials. It is so clear that damage is done by a system wide shortage that puts too many substitutes and unqualified teachers in front of our children. Students are at risk for not receiving the services and classroom support necessary for them to learn and thrive at school. Please fight for our students and pass SD3488.

I have 22 years of teaching in Hawaii public schools and I am currently on step 12. My co teacher is in her 8th year teaching and is on step 10. I should be at the top step 14B. We need to make this right for once and for all.

Many Thanks,

Sharon Saronitman

Kapaa, HI

LATE

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/18/2020 2:09:11 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kevin	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Kevin Huggins. I am a teacher at S.W. King Intermediate in Kaneohe on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been a teacher here in Hawaii for 7 years and my wife, who is teaching at Castle High School in Kaneohe, has been teaching as a SPED teacher for four years. Last year we had a daughter, and we tried to survive for several months on 1 teacher's paycheck, while my wife and baby recovered. It was really hard and we had to take out several loans to help stay afloat. We are still paying off those loans and would really like to start saving for a down payment on a home here, as this is where we see our future. The high cost of living and low pay is pushing us away, and we are starting to look at moving to the

West Coast. In Washington, teachers are better paid and the cost of living is lower. We could probably even purchase a home there.

If the money is provided to fund the pay differentials and salary compression we would definitely stay here. I have even heard senior teachers at my school talking about switching lines to a SPED line, or staying on a few more years if the compression issue is fixed. We need to see that the people we elected, care about the teachers and the students we teach. Students have had to survive long enough learning from long-term subs or emergency hires.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Kevin Huggins, Windward District, Oahu

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/18/2020 2:55:56 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Susana Roman	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I thoroughly support SB2488- as there is no shortage of financially strapped, overworked, and overwhelmed teachers' woes that can be easily traced back to the embarrassing treatment of its teachers, and their low compensation.

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

LATE

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Jenella Ogitani. I am a secondary inclusion special education teacher at Kapolei High School in Leeward district on O'ahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have teaching in the special education department in various settings for 16 years. Through the course of my tenure I have encountered various challenges when it comes to my pay. I am the primary provider of my household and with the loss of income due to furlough Fridays, contract battles and lack of pay raises. Because we do not receive regular pay raises I have encountered a repossession of a vehicle, defaults on student loans and finally the foreclosure of my home. All the while I was able to make contributions to the students I serve by providing the basic school supplies that they could not otherwise provide. There were years that our department did not give us any money, there were the real difficult time, I had to make choices of taking care of my family or helping my students. Ultimately we all lost...Please consider bill SB2488, SD1 any small contribution is better than no contribution.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Jenella Ogitani
Leeward district, O'ahu

LATE

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/18/2020 3:19:49 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Sarah Milianta-Laffin	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Committee: Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Hearing Date/Time: February 19, 2020 at 10:00am

Place: Conference Room 211

Re: RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION SB 2488

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran and Members of the Committee:

It's 3pm HST on 2/18/2020 and I'm typing this in my classroom as students run around me. I keep pausing to check homework, review projects, and discuss our new projects. On top of teaching, I tutor, drive for Lyft, and am the faculty club sponsor for 2 clubs. I do my grading and lesson planning late at night, when most people are sleeping. This isn't a rare thing; teachers do extra work and lose sleep all the time, worrying about other people's children. It's the nature of the job.

But do you know what we teachers shouldn't worry about? Being fairly compensated for our work.

My name is Sarah Milianta-Laffin. I am a teacher at Ilima Intermediate School in the Campbell-Kapolei Complex on O'ahu. I am submitting this testimony in support of SB 2488.

Please provide the funds to fix teacher salary compression. I'm a 14 year, nationally recognized educator who makes \$49,000. This is less than I made during my 1st year teaching, 14 years ago, in Texas. This is the lowest salary of my career. My rent in Kapolei is \$3000 per month, we have no savings, and even though I desperately want to start a family -- I can't afford to have a baby as a teacher in Hawai'i. Our family budget only works when my husband works a significant amount of overtime, and this puts pressure on our marriage. I hate feeling like the less supporting partner; I'm used to pulling my financial weight.

And while fixing compression won't help teachers in my particular situation, I support it, and I am urging you to support it because I believe that a rising tide lifts all boats, and we need a king tide to come through for teachers. Students deserve teachers who can focus all their energy on creating engaging lessons, not worrying about how they can make ends meet.

I urge you to please fund the pay differentials for teachers in hard to staff positions, special education, and Hawaiian language immersion. Mahalo for reading, and for supporting the students of Hawai'i by caring for their teachers. Curious about my students? Follow us on Twitter/Instagram at @STEMwithMili to see what my classroom is all about.

Sarah Milianta-Laffin

Home: 971 Kuou Street #207 Kapolei, HI 96707 (O'ahu)

School: Ilima Intermediate School, Ewa Beach HI

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE
RE: SB 2488 Proposed SD1, RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

LATE

Chair Donovan Dela Cruz. and members of the Senate Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Catherine Caine. I have been teaching in the state of Hawaii for the past thirty years, and I am currently a teacher at Waikiki School in the Honolulu District. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, proposed SD1.

I am asking you to please provide the funds to retain and attract teachers. As I am sure you know there are studies which indicate, the one thing that makes a significant difference in education is putting highly qualified teachers in every classroom. For your part, I urge you to fix the teacher salary compression issue and pay differentials for teachers. It is essential that the you funds you provide are able to meet the needs in entirety to prevent further deficient of experienced teachers from our schools. This would show that you are ready to make the commitment to attract and retain the best and the brightest people to the teaching profession in the State of Hawaii.

For my part I have been engaged in many activities outside of my classroom. I have for the last three years worked at the university level teaching pre-service teachers in order to put more qualified teachers in each classroom. Additionally, I have joined the other State Teachers of the Year as we begin to meet and work on problem solving the teacher retention and shortage crisis. Although I am qualified for retirement, I have continued to work finding it difficult to leave the students in the classroom when there is such a shortage of highly qualified teachers. Teachers cannot find a solution alone we need you to support this bill.

I could continue my appeal to your sense of fairness with stories about teachers' pay being reduced during the 2008 recession and staying at that level until 2014. I could talk about furloughs and the salary schedule changes that made it more difficult for teachers' salaries to reflect their years of dedicated service. However, I want to remind you is through all of difficult times many teachers continued to teach. Not because we thought these actions were fair but because of the dedication we have to the keiki and the belief that education is an essential component in building a viable society. I am humbly asking you to participate in fully funding this bill and creating a future where every student has a highly qualified teacher in the classroom. I look forward to letting go of the past and focusing on our keiki's future.

Mahalo,

Catherine Caine

National Board Certified 2008
2015 Hawaii State Teacher
of the Year/National Finalist

LATE

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/18/2020 4:23:58 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Rob Hamnett	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing in support of SB2488. As a parent living in a rural area on the Big Island we are dependent on the public charter school system to provide access to public education for our children. It is hard to imagine how schools (especially those in rural areas) are expected to retain quality teachers without offering competitive salaries, especially considering the cost of living in Hawai'i. It is time for the State of Hawai'i to step up and prioritize the public education system for the good of our children and our future.

Mahalo,

Robert Hamnett

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/18/2020 5:06:58 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Suzie Wallace	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/18/2020 5:24:07 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM



Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
John Fitzpatrick	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Honorable Senators,

My name is John Fitzpatrick, "Fitz," and I am a teacher at Maui Waena Intermediate school. I am in strong support of SB2488 and encourage you to amend the bill to allow for full funding (\$75 million) in order to help tackle the Hawaii State Teacher Shortage Crisis by: 1. fully funding the teacher differentials for special education teachers, hard to staff areas, and Hawaiian immersion teachers; and 2. no longer balancing the budget on the backs of veteran teachers.

If fully funded this bill would help over 60,000 students get a qualified and certified teacher into their classroom. We are already seeing the positives in special education where we have teachers wanting to go back into the profession because they now find it economically advantageous as well as fulfilling.

My pay is not affected by these moves but I see value to my students and I because we might be able to retain a few of our amazing special education teachers. It is night and day when you have amazing special education teachers like Ms. D'Auria, Ms. Yamamura, and Ms. Wiberg to name a few amazing ones at Maui Waena Intermediate School. These teachers have an enormous impact on our students everyday. I am extremely happy that they are getting a \$10,000 raise a year because of the actions taken by the DOE superintendent, the BOE, and the Governor. I hope you find a way to support them and make the raise permanent for special education positions around the state.

At our school we have around a 15% annual turnover and it is extremely costly and difficult to get in a rhythm when there is high turnover. At schools in Hana, Lanai, Molokai, and Waianae to name a few the turnover is much higher and positions go unfilled. It is estimated that 20/70 positions will be vacant next year at Lahainaluna High School. I can only imagine the difficulties of teaching in these schools with such high turnover. Imagine showing up as a student and not knowing who your teacher or substitute teacher will be the next day. I am so happy these teachers are getting a \$8,000 pay raise because of actions that have been taken.

Hawaiian Immersion teachers have it tough because they have to put in extra hours translating everything, creating their own curriculum, translating communication to

English only speaking parents and it is harder to get a teaching credential to be a Hawaiian immersion teacher. For 70+ years Hawaiians were not allowed to speak their language and it is time to make this injustice right by incentivizing those that speak Hawaiian or want to study Hawaiian to go into the teaching profession. Furthermore, this is the cheapest of all the differentials and it is an important step to writing the wrongs perpetrated against the Hawaiian people. It is a crime that we have Hawaiian Immersion Classes filled by substitutes that do not speak Hawaiian.

Lastly, I am in strong support of getting teachers back to the proper step based on their years of experience. It is not right that a teacher working 20+ years makes the same amount as someone who has been working 10 years. It is not right that our school librarian, Mrs. Barbosa, with 28 years of service is not at the highest step. Teachers with more experience are more effective at their jobs and have so much to share with newer teachers like myself. It is to our advantage to make them feel valued by finding the funds in order to put them back to the step that they have earned with their years of service. Furthermore we need to make it so teachers get automatic annual step increases, they should no longer be bargained for, thus eliminating the step compression problem. It is time to stop balancing the State Budget on the back of our veteran teachers.

It is time that we address the teacher shortage crisis and we do everything we can to make sure 1,100 teaching positions are filled with highly qualified and effective teachers. These steps proposed by the DOE, the Board of Education, and the Governor are a strong step in the right direction. Now we need the State Legislature to find a way to make them a reality.

Please add an additional \$45 million to SB 2488 in order to fund both the differentials and fix the wrongs done to our veteran teachers.

Mahalo,

Fitz

John Fitzpatrick
7th Grade Science Teacher
Maui Waena Intermediate School

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/18/2020 6:25:54 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM



Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Marcia Howard	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Dr. Marcia Howard. I am a Special Education Teacher at Kailua Intermediate School in Windward District on O’ahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

It is imperative that this committee provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been teaching special education for the past 25 years (19 here in Hawaii) and it has been a rewarding yet difficult experience at the same time. I enjoy working with students with special needs however there are parts of my experience in teaching that have been frustrating and mainly it’s the pay. I received my Doctorate Degree in Exceptionalities from The University of Hawaii at Manoa in 2014 and was hoping that with this degree I

could attain enough salary to sustain my living here in Hawaii, however I have not.

In Brooklyn, New York where I am originally from, teachers with 25 years of experience are making upwards of \$120,000. I can only imagine that with a PhD they are making more. It is sad that with a PhD and 25 years experience in special education here in Hawaii my salary is only \$68,000. I would emlore this committee to keep the salary compensation for special education teachers especially when you consider the amount of paperwork that we deal with on a daily basis, the amount of time we spend in meeting that goes beyond the contractual hours on writing IEPs, grading progress reports, contacting agencies and service providers, gathering data, and conducting meetings that can have up to 8-10 people! I can't even stress upon the effort put forth to teach the students with special needs in hopes that they can grasp the concept enough to possibly move them into inclusion classes with their nondisabled peers. This compensation is needed and eagerly welcomed!

Lastly, I know that all teachers spend an insurmountable time in writing and creating lesson plans, tests, and projects, but if Hawaii is to tackle the issue of shortages in special education, by attaining and maintaining licensed, certified, and highly qualified Special Education Teachers, then funding for the amount of time and effort in the form of salary compensation is a excellent start!

We need your help. Thank you for allowing me to share my thoughts on this matter!

Truthfully yours,

Marcia Howard, PhD,

Windward District

O'ahu

From: [Jon and Kauai Hayden](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: SV 2488, SD1
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 10:00:19 AM



RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

We are Jon and Kauai Hayden and we live with our family on O‘ahu Island. We are submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers.

Our 10-year old son has Sensory Processing Disorder and would not be where he is today without the help of his Special Education teachers. We moved from Alaska home to Hawai‘i so that both our sons could learn in an enriching cultural and language immersion environment, and both attended Kula Kaiapuni ‘O ‘Anuenue. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our invaluable teachers are worth it. Our keiki are worth it. Our future depends on it.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Jon & Kauai Hayden

Nu‘uanu District, O‘ahu Island, Hawai‘i



From: [Quintin Leong](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 10:07:29 AM

DO THIS BEFORE 10AM TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Quintin Leong. I am the spouse of an Special Education Teacher at Ke Kula Kaiapuni 'o Anuenue (a Hawaiian Immersion School) in Honolulu District on O'ahu Island. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Hawaii kai, Oahu

Quintin Leong

From: [Maile Sing](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 10:08:47 AM



Aloha

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Maile Sing. I am an academic advisor at UH Manoa in Honolulu District on O'ahu Island. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Maile Sing, Honolulu, Oahu

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Dawn Shiota](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Cc: [Dawn Shiota](#)
Subject: Teacher Support for SB 2488
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 10:23:43 AM

LATE

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Dawn Shiota I am an Alternative Learning Opportunities Teacher at King Kekaulike High School in Pukalani on Maui. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been teaching in the state of Hawaii for over 22 years and am one of the teachers affected by the compression. I was born and raised on the island of Maui and my family has been living here for over 100 years. If it is not for my family and the deep commitment I have to my community I would have left years ago. In order to live here in Hawaii I have worked additional part-time jobs since I became a teacher. I also grow most of my own fruits and vegetables as well as produce eggs to be able to survive. I am a single parent and living just above the poverty level.

As an Alternative Learning Center teacher I see the impact of not compensating teachers what they should be paid as I work with the students who are close to dropping out of the public schools. Students in my program the DOE system has failed. In addition, majority of the teachers today do not want to work with the population that I work with. If the State of Hawaii and Department of Education choose not to urgently fix this issue we will see more students entering the prison system because they will not have the skills to survive in Hawaii.

I urge you to support the full funding for SB 2488, SD1.

We need your help. Mahalo

Dawn Shiota, MA.Ed., B.Ed.
King Kekaulike High School
Alternative Learning Center Program Staff
121 Kula Hwy
Pukalani, Hawaii
96768
(808) 727-3500

Attachments area

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LATE

From: [Pulama Collier](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 10:29:11 AM

Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.

My name is Wanda S.P. Collier. I am a teacher at Kekaulike High School in the Kekaulike Complex, Maui District on the Island of Maui. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, proposed SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard to staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides to do so. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

This year is my 26th year of teaching for the Department of Education in Hawai'i, specifically the Hawaiian Language Immersion Schools. I have walked the picket lines in 2001, endured the furlow days soon after and am one of those teachers that have not been compensated for my years of service. I strongly support this bill as it will definitely give me a bit more incentive to stay with the DOE a bit longer. I was planning on leaving the DOE classroom for a better-paying teaching position elsewhere in the private sector.

Wanda Sarah Pulama Collier

Kekaulike Complex, Maui District, Maui

LATE

From: [Leinaala Kealoha](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 10:53:01 AM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE
RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020
10:00 A.M.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Leina'ala Kealoha. I am a Special Education teacher at Kaua'i High School in the Kaua'i district on Kaua'i Island. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state, value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

As a local, born and raised here, in Hawai'i, I have every desire and intention of giving back to the community/island/state that I grew up in, by living out my career as a teacher, here in Hawai'i. I can also say the same for my spouse. We are both teachers, and although we both have a Master's Degree in education, have been working with the DOE for a while (myself 6 year, and my spouse, over 20 years) and have great credit scores, we still do not make enough money to purchase a decent home. Because of this detriment, we are considering leaving our stable careers, here in Hawai'i, to move to the mainland where we can purchase a home, and still live comfortably. This is not something we are excited about considering, as we would be leaving almost all of our loved ones behind. Culturally, Hawai'i is tight-knit with their immediate and extended family; thus, moving out of Hawai'i is not a desirable option. Should this teacher compensation be approved, I know that it would definitely lower the chances of local staff members, working in the public school setting, leaving their profession to move out of state, or for another career.

With regard to my spouse it is unfortunate that, even after completing a Master's program, through UH Manoa, and working as a teacher for over twenty years, the consideration of creating more debt to go back to college to earn a degree for a different profession that pays more is even being given light to. I know that the adjustment to veteran teacher's pay, who were not given regular step increases during hard economic times, would alleviate much of this pressure, and once again, decrease the odds of the Hawai'i DOE losing an amazing and passionate local teacher.

We need your help. Mahalo
Leina'ala Kealoha, Lihu'e, Kaua'i

Leina'ala Kealoha
Special Education Teacher
Kaua'i High School
(808)274-3173 ext. 146
leinaala.kealoha@k12.hi.us
3577 Lala Road
Lihue, Hawai'i, 96766

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LATE

From: [Bj Medeiros](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb 19, at 10am
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 10:56:33 AM

Aloha Committe Members, My name is BJ Medeiros and I am humbly asking for your support on this bill that would allow me to continue teaching our keiki in our Hawaii public schools. I am a 23 year veteran teacher who has been impacted negatively by the compression of our salary scale. Its been a struggle to make ends meet so I am currently working 3 other part time jobs to support my family. The cost of living in Hawaii is really high and a lot of my friends have to move to the mainland because they couldn't afford to live here. I chose to stay and teach knowing that this day will come, and now you as our elected officials, committee members and state representatives have a chance to support not just teachers but our keiki of Hawaii and approve this bill. If this bill is approved and I am placed on my correct compensation step that would allow me to not have to work 3 other part time jobs and give me more time to concentrate on teaching our keiki. I am a 7th grade Social Studies teacher at Lokelani Intermediate on Maui and I love what I do. Please support SB2488 and do what is right for our kumu and keiki. Thankyou for your time and support on this very important bill.

Mahalo,
BJ Medeiros
7th grade History Teacher
Lokelani Intermediate School
1401 Liloa Drive
Kihei, Maui, HI 96753

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LATE

From: [Amanda Wilson](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 10:57:14 AM

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

Please fund the bill that will fully compensate the teachers that we need to retain the most.

As you know, Hawaii has a teacher crisis, and when you account for cost of living, we are getting paid the least of any state.

It's a pretty simple equation, and there is a pretty simple fix: Please say yes to funding the rest of the differential.

Next we will need to ensure that from now on, all teachers get closer to a living wage to be able to only work one job and be able to buy a house.

I have been working at Kihei Charter School since 2011. I have no chance of being able to buy a home without the help of a spouse, so single teachers have no hope of being able to put foundations down in their home state.

If teachers could get paid fairly for their time spent investing in Hawaii's keiki, then teachers would be able to have only one job, and be able to be way better teachers for most of the school-age population.

Imagine having to have a side job in addition to being a legislator. It would probably distract you from your work or at least render you very tired and worn out all the time. That is what Hawaii's teachers are up against.

Please help.

Thank you,

Amanda Wilson
Kihei Charter School

--

Amanda Li Wilson
808.250.8471

LATE

From: [Sharon Saronitman](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: e: SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways & Means, Wednesday, February 19, at 10 am.
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 11:04:12 AM

Dear Senate Ways and Means Committee Chairperson, Donovan Dela Cruz,

I strongly support fully funding SB2488 at \$70 million, because all of our children deserve to have a licensed teacher in the classroom. The full \$70 million is the amount that's needed to assure the salary adjustment to fix compression, along with continuing the hard-to-staff, SPED, and Hawaiian language immersion shortage differentials. It is so clear that damage is done by a system wide shortage that puts too many substitutes and unqualified teachers in front of our children. Students are at risk for not receiving the services and classroom support necessary for them to learn and thrive at school. Please fight for our students and pass SD3488.

I have 22 years of teaching in Hawaii public schools and I am currently on step 12. My co teacher is in her 8th year teaching and is on step 10. We need to make this right for once and for all.

Many Thanks,

Sharon Saronitman
Kapaa, HI

LATE

From: [Ellen Farnsworth](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 11:09:12 AM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is **Ellen Farnsworth**. I am a teacher at **Kealakehe Intermediate School** in **West Hawaii** on **the Big Island of Hawaii** I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

It is very important to maintain the differentials and salary adjustments for teachers in Hawaii. The cost of living is very high here and in order to keep current teachers and recruit new qualified teachers they must be paid enough money to live. When I first moved here four years ago, I was barely able to afford to live and contemplated moving back to the mainland. I stayed because I love the islands and really love teaching here. I wanted to make a difference in the lives of my students. Now with the new salary increases, it has definitely helped my living situation. You must fund enough money to maintain these increases or many teachers will need and we really need good teachers to help our keiki.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Ellen Farnsworth

West Hawaii Kona



LATE

From: [Miller, Niko](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 11:51:12 AM

Aloha,

My name is Niko and I teach health and physical education at Kihei Charter School. Prior to KC I have taught at Lahaina Intermediate. Before teaching, I was a substitute and taught at most schools on the island.

The problem at all schools is the same: underfunded, skewed adult to student ratio, and high teacher turnover. Each year I witnessed a minimum of 10 teachers leave. Time and time again it was due to teacher pay and student behavior. Most teachers I spoke with said if the pay was higher they could probably stand to deal with the student behavior and work harder to make a change.

Our education system is a joke, especially in Hawaii. With teachers coming and going the students don't take teachers seriously because they know there is not a high chance of that teacher staying.

If you can't raise our salaries you should give us military funds for hazard pay. Teaching today is a very dangerous job. Personally, in my 4 years of teaching, I have been threatened to be stabbed, dealt with 3 school shooting/bomb threats, more than I can count school fights, a multitude of suicide attempts, and drugs on campus.

If you don't take action now, Hawaii will continue to see an increase in drugs, violence, a non-educated community, and a complete loss of Aloha.

Warmest Aloha,

Mr. Niko-



From: [Agnes Yamauchi](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 12:04:24 PM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is **Agnes Yamauchi**. I am a counselor at Hilo High School in Hawaii on the Big Island of Hawaii. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

As a counselor, I deal with the aftermath of the classroom environments that do not have regular certificated teachers and are filled with substitutes. Typically, the students who are motivated will adjust but then get caught in the web of no teaching and no consistency in grading. These students will typically find this experience frustrating and will not learn anything. On the other hand, the students who are not motivated will continue to cause problems and find ways not to do the work, all the time blaming the substitute.

In either case, no learning occurs!

By funding this bill, many teachers will feel valued, many will remain in the classroom, and continue to teach their students. However, I am not only referring to the content they teach, but teaching their students life! It is amazing to realize how much the schools are taxed with the responsibility of raising our keiki! The breakdown of the home and family structure has made this our reality and what is sad is that we are also held responsible for failing to correctly guide these students. "A parent cannot fail to parent their child at home, then expect teachers to work miracles with them in the classroom." Please pay teachers fair compensation for the level of responsibility they are expected to carry daily. There is no other profession that is expected to do so much with so little.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Agnes Yamauchi, Hawaii, Hawaii Island

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TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE
RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

LATE

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is JEREMY R SEITZ. I am a full time, classroom teacher AND academy lead teacher at WR Farrington High School in Kalihi (Honolulu District) on the Island of Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide the full of amount of funds requested in order to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions as a means of honestly and explicitly stating that our state does in fact value our hard working teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth the full amount and are essential to the successful future of our keiki.

I am a public school teacher. In Hawaii, and much of the country, it appears that with this label comes the expected stigma that we are poor, underappreciated, and overworked. This is an understatement. I am a 10 month employee who works 12 months. I spend countless hours during the weekends, holidays, after school, before school, at lunch, and over the summer, winter, fall, and spring breaks working for my students. I work a minimum of 10 hours per day. That equates to at least 50 hours per week. I spend at least \$800 of my own money each year on supplies. In my 13 years as a teacher that amounts to at least \$10,400 dollars of my own money that I have spent in order to provide stimulating, exciting, and challenging experiences for my students. **If I had been able to save that \$10,400, I'd have almost enough to put a downpayment on a modest home.** I have in the past and will continue in the future to pay for my students' college applications. I dedicate significant time, energy, emotion, and financial resources to ensuring that these disadvantaged, overlooked students in Kalihi get a fair chance to make it out in the world. I connect with industry professionals and take countless hours of professional development, of which I pay for myself (\$150-300 per course), in order to increase my skill set and knowledge so that the relevance of the work my students engage in is current and valuable. I also lead a team of roughly 30 teachers, counselors, a Vice Principal, and academic coach in the largest academy on campus with over 400 students.

The compression issue is a deep rooted one. During furloughs we were asked not to work on Fridays. We also were not paid. To me this robbed not just the teachers of their right to just compensation but also robbed the students of a comprehensive education. As teachers, we, regardless of furlough or not, continue to dedicate massive amounts of time and energy. Yet, many of us are unable to own homes or even enjoy what little time we may have each day as we are often forced to supplement our income with a second or even third job. I had to coach two sports and take on a leadership role in order to make enough to pay rent. I know many

teachers that work multiple jobs, have children, and spend every waking moment squeezing every dollar out of every hour they have. It is disappointing that we as teachers are relied so heavily on to provide a quality education for our students, whom we clearly love and value, but we ourselves are not provided with the basic resources to do our jobs. This financial burden and stress constantly looms over our heads and is a tremendous weight for any one of us to carry. Provide us with the compensation we deserve. Be different from every other state that makes excuses for why teachers cannot be paid. Look at the numbers as they clearly indicate a trend of teachers leaving the profession AND the state in search of greater support and a better life. Hawaii can be the standard for the rest of the country. We are unique and different and as isolated as we may be, we can begin the trend to truly change the way education is viewed not just in this state but the entire country. We are a country that does not truly value education but yet demands results. How are we to get the desired results when we are worried constantly about our financial situations, our family well-being, and also working while feeling undervalued and unsupported?

Develop an educational model that you would be willing to confidently send your own children to. A system with happy, engaged, and motivated teachers that come to work every day feeling valued, appreciated, and supported. There are so many wonderful teachers in Hawaii that have for years dedicated massive amounts of time and energy knowing they are being paid just enough to barely survive. Yet they continue on. Many leave. Many become jaded and angry. The effect this emotional instability can have on the teacher's job and students is enormous. A happy teacher really does equate to happy, successful students.

This is not about buying a nicer car or taking an extravagant vacation. This is about an employer making a decision to do what they can to ensure that its employees are happy and physically and emotionally healthy. This is about creating a positive, innovative, and rewarding environment for teachers like myself, so I may continue to dedicate myself without fear of having to leave the island I have called home for the entirety of my 41 years. Do what is right and just.

Your help is greatly appreciated. Much thanks.

Jeremy R. Seitz
WR Farrington High School
Honolulu District
Kalihi, Oahu, Hawaii



From: [Lindsay Sugihara Yuh](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 12:23:54 PM

Dear Senate Ways and Means Committee Chairperson, Donovan Dela Cruz,

I strongly support fully funding SB2488 at \$70 million, because all of our children deserve to have a licensed teacher in the classroom. The full \$70 million is the amount that's needed to assure the salary adjustment to fix compression, along with continuing the hard-to-staff, SPED, and Hawaiian language immersion shortage differentials. It is so clear that damage is done by a system wide shortage that puts too many substitutes and unqualified teachers in front of our children. Students are at risk for not receiving the services and classroom support necessary for them to learn and thrive at school. Please fight for our students and pass SB2488.

Many Thanks,
Lindsay Yuh

Sent from my iPhone

LATE

From: [Naomi Muraoka](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways & Means, Wednesday, February 19, at 10 am.
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 12:24:43 PM

Dear Senate Ways and Means Committee Chairperson, Donavan Dela Cruz,

I strongly support fully funding SB2488 at \$70 million, because all of our children deserve to have a licensed teacher in the classroom. The full \$70 million is the amount that's needed to assure the salary adjustment to fix compression, along with continuing the hard-to-staff, SPED, and Hawaiian language immersion shortage differentials. It is so clear that damage is done by a system wide shortage that puts too many substitutes and unqualified teachers in front of our children. Students are at risk for not receiving the services and classroom support necessary for them to learn and thrive at school. Please fight for our students and pass SB2488.

Many Thanks,
Naomi Muraoka

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From: jeaninedot78@gmail.com
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: SB2488,SD1, Committee on Ways and Means
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 12:25:14 PM



Dear Senate Ways and Means Committee Chairperson, Donavan Dela Cruz,

I strongly support fully funding SB2488 at \$70 million, because all of our children deserve to have a licensed teacher in the classroom. The full \$70 million is the amount that's needed to assure the salary adjustment to fix compression, along with continuing the hard-to-staff, SPED, and Hawaiian language immersion shortage differentials. It is so clear that damage is done by a system wide shortage that puts too many substitutes and unqualified teachers in front of our children. Students are at risk for not receiving the services and classroom support necessary for them to learn and thrive at school. Please fight for our students and pass SB2488.

Many Thanks,

Jeanine Dotario

Sent from my iPhone



From: [Erika Notebo-Wakumoto](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways & Means, Wednesday, February 19, at 10 am
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 12:25:32 PM

Dear Senate Ways and Means Committee Chairperson, Donovan Dela Cruz,

I strongly support fully funding SB2488 at \$70 million, because all of our children deserve to have a licensed teacher in the classroom. The full \$70 million is the amount that's needed to assure the salary adjustment to fix compression, along with continuing the hard-to-staff, SPED, and Hawaiian language immersion shortage differentials. It is so clear that damage is done by a system wide shortage that puts too many substitutes and unqualified teachers in front of our children. Students are at risk for not receiving the services and classroom support necessary for them to learn and thrive at school. Please fight for our students and pass SB2488.

Many Thanks,
Erika Moura

From: [Jana Kauai](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1,
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 12:47:55 PM

My name is Jana Kauai. I am a second grade teacher at Elsie H. Wilcox Elementary School on Kaua'i. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have always wanted to be a teacher and count myself lucky to have the job that I've always dreamed of. I have been a teacher for 23 years. I remember being so excited getting my first paycheck, only to realize it would barely cover my monthly expenses. We have had raises over my career as a teacher, but I am still barely covering my expenses. Many things have changed over the 23 years as I am now a wife, mother of two, and a home owner. I am one of the many teachers stuck in the same salary bracket because of the compression issue. I have taken all the classes necessary to move myself up to the highest class, but can go no further than where I'm at. Having the regular movement in steps would provide my family with things from our "wish list". This would include family vacations, dinners out, and having extra money in our budget for little splurges.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Jana Kauai

Second Grade teacher

Wilcox Elementary School

Lihu'e, Kaua'i

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Demott, Carrie](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 12:50:11 PM

LATE

Aloha,

I am writing to show my support for increased compensation for educators in Hawaii. Providing supplemental payment for areas of need would help us fill vital positions. Fixing issues within the adjustments and steps would keep more teachers in Hawaii.

I came to Hawaii 13 years ago, with a Masters in Education, for a teaching position in a private school on Maui. This school year is my first with the DOE. I am teaching Science at Kihei Charter School. This is my 20th year in my chosen career.

Bouncing from rentals was very difficult and almost led to our departure. In my case, I was fortunate to qualify for housing assistance through a program called Na Hale O Maui, which has enabled me to have secure housing. For many teachers I work with, their inability to afford housing has caused them to leave. An increase in pay would help more teachers stay.

My son qualifies for special needs/services and my school lacks certified SPED personnel due to extreme shortage we have in Hawaii. With the benefits and pay, I am making about 20k less than I could in another state. These two issues are in the forefront of my mind as I determine if we will be able to stay in Hawaii. Will my son have qualified Special Education professionals to work with him in our DOE schools? Will I be able to afford to pay outside people to help him develop? Will the lack of pay increases and the current pay allow me to ever retire?

Increasing compensation for hard to fill positions will help us find and keep qualified Special Education teachers. Increasing pay for all educators will help us retain experienced teachers. This will improve what we are able to give the kids and families of Hawaii.

Please support the increase in funding for SB2488. My son and so many others depend on having certified and qualified educators.

--

Mahalo,

Ms. Carrie DeMott

7th Grade Science
Kihei Charter School
Kihei, HI 96753
808-283-1770

LATE

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chairman Donovan Dela Cruz and ladies and gentlemen of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Prescott Dela Cruz. I worked as a Health and Physical Education Teacher at Waipahu High School in the Leeward District on Oahu since 1999. I would like to start off first by thanking you all for your individual and collective efforts to support our keiki and teachers over the years in more ways than one.

However, in light of the current situation, I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1 in the hopes that you may find a way to help further efforts to provide additional funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions.

My rationale and personal story to support SB 2488, SD 1 is similar to many other teachers who like myself, chose to become teachers because we wanted to make a “positive difference” to help our students develop themselves to live productive and meaningful lives in order to capitalize on all that has been accomplished and ensure a better future for us all. As we all know, teaching requires more than just getting up in front of students and instructing for an hour for each class and going home at the end of the day. There is a lot of planning, preparation, modification, homework, and adaptation behind the instruction. More work is done outside of the classroom before and after school hours to ensure that students get rigorous and relevant instruction/assignments that will help them to be “well-rounded”

individuals, college and career ready, and ultimately, productive members of society.

Most of the teachers whom I've walked with on the picket line in the 2001 Teacher's Strike have either retired or moved on from teaching to find better paying jobs. I know a few more (myself included) that have had other part-time jobs besides teaching in order to supplement income to pay off expenses and support families in light of the rising cost of living in Hawaii. However, "it is what it is" and we knew the "price we had to pay" in order to be teachers, and to truly make a positive difference in the classroom would require more effort, time, and "treasure" that we knew would never be compensated for, but then again, we never went into teaching in the first place for the pay, but the pay raise we got back then did help some of us to continue teaching. (Thanks again to those of you who supported our efforts).

For some of us teachers remaining, and those new teachers on board, the passion and love we have for "teaching to make a positive difference" has not changed, and we continue to do what we must. Unfortunately, as the old saying goes, "love does not pay the bills". With consideration of our current time and circumstances, the "bills" are continuing to get higher for everyone, not just teachers. And "love" is not enough.

With that being said, I (like some other teachers) never hesitated to do what I must do to "make a positive difference". If I had to come to school early or stay late after school to help students I did so without being asked or requesting compensation. Years before our school had additional air conditioning units installed, I purchased fans on my own to cool down my students so they could focus more in class, and replaced fans as needed, but I did not request for compensation. When I assigned my health students Advocacy Projects (Ex: Domestic Violence Awareness & Prevention, Great American Smoke Out, Teen Dating Violence Awareness & Prevention, Alcohol Awareness & Drunk Driving Prevention, and Health Advocacy Awareness Booths) to be conducted in the community and on campus I purchased

supplies to supplement student efforts, but did not ask for compensation. To better instruct my students in the classroom, I purchased audiovisual equipment to supplement my instruction and provide another tool to be used to better assist all my students in their learning, but most especially for those students with special needs or are English Language Learners. For my physical education students I purchased additional basketballs and “nerf” footballs to ensure that all my students had more than enough time to personally handle the ball and develop their skills so that they can truly participate in the game with some degree of skill and enjoyment. To encourage lifetime fitness and developing a healthy lifestyle, I purchased blood pressure monitors, scales, and various alternative exercise videos (Ex: Yoga, Tai Chi, Pilates, Tae Bo, Zumba, etc.) so that my students can assess their fitness level and develop personal fitness plans to be incorporated in their life to achieve and maintain their college/career goals, and ensure overall health and well-being. I also purchased so many bottles of hand sanitizers so that my students could use them to prevent from catching something or passing stuff around, and numerous boxes of tissue so that students could use the tissue to blow their noses and focus more in class, or wipe away tears when they shared their heart felt sorrows to me in confidence.

I could go on further, but it would always be to make the point that I never asked for or expected compensation for anything I did because I felt it was the right thing to do, and I did it for the right reasons, no matter the cost. Furthermore, the funding in our school and the monies for the P.E. department were always allocated to support other worthwhile and needed school initiatives so I felt that asking for funding to supplement my classes would not be a priority. In any case, I may not be teaching in the next few months due to personal reasons, but I hope that my testimony can help with supporting the collective efforts of the HSTA and your committee to address pertinent concerns regarding SB 2488, SD1.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Prescott Dela Cruz

LATE

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/18/2020 7:04:34 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Hans Kurz	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I believe that Hawaii has the teacher shortage is does because the State of Hawaii Department of Education does not pay teachers enough to live comfortably. Any effort approved of by the Hawaii State Teachers' Association to increase the salaries of Hawaii's public school teachers has my full support without reservation.

Very truly yours,

- Hans Kurz

LATE

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/18/2020 6:51:18 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Renee Dieperink	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

SUPPORT for SB2488 SD1

Aloha, my name is Renee Dieperink, and I am a teacher at Enchanted Lake Elementary School in Kailua. I have been teaching for 31 years, and 21 of those in Hawaii. After 31 years of teaching I still need my second job (as a bookkeeper for a company) to make ends meet! Why is it that so many teachers in Hawaii NEED a second job?

I have lost so many coworkers and good friends because they ended up moving to the mainland. I was appalled when I found out that some of my co-workers, who have only been teaching half the number of years I have, are earning the same as me! Lately I have actively started looking for other employment or self-employment, since I do not feel valued as a teacher. It's not only about the money, but that sure would make the many unrealistic expectations we face nowadays a lot better.

People and societies spend their money on what they value. This society obviously does NOT value teachers, and I have become very cynical about this. I even have to fund many classroom projects and supplies.

My oldest daughter wants to become a teacher, and is currently in her freshmen year in college. My first response was, "Well that's a sure path to poverty!" She then quickly added she will be moving to Seattle once she's graduated. I actually love teaching, and live for the moments when I see that what I do has a major impact on a child's life. But unfortunately after so many years of going paycheck to paycheck, I too feel like moving away, or getting another job.

UNLESS...the legislator can find ways to keep me here by funding salary increases. That is what I would really prefer. And also to not have to work a second job, but to spend that time on better lesson preparing with all the special education inclusion that is expected nowadays. SB-2488 Submitted on: 2/3/2020 11:56:19 PM Testimony for ED

LATE

From: [Fern Agunat](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 1:03:08 PM

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

Aloha, my name is Fern Agunat and I am a 6th grade Social Studies teacher at Ewa Makai Middle School in Ewa Beach, Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

As a teacher of 21 years, I have been through the ups and downs of teaching, inside and outside of the classroom. I not only faced the 19-day strike in 2001 but also Furlough Fridays in 2009. I worked my way earning a Master's Degree in Educational Foundations. Yet, my husband and I struggle to make ends meet and live paycheck to paycheck. Hawaii has always been our home, but our struggle is real. I have five children and my husband now works for Terminix after being let go from Monsanto, now known as Bayer. We work hard to provide for our family. Now that my oldest will be graduating next year, my family is seriously looking at moving. How can anyone not want opportunities for their children? I know I do.

By providing the necessary funding to fix the teacher salary compression, this will allow me to remain in Hawaii and provide opportunities for my children. I know that I am blessed with the life I have and it feels awkward to ask, but it pains us as two hard-working parents not being able to provide opportunities for our family. It is difficult to allow our younger children to be latch-key kids because we can't afford to pay for A+ knowing that kidnapping is alive in our community, deny our children to participate in sports or school trips due to lack of funds, force my oldest to ride the city-bus into town for school since we can't afford a second car or pay for a chartered school bus, and the list goes on. As a humble citizen, I urge you to take a stand and value the local teachers to remain in Hawaii.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Fern Agunat, Ewa District, Island of Oahu

LATE

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/18/2020 8:18:52 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
kevin landers	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

It is shameful how we treat our teachers. They should be paid at least \$60,000 a year.

LATE

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/18/2020 8:22:56 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jennifer Kramer	Testifying for HSTA	Support	No

Comments:

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Jennifer Kramer. I am a teacher at Keone'ula Elementary School in Ewa Beach on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, proposed SD1.

Please provide enough funds to pay for differentials and fix the teacher salary compression issue. I really appreciate your consideration of this bill. Please also consider that charter schools and the Department of Education will need an additional \$45 million more than this bill provides to fund both differentials and compression. Our teachers are worth it as they are vital for the future of our keiki.

First, I strongly support differentials. The fact that there are hard to fill places and positions is simply a "supply-and-demand" issue (as well as a possible legal issue) that can and should be solved with financial incentives.

Compression is equally concerning. I don't know if most of the legislators realize this, but right now, **a 22-year teacher in Hawaii makes about \$10,000 more than a brand new teacher.** Getting by is difficult for me as a veteran teacher—but this fact is also distressing to new teachers who are barely getting by and questioning whether or not to stay in this field. It's also discouraging to high school and college students who may aspire to become teachers someday. Even some of my young 2nd graders have told me, "I don't want to become a teacher when I grow up because teachers don't make enough money." Of course, they hear this from their parents--who want them to live a comfortable life. This saddens me. Yet, other professions paid through the state of Hawaii such as firefighters, police officers, and nurses do not share our compression issues and I cannot in good faith recommend that my students struggle as I have in a career.

Teachers are professionals—college graduates at a minimum, and many of us have doctoral degrees or equivalents in credit hours. Our keiki deserve quality teachers—and you can see the result of years of pay neglect as this shortage crisis worsens. In my own experience, I have seen children come to my classroom after years with substitutes (since no teachers were found to fill positions). The children struggle with behavior and academics. I truly believe their whole life trajectory would change if they had quality teachers throughout their school careers. Please consider funding this bill so that education becomes a career that the best of the best of our keiki aspire to—and so that our current teachers can continue to give our children the quality education they deserve.

We appreciate your consideration and need your help. Mahalo.

Jennifer Kramer

LATE

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/18/2020 8:30:13 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Emily Haines	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Emily Haines-Swatek. I am a teacher at King Kekaulike High School on Maui. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been teaching at King Kekaulike for 21 years. I started when I was 24 years old after receiving my Masters of Arts in Teaching Mathematics and am extremely committed to the school. For the last 15 years I have been the schools Career and Technical Education Coordinator and the department head. During that time I have seen many teachers in my department come and go and I am the only one who has stuck with it. Early on in my career, before I had children, I took advantage of professional development and moved up to the highest class where I have been for over 10 years. I no longer have any control of my advancement in pay and can only receive pay increases when the union negotiates a new contract. Due to compression the starting pay for a new teacher has increased, which is great thing, however it also means that there is not a great difference between a starting teaching with a Masters Degree and one who has taught for 20 years. 10 years ago I became a Nationally Board Certified teacher so that I could increase my pay. I am now going through the renewal process so that I do not end up with a reduction in pay in the last 10 years of my career.

SB 2488, SD1 will make a huge difference in many dedicated teachers' lives and will reward them for sticking with the profession despite struggling to make ends meet for many years.

We need your help to make this a reality.

Mahalo,

Emily Haines-Swatek, Maui District

LATE

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/18/2020 9:21:46 PM
Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Roland Laliberte	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Members of the Weighs and Means Committee,

I strongly support SB2488. As the father of a public school student and husband of a public school teacher, I am personally effected by this decision. My own employment contract, I'm a Hawaii County firefighter, compensates me financially for my years of service. Recognition of an employee's work experience, the knowledge and skills they've gained while on the job, makes sense from both a fiscal and performance based perspective. Listen to the local news, read the headlines of our local newspapers, or simply talk to a parent of a Hawaii public school student and you'll hear there is a teacher shortage crisis. Hiring new teachers is one part of the solution. Your support of SB2488 will ensure teacher's pay keeps pace with the cost of living. We also need to keep the teachers we have. Adjusting our experienced teacher's pay to reflect their years of service will give them a reason to stay. Our children need good teachers they, in turn, need our support. This bill is a good start, so let's support SB2488.

Thank you,

Roland Laliberte

LATE

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/18/2020 9:35:23 PM
Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Teri L Skillman	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am writing in support of SB2488 SD1. As a Hawai'i resident, a parent, an educator, a former State employee, and as an associate director for a nonprofit that supports educational programs in the schools, I request the Senate to please pass this SB2488 in support of teachers in the DOE system.

Because salaries are so low in Hawai'i, I left to teach in international schools overseas. Recently, a friend of mine who was teaching in Chiang Mai, Thailand applied for a math position on Kaua'i, but she had to turn it down because the salary was inadequate and she could not find housing for her family of 4 that was affordable on a teacher's salary.

We have a teacher shortage of over 1,000 positions statewide. We can't even bring in educators who are qualified and familiar with Hawai'i's cultural demographics to benefit the students. Why aren't the qualified teachers in-state getting the support they need with salary, housing, and funding for teaching resources? Why aren't there enough teachers for Hawaiian language, special education, and the Arts? If the pay scale becomes competitive with continental teacher salaries and adjusted for a living wage in Hawai'i with a cost of living allowance, the State could turn around the situation to the benefit of the students.

Teachers' salaries should be on a grid that accounts for qualifications and years of experience. It is unfair to hire junior teachers at the same level or higher salary than a qualified, well-experienced teacher. There should be incentives given to teachers who accept positions in rural areas, but those teachers need to be able to connect with the students and the community culturally or the turnover will be high.

In a 3-day workshop I attended with a granting institution, I learned to create a rubric for the nonprofit that reflects what the organization values. If we truly value our children, then we should support those who provide education and help raise our children. *Kā« i ka mā« na/Like the one from whom he received what he learned.* This is said of a child who behaves like those who reared him (‘Ā«lelo No‘eau #1875). In short, the student receives knowledge from the mouth of his teacher. If we want to improve what comes out of our children's mouths and minds, metaphorically speaking, we must support our educators! Please invest in our children as our future by investing in their education and empowering those who teach them.

Mahalo nui for your time and for the opportunity to share my perspective.

Aloha,
Teri Skillman

LATE

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/18/2020 9:59:57 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jun Shin	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am a UH MÄ• noa student, writing in support of SB2488 SD1. I request the Senate to please pass this SB2488 in support of teachers in the DOE system. As a graduate of a private high school, I strongly believe that every young person, every student should be given the same oppurtunities I was given. An essential part of making this is teachers, who instruct our future leaders and innovators. Our teachers need a way better standard of living, not paying our teachers have resulted in a urgent need to recruit and retain qualified teachers in the areas of special education, hard-to-staff geographic locations, and Hawaiian language immersion programs because teachers are struggling, burning out and/or moving out. We need to help our teachers because democracy works when everyone has access to quality education.

Jun Shin

808-255-6663

junshinbusiness729@gmail.com

1561 Kanunu St.

Honolulu, HI 96814

LATE

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/18/2020 10:19:11 PM
Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lisa Grandinetti	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

We need to pay teachers more!!!

LATE

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

Aloha Kakahiaka Kakou,

O Margarita Leilani Alo-Chu ko‘u inoa and I‘m currently humbled to be a kumu of papa ‘ehiku (grade 7 Science) at my very own **alma mater, Nanakuli High and Intermediate School** in the ahupua‘a of Nanakuli on the leeward district of ‘Oahu island. I humbly submit testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Request for consideration to provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I've never been one to write in testimony for anything because quite frankly, I feel that most times there's so many more layers of politics when the finances of our state is decided upon. But this one topic on teacher salary compression I truly believe needs your action and attention. I identify as a native polynesian Hawaiian teacher in my hometown for the past 25 years now. I was one that never imagined that I would become an educator because I never had a Polynesian Hawaiian teacher in all of my years in grade school or at the

University of Hawaii at Manoa until recently. With that being said, I worked endlessly to make sure that I was in constant training, practicum, workshop and sought for higher knowledge at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. I'm currently on my final journey of a PHD in curriculum studies at Manoa and my hope is that more Polynesian Hawaiian teachers will do the same and still remain in the elementary, middle and high school classrooms. Everything that I've poured my life into revolved around advancing my educational skills, strategies and philosophy that the best teachers are the best learners. Every student that I've taught in all 25 years of public school teaching has excelled in their own plight through education because everyday they came to school, they knew that I would be attending class later in the evening as well. My students knew that they were expected to achieve well as I was expected to do as a learner too. I never focused on how my "pay" certainly did not reflect the amount of time, effort and focus I devoted to my profession, a sacrifice that my two sons had to learn to understand as I was their sole provider as a single parent.

With the immense number of University credits that I've obtained, I've been at the top of the classification (class) pay for years now but my steps do not correlate with the years of service that I've served. My step pay could be the same as a 5-7 year teacher because of past contracts that were not funded and a negative negotiation that froze a step due to the public charter school that I taught at for 10 years, administrator was caught with mismanaging funds. All things that were out of my reach. Most 20+ year vets that teach content usually get a position in a non-classroom position, I feel that our students need us all in the class with them and a non classroom position is not necessary. I don't know if there's other teachers with the same story but if anything, I hope that at the least there will be a way to help obtain a compression to equate pay to the number of years served in excellence.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Margarita L. Alo-Chu, Leeward, Nanakuli-‘Oahu

LATE

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/19/2020 4:04:01 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Nanea Lo	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Hello,

My name is Nanea Lo. I am a lifelong resident of Hawai'i on O'ahu. I am writing in to say that I am in Strong Support of this bill because of these points below:

- "...a qualified teacher shortage of one thousand twenty nine positions"
- "Hawaii's teacher salaries are the lowest in the nation..."
- "... teacher salaries are unequal when experienced senior teachers are aligned with less senior teachers in their placement within the existing salary schedules. "
- "...urgent need to recruit and retain qualified teachers in the areas of special education, hard-to-staff geographic locations, and Hawaiian language immersion programs."

Please support this bill and the dire need of qualified teachers that we need to teach our children here in Hawai'i especially in the areas of special education and hawaiian language immersion schools and programs. The state needs to do better in supporting these education initiatives to produce well rounded and compitent individuals to serve our communities for the future.

me ke aloha 'Ä• ina,
Nanea Lo

LATE

From: [Kevin Huggins](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 2:04:48 PM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Kevin Huggins. I am a teacher at S.W. King Intermediate in Kaneohe on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been a teacher here in Hawaii for 7 years and my wife, who is teaching at Castle High School in Kaneohe, has been teaching as a SPED teacher for four years. Last year we had a daughter, and we tried to survive for several months on 1 teacher's paycheck, while my wife and baby recovered. It was really hard and we had to take out several loans to help stay afloat. We are still paying off those loans and would really like to start saving for a down payment on a home here, as this is where we see our future. The high cost of living and low pay is pushing us away, and we are starting to look at moving

to the West Coast. In Washington, teachers are better paid and the cost of living is lower. We could probably even purchase a home there.

If the money is provided to fund the pay differentials and salary compression we would definitely stay here. I have even heard senior teachers at my school talking about switching lines to a SPED line, or staying on a few more years if the compression issue is fixed. We need to see that the people we elected, care about the teachers and the students we teach. Students have had to survive long enough learning from long-term subs or emergency hires.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Kevin Huggins, Windward District, Oahu



From: [Amanda Thomson](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 2:21:50 PM

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Amanda Thomson. I am a 4th grade special education teacher at Pomaika'i Elementary in Baldwin complex on Maui. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I work with extreme behavior students and everyday is a challenge, especially when I have to work my 2nd job as a nanny after an already stressful day. I have student loan debt and it has been so hard to make ends meet since my husband and I moved here four years ago. Continuing to fund the special education differential would mean that I would only have to work one job, I'd be able to focus all my energy for my students, and we will be able to stay on Maui and build a life here. We love this island and want to stay and keep respectfully contributing to the Hawaii community.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Amanda Thomson, Maui

From: [Stewart, Jeanie](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Please support SB2488
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 2:37:27 PM



Aloha,

I am a new emergency hire teacher at Kihei Charter School. I have lived and worked on the island for 15 years. Some of my colleagues have been affected by the salary and compression issues addressed in this bill, even though I haven't as of yet.

Please support our teachers and SB2488.

--

Sincerely,

Jeanie Stewart,

Algebra I, Field Science & Community Engagement Teacher & Student Advisor, Kihei
Charter School

LATE

From: [Wendy Heyd](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 2:44:20 PM

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means committee,

I am an elementary-certified teacher living and working on Maui. I *am* the teacher for whom SB 2488, SD1 was written. Teaching was a 'second career' for me. I worked as a software support analyst for a computer company for a half-dozen years, then returned to university to receive my elementary education certification (39 credits on top of my B.A. degree) in 1987. I worked as a part-time teacher for the DOE for 7 years before accepting a full-time position. I was a classroom teacher and curriculum coordinator at Waihe'e School from 1994-2008, Title 1 Linker for the Baldwin-Kekaulike-Maui complex area from 2008-2015 and serve as a resource teacher from 2015 to the present.

I have 25 years of service and am retirement age (yet still enjoying work). I came into the DOE during 'austerity' and suffered through multiple years with no pay raises and no step increases. Relief from "Zero, Zero" finally came once we went on strike. Fast forward through additional hard times - pay increases went to beginning teachers, or to retiring teachers - neither of which I was - to today. I have been a Class VII (the highest class) on the certificated 10 month teacher pay scale for multiple years and have 18 credits on my transcript with no way to use those credits to advance to a higher pay class.

Despite years of service and dozens upon dozens of additional credits earned, I am **not** at the top of the pay scale. I am that teacher most impacted by salary compression. To put it in perspective, I will make an additional \$10,000 with this bill. Before you gasp and say this is underserved, I ask you to consider how many years I have been underpaid. This is small compensation for the work I provide the DOE. I have done everything in my power to advance myself. Now, I am asking you to support SB 2488, SD1 so that I may be adequately compensated for my years of service and expertise.

Please provide enough funding to fix the salary compression issue in the teacher salary schedule. It will certainly keep me from retiring and taking with me my 25 years of experience with DOE systems and deep knowledge of continuous school improvement processes, change leadership, and implementation science - all areas of expertise which I have developed over the past 20 years. Experience that cannot be readily replaced.

I need your help.

With appreciation for your consideration of SB 2488, SD1,

Wendy Heyd

Maui District

Maui

Wendy Heyd | BKM Complex Area Resource Teacher | 808-298-3744

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LATE

From: [Keone & Steph](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 2:59:23 PM

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Stephanie Kuniyoshi. I am a school librarian at Wahiawa Elementary School in Central District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been teaching in the DOE for 26 years with a Bachelor's of Education degree, a Professional Diploma in Elementary Education and a Master's of Library and Information Science degree, and I am only earning the same amount of money as a teacher who is 10 - 15 years my junior. I believe this huge pay gap happened in the Cayetano and Lingle years when there was the teacher strike (which, by the way, we didn't really get a raise when the strike ended, because although our pay increased, we were required to work an additional 8 days per school year...so we basically just got compensated for our work), and work furloughs and pay lags. PLEASE right the "wrongs" of the past, and fund the money that we deserve.

Our state is also in a teacher shortage crisis. I witness this everyday, as we are forced to hire long term substitute teachers, as we cannot find highly qualified special education and ELL teachers. Our students deserve to receive an excellent public education from a teacher who is amazing, as well as qualified.

We need your help!!! Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Kuniyoshi

LATE

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Laura Phillips. I am a Special Education Preschool Teacher at Hilo Union Elementary in Hilo District on the Island of Hawaii. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

As a teacher and parent of students in public schools in the State of Hawaii, I know that the funding is needed so that we can provide a quality education to the students in Hawaii.

I know first hand the benefits of having a highly qualified special education teacher educating your child. My own son has special needs; he is lucky enough to have a certificated special education teacher. The progress he makes daily is making a positive difference in and outside school. The support he is receiving gives me hope that he will be an independent, contributing member of society. All students deserve to this. As with any field, the longer people are doing the job the better at it they become. Teachers should be paid by experience because the longer they are teaching the more they fine-tune their craft, which helps the students to learn and grow in all areas of development. Funding the differentials for hard to staff areas, special education, and fixing the compression issue will help to make highly qualified, experience teachers available to more students.

I am originally from Hawaii, but took a teaching position in California when I graduated. I worked in California for 17 years as a Special Education Preschool Teacher. I came back to Hawaii in August 2019. Hawaii only took 6 years of my work experience (less than half of my experience). I took over a 50% pay cut to come to Hawaii. I came back so my kids will be close to family and learn about the Hawaiian culture. It has been a huge struggle living in Hawaii because I make so much less money and the cost of living in Hawaii is significantly higher than where we lived in California.

I am so grateful to be getting the special education differential. It has made a huge difference to my family. With the differential my family and I are very hopeful that we will be able to stay in Hawaii. I am hopeful, that the teacher compression salary issue will be funded by the state. With that funded, I am sure my family will make a livable wage and stay in Hawaii. As a special education teacher in Hawaii I plan to have a positive impact on the students and families I teach and work with.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers and that we care about the future of our Keiki. When we invest in our teachers and our education system we are investing in the future of our state by nurturing and caring for our most precious resource, our children.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Laura Phillips

Hilo District

Hawaii Island

LATE

From: [Laura Lee Hufalar](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Chair Donovan Dela Cruz
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 3:17:06 PM

To: Chair Dela Cruz and Members of the Ways and Means Committee

2/18/2020

My name is Laura-Lee Hufalar. I am a student teacher at Princess Nahienaena Elementary School in the Maui District. I am submitting testimony in support of Support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million-plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

As a student teacher and my experience throughout the years, I have seen the difficulties that our Maui island has faced maintaining great and knowledgeable teachers. Many, sad to say, have moved because they are undervalued and simply cannot afford to live here in the islands. I am speaking of teachers that have been born and raised in Hawaii or have lived here for more than fifteen years. I believe that this funding opportunity would be a means to maintain teachers and keep them here.

Please support this bill. Mahalo for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Laura-Lee Hufalar, Maui District, Maui Island

LATE

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/19/2020 7:52:17 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Micah Pregitzer	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha, My name is Micah Kalama Pregitzer and I am a resident of Kailua, a parent of 2 public school children at Kainalu Elemenary, and a science teacher at Kalaheo High School for 16 years. I am submitting testimony to urge you to not only pass SB2488, but to fully fund it so that the teachers of Hawai'i that are needed the most can be recruited and retained to best serve our keiki.

As most of you know, we have a massive teacher shortage crisis here in Hawai'i that perenially tops 1000 vacancies and is climbing. That means tens of thousands of keiki are being "taught" by unqualified teachers every single year.

At Kalaheo High School, we have emergency hires and long term subs in the classroom every single year, and we are not even in a hard to staff region. This year alone, we started with 2 vacancies, and now we are up to 4 because teachers have left. The students complain of not learning anything in those classes, being bored, and losing the willingness to to even attend the class periods. This is not the fault of the unqualified teachers, they have been thrown into a dire situation and are doing the best they can, but the research shows that students learn best when they have qualified veteran teachers in the classroom teaching them.

How can we expect our keiki to succeed and be prepared for the world after their public education, if we cannot even provide them with proper teachers to educate and prepare them for life. How can we expect students to learn the Hawaiian language when their Hawaiian immersion teacher does not speak it themselves. How can we expect the needs of our most vulnerable students to be adequately met when their teacher has not been properly trained and certified. How can we expect our students to grow and perform well when they don't even have the same substitute for even a quarter of the year....

I urge you to please pass SB2488 with the full funding to implement both the Hard-To-Staff Differentials and the Salary Decompression.

Mahalo,

Micah Kalama Pregitzer

LATE

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/19/2020 8:14:07 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Susan Ellis	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I feel that teacher experience should be value as an asset in a student's education. Teacher's should be fairly compensated for years of experience whether obtained in Hawaii or in another state. I also believe well trained and competant Special Education teacher's provide deserve extra incentives to fill the need.

LATE

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/19/2020 8:24:07 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Matt Winn	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020 10:00 a.m.

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Matthew Winn. I am a Teacher at Kailua Intermediate in Windward District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I will likely be leaving Hawaii after one year. The cost of living is just too much. Although I love it here, my family and I feel like we are scraping by each month. I would love to stay, love to continue my work here and develop my curriculum but it doesn't pencil out financially.

Unless there is a drastic change we would be unable to ever afford to purchase a home, and considering we are two professionals in our 40s that is unacceptable. I want to stay, I just don't see a financially viable option without a second job or my wife working full time for the rest of our time in Hawai'i, leading to diminish the lifestyle we had hoped to achieve here.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Matthew Winn, Windward District, Oahu

LATE

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/19/2020 8:53:27 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Shelby Loo	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

February 19, 2020

Honorable Donovan Dela Cruz

Room 211, State Capitol

415 South Beretania Street

Honolulu, HI 96913

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Shelby Loo and I am a National Board Certified Mathematics teacher at Waimea Middle School who resides with my husband -a Hawai'i County Police Officer, and our two children in the Hamakua district on the Big Island. I have been a teacher at Waimea Middle School for the past 15 years, serving as the sixth grade level chairperson and a member of our School's Leadership Team for the past 12 years. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45

million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki. The cost of living in Hawai'i has outpaced our salary scale. Unlike many school districts in the country, Hawaii educators' years of experience are not automatically taken into consideration to determine when they earn step movements, which seems unfair.

I am passionate about my job and find value in the day to day work that I do with my 90 6th grade students. It is my hope to inspire them to become lifelong learners who dream big, work hard, and are always humble, kind and community contributors. The job is demanding and requires that I serve some of our most neediest students who require extra compassion, care and encouragement. It is a 12+ hour a day job that often requires that I put time in over the weekend or after tucking my children in at night in order to be effective for my students.

We need your help to rectify this issue and continue to ensure that we can attract highly qualified teachers for our keiki. Mahalo.

Shelby Loo

66-1803 Alaneo Street

Kamuela, HI 96743

(808)989-8125

LATE

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/19/2020 9:45:17 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Cicily R Bilecki	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha!

My name is Cicily Bilecki and I have been teaching special education for almost 20 years in the state of Hawaii. I moved here from Texas shortly after graduating from college and was immediately hired by the Department of Education. Although I love teaching special education, as time passes, I have come to the harsh realization that I may never even have the opportunity to retire due the high cost of living and my salary as a DOE teacher. As a single parent, surviving on my salary alone to raise my son has been a financial struggle. I have had in the past, needed to take on side jobs to help make up for the high cost of living. I am not the only teacher who faces this reality. I am so thankful for the state of Hawaii finally after almost 20 years recognizing the needs to not only attract but retain it's special education teachers. The special education differential has positively impacted my family, where I can stress less on figuring how I can keep up with the very high costs of living in Hawaii. Please consider continuing providing this differential, otherwise you will lose many qualified teachers to other states who do make education a priority by financially supporting it's teachers.

Sincerely,

Cicily R Bilecki

LATE

SB-2488-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/19/2020 9:46:54 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Nate Hix	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Teachers are paid worse in Hawaii than in any other state. This is one step in the right direction to adequately paying teachers. Many more steps are needed after this.

LATE

From: [Joey Dakine](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 3:23:31 PM

Aloha!

I'm a special education teacher at Hilo High School. I want to retire but the new raise and a lot of friends are talking me into staying another 5 years at this even though I feel burnt out. I know it's kind of hard to replace me because special education teachers are hard to come by lately around here. We need a lot more of them, and hopefully they're better at this than I am. Please consider allocating 50 million dollars to pay all our high demand teachers more right away since it really does make a difference in our students' learning. They have too many long term subs who are not highly qualify. Our keiki deserve better, and if funding critical teacher pay raises will help then let's do it! Please understand this is a very real issue and this is one good solution of many that need to be applied, the sooner the better. By the way, I'm all in for helping out the language immersion schools to pay their talented bilingual teachers more too. Since we have two official languages in Hawaii this is of significant importance. Imua na kula o na keiki o ka aina!

Mahalo,
Joseph Watts

Sent from [Outlook](#)

LATE

From: [Elisa Inouye](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: SB2488, SD1, COMMITTEE On Ways & Means, Wednesday, February 19th at 10am.
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 4:03:08 PM

Dear Senate Ways & Means Committee Chairperson, Donovan Dela Cruz,

I strongly support fully funding SB2488 at \$70 million, because all of our children deserve to have a licensed teacher in the classroom. The full \$70 million is the amount that's needed to assure the salary adjustment to fix compression, along with continuing the hard-to-staff, SPED, and Hawaiian language immersion shortage differentials. It is so clear that damage is done by a system wide shortage that puts too many substitutes and unqualified teachers in front of our children. Students are at risk for not receiving the services and classroom support necessary for them to learn and thrive at school. I myself have a family of four and struggle to meet the financial needs of my household. I work and tutor afterschool. A salary adjustment would help me continue to live on my island that I was born and raised. Please fight for our students and pass SB2488.

Mahalo,

Elisa Inouye

LATE

From: [Jan Mori](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 10 a.m.
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 4:07:01 PM

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

Pardon my late email; I was on a field trip today and being department chairperson, my duties are doubled as the contact person for the trip for my teachers and students. My name is Jan Mori, and I am a 3rd grade teacher at Wheeler Elementary school in Central District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides for a total of \$70 million plus fringe. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been teaching for 27 years, and looking back at the start of my career, beginning teacher salary was under \$30K, and we worked without a contract for several years. Back then as a new teacher, I had no idea what unions, contracts, salaries, and classes and steps really meant. But my parents instilled in me the "gaman" philosophy that has stuck with me my whole career.

For reference, this quote is from Google: *Gaman (我慢) is a Japanese term of Zen Buddhist origin which means "enduring the seemingly unbearable with patience and dignity". The term is generally translated as "perseverance", "patience", or tolerance.*

I applaud the efforts that the State, DOE and BOE have supported HSTA in recruiting new teachers! However, I'm afraid that there won't be many experienced teachers like myself left to train them as well as my mentors had for me 27 years ago without addressing the Compression Issue. Recently, my school took a loss when at least 5 senior members of the faculty decided that it was time to retire. We have been struggling to try to make up for their absence! Their "gaman" inspired me when they were here, and now that I'm very close to my full pension, I feel like taking my leave as soon as I financially am able to, as they did. In 3 years, I will have taught for 30 years, but won't reach 55 years of age for 2 more years. And my pension is crucial at this point!

While money doesn't solve every problem, I don't mind sharing my personal position, which highly depends on my salary: Divorced after what I thought were 25 happy years of marriage, a sophomore at a mainland private college, sophomore at a local private high school (and an ex-husband who works for a private engineering firm & gets raises & bonuses every year who EXPECTS me to make equal payments & won't understand that I am struggling financially & won't consider public school or asking my college son to attend school at home). I have not been able to put into savings anything after the divorce 4 years ago to enjoy my eventual retirement as well as helping my younger son to save money for his college expenses.

I try to not let the stress of worrying about my personal finances affect my teaching, though my health is starting to be affected as well, and I never want my students to have to worry if I'm out sick. And after taking sick leave, I end up working twice as hard to catch up, since a substitute teacher is really no substitute for ME.

Recruiting is a great step, but RETAINING the terrific teachers that we already have in order to provide for our keiki AND training the new teachers to follow in our footsteps is also needed. I love teaching and never want to lose that love, only to feel like it's an obligation because I can't afford to survive otherwise. Trying to teach my students that their efforts as they grow & learn to make a difference, when it doesn't feel like seasoned teachers are receiving much recognition for our own efforts and sacrifices, I feel defeated.

Please, we need your help. Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Jan Mori, Central Oahu, Wheeler Elementary School.