



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

**Date:** 03/13/2020  
**Time:** 02:00 PM  
**Location:** 309  
**Committee:** House Labor & Public  
Employment  
House Lower & Higher Education

**Department:** Education

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

**Title of Bill:** SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION.

**Purpose of Bill:** Appropriates funds for teacher compensation as negotiated and executed in a memorandum of understanding between the Superintendent of Education and the exclusive representative of collective bargaining unit (5) for an experimental modernization project pursuant to section 78-3.5, Hawaii Revised Statutes, or special education, hard-to-staff geographic locations, and Hawaiian language immersion programs, or some combination thereof. Appropriates funds to help address classroom teacher shortage differentials and for teacher fringe benefit costs. (SD2)

**Department's Position:**

The Department of Education (Department) strongly supports SB 2488, SD2, 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 \$26,769,500 included in the SD2 as well as the \$9,082,380 for fringe benefit costs for teacher compensation 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, SD2.

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](http://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

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FOR: SB 2488 SD2 Relating to Teacher Compensation  
DATE: March 13, 2020  
TIME: 2:00 P.M.  
COMMITTEE: Committee on Lower and Higher Education and Committee on Labor and Public Employment  
ROOM: Conference Room 309  
FROM: Yvonne Lau, Interim Executive Director  
State Public Charter School Commission

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Chair Woodson, Chair Johanson, and members of the Committees:

The State Public Charter School Commission (“Commission”) appreciates the opportunity to submit this testimony in **SUPPORT OF SB 2488 SD2**. This measure separately appropriates funds to the Department of Education (DOE) and public charter schools to fund teacher compensation as negotiated and executed between the superintendent of education and Hawaii State Teachers Association Bargaining Unit 5 for fiscal year 2020-2021.

While the funding and support for eligible charter school teachers provided in this measure is appreciated, the Commission would like to bring attention to the following:

- Funding for the Hard-to-Staff incentive for the current fiscal year 2019-2020, as required in Appendix VII of the current HSTA Master Agreement, has not been provided to public charter schools. The Master Agreement states that the “funding for this retention incentive shall not come out of public charter school per pupil allocations.” For the 2018-2019 school year, funding for this incentive, in the amount of \$657,000, was provided through the governor and Budget & Finance and paid out to eight public charter schools.
- Funding for the above item and the proposed teacher differentials introduced this year has not been provided for the current school year 2019-2020. This has negatively affected charter school retention, recruitment, and morale as most charter schools

have not been able to pay for the teacher differentials that DOE teachers have already received.

The Commission is available to collaborate with the committee, the DOE, other interested stakeholders, and public charter schools in supporting our teachers who serve and educate our public charter school students.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

841 Bishop St., Suite 301  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813



Telephone: 808 926-1530  
Contact@HEECoalition.org

Committee on Labor and Public Employment  
Representative Aaron Johanson, Chair  
Representative Stacelynn Eli, Vice Chair

Committee on Lower and Higher Education  
Representative Justin Woodson, Chair  
Representative Mark Hashem, Vice Chair  
Representative Sean Quinlan, Vice Chair

March 13, 2020

Dear Chairs Johanson and Woodson, Vice Chairs Eli, Hashem and Quinlan, and Members of the Committee,

We **support SB2488 SD2**, appropriating funds for teacher compensation as negotiated and executed in a memorandum of understanding between the Superintendent of Education and the exclusive representative of collective bargaining unit (5) for an experimental modernization project pursuant to section 78-3.5, Hawaii Revised Statutes, or special education, hard-to-staff geographic locations, and Hawaiian language immersion programs, or some combination thereof. Appropriates funds to help address classroom teacher shortage differentials and for teacher fringe benefit costs.

HE'E Coalition strongly supports this innovative project to address teacher retention. 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.<sup>1</sup> We appreciate all efforts to support recruitment and retention of our teachers in the state.

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

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<sup>1</sup> [Hawaiipublicschools.org](http://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.*



## **SENATE BILL 2488, SD2, RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION**

MARCH 13, 2020 · HOUSE LABOR COMMITTEE AND  
HOUSE LOWER AND HIGHER EDUCATION  
COMMITTEE · CHAIRS REP. AARON LING  
JOHANSON AND REP. JUSTIN H. WOODSON

**POSITION:** Support.

**RATIONALE:** The Democratic Party of Hawai'i Education Caucus supports SB 2488, SD2, relating to teacher compensation, which appropriates funds for teacher compensation as negotiated and executed in a memorandum of understanding between the Superintendent of Education and the exclusive representative of collective bargaining unit (5) for an experimental modernization project pursuant to section 78-3.5, Hawai'i Revised Statutes, or special education, hard-to-staff geographic locations, and Hawaiian language immersion programs, or some combination thereof, and appropriates funds to help address classroom teacher shortage differentials and for teacher fringe benefit costs.

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.

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

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March 13, 2020  
2:00 pm

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
House Committee on Lower & Higher Education

Conference Room 309  
State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street

Re: SB2488, SD2 - RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION.

Aloha Chair Aaron Ling Johanson, Vice-Chair Stacelynn K. M. Eli, Chair Justin Woodson, Vice-Chair Mark Hashme, Vice-Chair Sean Quinlan, and members of the House Committees on Labor & Public Employment and Lower & Higher Education:

We **SUPPORT** the intent of SB2488 SD2. The bill appropriates funds for teacher compensation as negotiated and executed in a memorandum of understanding between the Superintendent of Education and the exclusive representative of collective bargaining unit (5) for an experimental modernization project pursuant to section 78-3.5, Hawaii Revised Statutes, or special education, hard-to-staff geographic locations, and Hawaiian language immersion programs, or some combination thereof. Appropriates funds to help address classroom teacher shortage differentials and for teacher fringe benefit costs.

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



Friday, March 13, 2020

Senate Bill 2488 Senate Draft 2  
Testifying in Support, with Amendments

Aloha Chairs Johanson and Woodson, Vice Chairs Eli, Hashem and Quinlan, and Members of the Committees on Labor & Public Employment, and Lower & Higher Education,

The Democratic Party of Hawaii (The Party) **supports SB2488 SD2** Relating to Teacher Compensation, with suggested amendments. The bill currently proposes appropriating funds for an experimental modernization project pursuant to chapter 78-3.5 and make necessary discretionary salary adjustments. We wholeheartedly support these goals and respectfully ask that appropriation amount be no less than \$45 million, which is the amount necessary to reach both of these goals.

Educating our state's children by fully funding our public school system, including supporting our public school teachers, is one of the most important jobs of the State of Hawaii.

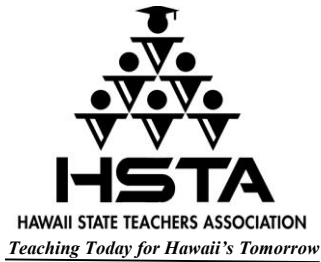
Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian immersion, and hard to staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. Our teachers are important for the future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

For these reasons, we urge you to vote favorably on this bill and appropriate \$45 million for our hard working public school teachers.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

Josh Frost  
Co-Chair, Legislation Committee  
Democratic Party of Hawai'i

Zahava Zaidoff  
Co-Chair, Legislation Committee  
Democratic Party of Hawai'i



1200 Ala Kapuna Street ♦ Honolulu, Hawaii 96819  
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Corey Rosenlee  
President  
Osa Tui Jr.  
Vice President  
Logan Okita  
Secretary-Treasurer  
Wilbert Holck  
Executive Director

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON  
LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT and THE COMMITTEE ON LOWER &  
HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 – RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

COREY ROSENLEE, PRESIDENT  
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and Members of the Committees:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association **supports SB 2488, SD2**, relating to teacher compensation, with amendment to increase the funding to cover both teacher salary compression and the differentials.

This bill will:

1. 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,
2. Provide funding for additional teacher pay for the areas of special education, hard-to-staff geographic locations, and Hawaiian language immersion programs, or
3. Some combination of (1) and (2).

The bill also requires a signed Memorandum of Agreement between the state superintendent and HSTA.

In the Senate, lawmakers increased the bill's base amount from \$25 million to nearly \$26.8 million with an additional \$1.9 million for public charter school teachers, plus \$9 million for fringe, which covers additional costs, such as retirement benefits, that would accrue should the bill become law. In all, the bill provides more than \$37 million for teacher compensation.

While this was a positive development, an additional \$45 million is needed to fully fund both shortage differentials and salary adjustments, plus fringe costs.



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**Corey Rosenlee**  
President

**Osa Tui Jr.**  
Vice President

**Logan Okita**  
Secretary-Treasurer

**Wilbert Holck**  
Executive Director

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 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.

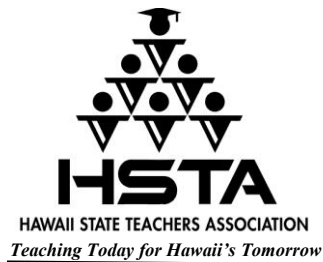
Unlike many school districts in the country, Hawaii educators' years of experience are not automatically taken into consideration to determine when they earn salary movements. Hawaii public school teachers only receive increased pay for years of service if those rates are negotiated with the state, which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



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

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.

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.



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President

Osa Tui Jr.  
Vice President

Logan Okita  
Secretary-Treasurer

Wilbert Holck  
Executive Director

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 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 and amend the amount appropriated to fully cover both salary compression and the differentials.**



HAWAII

AMERICANS FOR DEMOCRATIC ACTION

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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 Farm	Jenny Nomura		Hawai'i 96823
Doug Pyle, Secretary	Stephanie Fitzpatrick	Dave Nagaji		

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March 12, 2020

TO: Chairs Johanson & Woodson and LAB/LHE Committees

RE: SB 2488 SD2 Relating to Teacher Compensation

Support for hearing on Marcj 13

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 SD2 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





**S E A C**  
**Special Education Advisory Council**  
1010 Richards Street Honolulu, HI 96813  
Phone: 586-8126 Fax: 586-8129  
email: spin@doh.hawaii.gov

March 13, 2020

**Special Education  
Advisory Council**

Ms. Martha Guinan, *Chair*  
Ms. Dale Matsuura, *Vice Chair*  
Dr. Patricia Sheehy, *Vice  
Chair*  
Ms. Ivalee Sinclair, *Vice Chair*

Ms. Andrea Alexander  
Ms. Brendelyn Ancheta  
Ms. Virginia Beringer  
Ms. Mary Brogan  
Ms. Deborah Cheeseman  
Ms. Annette Cooper  
Mr. Mark Disher  
Dr. Kurt Humphrey  
Ms. Cathy Kahoochanohano  
Ms. Tina King  
Ms. Bernadette Lane  
Ms. Kaili Murbach  
Ms. Carrie Pisciotto  
Ms. Kau'i Rezentos  
Ms. Rosie Rowe  
Dr. David Royer  
Mr. James Street  
Mr. Francis Taele  
Mr. Steven Vannatta  
Ms. Lisa Vegas  
Ms. Jasmine Williams  
Ms. Susan Wood

Ms. Cara Tanimura, *liaison to  
the Superintendent*  
Dr. Bob Campbell, *liaison to  
the military community*

Amanda Kaahanui, Staff  
Susan Rocco, Staff

Representative Aaron Ling Johanson, Chair  
Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Representative Justin H. Woodson, Chair  
Committee on Lower & Higher Education  
Hawaii State Capitol  
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: SB 2488, SD 2 - RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

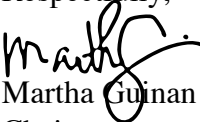
Dear Chairs Johanson and Woodson and Members of the Committees,

The Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC) appreciates this opportunity to offer our strong support for SB 2488, SD 2 which appropriates monies for classroom teacher shortage differentials. In particular, we are most keenly focused on additional compensation for special education teachers in order to ensure that special education students, arguably those most at-risk of academic failure, have access to qualified and certified special education teachers.

As your Committees know, only 84% of special education teaching positions in School Year 2018-19 were filled by individuals who have completed a state approved teacher education program. Retention of qualified special education teachers is also a growing problem. A contributing factor is that the chronic shortage of qualified teachers for our most vulnerable students has led to additional hardships for those teachers still in the field who must double up their IEP coordination and paperwork to fill in the gap.

SEAC is in full support of pay differentials for special education classroom teachers as a tool to both recruit and retain these valuable personnel. We urge your committee to support funding for these vitally needed positions.

Respectfully,

  
Martha Guinan  
Chair

  
Ivalee Sinclair  
Legislative Committee Chair



# HAWAII APPLESEED

## CENTER FOR LAW & ECONOMIC JUSTICE

Testimony of Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice  
Supporting SB 2488, SD2 – Relating to Teacher Compensation  
House Committees on Labor & Public Employment and on Lower & Higher Education  
Friday, March 13, 2020, 2:00 PM, conference room 309

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Dear Chairs Johanson and Woodson, Vice Chairs Eli, Hashem and Quinlan, and members of the Committees:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in **SUPPORT of SB 2488, SD2**.

Lower-income families in Hawai'i depend on our public school system to educate their children. They deserve high quality education and fully qualified teachers, but the fact is their children are much more likely to attend schools with lower student proficiency rates and fewer experienced teachers.

Data analysis shows that our state's Title I schools, which have high proportions of low-income students, have poorer teacher retention rates and greater numbers of emergency hires, who lack teaching credentials.<sup>i</sup>

That is why it is so important to address our teacher shortage by providing adequate funds for Hawai'i teachers to receive more competitive salaries as well as pay differentials for years of service, and special education, Hawaiian immersion, and hard-to-staff positions.

The \$37.8 million, one-year appropriation in this bill is a start, but we believe it will take **at least twice as much funding and a longer-term commitment** to effectively address long-standing shortfalls in teacher compensation and the resulting negative effects on our students.

We appreciate your consideration of this testimony.

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<sup>i</sup> <https://www.civilbeat.org/2019/05/where-hawaiis-chronic-teacher-shortage-hits-hardest/>

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*The Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice is committed to a more socially just Hawai'i, where everyone has genuine opportunities to achieve economic security and fulfill their potential. We change systems that perpetuate inequality and injustice through policy development, advocacy, and coalition building.*



## KAMEHAMEHA SCHOOLS®

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
House Committee on Lower & Higher Education

Time: 2:00 p.m.  
Date: March 13, 2020  
Where: Conference Room 309

### TESTIMONY

By Dr. Kā'eo Duarte  
Kamehameha Schools

#### RE: **SB 2488, SD2, Relating to Teacher Compensation**

E ka Luna Ho'omalū Johanson, ka Luna Ho'omalū Woodson, ka Hope Luna Ho'omalū Eli, ka Hope Luna Ho'omalū Hashem, ka Hope Luna Ho'omalū Quinlan, a me nā Lālā o kēia mau Kōmike o ka Hale o nā Lunamaka'āinana, aloha! 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, SD2, which appropriates funds for teacher compensation as negotiated and executed in a memorandum of understanding between the Superintendent of Education and the exclusive representative of collective bargaining unit (5) for an experimental modernization project pursuant to section 78-3.5, Hawai'i Revised Statutes, or special education, hard-to-staff geographic locations, and Hawaiian language immersion programs, or some combination thereof. This measure also appropriates funds to help address classroom teacher shortage differentials and for teacher fringe benefit costs.

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 all of 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'ohē hana nui ke alu 'ia. No task is too large when we all work together! **Please advance this measure.**

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 1:08:48 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Kenzi Souza	West Hawaii Explorations Academy	Support	No

Comments:

**Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:**

**My name is Kenzi Kunishige. I am a Office Clerk at West Hawaii Explorations Academy in Kealakehe Complex District on Big Island. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.**

**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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.**

**We need your help. Mahalo.**

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 10:50:00 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Laura Barbato	Kamaile Academy PCS	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Laura Barbato and I currently teach 7th and 8th grade resource at Kamaile Academy in the Leeward District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been living and working as an educator on the Waianae Coast since January of 2012. I have recently had a son and my husband and I love the people and living in Hawaii. Due to the high cost of living coupled with low teacher salaries, we were on the verge of moving back to the mainland. With the SPED bonuses and hard to staff differentials, we are now making enough of a livable wage that we are considering staying through to retirement. If these bonuses do not pass, we may be forced to once again leave the island and leave a void in the lives of many children and families. I know many teachers that are in the same situation. The only way to improve public education in Hawaii is to retain and recruit good teachers who are committed to building a life on the islands.

We need your help.

Mahalo,

Laura Barbato, Special Education Teacher, Leeward District, Oahu

The Thirtieth Legislature  
Regular Session of 2020

THE HOUSE

**Committee on Labor & Public Employment**

Rep. Aaron Ling Johanson, Chair

Rep. Stacelynn K.M. Eli, Vice Chair

**Committee on Lower & Higher Education**

Rep. Justin H. Woodson, Chair

Rep. Mark J. Hashem, Vice Chair

Rep. Sean Quinlan, Vice Chair

State Capitol, Conference Room 309

Friday, March 13, 2020; 2:00 p.m.

**STATEMENT OF THE ILWU LOCAL 142 ON S.B. 2488, SD2  
RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION**

The ILWU Local 142 supports S.B. 2488, SD2, which appropriates funds for teacher compensation as negotiated and executed in a memorandum of understanding between the Superintendent of Education and the exclusive representative of collective bargaining unit (5) for an experimental modernization project pursuant to section 78-3.5, Hawaii Revised Statutes, or special education, hard-to-staff geographic locations, and Hawaiian language immersion programs, or some combination thereof and appropriates funds to help address classroom teacher shortage differentials and for teacher fringe benefit costs.

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 37+ 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, SD2 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, SD2. Thank you for the opportunity to share our views on this matter.

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/10/2020 8:24:48 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Pride at Work - Hawaii	Pride @ Work - Hawaii	Support	No

Comments:



# Hawai'i Scholars for Education and Social Justice

Research Brief #2

February 9, 2020

## Increased Teacher Compensation Can Lead to More Equitable Education in Hawai'i

*Hawai'i needs to recruit and retain more teachers to assure a quality education for all of our 180,000 public school students. The greatest shortages are among teachers of special education, science, mathematics, Hawaiian language immersion and English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL).*

While shortages are statewide, some communities are disproportionately affected. These communities are home to higher percentages of Native Hawaiians, Filipino Americans and other Pacific Islanders on the Wai'anae coast of O'ahu; Hana on Maui; Honoka'a, Kealakehe, Konawaena and Kohala on Hawai'i island; and the islands of Lāna'i and Moloka'i. Although the need for qualified teachers has existed for decades, it is exacerbated by an aging and overworked teaching force, as well as declining numbers of individuals who complete a rigorous teacher education program and become educators.

The reasons for the teacher shortage in Hawaii's public schools are numerous and complicated, including systematic discrimination against Hawaiian and other teachers of color.<sup>1,2</sup> Long-term solutions require additional funding as the Hawai'i State Department of Education does not currently have the funds to raise teacher compensation in meaningful ways. Hawai'i continues to rank among the lowest of the fifty states in the percentage of state and local expenditures supporting K-12 education (15.9%), compared to the U.S. average (21.7%).<sup>3</sup> The most recent study on the extent of underfunding of Hawaii's public schools found that the DOE would need an additional \$278 million a year in order to provide an "adequate" education to its students.<sup>4</sup> **Policy makers and educational leaders can change the trajectory of the problem by increasing compensation for existing teachers, particularly those in hard-to-staff areas, and providing incentives for more qualified and culturally diverse people to complete rigorous teacher preparation and receive relevant induction and mentoring support.** The instability



of the teacher workforce perpetuates a revolving door of new teachers, forcing schools to continually invest in efforts to replace teachers who leave, rather than allocate resources towards other needs.

The Hawai'i Scholars for Education and Social

Justice (HSESJ) draw on research in education and related fields to provide facts about the teacher shortage and to dispel misconceptions regarding the effects of increased teacher compensation and incentives for teacher education on teachers, students, and the broader community.

## What We Know About Hawaii's Teacher Shortage and Compensation

*Each year, roughly 1,000 teachers leave their positions in Hawai'i public schools, and these numbers appear to be rising.*<sup>5</sup> Annually, the schools must hire 10% of the teacher workforce. **At the start of the 2018-2019 school year, 1,029 of the 14,437 Hawai'i teacher positions were either filled with non-licensed or emergency hire teachers (49.4%) or left vacant (50.6%).**<sup>6</sup> With a nearly equal number of these cases in elementary and high schools, the shortage can affect more than 60,000 students, one third of our student population.

**When adjusted for the cost-of-living, Hawaii's teachers are the lowest paid in the nation,<sup>7</sup> and Hawai'i ranks as one of the worst states to be a teacher.**<sup>8</sup> A recent study compared Hawai'i teacher salaries with three groups of comparable districts. In all three analyses, Hawaii's teachers were paid between \$3,000 to \$26,000 less, after adjusting for the cost-of-living.<sup>9</sup> Research indicates that when salaries are low, teachers leave for higher paying professions and student performance worsens.<sup>10</sup> The economic costs to our community are high, as nationwide, the average cost of recruiting and training new hires is \$21,000 per teacher.<sup>11,12,13</sup>

**The short-term solution to fill vacancies with non-licensed teachers, including those in "fast-track" teacher education programs like Teach for America (TFA), iTeach, and TeachAway has**

**not worked well.** According to data from the Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board, fast-track programs often recruit candidates who leave teaching and the islands at a higher rate than local recruits.<sup>14</sup> This is consistent with national data on fast-track programs that show TFA candidates tend to leave after two years.<sup>15</sup> Staffing teacher vacancies with underprepared, non-licensed individuals, including those who are pursuing fast-track teacher education, leads to less student learning and increased teacher turnover.<sup>16</sup> Hiring teachers from fast-track programs can come with greater upfront costs compared to hiring teachers from rigorous teacher certification programs.<sup>17,18</sup> For example, TFA charges a finder's fee of several thousand dollars for every teacher they supply. Fast-track teachers also require a higher degree of professional support as new teachers, which is one of many hidden costs of such programs. Although, fast track candidates can appeal to administrators who need to fill an immediate vacancy, in the long run these schools end up with more costs and fewer gains over time.

In the next sections, we discuss common misconceptions about teacher recruitment, compensation, support, and retention. In doing so we provide research evidence that refutes these misunderstandings.

## Misconception #1: People in Hawai'i do not want to be teachers.

Across the nation, there is a decline in the number of students enrolling in teacher education programs.<sup>19</sup> Yet, **in Hawai'i, there is a large and growing pool of people who aspire to become teachers, especially among underrepresented groups.**

### *People in high schools and community colleges.*

Across the state, hundreds of high school students, including those at Campbell, Farrington, Kapolei, Leilehua, and Wai'anae High Schools, enroll in teacher academies and pathways.<sup>20</sup> Many students at these schools identify as Native Hawaiian and Filipino American. For example, the Teacher Academy at Farrington enrolls over 150 students each year.<sup>21</sup> Although all community colleges offer educator preparation programs, only Leeward Community College prepares both elementary and secondary teachers. Currently, Leeward enrolls over 600 students in its education courses. The majority of these students identify as Native Hawaiian (40%) and Filipino American (25%) and live near areas of O'ahu with a high demand for teachers. Leeward

annually matriculates approximately 100 students with degrees and certificates in education. At Leeward, 90% of these students complete two years towards teaching licensure, but only 30% subsequently transfer to four-year institutions.<sup>22</sup>

*University students.* Across the various university-based rigorous teacher education programs there are approximately 1,200 people who are currently working toward a credential in teaching.<sup>23</sup> These numbers indicate a willingness of people in the State to teach.

*Community members.* Another pool of residents who have expressed a desire to become teachers is that of long-term substitute teachers, emergency hires, and others who live in communities where teachers are needed. These individuals have responded to initiatives to become licensed teachers. For example, INPEACE's Kūlia and Ka Lama Education Academy, a community-based "grow your own" program, supports over 400 Wai'anae and Nānākuli residents who have expressed interest in becoming teachers.<sup>24</sup>

## Misconception #2: Increasing teacher compensation will not affect teacher recruitment and retention.

*Teachers often leave the field.* Nationwide, teachers leave schools or the field altogether for a variety of reasons, including low salaries, poor and unsafe facilities, large class sizes, an unsupportive administration, insufficient resources for students, long commute times, and lack of input on school-

wide decisions.<sup>25</sup> Salaries are as important to teachers as they are to professionals in other occupations.<sup>26</sup> Specifically, **higher teacher compensation attracts more qualified teacher applicants, influences teachers' career aspirations, and enhances teachers' commitment to their jobs.**<sup>27</sup>

*Effects of raising compensation.* Raising teacher salaries can improve a school’s attractiveness within the local labor market,<sup>28</sup> thereby improving the status of teaching as a profession. Better paid opportunities for teachers appear to be the most influential in schools with high-poverty rates, low test scores, and ongoing teacher turnover.<sup>29</sup>

**Research suggests that a 25-40% increase in teacher compensation can improve recruitment and retention of well-prepared and motivated teachers.**<sup>30</sup> In the State of Hawai‘i, overall compensation for teachers may be increased by offering housing incentives, such that teachers receive financial support for housing expenses, including rent and relocation, as well as discounted homes and subsidized teacher housing. The effects of increased compensation are the strongest at the beginning of a teacher’s career;<sup>31</sup> however, the effects of compensation on teacher retention persist among more experienced teachers, as well.<sup>32</sup>

*High-demand fields.* Teachers in high-demand fields, such as mathematics, science, special education, and ESL are especially vulnerable to salary differences that affect their decisions to stay in the profession, given much higher salaries in alternative occupations for individuals with their expertise.<sup>33</sup> A recent study analyzed differences between states with the highest and lowest shortages in special education.<sup>34</sup> Researchers identified Hawai‘i as one of the states having the greatest shortages of special education teachers in the nation. The research revealed that states with higher salaries for special education teachers did not have such significant shortages. The compounding variables of Hawaii’s teachers being the lowest paid in the nation, *and* not offering financial incentives to a high-need discipline like special education, makes it particularly difficult to recruit in this field. The recent increase in Hawaii’s special educator salaries improves this situation, as compensating teachers in areas in which they are needed is related to retaining those teachers.

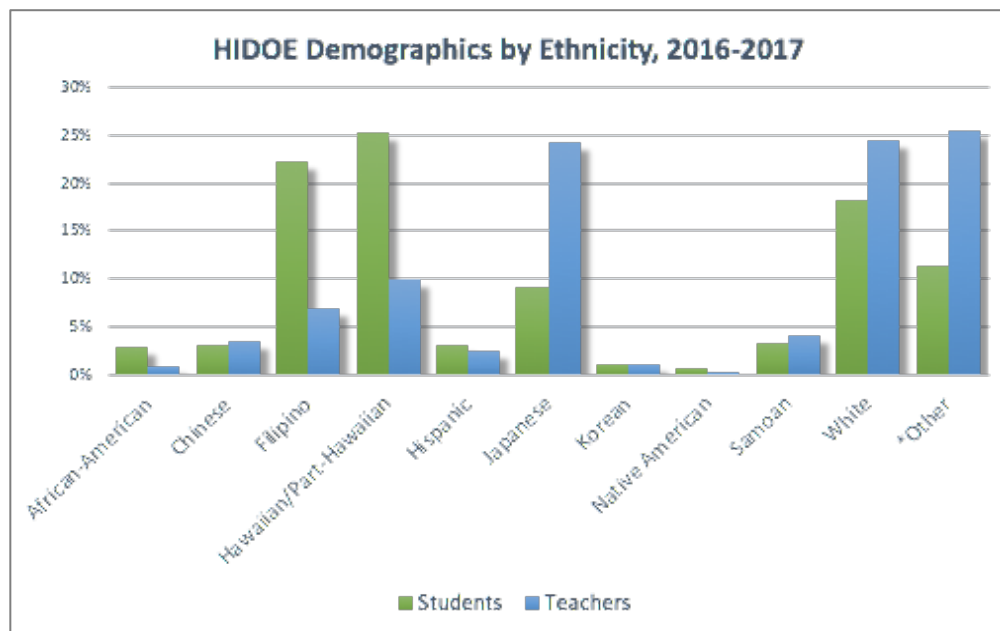
### Misconception #3: Increasing teacher compensation will not affect student outcomes.

*Increased teacher salaries improve student learning.* Teacher salaries are related to students’ learning. A recent international analysis of teacher salaries in 31 countries, including the U.S., showed that higher salaries attracted and retained more capable and well-prepared teachers, which in turn had a positive effect on students’ school performance.<sup>35</sup> Research indicates that teacher salaries affect students’ math achievement scores, even after controlling for students’ background characteristics such as their families’ income.<sup>36</sup> As noted above, increasing teacher salaries can lead to qualified teachers staying in their positions,<sup>37</sup> and this improves student achievement through higher student retention rates.<sup>38</sup> One study found that

raising teacher salaries by 10% was related to a 3-4% decrease in high school dropout rates.<sup>39</sup> Having a knowledgeable, well-prepared and experienced teacher is the most significant school factor related to student achievement.<sup>40</sup> **Teachers have 2-3 times more influence on students’ math and reading test scores than other school factors, including facilities, services, and leadership.**<sup>41</sup> In addition to directly affecting their own students’ learning, well-prepared teachers have an indirect impact on a broader population of learners when their students become peers to other students in future classes.<sup>42</sup>

*Teachers should mirror student ethnicities.* More teachers are needed in Hawai‘i schools, but there is a particular shortage of teachers who come from the same ethnic backgrounds as the students they serve. **When teachers are the same race or ethnicity as their students, learners display higher academic**

**outcomes, specifically in math and reading, when compared to students taught by teachers from a different racial or ethnic background.**<sup>43,44,45,46</sup> Over half of all students in Hawai‘i public schools are Native Hawaiian or Filipino American, yet these groups make up only 16% of the teaching force.<sup>47</sup>



Teachers who are from the same race or ethnicity serve as role models for students.<sup>48</sup> They model for students that people “like them” can do well in school, go to college, and have many options in life.<sup>49,50</sup> The presence of these teachers counter stereotypes presented in the media and broader community about the groups they and the students represent.<sup>51</sup> Research reveals that **teachers from the same ethnicity as their students are more likely to have a better understanding of their students’ culture-based learning styles and needs** than teachers who differ ethnically from their students.<sup>52,53,54</sup> The cultural fit between students and teachers enhances students’ experiences and well-being and increases feelings of belonging. When students and teachers share ethnic or racial backgrounds, students tend to report feeling more cared for and receiving more social-emotional support and confirmation than students whose

teachers are from different backgrounds.<sup>55,56,57</sup> Students also rate their teachers more favorably when they share the same background.<sup>58</sup> A large longitudinal study of students in grades K-5 found that students with a teacher from a different race had more unexcused absences and were more likely to be chronically absent than students with same-race teachers.<sup>59</sup> Boys of color were particularly vulnerable in this regard. If they had a White teacher, these boys were more likely to be chronically absent and to be suspended. While student-teacher race matching is not a requirement for cultural understanding or student success, students should have the opportunity throughout their K-12 education to learn from a teacher who represents and understands their cultures. Federal policy recognizes that **all students can benefit from a more diverse teacher workforce.**<sup>60,61</sup>

*Financial support can increase the number of teachers of color. Students of color often do not choose teacher education because of (a) the field's low salaries; (b) their families often already struggle financially; and (c) the potential debt they will incur in a teacher preparation program.*<sup>62,63,64</sup> Compared to White peers, students of color have more college debt. The amount of debt for students of color, as well as the debt gap between White and non-White students, grows across time.<sup>65</sup> Students may also be dissuaded from teacher education because they are unable to forego the income of their part- or full-time jobs during student teaching. Targeted compensation for teacher candidates from Native Hawaiian, Filipino American, and other underrepresented backgrounds to complete rigorous teacher education programs could help these candidates become teachers.

*Partnership pathways into teaching are needed.* Creation of pathways into the teaching profession can assist local students to become teachers.<sup>66</sup> Partnerships among high schools, community colleges, universities, and schools where teachers are needed, can create bridges of support for teacher candidates from Native Hawaiian, Filipino American and other underrepresented backgrounds. Such programs encourage high school students of color to become teachers.<sup>67,68</sup> More funding is needed for programs that prepare teachers from local communities to become a new generation of diverse, community-responsive educators who understand and meet the needs of all students, including multilingual learners and those from ethnic minority backgrounds.<sup>69,70</sup>

## Misconception #4: Supporting students to complete rigorous teacher education will not improve the teacher shortage.

*Benefits of rigorous teacher education.* Motivating students to choose teaching as a career and preparing teachers to meet the needs of a diverse student population starts with effective and comprehensive teacher education. Research suggests that **rigorous, university-based preparation of teachers enhances teachers' self-efficacy and performance, thereby improving student outcomes.**<sup>71,72</sup> Rigorous teacher preparation requires many hours of supervised clinical practice in classrooms,<sup>73</sup> and candidates learn to provide culturally relevant and engaging curricula that builds on students' assets and supports students' identity development and learning.<sup>74</sup>

*Fast-track teachers are less prepared.* Teachers who complete fast-track teacher licensure programs receive less comprehensive coursework and student teaching. Fast-track models of teacher preparation

do not take into account the differences between teaching fields or the differences between states and communities. Additionally, teacher candidates from fast-track programs display lower levels of instructional knowledge and are less confident in their teaching abilities and skills than those who received rigorous preparation within a four- or five-year university-based accredited program.<sup>75,76,77</sup> A recent study in the field of special education found that fast-track completers felt less prepared to teach core academic content (e.g., science, math, social studies, history) and communicated the need for additional coursework to work with students with disabilities.<sup>78</sup> Compared to teachers who completed rigorous teacher preparation programs, the fast-track teachers were also more likely to experience daily classroom management problems.<sup>79</sup> These findings have consequences for teacher retention and student learning.

*Fast-track teachers leave schools faster.* **Teachers who complete fast-track teacher education are 2-3 times more likely to leave their schools than those who received rigorous, university-based teacher preparation.**<sup>80,81,82</sup> As teacher candidates of color often do not have the funds to enroll in a comprehensive, university-based licensure program, their enrollment in fast-track programs is increasing.<sup>83</sup> However, a large scale, nationwide study of TFA teacher outcomes showed that more than half (56%) of TFA teachers left their

initial placements in low-income schools after two years of teaching.<sup>84</sup> By their fifth year, only 15% continued to teach in the same school to which they were originally assigned. Although teachers who complete fast-track programs tend to work in rural and hard-to-staff schools, they are also less prepared to teach in classrooms where students are struggling,<sup>85</sup> perpetuating the teacher turn-over and low student achievement at those schools.

Misconception #5: Once people become teachers, they no longer need support to stay in their positions.

*Induction and mentoring to support teachers.* Once new teachers arrive at school, they need continuing professional development and support to sustain their work. **Research indicates that providing high-quality induction and mentoring is one of the most effective ways to advance teacher retention, satisfaction, and performance.**<sup>86</sup> The costs needed to support induction programs could be offset by the savings achieved through decreases in the costs of turnover.<sup>87</sup>

*Sustained and culturally-responsive support.* New teachers need sustained support and professional and cultural guidance in their first years of teaching. Connecting beginning teachers with experienced teachers who instruct the same subjects reduces teacher attrition rates by more than two-thirds.<sup>88</sup> Additionally, place-based induction and mentoring fosters beginning teachers' understanding of local communities and the needs of students in Hawai'i's schools.<sup>89</sup> Mentorship assists new teachers in learning about their schools' cultures and routines as well as students' diverse ethnic and racial backgrounds, all of which results in more student centered, culturally responsive instruction.<sup>90</sup>

Further, this knowledge enhances teachers' pedagogical practices and self-efficacy, which in

turn positively influences student achievement.<sup>91</sup> In short, place-based induction and mentoring improves teacher performance and retention, as well as student learning.<sup>92,93</sup>

*Decrease teacher turnover.* Research suggests that induction and mentoring is especially effective in schools with high teacher turnover rates and low student achievement.<sup>94</sup> It is more effective when teachers feel empowered and there are sufficient resources for comprehensive support of new teachers.<sup>95</sup> Support and mentoring works well when schools provide joint release time for new teachers and their mentors<sup>96</sup> and when school leaders provide monitoring and feedback of new teachers and have frequent discussions with them.<sup>97</sup>

Locally, individuals who were **former teachers in Hawai'i public schools reported that improved working conditions and professional development, along with higher pay, would have influenced their decision to stay in Hawai'i.**<sup>98</sup> To retain teachers, state policies should align with national criteria for induction and mentoring and require all new teachers' participation.<sup>99</sup>

## *Conclusion*

Public education is a right enshrined within the State of Hawai'i Constitution. The quality of public education, and indeed Hawaii's future, is dependent upon how well the State supports the current education system. The status quo results in academic and economic disparities, with the greatest impacts on Native Hawaiian, Filipino American, and other Pacific Islander families living in rural and low-income areas. The data presented in this research brief make a strong case for increasing teachers' compensation, recruiting and supporting more local teacher candidates, and retaining public school teachers, thereby, improving learning for all of Hawaii's students.

**HSESJ recommends the following public policies:**

- 1. Increase all teacher salaries in accordance with Hawaii's cost of living.** Additional increases should be given to teachers in hard-to-staff locations and specialties (e.g., special education, math, science, Hawaiian language immersion, and ESL).
- 2. Offer affordable housing for teachers.** Hawai'i needs to ensure that teachers do not leave the profession or the State due to high housing costs. Affordable housing options need to be more robust than housing stipends, low-interest loans, or assistance with down-payments, as these options only amplify economic disparities by allowing more people into a high-cost market rather than addressing the rising cost of homes. HSESJ recommends rent caps and control, as well as additional support for the Rental Housing Trust Fund.
- 3. Provide greater financial support to low-income and underrepresented students aspiring to become teachers by offering tuition assistance and living stipends.** A large pool of people in Hawai'i have expressed interest in teaching, including high school and community college students from Native Hawaiian and Filipino American backgrounds. HSESJ recommends providing funding for these individuals to complete rigorous teacher education programs. In addition, funding is needed to support teacher candidates from underrepresented groups during student teaching, when they are advised to not have another job.
- 4. Strengthen and develop more partnerships among high schools, community colleges, universities, and the communities in which teachers are needed.** In order to support students' pathways to become teachers, partnerships are needed that bridge rigorous, university-based teacher education programs with high schools and community colleges where students interested in the teaching profession have been identified. Programs that offer sustained financial support, academic guidance, and professional collaboration between high school, community college, university teacher preparation pathways, and communities help students stay on track to become teachers.
- 5. Support and reward induction and mentoring of all new teachers** from mentors in the same content areas. Induction activities should focus on learning about the school culture and routines and gaining an understanding of the diverse backgrounds and assets of their students. Mentoring should involve frequent monitoring, feedback, and discussion. Mentors should be adequately compensated for their time.
- 6. Provide more funding for these initiatives.** The Department of Education is chronically underfunded and does not currently have enough funds to provide the types of support suggested in this brief. More funds are needed to improve the conditions of teachers in ways that will improve teacher recruitment and retention.



## Notes

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This briefing paper was prepared by Michael Cawdery, Janet Kim, Jonathan Okamura, Colleen Rost-Banik, Lois Yamauchi, and Klavdija Zorec.

Hawai‘i Scholars for Education and Social Justice (HSESJ) is a volunteer group of researchers in Hawai‘i who conducts, reviews, and disseminates research related to education and social justice in Hawai‘i. Our goal is to use research to promote dialogue and create an informed consciousness about public education in our State. We partner with educators, educational groups, and non-profit organizations. **If you are interested in learning more or becoming involved, please email [Infohsesj@gmail.com](mailto:Infohsesj@gmail.com).**

Our educational researchers are available for comment and discussion on topics raised in this research brief.

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**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/10/2020 4:44:33 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Anna Crawford	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

My name is Anna Crawford I am a French teacher at King Kekaulike High School in The Baldwin-Kekaulike Complex on Maui Island. I have been teaching at KKHS for 17 years. I am submitting testimony to aks that SB 2488 be fully funded.

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 and to pay off debt. There are teachers at my school who have worked far less 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



**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/10/2020 4:43:56 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Nanna Lindberg	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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.

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. These measures will benefit students and educators. Therefore, I speak in support of it. We need this to retain our educational professionals and offer students a quality education.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Nanna Lindberg

Science teacher at Maui High School

Maui

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/10/2020 4:47:16 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
eric iwasaki	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

C'mon guys and gals, keiki are the future, people like myself who are teachers trying to help Hawaii and in turn, helping the world, let's approve this compensation bill for teachers because by doing so, we have a better chance of attracting teaches who are from these islands and help retain the old dogs like myself and a better chance for people to transition into teaching, pay it forward instead of paying later via new prisons on maui

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/10/2020 5:01:32 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Jaclynn Phillips	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha honorable members of the labor committee,

My name is Jaclynn Phillips and I am a teacher at Lokelani Intermediate school in Kihei, HI. I am in strong support of bill SB2488 because it will benefit the teachers who are the lowest paid teacher in the nation when you factor in cost of living. What this bill will do is benefit the teachers who have served our keiki for about 23 years and have not been given appropriate pay increases through the years. In addition if this bill is funded the rural schools will be able to fill teaching positions. Our special education students are at a severe disadvantage because they don't have a certified teacher in the room to help them. Lastly Hawaiian immersion has it difficult because of the expectations of teaching in Hawaiian and English. These positions have been filled with long term subs and therefore not a certified teacher.

We have a severe lack of teachers which is causing a huge disservice for our keiki. My current students have at least one long term sub in their core classes. We have a huge teacher shortage. We have 60,000 students who have a long term sub. We have an issue ahead of us and this bill is a step in the right direction. Please help our keiki have qualified teachers. We appreciate the support in helping end the teacher shortage.

Additionally please consider funding the additional 40 million to correcting the compression issues.

Please support the SB2488 teacher compensation bill.

Thank you for the support.  
-Jaclynn Phillips

Teacher at Lokelani Intermediate School

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/10/2020 5:01:41 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Shannon Kealoha-Kaia	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Honorable Memebers if the Labor Committee,

My name is Shannon Kealoha and I'm in strong support of SB 2488. This bill will help Hawai'i's teachers who are the lowest paid in the nation when adjusted for cost of living. This bill will help to correct the pay for those veteran teachers, like myself, who have taught Thousands of our prescious keiki for over 20 years and we're not properly compensated.

Throughout my 26 years of teaching , I have often had to take on a second job to help make ends meet. If this were corrected I could just focus on my main job of being a teacher.

I also ask that another 40 million be added to fund not only the differentials for hard to staff schools, Hawaiian Immersion and our SPED teachers, but to also include enough to fund the correction of teachers who's pay is compressed.

Mahalo Nui for your time and consideration in the bill.

Aloha,

Shannon Kealoha

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/10/2020 5:02:41 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Nicole Heinlein	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Honorable Members of the Labor Commuttee. My name is Nicole Heinlein and I teach English Learners on Maui at Iao Intermediate School. I am in strong support of SB2866 to support teachers, who are the lowest paid in our country (when adjusted for cost of living). I've been teaching in the islands for 8 years in both Maui and Lana'i. When I came to the state, I took a \$10,000 pay cut from what I had been making at my previous district in Oregon. I also did not receive compensation for the 6 years I had taught there. I am committed to living here and contributing to our community here. In order to stay and own a home, I have to work other jobs. I teach dance classes after school and I sell teaching materials that I create online. I'm sure you are aware that teachers work long hours. It's hard having to take time away from my kids and family worrying about making more money than what my full time occupation provides. Even with my personal sacrifices, many teachers are worse off than me. I find it appalling that roughly 6,700 teachers are experiencing pay compression and are not paid what they deserve. Our students who have special needs, are learning Hawaiian in an immersion setting, or who live in hard-to-staff schools deserve to be taught by highly qualified and appropriately compensated teachers, not long-term subs and emergency hired teachers. Please provide \$40,000,000 to support teachers and support our keiki.

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/10/2020 5:03:03 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Evelyn Ibonia	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Honorable Members of Labor Committee,

My name is Evelyn Ibonia and I teach at Kihei Elementary School. I am in strong support of SB2488 because it will help the thousands of teachers in Hawaii, who are the lowest paid in the nation, when adjusted for cost of living. What this bill does is adjust the pay for teachers who have been working for over 15 years get the step movement and pay they deserve. These teachers haven't been given the appropriate pay when the state is hit with economic turmoil. In addition, if this bill gets funded, it will help fill rural areas like Hana and Lahaina fill teaching positions. Our special education students are at a disadvantage when they do not have a certified teacher in the classroom. Lastly, Hawaiian Immersion teachers have it extremely hard when there are no funds for curriculum and are not able to find adequate substitutes.

This is my 16th year teaching in Hawaii. I am currently tutoring after school to help supplement my pay. I am living with my family because I can't qualify for and can't afford a home mortgage. For all these reasons, I am asking you for your support of teachers.

We look forward to working with you to end the teacher shortage crisis. Please show your support by funding the differential and compression.

Mahalo for your time,

Evelyn Ibonia

Kihei Elementary School

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/10/2020 5:05:50 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Michelle O'Byrne	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Honorable Members of the Labor Committee-

My name is Michelle O'Byrne and I teach 7th grade life science at Lao Intermediate School. I strongly support SB 2866 to support our teachers in Hawaii who are the lowest paid in the U.S.

This is my third year teaching. For my first two years teaching, I qualified for free and reduced lunch. I obtained my teaching license and I am now pursuing a master's degree in education. I still do not earn enough money to pay rent.

Many teachers are struggling more than I am.

Teachers in rural areas like Lanai and Hana may teach 5 different subjects. Because of struggling to make ends meet, there is a high turnover of teachers in these hard-to-staff areas.

We need support for our Hawaiian immersion teachers. Hawaiian immersion teachers have extra challenges because they are teaching to state standards, having to translate those into Hawaiian, then write curricula because there is very little standards-aligned curricula in Hawaiian. This is an opportunity to make a tiny step toward righting the wrongs that were committed against the Hawaiian people by the Hawaii Department of Education when the DOE prohibited Hawaiians from speaking their home language. Please support SB2488. Mahalo for your consideration.

Michelle O'Byrne

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/10/2020 5:16:29 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Monica Collias	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha LAB/LHE Committee,

My name is Monica Collias and I teach at Iao Intermediate on Maui. I am in strong support of the proposed bill SB 2488. This bill would right the wrongs that our veteran teachers have experienced for many years. Research shows that our keiki are more strive more when they are in the classroom with an experienced teacher who has been in their field for many years. There are teachers who have been teaching for 28 years who are not at the top of the pay scale because of this compression issue.

For my own experience, I remember as a keiki myself the teachers picketing because of their poor pay. This was when I was 7 and in the second grade. I am now 26 and have been teaching for 4 years myself. In high school, I experienced Furlough Fridays because teachers took a mandatory five percent paycut. I would have never imagined that after all of that the teachers still wouldn't be fairly compensated.

In addition to this component of the bill, the differentials would help with our heavy teacher shortage. Our identified students deserve qualified SPED teachers in their classrooms. Our keiki learning olelo Hawai'i deserve kumu who can actually teach them the language. And finally, our students in rural areas deserve to have enough teachers in their schools each year.

Thank you so much for taking the time to read this and for coming up with this bill.  
Monica Collias



**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/10/2020 5:24:35 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Amanda Jimenez	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Honorable Members of the Labor Committee,

My name is Amanda Jimenez and I teach at Lihikai Elementary school. I am in strong support of SB2488 because it will help teachers throughout Hawai'i that are the lowest paid teachers of the nation when adjusted for cost of living. This bill provides needed salary adjustments for teachers that have been sacrificing for our students for 23-28 years or more and haven't been given the appropriate pay increases through negotiations when there was economic turmoil. In addition, if this bill is fully funded, it will help rural schools fill teaching positions and help special education and Hawaiian immersion teaching position vacancies be filled. Additionally, I'm writing to ask for an additional \$40 million dollars to be added to fund both teacher compression AND differentials.

At my school, there are several special education positions not filled. This affects both teachers and students. My best friend Renee O'Brien was my co-teacher the past two years in our kindergarten inclusion classroom. Renee was set to teach kindergarten inclusion this year also, but due to staffing shortages, Renee is responsible for first and second grade students also. With this amount of students Renee can not adequately provide support to all the students on her caseload, much less teach doing a true inclusion model. These students are suffering because of the staffing shortages. Renee is suffering because of the workload. In addition to her primary job as a special education teacher, Renee, a single-mother works in catering and as a professional nanny to support herself and her daughters. Imagine planning for twenty-plus students in three different grade levels, having to know three different grade levels' curriculums, attending meetings for all of those students, creating and revising their Individual Education Programs (IEPs), attending meetings for other students that could potentially qualify for special education AND working two additional jobs and being a single-mother. She can't do any of these things to the best of her ability, yet everyday she comes to school and tries her best to give these students and families what they deserve. An increase in special education teacher salaries would draw more teachers to fill positions and allow these students a better education. An increase in special education teacher salaries would also give Renee more support that she deserves and help to keep her in the profession.

We look forward to working with you to end the teacher shortage crisis. This is one essential step to make that happen.

Thank you,

Amanda Jimenez

Kindergarten Teacher

Lihikai School

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 5:47:29 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
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 **STRONGLY SUPPORT** this bill. Not only do I believe that the future is through education, but I believe that we should support our teachers in all areas as much as we can and that includes funding.

Please pass this bill.

me ke aloha 'Ä• ina,

Nanea Lo

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 6:30:19 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Hope McKeen	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha mai e nā• luna kā• nā• wai o nei ‘Ä• ina o Hawai‘i,

I have submitted testimonies multitudes of times for education measures, some have good outcomes and some fall short of ever being heard. Below is an argumentative essay my 12-year-old wrote, I would like to claim I presented her with all this information but she did her research and this is her perspective on why SB2488 SD2 is imperative to supporting the future of Hawai‘i.

**Currently, our schools have to choose between “for the future” or “for the present”**

**For over a century people have been fighting with the government for more teacher pay, currently, it is heated more than ever. Some believe that teachers have an easier schedule, but some believe they do enough to get paid more. Educators deserve to make a higher yearly income. Currently, Hawaii can’t keep good teachers. In fact, Hawai‘i is ranked “ The worst state for teachers” (“Hawaii ‘Worst State’ for Teachers, and Not Just Because of Pay”). Finally, many teachers are having to work more than one job.**

**If you don’t pay teachers enough, they won’t do their job in Hawai‘i. In the first year, a teacher makes roughly \$36,000 with a bachelor’s, with a master’s an average of \$39,000, and with a Doctorate \$61,000. If we’re choosing for “the present” we will pay teachers less and pay more taxes, if we are choosing “for the future” we are going to up a teacher’s yearly income rate teacher pay. “Why should I care?” you may ask. It’s simple; everything new and modern like the O‘ahu rail and the 30-meter telescope, is expensive. Upping certain taxes and changing where the amount of the tax is going will give more money to the present and not the future. The O‘ahu rail and a 30-meter telescope are the present and education is the future. What is more important, the present, that will only benefit here and now, or the future that will help change the world for**

generations to come? Prioritizing the future could help cancer or other diseases have a cure in the future.

Dead last for the future? In 2017 WalletHub ranked Hawai'i "second-worst state for teachers", in 2018 they ranked Hawai'i "Worst state for teachers". Things are supposed to get better as time goes on. We got worse. Referring back to my first paragraph, with having terrible teacher pay they will move away. Dead last means that we are doing something wrong. It is similar to America being the number one plastic producer. Same concept, different ranking, they are both killing our chances in the future. In the future when my generation, has to clean up the mess and find new solutions to plastic pollution and, has to lead Hawai'i we want to be educated and know what we're fighting for. We need to be able to have new solutions and make connections that are taught by who?TEACHERS!!! Nobody is going to be there if people aren't educated, scientists and other careers work hard but that work is nothing if nobody can continue it.

Hustling every year just to get by. Most people work one full-time job. NOT TEACHERS!!! They have a full-time job and lesson plans to do, they also have to pick up some extra cash on top of all of that. Lois Yamauchi, parent of two public school students and president of the group Parents for Public Schools of Hawaii said, "I've been very concerned about the low salaries of teachers in Hawaii, such that so many of our teachers have to work more than one job. They are professionals and they're doing really hard work to teach our children" . Additionally, 58% of public school teachers have to work side jobs, 2,100 people were surveyed in 2016. That's over half of the people surveyed. This is a problem because not only are they working over double the time than they're getting paid, teachers barely get by including any side job(s) that they do. They've spent extra years in college and spent the extra money to get where they are today and not even getting the amount of respect they deserve for it? Any human being would find that troubling.

Yes, teachers have summers off and get out early in the day. However, according to weareteachers.com teachers on average spend 890 hours outside of the classroom planning, grading, ETC (In Honolulu, educators, parents ask for higher teacher pay) In addition, it is important to know that on average teachers are paid for about 450 hours per year. The current pay they get would be fine if they didn't actually work almost twice as many hours. Other jobs would be upset if they were asked to work more than double the time than they usually do without getting paid. Teachers are worth it! If you work a full-time job and can't make a living you find a new profession, we are ranked the least friendly state for teachers cause they can't afford to live here, and why should a person who is making the future happen to have to work more than one job while working a full-time job? There is

no “meeting in the middle” with this, we must invest now for our future. “ ‘u’uku ka hana ‘u’uku ka loa’a”, Little work, little gain. The less we work at solving these problems, then the less of a future we will have. The facts have been stated. What side do you stand on?

**McKenzie Kilinahemilika‘alehua Ehrhorn**

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 6:38:21 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Aaron Kubo	Individual	Support	No

**Comments:**

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and members of the Committees:

My name is Aaron Kubo I am an eighth-grade social studies teacher at Hilo Intermediate School in the Hilo-Waiakea Complex area 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 plus fringe costs, to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest to fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

Teachers are besieged every day by many systems (e.g. burdensome evaluation system, mandated curriculum, SBA/WIDA/NWEA/NGSS-HSA, data collection/implementation, RTI, meetings and many other mandated things teachers are required to do on a daily basis that exists in the DOE/complex/school) and, in turn, receive the lowest pay in the nation. We have had the current pay scale since the '90s and a class VII from at least 1975. It is time that the legislature compensates teachers and pays them a fair wage adjusting for inflation especially considering Hawaii's high cost of living. If things do not change I may be forced to move to continental United States where I can be adequately compensated for being a teacher. Not only should teachers be adequately compensated but schools themselves also need to be fully funded. Many teachers pay for school supplies out of their own pockets. I have spent over \$1000 in this school year alone. My school is 80% free and reduced, the students cannot always afford the basic supplies. Do we ask police officers to purchase their own guns and bullets? Ask firefighters to purchase their own axes? Does the paramedic ask the rider if they brought their own saline solution? The answer is a resounding no, so why is it okay for teachers in Hawaii to buy their own supplies? For society to flourish the needs of the whole child must be addressed,

in a school that is designed for this century and where everyone is adequately funded to end the teacher shortage crisis.

We need your help. Mahalo,

Aaron Kubo, Hilo-Waiakea Complex, Hawai`i Island



**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 7:36:20 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Anthony McCurdy	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee:

I am a teacher at James Campbell High School and I am writing in strong support of SB2488 to continue teacher pay differentials.

This is the first step to helping end our teacher shortage crisis. It is not sufficient on its own, but these differentials have made a difference to teachers I have spoken with regarding their pay and if they are going to remain teachers in our state.

I recently spoke with one teacher who told me that he was honestly considering leaving the profession entirely because he was overworked, overwhelmed and unappreciated as a special education teacher. This teacher told me that the pay differential allowed him to spend more time with his family and improved his quality of life as well as recognizing his hard work as a special educator.

Please pass this bill. You will make a difference for our teachers and, by doing so, improve our schools for our keiki. Our students deserve this, too.

Thank you in advance for your support.

Anthony McCurdy

James Campbell High School

Leeward District

Ewa Beach, Oahu

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 7:41:36 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Ryan Mandado	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chairman Johanson, Chairman Woodson, and members of the LAB/LHE Committee,

My name is Ryan Mandado and I'm the Chief Academic Officer of DreamHouse 'Ewa Beach Public Charter School, a new school focused on leadership and identity development. I'm in full support of this measure.

Our keiki deserve high-quality teachers. In order to keep talented teachers here in Hawai'i, it's important they are paid at a competitive rate but also enough to survive in our state. From experience, I know it's hard to live on a teacher's salary and still complete my duties as a teacher, especially a Special Education teacher. As someone who has led the largest Special Education department in the state who serviced 300 students with special needs, I know firsthand how much work and dedication my teachers completed to ensure all of our students had access to a high-quality education. I met with many talented teachers at the end of the school year telling me their plans to move away from education because the pay was just not enough. Many enter consulting agencies, worked in business, and other industries in Hawai'i that paid them a lot for the work they contributed.

This past school year, 600 Special Education classrooms across this state did not have a qualified Special Education teacher. This should be a state of emergency to ensure our most vulnerable students have access to an excellent education.

Overall, I believe this bill will do a lot to ensure we recruit and retain an excellent teaching force for the future of our keiki. Once again, I fully support this bill and I encourage the committees to continue investment in the future of Hawai'i.

With gratitude,

Ryan Mandado

ryanmandado@gmail.com

808-931-0442



**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 7:44:26 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Mike Golojuch, Sr.	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support SB2488. We need every effort to retain excellent teachers. Please pass SB2488. Thank you.

Mike Golojuch, Sr.

Secretary/Board Member, Rainbow Family 808

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 8:09:49 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
David Tanabe	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee:**

**I am a teacher at James Campbell High School and I am writing in strong support of SB2488 to continue teacher pay differentials.**

**This is the first step of many other steps to helping end our teacher shortage crisis. This measure is not sufficient on its own, but these differentials have made a difference to teachers I have spoken with regarding their pay and if they are going to remain teachers in Hawaii.**

**Anecdotal evidence for you and me are likely similar. Teachers tell me that they are honestly considering leaving the profession entirely because they feel overworked, overwhelmed and unappreciated. One Special Education Teacher told me that the pay differential allowed him to spend more time with his family and improved his quality of life as well as recognizing his hard work as a special educator.**

**Please pass this bill.**

**You will make a difference for our teachers. Improve the setting in which students are learning. Improve the culture of the State of Hawaii and its future adult population. improve our schools for our haumana. Please show that you value public education.**

**Thank you in advance for your support.**

**David Tanabe**

**James Campbell High School**

**Leeward District**

**Ewa Beach, Oahu**



**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 8:39:29 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
cheryl B.	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I SUPPORT.

THERE will always be a "crisis" " a reason" to deny funding for anything education and teacher related. As a retired educator , 40 years in elementary education, my salary in Hawai`i never reached over \$50,000. YOU KNOW all the reasons why educators should have improved compensation. LET me add another one. A legislator mentioned that the focus needs to be on COVID. Well, who do you think deals with that focus every single day. NOT just COVID, but every other illness one can name, including childhood cancers. WHO works with children who come to school ill because their families can't afford to stay home? WHO goes to school even when they shouldn't because they have no more sick days because they used them for their own children or maybe it's because there is a huge event that they can't disappoint their students by not attending. WHO feeds children for breakfast and sends food home on weekends? WHO stays after school to assist students and families that do not have resources at home? WHO goes to meetings and seminars on the weekend to learn more about how to protect their students? WHO will be preparing resources, online work IF the decision is made for children to stay home?

I believe you get the picture, HOW can you use the excuse of COVID to deny well-deserved compensation for teachers? IF that is not the excuse, then what reason could you possibly come up with to decimate a good bill designed to end a few of the compensation disparities?

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 8:57:15 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Chu Hyung Hong	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and members of the Committees:

My name is Chu Hong. I am a math teacher at Kaimuki High 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 to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more plus fringe costs, to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest to fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I've been working for the DOE over 14 years and am fully certified to teach both math and English. I have also served as a teacher leader, and have spent thousands of my own hard-earned dollars to take professional development credits to increase my salary and learn best practices. As a result, I am able to employ numerous teaching strategies to ensure success for all students. However, the salary increase is not commensurate with my skill set. I find myself looking at other opportunities that will better compensate me, and have even considered moving to the mainland where I could be paid more and have a lower cost of living.

We need your help. Mahalo.

[Chu Hong, Honolulu, Oahu]



**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 9:38:37 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Aaron Yasuhara	Department of Education	Support	No

Comments:

March 11, 2020 Wednesday

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

I (**Aaron Yasuhara**) work at James Campbell High School and my wife (**Jaycie Yasuhara**) works at Barbers Point Elementary School. I am writing this email in strong support on **Bill SB2488** to continue teacher pay differentials.

This profession has been very challenging for both me and my wife. To make a better learning environment both me and my wife have spent a lot of money out of our own pocket to make learning valuable to our students.

We have also spent countless hours before and after school prepping, planning, contacting parents, collaborating with other teachers, etc. Both me and my wife have contemplated changing professions for jobs that pay better, for jobs that have better hours, for jobs that have better medical and finally we consider leaving for a profession where we are appreciated for what we do.

We both strongly support **Bill SB2488** because it is hard to make it as a teacher. It makes it even harder when your wife is a teacher as well. The time and effort we put into making a difference in our students lives leaves us without time to get another job. Also because we are so strapped for cash we have contemplated on not having a baby because we fear we do not make enough to properly take care of a baby.

Please vote yes on **Bill SB2488** because it would truly help make a difference for both me and my wife. We want to stay in this profession but if we are not supported, then it will make it hard to stay.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. Please consider voting yes on **Bill SB2488** because it will make a difference in many teachers' lives around the state. Hope you have a great day.

Sincerely,

**Aaron Yasuhara**

Social Studies teacher

James Campbell High School

91-980 North Rd.

Ewa Beach, HI 96706

Phone number: 305-3702

Email address: [aaron.yasuhara@campbell.k12.hi.us](mailto:aaron.yasuhara@campbell.k12.hi.us)

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 9:52:44 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Paul Tokuno	Department Of Education	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chair Johanson and Chair Woodson,

My name is **Paul Tokuno**. I am a **9th Grade teacher** at **Kaimuki High 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 feel that it is really important to retain teachers who are in my position who have shown the ability to not only last but thrive in the DOE. It is increasing difficult to be positive living in Hawaii while raising 2 young children. Although my wife (Math teacher) and I enjoy sharing the breaks with our children, money is always an issue. We often discuss one of us leaving the DOE to pursue a more lucrative career in the private sector. Both of my children go to public school and although I am pleased with their teachers thus far, I am worried that one day they will have an emergency hire or long-term sub because of a lack of qualified teachers. We both come from a family of educators and it's sad to say that we do not encourage our children to follow in our footsteps because of the lack of pay.**

**I currently work at Kaimuki High, where we have a number of emergency hires including core classes. I don't think people really understand the crisis we are in right now with teacher quality and retention. I hope you consider what I have shared with you and invest in our Keiki's future!**

We need your help. Mahalo!

**Paul Tokuno**

**98-849 Olena Street**

**Aiea, Hi 96701**

**Honolulu District, Oahu**

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 9:52:56 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Osa Tui, Jr.	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Johanson and members of the House Committee on Labor and Public Employment and Chair Woodson and members of the House Committees on Lower and Higher Education,

It is an honor to be able to submit testimony today in **STRONG SUPPORT** to **FULLY FUND** SB2488 SD2. 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 are actively pursuing positions during the current Teacher Assignment and Transfer Period windows.

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-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 9:57:56 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Micah Benavitz	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Good morning,

My name is Micah Benavitz, my residence is in Wahiawa, and I have been teaching secondary education for nine years, and currently teaching at Mililani High School. I ask that you support this bill and to increase its funding to fix the salary compression so that teachers pay will reflect their years of service. There are teachers with more years of experience than me, however, their salary is the same as mine because the teacher step movements were frozen in prior years. Teachers should be paid based on their years of experience.

As a teacher living in Hawaii it is difficult for me to provide for my family especially if this bill does not receive more funding. One of the main reasons why there is a teacher shortage is because of the lack of pay. It is forcing individuals to either change professions or move to the mainland for higher paying teaching positions. Our students deserve the best education we can provide, and paying teachers based on their years of experience will help students and teachers.

Sincerely,

Micah Anjin Benavitz

## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Dean Watanabe <dean.watanabe@k12.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 8:56 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and the Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13th, at 2:00 p.m.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and members of the Committees:

Aloha, my name is Dean Watanabe,

I am a teacher at Kaimuki High School in the Honolulu District on the island of Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, proposed SD1.

I have been a Teacher and Coach in the public school system for over 20 years now, hoping to do another 8-10 years. I am asking for your support, for everyone's support of SB 2488. A colleague once told me "I thought that the longer you work at a job the easier it's supposed to get." Well it seems that this is not the way a career in Hawaii's education is progressing. We are asked to do more with less, whether it's providing supplies, higher test scores, social emotional learning as well as many other areas of need for our Keiki.

For many years I had to live paycheck to paycheck. I would probably still be living like this if it were not for my retirement from coaching and doing side jobs "my side hustle". I am not alone, many of my colleagues that I talk to also have side hustles. It is necessary to prevent the stress of living paycheck to paycheck in Hawaii. However, many of our teachers, including veteran teachers do not have the time or opportunity for a "side hustle" and still live paycheck to paycheck.

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. We need to keep our finest in place where they are or even entice them to stay in our profession. We have lost and will continue to lose our best teachers to early retirement or career changes. If changes are not made this will continue to happen and my colleagues will continue to live paycheck to paycheck because not everyone has a "side hustle."

Mahalo for listening, Dean

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**From:** Lynette Low <lynette.low@k12.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 10, 2020 8:35 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and the Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13th, at 2:00 p.m.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and members of the Committees:

My name is Lynette Low. I am a science teacher for 20 years at Kaimuki 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 to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more plus fringe costs, to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest to fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I've taught for 20 years in Hawaii. As a 4th generation Kamaaina, I need a wage that will pay the bills. I have another job to make ends meet and use coupons to buy groceries. Fixing the compression scale would be a start, as I am thinking of retiring in 4 years when I have 25 years (just to get the medical). If the salary was comparable with the states in the continental USA, I would stay until 30 years or 62 years. It doesn't make sense to work under harsh conditions (no air conditioning, no desk chair for teachers and no printer in the classroom). Fix the pay and make it equitable for all teachers now.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Lynette Low, Honolulu District at Kaimuki High School

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Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and members of the Committees:

My name is Jaclyn Tokuno. I am a 7<sup>th</sup> Grade teacher at Kalakaua Middle 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 don't think people really understand the crisis we are in right now with teacher quality and retention. I currently teach 7<sup>th</sup> grade math at Kalakaua Middle school. Each year we struggle to fill positions and lose teachers to the mainland who just can't afford to make it in Hawaii. It is increasing difficult to be positive living in Hawaii while raising 2 young children. Although my Husband (Health teacher) and I enjoy sharing the breaks with our children, money is always an issue. We often discuss one of us leaving the DOE to pursue a more lucrative career in the private sector. We both come from a family of educators and it's sad to say that we do not encourage our children to follow in our footsteps because of the lack of pay. I feel that it is really important to retain teachers who are in my position who have shown the ability to not only last but thrive in the DOE. I hope you consider what I have shared with you and invest in our Keiki's future!

We need your help. Mahalo.

Jaclyn Tokuno

98-849 Olena Street

Honolulu District, Oahu

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT and  
THE COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD1, RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2:00 p.m.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and members of the Committees:

My name is Sarah Miranda. I am a Teacher at Mililani High 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 plus fringe costs, to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest to fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been a teacher for 4 years now. I am passionate about teaching math in high school! But I regularly struggle with continuing as a teacher because my family can barely make ends meet. Is it fair for my children to struggle so that I can do what I love? Is it fair for the keiki in our state to lose wonderful teachers each year as they leave the education system for higher paying jobs? In my first 2 years as a teacher, our school lost 5 amazing teachers because they could not afford to continue teaching and support their families. On the flip side of this equation, I challenge you to consider how many people in our state could be spectacular teachers who would inspire our keiki to learn more and be better, but can't become teachers because the low salary does not provide a living wage. How is it acceptable for a brand new teacher in Hawaii to make a salary that requires them to live under the poverty line?

In the Star Advertiser issue from May 28, 2019,

“Are you single, and earning less than \$67,500 a year? Based on the latest income limits set by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, you qualify as a “low-income” individual in the urban Honolulu area. The income limits are used to determine eligibility for assisted housing programs, including Section 8 vouchers, and setting fair market rents.”

With the current salary guidelines allowed by the state, it could take a single teacher between 5 and 10 years to reach a salary that brings them out of the low income bracket. A single parent with 3 children could “max out” and still be living under the low income guidelines. Is this really the value that we place on our teachers? The education of our keiki? The future of our state?

Please, chairpersons, I ask that you increase the funding for our teachers to add \$45 Million plus fringe costs so that we can begin to fully pay our veteran teachers and hire and maintain new teachers. Our keiki deserve it, our schools deserve it, our state deserves it, we deserve it. We need your help. Mahalo.

Sarah Miranda, Central District, Oahu

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 11:30:05 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
kapena wong	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

My name is Kapena Wong, I am a **Special Education Teacher** at **Kaimuki HS in the Honolulu 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 state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more plus fringe costs, to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest to fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

These compensations will help teachers in the long run. There have been many comments that have been going around for years about teachers don't make enough money, and they are stressed out all the time. I have been teaching for 5 years and been in the education field for nearly 15 years. Teaching is not easy. There isn't enough time for planning lessons, meetings, or collaboration with other teachers. If this bill is passed it will finally make teachers happy and they will receive the monetary value they deserve.

We need your help. Mahalo!

Kapena Wong

Honolulu District

Oahu, Hawaii



**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 11:38:00 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Fasil Bizuneh	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

My name is Fasil Bizuneh. I am a teacher at Kohala Middle School in the West Hawaii School District on Hawaii 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 two young children, and my wife and I are considering buying a home here in Hawaii. Every little bit helps. And this differential is a great bonus to our family's income that puts us closer to our goal of home ownership here in Hawaii.

It also serves as additional incentive for me remain as a teacher in the Hawaii public school system.

We need your help. Mahalo.

***Fasil Bizuneh***

***Math Department***

**[Kohala Middle School](#)**

**808 772-9574**

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 11:48:54 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Brian Citro	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee:**

**I am a teacher at James Campbell High School and I am writing in strong support of SB2488 to continue teacher pay differentials.**

**While, it is not sufficient on its own, these differentials have made a HUGE difference to myself, as well as teachers I have spoken with. I recently started receiving the differential in January, and it has completely changed my entire life as well as my families. Before this differential, we were barely surviving on the income of 2 teachers (myself and my wife). I even began looking for teaching jobs on the mainland, because it was evident that I would not be able to support a family of four for much longer on my current salary. This differential has allowed me and my family to continue living on Oahu. Without it, I am afraid that we will have to leave.**

**Please pass this bill. You will make a difference for our teachers and, by doing so, improve our schools for our keiki. Our students deserve this, too.**

**Thank you in advance for your support.**

**Brian Citro**

**James Campbell High School**

**Leeward District**

**Ewa Beach, Oahu**

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 11:49:27 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Jocelyn Pajimula	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

My name is Jocelyn Pajimula. I am a 6th/7th grade teacher at Ewa Makai Middle School in Leeward District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I would like to one day start a family and my salary is just not enough to realistically make this dream come true. I have also invested in my own future by obtaining my Master of Education in Teaching degree from UH Manoa and I honestly feel that my past investment has not paid off based on my current salary. Please improve salary conditions for all teachers in the state of Hawaii.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Jocelyn, Leeward District, Oahu



**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 11:54:05 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
catherine Caine	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

To Whom it May Concern:

My name is Catherine Caine 2015 Hawaii State Teacher of the Year. 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 SD2.

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. This would show that our state is ready to make the commitment to attract and retain the best and the brightest people to the teaching profession here in 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, what I want you to reflect on 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 supporting 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

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 11:55:37 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Kevin	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION**

**RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION**

**FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020**

**2 P.M.**

**Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:**

**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, SD2.**

**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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. 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**

March 10, 2020

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Reinaldo Corpuz. I am a special education teacher at Kalakaua Middle School in the Honolulu district. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been a special education teacher for 27 years. I experienced a strike in 2001 during Governor Cayetano's administration, furloughs during Governor Lingle administration, and no pay raises during Governor Abercrombie administration. As I approach complete my three decades of teaching, I face the reality that I will be teaching at least another decade because the past teaching salary schedules over the years did not allow me to sufficiently plan for an adequately funded retirement. The past salary schedules did not also prepare me to sufficiently set aside enough money to fund my two daughters' college education. While we are on the right path in Governor Ige's administration in providing teachers adequate pay to live in Hawaii, the present teacher salary schedule for veteran teachers such as myself is still insufficient to meet my family's cost of living needs, retirement needs, and educational needs.

I urge you to please help us support SB 2488, SD2 in fixing the salary compression issue and/or teacher pay differentials. I promise you that I will remain in the teacher profession as a special education teacher and do my best to help our teacher shortage in Hawaii.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Sincerely,

Reinaldo Corpuz, Kalakaua Middle School, Honolulu District, Oahu

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 12:04:01 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Brian Nakamoto	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

To Honorable Representative Aaron Ling Johanson and the Committee on Labor and Public Employment,

My name is Brian Nakamoto and I am currently a teacher at Hawai'i School for the Deaf and the Blind, teaching mathematics for high school students. I am in support of this bill, SB 2488, "Relating to Teacher Compensation."

I support this bill because it is beneficial to my colleagues that have been working here at Hawai'i School for the Deaf and the Blind (HSDB) for many years. Even there is one teacher that used to be my teacher when I was in intermediate and he still teaches at HSDB. I am proud to say that I am finally at the same level as my former teacher, as I used to be his student, but now we are colleagues. However, I have reached to a realization that he is not at the top of the salary schedule set for teachers. That made me feel disappointed because that colleague of mine deserves so much more. Even more, he and I work in a school that is considered as the special education school, as the entire of our student body is Deaf, and it is also the hard-to-staff school. If we do not address the teacher salary compression, then I know that my colleague will have a bitter retirement, as he might ask himself, "Am I worth that much, after all the years of being compressed in the teacher salary schedule?" I do not want him to feel that way and I am sure that there are many of us that do not want our veteran teachers to feel that way, especially when they are approaching their retirement.

I am in support of this bill for another reason as well. This bill will ensure many teachers to remain in the educational careers, especially those who are in special education and those who are assigned to the hard-to-staff schools. HSDB is not only a special-education, but it is also a hard-to-staff school because of the high turnout of teachers. Nearly every year, HSDB loses at least a teacher and it is always tough to hire another teacher because our school's primary communication is American Sign Language and this school requires the teachers to be certificated in the Deaf education field. Those requirements make our school a really unique one in the entire state of Hawai'i, as we are the only school that serves primarily for our Deaf keiki with their needs of American Sign Language to have access to the general education curriculum.

Please take this into consideration and ensure that all of us the teachers who are in the salary compression, in special education, and/or in hard-to-staff schools, deserve the

salary for our work on creating the future of our keiki, both Deaf and hearing and anything else in the between, because we are creating these keiki of tomorrow that will run our world.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Aloha,  
Brian Nakamoto  
HS Mathematics Teacher & Chair of the HS Department  
Hawai'i School for the Deaf and the Blind  
HSDB Alumnus

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC  
EMPLOYMENT AND COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Alexander Kendrick. I am a teacher at Kalani High in Honolulu District on O'ahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I will finish my twenty-fifth year of teaching next year. I plan to retire and work at a private school so I can meet my financial needs. I already work two jobs to afford to teach our keiki. When I started teaching, I was made salary promises that never saw fruition. Between the step freezes and Furlough Fridays, I lost years of my earned teacher salary. Without the support of this bill, I must say an anguished aloha to a job I love.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Alexander Kendrick, Honolulu District, O'ahu



**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 12:10:17 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Greg Poppy	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I have worked at Lahaina Intermediate School for the past three years. In that time, we have lost several teachers for a variety of reasons, including the high cost of living, the long commute from other parts of the island, or teachers finding opportunities that fit better with their skills.

This bill alleviates some of those burdens carried by teachers who have to spend extra time and money commuting from other parts of the island and somewhat addresses the high cost of living in Hawaii. Also, the special education stipend could help protect one of the most vulnerable of our student populations by attracting and retaining highly qualified teachers for those IDEA positions.

Please pass this bill and give teacher's support that they need.

Sincerely,

Greg

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 12:15:55 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Ted Edwards	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

My name is Ted Edwards. I am a special education teacher at Jarrett Middle School in the KMR district on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been a special education teacher for 12 years now and love what I do, but if it was not for the recent shortage differential that I received, I was actually looking into moving out of the classroom into other positions. This additional funding is keeping me in the classroom to service this very important population. My job as a special education is not easy, and I do feel that finally I am being compensated fairly for the amount of work I do. I believe this funding will attract and retain special educators in our state.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Ted Edwards, KMR district, Oahu

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 12:17:48 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
James Younger	West Hawaii Explorations Academy	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I served my country for three years in the Peace Corps, and then served domestically for three more years with Americorps. I am licensed as an EMT, a lifeguard, and a science teacher, and I have been teaching in Hawaii for five years. I have an M.S.Ed. from the Johns Hopkins School of Education and I am fluent in Spanish. I cannot afford to live in Hawaii because I have chosen to be a school teacher. The decision to be a school teacher should not mean that I am not able to afford my own home in Hawaii.

Shame on Hawaii's real estate markets, and shame on Hawaii's Board of Education.

Hawaii needs to decide to fairly compensate its' teachers. Hawaii needs to invest in the people who work with the Keiki. Hawaii needs to make positive decisions for Hawaii's future. Good luck!

Mahalo

James Younger

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT  
AND COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and Committee Members:

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

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 12:21:30 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Amber O'Reilly	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC  
EMPLOYMENT AND COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Amber O'Reilly. I am a teacher at Kahuku High and Intermediate School on Windward District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been teaching high school science for 13 years. In my first 10 years of teaching we received no step raises. I took many professional development course and obtained my master's degree to move up to class 7, but that was the only way I could get a raise. It has been wonderful in the past 3 years to receive the step raises in the current contract, however I am at the same step as teachers who were hired just 3 years ago. Fixing this discrepancy will show experienced teachers like myself that we are valued educators and will encourage us to remain as teachers in the public school system.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Amber O'Reilly, Windward District, Oahu

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 12:23:48 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Jonathan Kissida	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Mahalo for your service on the the House Committee on Labor & Public Employment and for the state of Hawaii. Please support keeping teacher quality in the classroom by making the necessary discretionary salary adjustments for 6,000 plus experienced senior teachers by recognizing their many years of professional service to the Department of Education with compensation. Please support providing additional teacher pay to support Emergency Hire Areas such as special education, hard-to-staff geographic locations, and Hawaiian language immersion programs so that all of Hawaii's keiki are provided with an effective and licensed teacher. Your support will make the difference in the future of Hawaii for all.



## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Janet Hunter <srfpig@aol.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 11:43 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Special education

I have been a teacher in Hawaii for approx 10 years. I am currently teaching an inclusion class. My experience along with most inclusion general education teachers is that we are all preparing the lessons, the classroom and teaching the whole class including the special education kids. It's a lot of work. Inclusion teachers should get extra pay since we are doing most of the teaching. The SPED teacher is writing the IEP. But it is the general education teaching who is doing most of the work for 20 plus kids. Please include the inclusion teachers in this pay raise. Most general education teachers don't want inclusion classes because it is more work.

Mahalo  
Janet Hunter  
iPhone sent on behalf of J.H.

**From:** Martinez, Arnold <arnold.martinez@kalakauamiddle.org>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 11:45 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

My name is Arnold Martinez. I am a National Board Certified teacher at Kalakaua Middle School in the Central District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488.

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 2003 I moved here from the state of California. I had served as a licenced teacher in CA for seven years prior to moving here to Honolulu. At that time I took a significant pay reduction as a teacher to come to this great state and help impact the lives of amazing children here in Hawaii. I, like many other teachers (from here or transplanted here) have struggled financially for many years. I now have 17 years of service teaching the children of Hawaii in the DOE. I have not recovered from the pay reductions during the state's economic downturn of 2009 and currently I still pay student loans. My wife and I have two children, one a freshman in high school and the other freshmen in College in the mainland at the University of Washington. I currently work two additional part time jobs and live paycheck to paycheck. I work all hours of the day and weekends to prepare lessons and grade assessments. My wife also has a full time career and two additional part time jobs just so we can make ends meet.

As a teacher who encourages secondary education to my students as the means towards a financially stable life I am well aware that this is not always the case. I earned my Bachelor's degree from the University of California at Berkeley, I then continued on to graduate school earning my Masters degree and a teaching license in secondary education. I also continued to seek professional development earning my National Board Certification. I believe in

education and have worked at my own training in order to be a highly qualified teacher and provide my students with the best I can give. That said, my training was very costly and working here in Hawaii as a teacher has put me in a financial disadvantage. The teacher pay scale here is not sufficient, I am still paying my own student loans that I needed to gain and enhance my teacher training at the same time I am now paying for out of state tuition and student loans for my own child in College. Unfortunately, because of this, my wife and I are now exploring relocation to the mainland for improved employment opportunities. Because of the compression issue of the current teacher pay scale my pay has not moved comparable to the cost of living and inflation here in Hawaii. If the current bill is passed and the compression issue is addressed, it would significantly help me and so many fellow teachers. It would give us some breathing room and may alleviate some of the financial pressures we all face.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Arnold Martinez, Central District, Oahu

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## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** aurene padilla <aurenecp@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 11:48 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Cc:** aurenecp@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education

Chair Johanson and Chair Woodson,

My name is Aurene Padilla and I am a twenty-year veteran of the Hawaii Department of Education. I currently serve as the Induction and Mentoring Program coordinator for Central Disitric, Leilehia, Mililani, Waialua complexes. In addition, I am the mother of a 6th grader currently attending Mililani Middle School. **I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2922 SD1 to increase funding for public schools.**

I am a proud public school teacher and parent. I strongly believe that public education is the key to a prosperous democracy. Through public education our keiki are able to fulfill their dreams and ensure that we are all able to live Aloha in our beautiful state.

Supporting this proposal will lift Hawai'i's schools into the 21st Century. A vote for this measure is a vote for lower class sizes that allow teachers to connect with their students, whole child education that includes the arts and Hawaiian studies, providing resources and services for students with special needs, and providing professional pay that reflects the value of our hardworking teachers.

We desperately need additional funding for our public schools to ensure that our keiki receive the best education. The lack of funding has meant many things to my family. As a single mother of two children, low pay means that I have had to take on additional jobs to support my family. I have taught summer school every year to supplement my income and have held part-time jobs as well. Having to work two jobs takes me away from raising my family as well as from committing my energy to my primary position with the Department of Education. Unfortunately I am not alone in this predicament. Many of the beginning teachers that I Mentor tutor after school, teach summer school, and work afternoons and on weekends to supplement their low pay. This leaves our teaching force tired, stressed, and distracted and many choose to leave the profession because of this.

However, teacher salary is not the only area that could use more funding. Our classrooms need make-overs, more educational resources, and air conditioning. Many important programs are not funded, teachers who take on additional responsibilities like mentoring should be adequately compensated. Teachers are very resilient and creative people. I know many that have taken this lack of funding issue to cause, applying for grants and other sources of monies to give their students the best education possible.

To deliver the schools our keiki deserve, please support this bill.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Aurene Padilla, Central District, Oahu

**From:** Scott & Wendy Wilhelm <sandw96@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 11:50 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND  
COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Wendy Wilhelm. I am a Technology Coordinator, Testing Coordinator & STEM Teacher at Makawao Elementary on Maui. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been a teacher for 25 years. I started in the classroom, but moved to a resource position in order to support my colleagues. I also service all 550 students with STEM classes.

I currently have 3 jobs; I work as a teacher full-time, work in the A+ program everyday after school, and I am a server at a catering company on most weekends and some weeknights to help make ends meet. The cost of living has outpaced my salary and hope that you support the necessary salary adjustments that senior teachers such as myself deserve.

We need your help. Mahalo

Wendy Wilhelm, Maui



**From:** Kayleen Pieper <kayleenelen@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 11:52 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND  
COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Kayleen Pieper. I am a kindergarten teacher at Kamali'i Elementary School in Maui District on the island of Maui. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

Salary compression is a serious issue that needs to be addressed in order to retain our veteran teachers. There are teachers I am working with that are on the same or similar salary step as teachers that have been working 10-15 years fewer. This sort of compression does not honor the years of service that these teachers have worked. The longer a teacher has worked, the better they are at educating our keiki! Yet year after year, we lose teachers due to low salaries and cost of living difficulties.

Invest in our educators. They are already investing their lives into our children.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Kayleen Pieper, Maui District, Island of Maui

**From:** DW Ab <dabuel247@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 11:56 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND  
COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Dwayne Abuel. I am a **Teacher/IT** at **Highlands Intermediate School** in **Leeward** on **Oahu**. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

**I have been teacher with the DOE for 23+ years and 18 years ago accepted to do the IT job (Technology Coordinator) for my school. I have not had a vacation other than forced school closure holidays for 18 years. I have only gotten very little compensation for my time and if you put the time together, you would see I got compensated for only less than a quarter of that time. I have also done this with very low pay where people in the IT field doing that same get way more. Yet, DOE says I am over paid for that position. Just teaching and doing IT alone is more than a plate full. Trying to get myself to move someday can be trying as I am getting older and the amount of work that piles gets bigger. If I only look at the teaching aspect, it is already a handful plus. It is so discouraging to know we have to put in so many hours and not even get paid decently**

where I can afford my own home or even the stay in a rental. Rental prices are just so high. Most rentals that are decent would take more than one pay check a month and then leave me very little to live on and very little to save. I don't drink, no smoking, and I have medical bills. I don't even go out anymore because I know I have to save more for retirement. As is, my retirement is less than \$70,000 through all those years. I had a rude awakening when I had to find my father in law a care home. I don't have enough to cover any of those expenses. Not even close. \$4000 is decent. Anything lower is really terrible care homes that smell and sanitation is bad. \$9000 you are in luxury. By the time I retire I am unsure what that's gonna be like being I have some health conditions that working without vacations cause. Getting ready all the technology for teachers and students and staff to use during the school year and then coordinating and doing repairs during the vacation times is a must to get things out on time. I am one of many Technology Coordinators and a Teacher who are in this tough situation. Help please.

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 ----->|

## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** James Hong <james.hong@k12.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 11:57 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and the Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13th, at 2:00 p.m

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and members of the Committees:

My name is James Hong and I'm a social studies teacher at Kaimuki High School. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Many people hear about the challenges teachers face in the islands. Many people hear about the low pay teachers make here relative to the cost of living, and in comparison to teaching positions elsewhere. Many people hear about this and that about teaching. But, many people do not actually know the difficulty and challenges teachers face. Many of these difficulties and challenges are not commensurate with the pay we receive. On top of the content we are expected to teach, we are also expected to go above and beyond what we should be doing. Teaching social-emotional skills that children should be learning at home? No, this is a responsibility on teachers. Teaching students proper hygiene to help prevent the spread of the flu, which should be taught at home? This is a responsibility I take as a teacher. Teaching students good manner, which should be taught at home? This is a responsibility I take as a teacher. Considering many of the "and other duties as assigned (or unassigned)" we have and the responsibilities we have with the children, we should be given more pay. I'm not even a SPED teacher or Hawaiian language immersion teacher, but I can only imagine how much more difficult those positions can be. Just like how the general population can only imagine how difficult my own job can be.

Thank you so much for your consideration and support for this bill.

Sincerely,

--

**James Hong, MAEd, MPA**  
Social Studies  
Hospitality Academy  
Kaimuki High School  
(808) 733-4900 ext. 336

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**From:** Lisa Donovan <lisa.donovan@k12.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 12:04 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and the Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13th, at 2:00 p.m.

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT and THE COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD1, RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2:00 p.m.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and members of the Committees:

My name is Lisa Donovan. 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 plus fringe costs, to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest to fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

The special education differential has already helped me tremendously, and I want to show my appreciation for that. I was considering moving back to the mainland at the end of this school year, but when I heard about the differential, I decided to stay. Living in Honolulu on a teacher's salary requires you to live very simply. For example, I have not been able to afford a car for the past 4 years working as a teacher in Honolulu. However, after the differential, I was finally able to purchase a car. Teachers are professionals, well-educated, and we're trusted with educating our future adults. Teaching is an extremely important job, yet we are paid as though we are not important, not well educated, and not professionals. We should want to attract the best and brightest into teaching, and we do that by paying teachers what they are worth. Also, teachers work very hard, especially special education teachers, and often spend time before and after work hours completing lesson planning, IEP paperwork/progress reports, calling parents, planning/scheduling/running IEP and re-evaluation meetings, and after school tutoring, in addition to correcting papers and inputting grades that regular ed teachers do. Teachers deserve to be paid what they are worth, and students will benefit from it.

In conclusion, it is essential that teachers be paid a livable wage. I was barely able to buy a car, and buying a house isn't even something I could ever consider in Hawaii. However, teachers can afford to buy homes on the mainland with their salaries, so it is important that teachers in Hawaii are paid competitive wages. When teachers leave Hawaii, it hurts students.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Lisa Donovan, Honolulu District, Oahu

--

Lisa Donovan  
Inclusion Teacher  
Kaimuki High School  
Room A101

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eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Dr. Phaedra Robinson <drphaedra@me.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 12:05 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Support SB2488

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND  
COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

[FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020](#)

[2 P.M.](#)

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

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, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

**It is vital to our state that this bill passes in support of teachers. We cannot survive or thrive on the dismal pay scale currently in place with the high cost of living here in Hawaii. We cannot afford to stay in the field if educators are not fairly compensated**

We need your support so just we can continue to teach in public schools in Hawaii.

Mahalo.

Phaedra Robinson Ph.D.

With aloha,  
Phaedra Elisabeth Robinson, Ph.D.





**eli2 - Kevin**

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**From:** Roy Hannu <roy.hannu@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 12:05 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and the Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13th, at 2:00 p.m.

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT and THE COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD1, RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2:00 p.m

Chair Johanson and Chair Woodson and members of the committees,

My name is Roy Hannu and I am a special education teacher at Mililani High School, this my 13th year teaching. I am writing to ask you to support SB 2488.

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 plus fringe costs, to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest to fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I would benefit from the shortage differentials in SPED because of the time I put in before school and after school to create IEP's, progress reports, plan and schedule meetings, compile data and call parents, among other things. This pay differential is a breath of fresh air and makes it tolerable to work through all of the paperwork because it shows me that I am respected as a professional. Being a SPED teacher we often seems to be on the short end of the stick, over looked and under paid. This differential will keep SPED teachers where we need them.

Thank you for your time,

Roy Hannu  
Mililani Town, Oahu

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 12:42:14 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jon Fia	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear House Committee on Labor & Public Employment,

My name is Jon Fia. Teacher at Waipahu High School. My wife is also an educator at James Campbell High School. We both are part of the 6300 teachers who have been caught up in this compression issue. We both have been in the DOE for over 25 years. Neither of us has reached the top classification of steps even after all these years. It is patently unfair and insulting that there are other educators with less years of service to the State of Hawaii as us and yet are at the same pay scale as us. During the economic crisis, the State of Hawaii balanced the budget off our backs. Furloughs, no step increases, decreases in contributions to health care all hammered my wife and I. Its time to make things right and pass SB2488 with appropriate funding.

We are facing a teaching shortage as everyone knows. There are many teachers in the same boat as my wife and I. We are all reaching retirement age. If funded, it would accomplish a few things:

1. Correct a wrong
2. Save 50% of teachers from working a second job to survive in Hawaii. (Its hard to be an effective teacher when one has to work a second job. That would be a direct correlation to quality of teaching.) Additionally, extra curricular activities are very important to student success. How many teachers cannot be coaches, advisors, or mentors because they are too busy driving UBER or waiting tables after the school day? BTW, I am part of the 50% who works a second job.
3. Make us know we are appreciated
4. Make us stay in the DOE longer

If you think we have a teacher shortage now, imagine when there is an exodus of teachers who are eligible to retire and feel that there is no need to stay any longer? Some are even leaving with early retirement and moving away right now. One of my closest friends did exactly that. This will be his last year in the DOE although realistically he should stay at least five more years. He realized leaving now and moving to the mainland is more cost-effective than staying and languishing with no step movements to improve his retirement.

I humbly ask for your support to PASS and FUND SB2488.

Kindest Regards,

Jon Fia

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 12:44:54 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Paul McDonnell	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Paul McDonnell I am a Special Education teacher at Hawaii School for the Deaf and the Blind in Honolulu on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

Had I stayed in California for the last 13 years of my teaching career, I would be making at least \$20,000 more a year by now, and living in a more cost effective location. There have been times when I considered quitting and moving back to California to resume teaching there because then I would not need to work a second job like I have been the last several years just to make ends meet. Getting rid of the pay compression that I find myself unfairly trapped in will go a long way in helping make this a more appealing state to teach in for the rest of my life.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Paul McDonnell, Honolulu, Oahu

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 12:56:32 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Michelle Abad	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Michelle Abad. I am a Teacher at Lahainaluna High School in the Canoe Complex on Maui. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

In Lahaina, one in three housing units are rental properties. This makes it difficult for residents to find decent housing at an affordable price. I grew up on the other side of the island but moved to Lahaina when I became a teacher at Lahainaluna High School. I have grown to love the community I live and work at and it has been important for me to establish myself in Lahaina. However, with the rising costs and limited housing options, moving back to the other side to live and work has become more and more tempting each year.

I have been very appreciative of the recent pay differentials offered to Lahaina teachers for multiple reasons. First, this will not only allow us to fill the hard to staff positions that have remained open year after year, but will provide more stability for our schools in Lahaina as teachers who currently work there would be more willing to stay. Second, the recent differentials have made it possible for me to afford a home in Lahaina making the temptation to live and work on the other side less likely. Average costs of homes in Lahaina are significantly higher than other parts of Maui. I recently applied to Kahoma Homes in Lahaina through the community land trust program, Na Hale o Maui, and needed to make a certain income to meet income guideline requirements in order to apply. The pay differential made that opportunity available to me.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Michelle Abad  
Lahainaluna High School  
Canoe Complex, Maui District

Dear Representatives,

I am writing to you about the upcoming bill that addresses salary compression for Hawaii state teachers and Special Education teachers.

In 2014 I became a teacher on Kaua'i. I was originally hired as an Emergency Hire, my salary at the time just covered some food. I had to hold a second job to pay for my insurance and living expenses. I could not afford to pay rent, to rent a room was more than I could afford, so I lived on the beach. Once I was licensed and my salary increased I was able to rent a room.

I still hold a second job to cover my living expenses. Thankfully my children are grown, as a single parent there is no way I could ever afford to support and raise a family on a teacher's salary. I struggle providing for myself as an individual as the cost of living continues to increase but our salary does not compensate to meet inflation.

I love my job, my students, my administrators, and my community. However, I am so embarrassed that in order to survive, even with an advanced degree, I still have to hold two jobs in order to compensate for what my salary cannot do: provide a living wage.

Please do the right thing and dignify my profession. Please vote to fix the salary compression issue.

Respectfully,  
Heidi Alvarez  
Special Education Teacher  
Kapaa High School  
Cell # 707-483-0655



**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 2:03:28 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
joshua noga	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments:

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Joshua Noga. I am a **8th grade US History teacher** at **Kailua Intermediate School** in Windward District on **Oahu island**. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I am a graduate of our states Grow Our Own program and I am worried that if you don't fully fund compression and differentials for increasing teacher pay my cohort classmates may seek to teach outside of Hawaii after their three obligation is completed. Teachers deserve fair pay and fully funding compression and differentials will be the first step toward making this happen. Mahalo for your time.

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 2:23:06 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Una Burns	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

ESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020 2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is **Una Burns**. I am a **teacher** at **WHEA** in **Kealakehe district** on **the island of Hawai'i**. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I really appreciate everything you have already done for us as teachers and our students: a heartfelt thank you. I feel that it is vitally important that you can find a way to adjust veteran teachers' pay who were not given regular step increases during hard economic times. For instance, I have been teaching 16 years and am not ready to retire yet but I know of a few teachers who would retire soon but would consider staying a few more years if their pay increases. We really need to value our experienced elders! Some of our newer teachers are thinking of teaching elsewhere outside of the islands so their years of service will be properly honored, or leaving the teaching profession altogether because the cost of living has outpaced their salary. I have seen educators quit in the middle of the school year, leaving students with long-term substitutes who aren't qualified. These 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 are very blessed already given where we all live but this would be make our beautiful islands even more special. Please find a way to allocate the extra money to help all our children which in time will help their children and their grandchildren. Good teachers can have long lasting

impacts. Being a teacher is also a blessing and I just hope we can continue to retain & recruit the best people to teach in this very special place!

We need your help. Mahalo.

**Una Burns, Kealakehe District, Hawai'i Island**

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 2:23:08 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Le'a Kimura	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

The compensation has made it easier to be a teacher that commutes from Honolulu to Waianae. The choice to travel was for the students, it was purposeful to teach on the coast. By living so far from work there is an increases in the cost of gas, car maintainace and time. The compensation has made it easier to breath with the cost of living in Hawaii. I don't want to move to the mainland, I don't want to teach somewhere else. I am invested in teaching the students of Hawai'i, I hope that you can invest in keeping Hawai'i teachers in Hawai'i.

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 2:34:50 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kori Oros	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC  
EMPLOYMENT AND COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION**

**RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION**

**FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020 2 P.M.**

**Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:**

**My name is Kori Harvey Oros and I am a 3rd grade teacher at Kipapa Elementary School in Central District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.**

**First thank you for the differentials : My husband is a SPED teacher, and for our family, it meant that we were able to have hot water. We couldn't afford a water heater or installation and took showers at our neighbors or sometimes every other day. When the differential came in, we bought ourselves some hot water.**

**PLEASE fix the the salary compression issue, and also provide funding for the differentials for Sped, Hard to Staff and Hawaiian Immersion ~ doing so would increase the quality of education, as we would be able to retain our amazing veteran teachers while also showing that we value our teachers. Our students deserve a stable, strong education, and teachers should be able to provide that with out working 2 jobs, hustling or giving 10 percent because they are too tired, overextended or given extra students due to the teacher shortage crisis.**

**The Department of Education will need \$45 million more plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.**

**My class size is getting bigger, a couple students added on every year...we need more teachers! The Starbucks lady this morning in the drive through told me she**

**was thinking of being a high school English Teacher, but said that pay wasn't worth the horror stories she's heard about teaching. NOBODY WANTS TO BE A TEACHER except for suckers like...me?**

**We need your help. Mahalo.**

**Kori Ann Harvey, Central District, Kipapa Elementary Grade 3, Oahu**

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC  
EMPLOYMENT AND COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Andrew Ching. I am a first-year teacher at Wai`anae Intermediate School on the Leeward District of O`ahu, Senate District 21. Chair Johanson, I was a student of Mr. Elden Seta, director of the Moanalua High School Music Department, who speaks so highly of you and the other legislative leaders for your support of their music complex and department. Senator Woodson, I had the pleasure to speak with you two years ago at the *College of Education Day at the Capitol* as a student representative from the University of Hawaii. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

As a first-year teacher, I can speak to the hardships that we face when we decide to join hard-to-staff schools. I teach the band and I am always looking for opportunities for our students. I had the fortune to grow up in a thriving music program in Moanalua. My teacher, Mr. Seta, has built an outstanding Music Department over the 25+ years that he has taught there. This career-long commitment to a school is similar at other successful music programs: Kalani High School, Roosevelt High School, McKinley High School, Pearl City High School, Kaimuki Middle School, Kawanakoa Middle School, and more. In the past few decades, Wai`anae Intermediate and Wai`anae High School have not had a single music teacher stay for 25 years, and only one has stayed for more



than ten years. The challenges that we face in Wai`anae are taxing. When we want to perform at a music festival, our students and instruments have to travel for at least an hour to get to the nearest concert hall. Our remote proximity virtually cuts us off from invaluable and readily available resources, such as the University of Hawaii, Royal Hawaiian Band, Hawaii Symphony Orchestra, Pacific Navy Fleet Band, and all of their members, who offer lessons and clinics. It is a challenge to find and travel to performance venues, which are located centrally. For most of my students, I am the only music instructor that they will have in their lifetime. I want to continue to work with these students and provide them the best music education experience possible but the work-load and the compensation do not equate.

The students at Wai`anae may appear rough-around-the-edges, but they are warm-hearted and full of Aloha. Just like every other student, they deserve a quality music education. The hard-to-staff differential has directly helped me with my personal situation. It has allowed me to consider pursuing a graduate degree to further increase my effectiveness for the students, without having to put an unmanageable burden on my finances. It helps me to pay for the mileage that I travel daily. Most of the new teachers here are young, many travel from out-of-state. We don't have the financial stability that perhaps more veteran teachers would have. Your continued support of educators allows us to provide what we believe our students deserve. Please support SB 2488, SD2.

We need your help.

Mahalo,

**Andrew Ching, Senate District 21, Oahu**

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 2:55:49 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Cory Ann Kaimuloa	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND COMMITTEE ON LOWER AND HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020. 2 PM

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Cory Ann Kaimuloa. I teach first grade at Kipapa Elementary School. I've been teaching for 17 years. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more plus fringe costs to fully fund essentials for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service. Please help our teachers feel that they are important and give them a reason to stay in this profession. Please think about the future of our keiki and give them teachers that are highly qualified and passionate about teaching!

Living in Hawaii is expensive. Having a child, paying a car loan, and paying for a mortgage is hard to afford with a teacher's salary. My family is basically living from paycheck to paycheck. I'd love to someday be able to have extra money after paying the monthly bills to put money in a savings account to take my daughter on trips and see the wonderful world. I would love to be able to afford to have my daughter take lesson for sports, musical instruments and other fun activities to develop a well-rounded child and give her opportunities to learn sportsmanship and teamwork.

Thank you so much for taking the time to read my testimony.

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 2:57:15 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Lianne H	HSTA	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and members of the Committees:

My name is Lianne Hue. I am a 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 plus fringe costs, to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest to fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Lianne Hue

Kaimuki High School

Honolulu District

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 2:58:05 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Amy Spencer	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Far too many educators in Hawaii are struggling to survive due to low pay. This stress is passed directly to our students in several ways.

First, as a state we are losing teachers of high quality because they can't afford to stay in our profession. If we can't keep good teachers in the classroom, our keiki are the ones who will pay the price.

Second, teachers who are under economical stress are distracted from their jobs. It is difficult for them to fulfill their professional responsibilities when they are occupied by second or third jobs and the mental stress of financial insecurity.

Our state is lacking in special education support for students and for educators. Increased pay is essential to draw more high quality educators to Hawaii to support our children.

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 2:58:48 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Anyely Dickerson	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear elected officials,

My name is Anyely Dickerson. I am a middle school teacher at a public school on Oahu, Hawaii. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

We need your help. Mahalo.

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 3:00:01 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Simran Bott	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I am a teacher at Mckinley High School, Honolulu. My husband is a teacher as well. We are renting accommodation in Hawaii (1 bedroom) which is extremely expensive, and with both our pay cheques together combined with an 8 year old and my mother staying with us, it is very hard to save any money at all. We plan to have another child, and we can foresee it getting harder for us. We can't even imagine renting a two bedroom with our growing family. It is extremely stress for us, as a family, as a spouse and as a teacher. The frustration and stress certainly does not help the quality of my teaching and my potential to teach my students to the best I can. We are all at loss including my students! Students can sense the stress in a sad teacher- and it makes for an all negative cycle. Please be kind and human and help us! We are pioneers of the next generation- we are responsible for building them and how can we do that if we are breaking ourselves!

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 3:02:28 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Kory Ohly	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am writing in support of SB2488 (SD2)

I have taught in Hawaii for 13 years. It was an unpleasant surprise that my second year, my pay was the same as when I started, and 13 years later is is close to the same. It is typical in industry to pay higher salaries based on years experience, and it should be the same in public education.

If you value education, and educators, and the dedication of teachers who stick around, you should pay them fairly.

Thank-you!

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 3:04:46 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Perry Buchalter	HSTA/ Molokai High School	Support	No

Comments:

As one of the veteran teachers who have been stuck at step 11 for far too long and have seen those at the top gain compensation and new teachers' salaries outpace those of us that have continued to be loyal State employees. Addressing the compression issue is of high priority, based on the twenty-three years I have been teaching, I should be at step 14B. With the onset of the Covid-19 virus and the lack of revenue the State may be facing, my fear is that once again we will be the ones left out and yet we continue to support new teachers and take on tasks of retiring teachers while continuing to be neglected in terms of pay. I am very pleased to see the recognition of this as the Senate passed this unanimously and am hopeful the House will do the same.



**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 3:12:25 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
joseph wood	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

My name is **Joseph Wood**. I am a **teacher** at **Kailua Intermediate School** in **Windward District** on **Oahu**. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

**This bill will help my family tremendously because my wife and I are both teachers and living paycheck to paycheck. We have two small infants and are having a hard time afford preschool for them both. We both technically make too much to qualify for any assistance. Every day I leave my house before the sunrise to make sure I have adequate time to prep for my students. I then leave my job at 2:50 and go to my second job. I don't get home from that job until after 7:00 pm. The main issue is my children go to sleep at 7:15 pm, meaning, every day I get to spend 15 minutes with my family. This kills me because I am having to choose between my family and the career I love. As educators, we shouldn't have to worry about money. Instead, we should worry about things that matter most... our students.**

We need your help. Mahalo.

**Joseph Wood, Windward, Oahu**

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 3:42:32 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Jonathan Lee	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and members of the Committees:

My name is Jonathan Lee. I am a special education teacher at Kaimuki High in Honolulu District on Oahu I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2

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. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest to fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been a teacher in the area of special education for 20+ years. I have seen a number of my colleagues move out of state and/or out of the teaching profession altogether. This bill would be a step in the right direction to retain and recruit highly qualified individuals into the teaching profession.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Jonathan Lee, Hawaii Kai, Oahu

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 3:56:34 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Rick Yamashiro	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Distinguished Chair and Members of the Committee,

I am a school counselor at James Campbell High School and would like to express my sincere support for SB2488. As an educator for the past 20 years, I have enjoyed the tremendous success of our students. I feel a deep sense of pride and accomplishment with each wonderful story. Over the past few years however, I have witnessed a growing movement of our most talented students to relocate away from Hawaii. I feel in part, this is due to the lack of retaining outstanding educators. Our bright students are envisioning a local education system in which their children won't be properly educated. For me personally, I worked hard through school and was fortunate enough to earn my Doctorate degree. Even being at the top of the pay scale due to my education, I still have a part time job to pay the bills. I know we don't go into the education profession to be rich, but as educators we really need enough to survive in Hawaii.

Thank you for listening,

Dr. Rick Yamashiro

James Campbell High

School Counselor

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 4:01:52 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Jennifer Jo	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am writing you to ask that you please pass SB2488 SD2. There is such a high need for highly qualified teachers to stay teaching at our schools and to provide wages that allow them to afford the high cost of living in Hawaii. I am a Special Education teacher who works many hours beyond the school day, and it is not about having extra pay for me to do my job, but a salary that provides me the opportunity to afford living and teaching in Hawaii. I also have veteran teaching colleagues who also have a great list of responsibilities that should be able to afford a roof over their heads as a teacher in Hawaii. I humbly ask that you support this opportunity to provide compensation that will allow for us teachers to work in Hawaii and provide for ourselves and families in doing so.

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 4:03:47 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Irene Tanaka	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I entered teaching in 1999, the year of the strike; I was single at the time, but it was difficult trying to support just myself on my salary. Now, after 22 years in the system, married and with a child, I am experiencing the same difficulties to support my family, even though my husband and I both work full time. With the cost of living here so high, we have hit the proverbial wall more than once; I have sold my jewelry, clothing, and other personal items, just to buy groceries, pay for utilities, and to afford my 9-year-old daughter's EpiPen for her life-threatening allergy. I have used my credit card to pay for my daughter's tuition, school supplies, clothing, and tuition, and am about to take out a personal loan and use some of our home equity line of credit to help make ends meet. On top of this, getting supplies for the classroom -- pencils, paper, notebooks, and books -- are an added expense. Sadly, my story is a familiar one amongst my colleagues; we have so many dedicated, hard-working teachers who are trying to make things better for the next generation, but too many of the students that I teach say "Miss, I enjoy your class. But I wouldn't want to teach as my job. It's not worth it." Students are equating education with pay, and this perception is one that MUST change if we are to show students that education is valued in Hawaii. Detractors may say that teachers didn't get into the field for the pay, which may be true, but we *cannot* model the value of education if we don't invest in our educators. Therefore, I urge you to vote in support of SB2488.

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 4:05:57 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Naomi S Muraoka	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Naomi Muraoka. I am a teacher at Wilcox Elementary School on Kaua'i. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been teaching in Hawaii for 16 years now and fixing the salary compression issue and/or differentials will definitely help me and my family with the cost of living here in Hawaii. Being on a higher step and having that pay increase will help keep teachers and counselors in Hawaii.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Naomi Muraoka, Kaua'i District, Kaua'i

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 4:19:05 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Denise Kelekolio	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 4:22:09 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Anjanette Naganuma	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC  
EMPLOYMENT AND COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Anjanette Naganuma. I am a classroom teacher at Lahainaluna High School in the Canoe Complex on Maui. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I am a Lahainaluna graduate. I love that many of the students I have taught over the last 15 years are the sons, daughters, nieces, and nephews of my former classmates and schoolmates. A few of my students have been actual family--my own nieces and nephews. They call me Mrs. Naganuma in class and Aunty after school. My students see me in town and in the community. These connections provide continuity and stability. In turn, a stable community is one that can thrive.

When schools and classrooms are revolving doors to teachers who cannot afford to live in their own communities, students will struggle in an unstable educational environment. At Lahainaluna, 1 in 3 teachers have been at the school for less than 5 years. I have had a new Special Education co-teacher every year that I've had co-taught



classes. Sometimes the positions were not filled and the substitutes were not certified in English or Special Education.

In Lahaina, we need so many substitutes that the prerequisite of requiring substitute applicants to have a college diploma was waived. For Lahaina schools, high school graduates who pass the 30-hour Substitute Training course may be hired.

When you provide funding for decompressing the teacher salary schedule, for pay differentials for shortage areas like hard-to-staff locations, Hawaiian Immersion, and Special Education, you helping to keep teachers like me in the community we love. You are showing that Hawaii truly values its children's education.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Anjanette Naganuma, Canoe Complex, Maui

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 4:23:50 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Tanya Factora	Individual	Comments	No

Comments:

Addressed to:

Chair Johanson & Chair Woodson

Please and thank you.

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 4:24:29 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Anne Alves	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Anne Alves. I am an English teacher in the Leeward district on the island of Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compensation issue, and provide funding for 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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I moved to Hawaii back in 2003. I found Hawaii, with all its cost-of-living-related faults, to be the place that fed my soul and helped me become the best version of myself. I graduated from UH Manoa with a Bachelor of Arts in 2010 and with a Masters of Education in Teaching (MEdT) in 2016. I've set roots here, meeting and marrying my partner. Together we were able to buy a modest townhouse in Makakilo. Scratch that. Through generous loans from loved ones, we were able to put together a downpayment. And with our joint income, we are able to make mortgage and maintenance payments consistently, as long as no emergencies come up. We are at the point in our lives where we really want to have a child, but it would be financially irresponsible to do so. We cannot afford both childcare and our mortgage while still having enough for the basic necessities.

I am in my fourth year of teaching and have received a "Highly Effective" rating in the three years I was evaluated. I have seen an increasing amount of teachers leaving the island or leaving the profession entirely. The reasons are usually similar: Unrealistic expectations and inadequate compensation. The challenges we are expected to overcome, such as having to teach American Literature with no novels for students to read, are enough to turn any sane person away from this work. But instead of turning away, we rise to the challenge by giving more of ourselves, more of our time, and more of our money. If there are no books for the students, we write up a Donors Choose and then hope enough of your friends on social media make a donation.

I was lucky enough to get the above mentioned project fully funded, but my wife and I had to make a sizable donation ourselves. Three sets of 30 novels were donated to my school (not to me to take with me to another school, should I transfer). This meant that I had to plan units for three different novels simultaneously and then rotate novels each quarter. But the discussions we had over identifying with Holden Caulfield's angst and Jay Gatsby's passion were well worth the effort.

Increasingly, the need for extra effort by teachers has become the norm. More and more responsibility falls on teachers and our time and energy is stretched to the very limit. Nevertheless, we persist because we must. If we don't the keiki are the ones who suffer. But we did not sign up to be martyrs. At some point every teacher has to decide for themselves: can I afford to keep teaching here in Hawaii? From the data, we can infer that, increasingly, the answer is "no". My partner and I find ourselves, for the first time, seriously considering leaving the island because we want a child. The irony! No teacher should have to choose between being able to afford to teach or being able to afford to have a child.

We need your help. Mahalo

Anne Alves, Leeward District, Oahu

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 4:32:48 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Diane Styles	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Testimony in support of SB2488,SD2,

My name is Diane Styles and I'm a special education teacher at Maemae Elementary School. 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. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of hard work and service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest to fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important to our keiki.

Please keep in mind that teachers play a major role in everyone's life. Teachers are the ones who help others to become successful. We know that students are the future of our country and the future development of any country is in the hands of teachers.

Teachers need to be compensated for all that they do. Fixing the salary compensation and differentials will help me and all of the other teachers in this state remain here in Hawaii.

We need your help.

Mahalo,

Diane Styles

Honolulu District

Island of Oahu

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 4:32:53 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Kuulei	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support SB2488 SD2 - all teachers need a living wage.

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 4:46:40 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Kathleen Booth	HSTA	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and members of the Committees:

My name is Kathleen Booth. I have been a resident in Hawaiian Paradise Park for almost 25 years. I have also been a teacher for 13 years in Hilo at Connections Public Charter School. I decided to become a teacher while my son was a student at Connections. I fell in love with the school community. My husband and I borrowed a bunch of money so I could stop working and go to UH for two years as a full time student. This was a wonderful career change, but it was a costly one. We are still paying back the home equity loan which funded my second career. My husband owns an antique store in Hilo which has been struggling for approximately 3 years. (Lava? Trump? We aren't sure.) He has recently taken in three more dealers to share the cost of the rent, and this was a much needed change.

My husband always tells me the only way I can make more money as a teacher in Hawaii is to work fewer hours. I constantly respond I can't work fewer hours because teaching takes many, many hours, and the job is never done. I also can't work fewer hours because I have to take courses in order to make more money. An average PD course costs \$150, 21 hours of classroom time (on Saturdays), and approximately 30-40 hours to complete the portfolio requirements. All of that work is done on the weekends after I complete my prep to teach the following week. Submitting all the portfolio requirements earns me three credits. After earning 15 credits (\$750, 105 hours of classroom time, and 150-200 hours to complete portfolio requirements) I can then request a "class increase." An average increase of approximately \$2,500 a year. (That was how much my most recent reclassification increased my salary.)

I am really beginning to resent the fact I have sacrificed so much family time in order to earn credits to make more money as a teacher. I resent this because I think there should be some value attached to the fact that I have been in the profession for 13 years. I also take part in professional development and I know I am a much better teacher than I was 13 years ago. The teacher shortage is due to the fact that teachers are not compensated for the sacrifices they make. We have many unlicensed teachers at our school. This has to change.



At this time, I ask you to please support SB2488, SD1. This bill will provide funds to fix the salary compression issue. This bill will help end the teacher shortage. This bill will make teaching a profession Hawaii's students can consider as a great future career.

Please, we need your help. Mahalo.

Kathleen Booth

Hilo District, Hawaii Island

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 4:40:57 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Reid Robinson	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:**

**My name is Reid Robinson. I am a school counselor at Lihikai Elementary School in the BKM District on Maui. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.**

**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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.**

**Our school struggles with the shortage of teachers in special education. We have special education teachers overextending their time and availability. After losing one of our special education teachers, we had to ask our other special education teachers to add to their caseloads. It is important that we keep these dedicated, hard-working teachers. Providing funding for the pay differentials will help retain these excellent teachers.**

**Over the years, I have heard many frustrating accounts of teachers who have served numerous years in the Hawaii DOE, yet they were stuck at the same level of pay. I have seen good teachers leave Hawaii because they could not keep up with the cost of living. It is both sad and frustrating to lose such talented and devoted teachers to a problem that can easily be fixed by providing the funds they need to continue serving in the Hawaii DOE.**

**We need your help.**

**Sincerely,**

**Reid Robinson, BKM District, Maui**



**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 5:04:03 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Kimberly Hollingsworth	Leihoku Elementary school	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and members of the Committees:

My name is Kim Hollingsworth. I am a teacher at Leihoku 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 plus fringe costs, to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest to fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been teaching in Waianae for the past 12 years and I am committed to helping the students on the coast. Although I love the school and community I work in, it is very challenging not only mentally and emotionally, but financially as well. I spend a lot of my own personal money to provide things that my students' families are unable to provide and to give my students experiences they may not receive outside of school. My husband works a full-time and part-time job just so that our family can live in Hawaii. It is unfortunate that our two jobs can't afford us to live comfortably. I believe that teachers are sadly underpaid in comparison to the amount of sacrifice we make each day. My hope is that the passing of this bill will help me and other teachers continue to do the work that is needed on the coast.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Kim Hollingsworth, Leeward District, Oahu

Chair Johanson and Chair Woodson,

My name is Grant Wilkinson and I teach at Lahaina Intermediate School. I am in strong support of SB2488, SD1.

SB2488 will help teachers throughout Hawaii who are the least paid teachers in the nation when adjusted for cost of living. This bill provides much needed salary adjustments for teachers who selflessly sacrificed during times of furlough and economic recess. SB2488 will help alleviate the staffing issues in many areas including hard-to-staff areas, special education, and Hawaiian immersion.

SB2488 provides needed salary adjustments for teachers who have been sacrificing for their students for 23-28 years or more and have not been given the appropriate pay increases through negotiations when there was economic turmoil. These are educators who provide some of the best educational environments and outcomes - who have been bearing fruit for the state for years with less to show for it than they were promised. We are in need of 45 million additional dollars to fund teacher compression, money these valuable public servants were promised, but never delivered. Our veteran teachers deserve better.

SB2488 provides salary adjustments to help find teachers in difficult to staff areas. Teachers at rural schools often leave after less than five years, leaving vacancies which are difficult to fill and are often filled by unqualified or underqualified long term substitutes. As a teacher at a hard-to-staff school, the differential pay is incentive to stay at length, makes me confident that more of our staff will be around next year, and helps pay for gas for the longer commute to and from work each day. Hard-to-staff pay alleviates issues found in rural areas.

Our special education students are at a profound disadvantage when they do not have certified special education teachers in the classroom. We have to take steps to ensure our most vulnerable keiki receive the education they deserve. When a special education teacher cannot be found, the students are served by a long term substitute who does not have experience dealing with the intricate nature of special education. Differential pay will help attract and retain more qualified special educators.

Hawaiian immersion teachers are few in number and work tremendously hard to help correct the injustice done by smothering the Hawaiian language and culture for nearly 70 years. These teachers are required to teach in a language with little to no curriculum. If a Hawaiian speaking teacher is not available, students are served by a long term substitute teacher who does not speak Hawaiian. More can be done with increased salary for these hardworking, rare teachers.

A common thread connecting all of these difficult to staff cases is the filling in by long term substitutes. Working at a difficult to staff school, we have several positions held by long term substitutes in both general and special education. Substitute teachers are in short supply, and often enough cannot be found. When substitutes are not available, administrators scramble first to find a substitute, and in the event one is not found must create a backup plan. Teachers are asked to cover classes, take additional students - and ultimately valuable learning time is lost.

We look forward to working with you to solve this teacher shortage crisis. SB2488 is one important step to solve the issues of compression, hard-to-staff areas, and the multitude of difficulties that come with difficulties staffing and low teacher retention.

Please vote yes for SB2488.

Sincerely,

Grant Wilkinson  
Lahaina Intermediate School  
House District 11  
Maui

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 5:48:18 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Nicholas Cushnie	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

My wife and I are both public school teachers. We teach in a hard to fill location on the Big Island and my wife is a Special Education teacher. We have been teaching in the DOE for 10 years. Recently, we have been considering leaving to teach overseas in the Department of Defense school systems. I was born in raised in Hawaii and served in the military in Germany. Although it would be difficult to leave my home and extended family again, we had to consider the superior compensation and benefits from the DoD. However, the additional compensation under SB2488 SD2 now provides the incentive for us to stay in Hawaii. As long as it is in place, we will not be looking to leave.

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 5:48:19 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kehaulani Medeiros	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson and committee members:

Aloha kākou, ‘o au nā ‘o Kāhāulani Medeiros, he kumu papa ‘ekolu au ma ke Kula ‘o Nāwahā‘ōkalanani ‘o Puna ma ka mokupuni ‘o Hawai‘i no ‘eono makahiki. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 amount of \$37 million on compression differentials is much appreciated. However, the Department of Education will need \$45 million plus fringe to assist with salary adjustment to fix compression happens along with continuing the hard-to-staff, SPED and Hawaiian language immersion shortage differentials, including charter schools. Please do not forget the charter school teachers, we are humbly asking to be included in the funds being sought. Our teachers, including charter school, are worth it as they are so important for the future of our keiki.

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 the 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 have a dire need of more qualified, fluent Hawaiian language teachers for our immersion schools and this might help to increase our numbers.

We need your help. Mahalo.



**KÄ“haulani Medeiros, Puna,Hawai‘i Island**

## **SB2488, SD2 Relating to teacher compensation**

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC  
EMPLOYMENT AND COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020 - 2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is David Huitt. I am a social studies/history teacher at Kealakehe High School in West Hawaii on the Big Island of Hawaii. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers.

I am a “homegrown” teacher who graduated from Konawaena High School in 1989 knowing that I wanted to return to Kona and become a high school history teacher. I received my B.A. in history and my teaching certificate from U-H Hilo and began teaching at Konawaena in 1993-94. In 1997-98, Kealakehe High School opened and I joined the “original” staff that built Kealakehe’s culture, curriculum, etc. from the ground up.

As you can see, I have been a teacher for over 25 years – all of them spent in Kona; Konawaena High (4 years) or Kealakehe High (23 years). I love what I do and hope to continue teaching for many more years. Along the way I have worked with special education students, English Learners, regular education students and honors/Advanced Placement students. In addition to teaching in the classroom, I have served in various leadership roles with the school, produced school-wide curriculum and a daily morning broadcast and advised the Interact Service Club. It is an honor to be a teacher but teachers, and students, need your help and support.

First of all, we need help with the issue of “salary compression”. Based on both anecdotal evidence from teachers that I know and research done by HSTA, there are a large number of veteran teachers who are paid at the

same level as relatively new teachers because the veteran teachers did not receive regular “step increases/experience increases” due to the effects from the 2007-2008 recession. This has had a negative impact on teacher morale and has resulted in a migration of veteran teachers to the mainland in search of a salary that matches their skill and experience. Please help solve this problem by providing the necessary funds to move teachers into the steps that truly match their levels of experience and success.

Secondly, due to a variety of issues, there are areas around the state where it is very difficult to retain a veteran teaching staff. Unfortunately, one of those areas is here in Kona (both Konawaena and Kealakehe districts) due to the high cost of living, the large sizes of many of the schools and very high rent. Over the last four years at my school, Kealakehe High School, we have had to replace almost 40% of our faculty. This erodes the continuity of traditions, strategies and school-wide initiatives while also impacting direct instruction because so many students are taught by new hires (who have little experience) and/or long-term substitutes. As a teacher, I have worked hard to support the new teachers and subs but I also feel somewhat helpless. The new “hard to staff/shortage” differentials could really help with this problem. The extra pay will help some teachers stay in Kona (or other high rent/high cost of living areas) and will also encourage more people to transfer to the school.

Finally, we can see the writing on the wall. We are losing teachers faster than we can replace them and our society keeps asking schools to do more and more (teaching, mental health support, job training, etc). As a result, we need to invest in the professionals who fill these schools or else we will suffer in the long run.

Please help us, and Hawaii’s future, by fully funding these initiatives.

Thank you for your time and consideration,  
David Huitt  
Kealakehe High School

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 6:11:56 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Lenny Linsky	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

What kind of society does not invest into those who teach our children. This is a no brainer!

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 6:17:39 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Renee Dieperink	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I **SUPPORT** SB 2488 SD2 if it will be properly funded for all teachers mentioned in this measure.

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.

After my daughter completes highschool, I may follow many of my former coworkers, by moving to the mainland for economic reasons. I'm tired of still going paycheck to paycheck after 31 years of being a teacher (21 years in Hawaii), and having a second job to make ends meet. However, I much prefer to stay in Hawaii. Proper salary funding will greatly help keeping me here!

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 6:34:02 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kevin Hoag	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is **Kevin Hoag**. I am a **7th Grade Science Teacher** at **Konawaena Middle School** in **Kealahou** on **the island of Hawaii**. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

**I am a veteran teacher with over 20 years of experience and am being paid the same as someone who has 10 years less experience. Experience matters. Every year I become a better teacher. I am constantly self reflecting on how I can do better at reaching my students and allowing them to access knowledge and using it to think and analyze situations and problems. I had to take a pay cut of between 5% and 10% for multiple years, not to mention not getting a step increase. By funding this bill it would show teachers that they are appreciated, wanted and valued. By not funding it, it tells teachers they may want to go somewhere else because we don't really value you. This will only add to the teacher shortage.**

We need your help. Mahalo.

Kevin Hoag, Teacher, Konawaena Middle School

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 6:43:38 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Anthony Benigno	Individual	Support	No

**Comments:**

My name is **Anthony Benigno**. I am a **Dual certified teacher at Maui High School**. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I started teaching in Hawaii in 2007 as a special education teacher. Not long after that, a contract to severely defund public education was passed. I was forced to move to California with my wife and newborn daughter. In 2011 we moved back with a promise of changing priorities in education. Over the years, conditions have improved and I think they can get better. Please consider improving salaries for the long term. I understand there will be times when we need to cut back but there have been steady gains until now. I want to continue teaching and my wife, a special education teacher, does too but we need to make enough money to live comfortably. Currently, we're paycheck to paycheck with student loans. Sadly that's the reality for most teachers. Please help. Thank you so much for reading this testimony.

Anthony Benigno

Maui High School

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 6:51:21 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Ryan Kishida	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Ryan Kishida. I am a teacher at Waimea Canyon Middle School on the island of Kaua'i. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Ryan Kishida



**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 7:09:13 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Jessica dos Santos	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 7:14:57 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Len Fergusen	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha, my name is Len Fergusen. I am a Special Education teacher at Nanakuli High and Intermediate school. As you are aware NHIS is a hard to staff school. In my years here I have seen a considerable turnover of teachers. This creates a less than optimum learning environment for my students as they are not able to form meaningful relationships with their teachers as they progress through their academia. Supporting teachers with the pay differentials would be of utmost importance to help create stable learning conditions for these young minds. We need to keep and attract good teachers. I am asking you to support SB2488 SD2, mahalo.

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC  
EMPLOYMENT AND COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION  
RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION  
FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020  
2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Tricia Sumstine. I am a secondary mathematics teacher at Pearl City High School in Leeward District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been teaching for over 25 years and I still love coming to school and educating our youth. Being a teacher has changed my life and I know am making a positive change for my students. Since getting my Masters in Education 20 years ago, my pay can only be raised when we renegotiate our contracts. I enjoy attending conferences and workshops to become a better mathematics teacher. Last year was my first time teaching AP Statistics. It is a difficult course to teach, but I am loving the challenge as I grow as a math teacher. My focus is the students and I spend late hours at school preparing lesson plans. I do this for the students and for their future to make Hawai'i a better place. Teachers are a vital part of our society.

My family and I are registered voters and we care about our community and we vote in every election. We need your help.

Mahalo.

Tricia Sumstine, Leeward District, Oahu

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 7:20:18 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Jayne Heinze	HSTA	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Jayne Heinze. I am a Curriculum Coordinator at Waimea Elementary School in Hamakua on Hawaii Island. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I moved to Hawai'i Island in 1998. When I left New Jersey, I left a teaching position that paid me ten thousand dollars more than my Hawai'i teaching position. At the time, I was young and believed that I would make up the difference in happiness in Hawai'i. Thanks to the compression issue, I now make 40 thousand dollars less per year than my colleagues I left in New Jersey. Even with the compression adjustment, I would still be making 20 thousand less than them. I am still joyful in Hawai'i but poor. My husband and I have 2 vehicles, a second hand rusted 2005 Toyota Tundra and a 2007 hand me down Ford Focus from my mother in law. As I am now 5 years away from my 55th birthday and 25 years of service to the HODOE, I am contemplating ending my career in education to begin a new career. The truth is, I could be hired in a new career who's starting salary is equal to or more than my 20 year salary at the Hawai'i Department of Education. The good news is, I have been gifted the hard to staff differential and if the compression of the salary scale was righted, I would be delighted to keep teaching for another 10 or dare I say 17 more years (until age 72!). And I might even be able to buy myself a new car. The last time I did that was in 1991, my first year of teaching.

We need your help. PLEASE do the right thing for the children!

Mahalo.

Jayne S. Heinze

Hamakua on Hawai'i's Big Island

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 7:32:38 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Lori Kaufman	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Johnson, Chair Woodson, and committee members,

My name is Lori Kaufman. I am a third grade teacher at Princess Nā• hi'ena'ena Elementary, in the Canoe District, on the island of Maui. I am submitting testimony in support of SB2488,SD2.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in Hawaiian Immersion and hard to staff positions. This will show that we, as a state, value our hard working teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more, plus fringe costs, to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place teachers like me where we should be for our many years of service. Funding the differentials will help to recruit and retain teachers in the hardest to fill areas.

I have been a teacher at Princess Nā• hi'ena'ena for 27 years. I am currently teaching a 2nd generation of Maui's keiki. Teachers who have been working fewer years than I have are making the same salary, or more, than I make. I have not taken many classes to increase my salary. Mostly because, I have chosen to use my spare time to help the children in my school community in other ways. I coach youth basketball and Little League baseball. I also work with a singing group at our school, and I am very active in our P.T.A. Receiving pay that is in line with my years of dedicated service just seems fair.

I am 59 years old and looking ahead to retirement. A pay increase might be an incentive to continue working.

Over my 27 years, I have worked with 5 different principals. No other teachers on our staff have been there as long as I have. The high turnover rate at our school seems like a revolving door. Young teachers are recruited to come to Hawai'i from the mainland. They realize that they have to work at least one extra job in order to be able to afford to live here. I can't even count how many good teachers have left.

Please do everything you can to pass this important bill. The keiki are counting on you to provide them with quality teachers that can deliver a quality education.

Mahalo,

Lori Kaufman

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 7:37:13 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Chelsea Welcker	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

My name is Chelsea Welcker. I am a third grade teacher at King Kamehameha III Elementary School in Maui District on Maui. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I work a second job in order to pay my bills and work full time as a classroom teacher here on Maui. I give my all to this job and I am exhausted working so many hours between a full time and part time job for over ten years. Every summer and winter break I work full time to supplement my income at my second job. I am not giving my all to teaching because it simply doesn't pay a living wage. I love teaching. It is my calling and what I was born to do but I simply can not afford to keep doing it here on Maui unless something changes.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Chelsea Welcker



**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 8:36:58 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Gerry Clarin	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

Friday March 13, 2020

2:00 pm

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,

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 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



TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC  
EMPLOYMENT AND COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Rowan Puaa. I am a First grade teacher at Kaunakakai Elementary School in Molokai on Molokai. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I feel like it is important to fix this compression issue because many teachers are having a difficult time living here in Hawaii because of the high cost of living. The stresses within the school are great because we have the responsibility of guiding tomorrows leaders. Teachers are also putting in a lot more work than we're being paid for. Although I am new to teaching—I feel like this would be a great way to retain teachers especially in our "hard-to-fill" places. For these places, I feel like we need to "grow our own" because we know how our kids are and how to relate to them. In the wise words of Rita Pierson "Kids to learn from teachers they don't like" and I feel like new teachers to Hawaii aren't as vested but this may allow them to become more vested because they won't have to go out looking for another job just to be able to live here in Hawaii.

We need your help. Mahalo.

**[Rowan Puaa, Molokai, Molokai]**

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee:

My name is Kim Virtudazo and I am a teacher at James Campbell High School. I am writing in strong support of SB 2488 to continue teacher pay differentials.

This is my eighth year as an educator in Hawaii and things have gotten progressively worse since I first started in 2012. Passing this bill would be the first step to helping end our teacher shortage crisis. It is not sufficient on its own, but these differentials have made a difference to teachers I have spoken with regarding their pay and if they are going to remain teachers in our state.

As a general education teacher, I see the how difficult teaching Special Education can be. These courses, students, and workload is so much more than people can expect. And although I wouldn't benefit from this bill, I know it will help with retaining special education teachers, which in turn would benefit out school and all other schools.

Please pass SB 2488. You will make a difference for our teachers and, by doing so, improve our schools for our keiki. Our students deserve this, too.

Thank you in advance for your support.

Sincerely,  
Kim Virtudazo  
James Campbell High School  
Ewa Beach, Oahu

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND  
COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION  
RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION  
FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020  
2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

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, SD2.

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-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 8:58:26 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Suzie Wallace	Individual	Support	No

**Comments:**

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2 P.M.

Dear Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and Committee Members:

My name is Suzie Wallace. I am a science teacher at Radford High School in the Central District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

As a DOE teacher that has just earned her 10 years of service certificate I would very much like to continue teaching as I really love my job. However, I have to work exhaustingly long, arduous hours to provide my students with the type of education I would have wanted growing up or that I can imagine for my future children. What compounds the difficulty of my situation is that in order for me to live a comfortable lifestyle I also own and manage a legal AirBnB to bring in more income although this is, in itself, a labor of love as well. I work nearly all day, every day. I also am the sole caretaker of my mother who requires so much monitoring that I have chosen to not have a family of my own at the moment due to all the stress I have in my life. Although I've worked hard in the last few years to complete my professional portfolios to bring up my pay I'm beginning to feel crippled by the amount of pressure I'm under to perform all of my professional and personal duties to be a good citizen and daughter. If only I had better pay, I could relinquish some of my duties to others for hire and focus more on my job and my health, which I have been struggling to manage as of late since completing portfolios has become

more important lately than daily exercise. I'm also holding onto hope that I'll be able to afford my own family someday.

Thank you for this opportunity to at least allow me to vent, if no other action comes to pass to push this bill forward. I'll get back to my work portfolios now.

I deeply appreciate your kind consideration in passing this bill.

Sincerely,

Suzie Wallace

Honolulu, HI



**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 8:58:28 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Shannon Clarin	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**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.**

**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. 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**

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 8:59:33 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Stephanie Hayashi	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Stephanie Hayashi and I am grade 4 teacher at Aliamanu Elementary School in the Central District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and funding for teachers in hard-to-staff positions. Doing so will show that we as a state, value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential and basic needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, despite teaching our children through the recession years during which we all stayed in the profession without complaint. Funding the differentials will help us to retain our most experienced teachers, not just in the hardest-to-fill areas, but also statewide. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I began teaching over 20 years ago with a passion and a hope to make a difference. While it has been very rewarding, these years have not been without challenges. Many other veteran teachers and I were not given regular step increases during the downtimes of Hawaii's economy. To date, my salary does not warrant the many years of service placed in the department and because of this, I have considered leaving the state, or even leaving the profession altogether. All too often we hear of very good teachers leaving mid-year, only to have their children taught by an unqualified substitute. If salary adjustments are provided, many teachers may stay and this will help ease the teacher shortage crisis. The lives of students will be all the better, because experienced educators will be more inclined to stay in the classroom. Please keep this in mind when you vote. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Aloha,

Stephanie

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 9:03:08 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Jesse P Neumann	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Jesse Neumann. I am currently a teacher at Ke Kula 'o NÄ• wahÄ«okalani'Ä• pu'u. I support this Bill as teachers play a vital role in our community by developing well-educated youth who will become active contributing members of our community. Thank you for including charter school teachers in this bill.

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 9:05:56 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Jan Dumarán	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT

RE: SB 2488, SD2, RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020, 2:00 p.m.

Aloha Chairman and Members of the Committee,

My name is Jan Dumarán. I am a teacher at Ilima Intermediate School and a community member of Ewa Beach, Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

Please provide the 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.

Legislators talk about education being a top priority but they fail to provide the appropriations to support education. This bill will do a lot to fix the salary compression issue and differentials and inspire and encourage teachers to continue teaching.

To show your support for teachers, librarians and counselors and to keep them from leaving the profession, please fund this bill. The future of all our keiki is depending on you to do the right thing.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Jan Dumarán

Campbell-Kapolei Complex, DOE

Ewa Beach, Oahu



**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 9:04:53 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Derek Govin	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Hello. My name is Derek Govin. I live in Honolulu, Hawaii and I am a Special Education Teacher at Roosevelt High School in the KMR Complex on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

It is 8:45pm on March 11th and I'm sitting at my home desk now testifying after not only working today, but also after working at various coffee shops that I frequently will go to continue work after leaving Roosevelt High School. Here you will find me reviewing data from previous days, making lesson plans, creating new visuals for my students with special needs, and collaborating with other teachers on how to make our school a more inclusive and successful learning environment for all students.

I am completing my 6th years as a Special Education Teacher and I am making \$50,000 per year. I am now very thankful for the \$10,000/year increase for the Special Education Teachers as this is helpful in being able to be a contributing member in my relationship with my partner. While he is a Pharmacist and makes upwards of \$120,000/year, I find it baffling that when we sit down and discuss numbers with a broker, we STILL find it impossible to buy a home in Honolulu. This disgusts me. I find myself feeling like the lesser of the relationship, hindering our ability to move forward in our personal life together to settle down. We want Hawaii to be our home, not a place where we are forced to rent and where I will become another statistic. Just another Special Education Teacher who comes to Hawaii, teaches for 5 years, and leaves the island.

I DO NOT WANT TO BE A STATISTIC. Did you hear me?

I am a highly qualified Special Education Teacher who works with the moderate to severe need special education population. It repulses me when someone suggests "maybe you two should look out west to live, you can afford a home there."

1) I do not want to leave my school. Period. I have NEVER experienced the level of support and belief in leadership abilities that I have at Roosevelt High School, especially from Principal Sean Wong.

2) I do not want to be forced to make the horrendous commute to and from work, just because I cannot afford to purchase a home with my partner.

3) I DO want to be paid a fair salary for work and practice. I deserve to make a salary where I am a contributing member of my personal relationship, not the individual who feels like the "lesser" because funding is placed elsewhere.

I implore you. Hawaii needs highly qualified teachers for ALL students. Hawaii's kids deserve teachers who earn a fair, livable salary. Hawaii's kids deserve to see teachers who are loved and respected by the community, making ends meet, and DESIRING to be teachers themselves. I FULLY support initiative such as *Grow Our Own* as I believe the answer to the teacher shortage crisis doesn't lie on the mainland.

The answer is here. Right now. You have the opportunity to be a part of changing the teacher, student, and HDOE narrative. The answer is our students seeing that teachers make a fair, livable wage and CAN be a teacher AND live in the beautiful state of Hawaii.

I fully, 100% support SB 2488.

Derek Govin, Special Education Teacher

Roosevelt High School

Honolulu District

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 9:24:54 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Susana Roman	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, & committee members:**

**Aloha, my name is Susana Román. I am a Special Education teacher at Kailua Intermediate School, located in the beautiful Windward District on O‘ahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.**

**I implore you to provide \$45 million more, plus fringe costs, to fully fund essential needs for our professional teachers. Without full funding, we will not be able to fix the teacher-salary compression issue, or provide sufficient funding for the pay differentials for teachers in Special Education, Hawaiian language immersion, and other hard-to-staff positions. We need our professional teachers earning professional wages. Fixing the compression issue will appropriately compensate teachers for their dedicated years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas.**

**As a classroom Special Education teacher, the differentials provide me hope that the increase in pay will be enough of an incentive for qualified Special Education teachers to return to the classroom. There are far too many untrained and underqualified people writing and/or implementing IEPs. We need your help to provide an appropriate education for all. Our teachers are worth it, as they are important for the future of our keiki.**

**Susana Román, Windward District, O‘ahu**



Dear Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

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, SD2.

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 I 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 I would struggle to make ends meet, but still decided that teaching was for me. Little did I know that I would end up working a second job for 15 years to supplement my income as a teacher.

There have 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-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 9:35:04 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Jimmy Lee	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I will not benefit financially from the passage of this bill but I fully support it for many reasons. One is that the last few years I've seen so many good teachers give up and quit the profession and one of the reasons is the lack of pay. They cannot survive in this state without more pay. Teachers already sacrifice so much emotionally and physically in the class room. It's a very hard and draining profession. To put an even bigger burden of them (a financial one) only makes teachers want to leave the profession.

With that said, year after year I hear people tell us how important education is and how important our teachers are to providing that education. If we truly believe that we need to keep quality veteran teachers. There are countless quality young teachers but nothing can substitute the years of experience they bring. To lose that experience, whenever a veteran teacher quits hurts our schools and that community. That is something that cannot be easily purchased but must be maintained by treating them with respect.

All my years living in Hawaii I've been told we respect teachers and our kupuna. I've been raised in my culture that way and the older I get the more I see how valuable and important that is. So I'm asking you to represent our values by passing this bill. Thank you.

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 9:44:54 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Michael Kline	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC  
EMPLOYMENT AND COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

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, SD2.

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.

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-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 9:52:30 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Mary Lou	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT and THE COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD1, RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11, 2020

Chair Johansen, Chair Woodson and members of the Committee

My name is Mary Lou Morgan. I am a kindergarten teacher at Keone'ula Elementary School in the Campbell-Kapolei Complex, Leeward District on O'ahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1

I am writing my testimony while grading my students' assessments and feeling anxious about being a teacher in Hawaii. I've had many teacher friends that have already moved to the mainland as we all know that teachers in Hawaii are one of the lowest paid. I thought they were crazy to do so because working on this beautiful island is a dream for most. I've been teaching for 24 years and love my job and especially the children that come through my classroom doors!

It's sad though that most don't know how much I sacrifice to work here. I am a bit tired about the ongoing negotiations that teachers have to do just to ask to be fairly compensated for our work. Sometimes, I get super excited about a lesson and go out and buy the things I need just so my students experience learning at its best! Then I realize that my funds are limited. My family is living paycheck to paycheck and sometimes forced to use my credit card. It's sad to think that I went to college to become a teacher but my brother, who's an electrician (never went to college) gets paid 4 times as much as I do!! It frustrates me!!

Moral is low. On some days I feel like quitting and then I hate myself for thinking it as it is my passion. My husband and I are talking about moving to the mainland just so we can be better off financially. Being a teacher is honorable and one of the most

rewarding jobs but lately I am ashamed to even say I'm a teacher. Please, please, please hear my testimony and make the right choice. Thank you.

Mary Lou Morgan, teacher

Keoneula Elementary School

Leeward District

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 9:53:34 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Emily Willis	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson and committee members,

My name is Emily Willis. I am a teacher at Kailua Intermediate School in the Windward District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

It is very difficult for teachers to stay in the profession given the cost of living in Hawaii and our proportionally low salaries. We lose dedicated and talented teachers every year because teacher compensation in the state just doesn't keep up with their experience level. A job that requires a college education and the amount of professional training that teaching requires should be one that allows us to be able to support ourselves and our families without having to work additional jobs, have roommates, etc. My husband and I are in our late 30's and are still renting a one bedroom apartment due to the cost out here. In most other places in this country, we would at least be able to afford a modest house. Hawaii desperately needs to be competitive with the teacher salaries of other states as well as the salaries for other similarly-educated professions to continue to keep our highly qualified educators. I love this profession that I chose, but the state needs to start showing they value us as professionals by fully funding bills such as this one. Partial funding will not work.

We need you help. Mahalo.

Emily Willis, Windward District, Oahu



**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 9:54:34 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Hailey Mozo	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

My name is Hailey Mozo, I have been a teacher in the Windward District on Oahu in the state of Hawaii for the last 17 years. I support bill SB 2488 SD2. I work other jobs in order to own a home and support my family in this state. I could easily sell my home and move to another state to get more pay but I love it here, and I love the students I teach. I have watched many excellent and qualified teachers walk away from this profession because they can make more money working in other industries. One of my colleagues left to work retail and another left to work in a restaurant. The sad reality is that my years of experience, currently, doesn't get me a pay raise. I should be making more than teachers that just started a few years ago, but I'm not. I have done all I can to get a Master degree and all the credits I need to be at the top of the pay scale. Please help fund this bill so the teachers that love their jobs can have a fighting chance of staying in Hawaii. The teacher salary compression issue needs to be fixed. Please provide the funds for it.

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 9:57:52 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Shelby Loo	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**March 11, 2020**

**Committee on Labor and Public Employment and Committee on Lower and Higher Education**

**Hearing Date: March 13, 2020**

**Hearing Time: 2:00 PM**

**Hearing Location:**

**State Capitol, Room 309**

**415 South Beretania Street**

**Honolulu, HI 96913**

**RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION**

**Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and Committee members:**

**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, SD2.**

**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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.**

**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**

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND  
COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and Committee Members:

My name is Christy Sakamoto. I am a teacher at Kamali'i Elementary School in Kihei on Maui. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, proposed SD2. **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 to do so. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been a dedicated teacher on Maui for over 20 years. During this time, my fellow teachers and I have endured a strike, many contracts with no step increments embedded, furlough Fridays, and increased demands and paperwork. I have been willing to tolerate all of this, despite the financial burden put on my family, because I am passionate about teaching. I have been steadfast in remaining loyal to my profession here on Maui while being underappreciated and underpaid.

It seems that most contracts in the past have been designed to attract new teachers, sending a message that new teachers are more valuable than experienced teachers. **Teachers should be paid according to years of service and ongoing education.** Leaders need to realize the dedication of teachers who have stayed year after year, despite watching brand new teachers almost catch up to them on their pay scale because of lack of step movement in the past. **Please realize that all of us deserve fair pay,** not just certain groups of teachers. It is disheartening to feel that over 20 years of service is basically meaningless to the people making these decisions for us. If teachers can be compensated for missed step movements in the past, this would be a powerful step towards showing respect to our seasoned teachers and encouraging them to remain in the classroom. I greatly appreciate you considering our requests.

Mahalo.

Christy Sakamoto, BKM Complex Area, Maui

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 10:22:31 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Mariko Jackson	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Teacher pay raises have long been underfunded and passed up through poor contract situations. Teacher work is largely undervalued despite working in a profession that supports one of the most important services we have for our children. If approved this will begin the work that needs to be done to restore incentives for future teachers and to adequately pay our current faculty. Hawaii is often on the forefront in terms of supporting educational equity and adequacy for our students through our allocation system. Let us hold that same standard to our teachers, who we need to do the great work of education.

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 10:36:54 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Dr. Lilinoe Darlene Yong	Hawaiian Immersion Program	Support	Yes

Comments:

**RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION**

**Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:**

**My name is Dr. Lilinoe Darlene Yong. I am a Hawaiian Language Immersion teacher from Waiiau (1989-1995); Puohala (1995-2008); and currently at Hau‘ula (2008-2020) in Windward District on O‘ahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.**

**Please provide enough funds to 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. Funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.**

**I started as a Part-Time Teacher/ Substitute at Waiiau Hawaiian Language Immersion when it began in 1986-1987 with a Bachelor's Degree in Hawaiian, Professional Diploma in Elementary Education, and a Nation Teacher Exam passing scores. There were many highly qualified applicants with teaching certificates as well as Hawaiian Language proficiency in the beginning years so I strategically drove from Kaneohe to MÄ• ‘ili Elementary for 2 years (while pregnant) to position myself as a “certified, tenured, IN-DISTRICT TRANSFER” applicant to Waiiau Hawaiian Immersion as advised by HSTA.**

**I worked amongst the best of the best at Waiiau from 1989-1995. I received yearly training from Leo Ola affiliated with UH Hilo and Dr. Larry Kimura, Dr. Kalena Silva, Dr. Keiki Kawai‘ae‘a, etc. During my next pregnancy, I transferred to my hometown and childhood school at Puohala Elementary. I received 2 summers of training at the KÄ«kamaile Hawaiian Immersion Training at UH MÄ• noa with college credit. I received Hawaiian Language training at KÄ« ka Mana‘ai with Dr. No‘eau Warner. I have attended numerous DOE B credit, PDERI, and PDE3 teacher training. The Teacher Strike of 2001 set me back because teachers STEP LEVELS WERE LOWERED. I did**

**not like the idea that younger teachers with fewer years of service were receiving nearly the same income as me. So I made a \$40,000 loan to earn a MASTERS and DOCTORATE from College of Education UH Manoa to increase my salary. After I graduated the Kamehameha Schools offered me a position as their Director of the Publishing Company. I turned it down to serve the Hawaiian Immersion community. I have been working at Hau‘ula since 2008. These are my concerns:**

- 1. I have seen a dirge of the curriculum in 30 years. We translate and/or create everything we teach. After we translate Math Investigations textbook, and Stepping Stones textbook they switch to Ready Math textbook and we have to start over with translations.**
- 2. I have seen high school graduates hired as part-time temporary teachers because they speak Hawaiian and we have a shortage of Hawaiian speaking teachers.**
- 3. I have seen English speaking teachers teaching our Special Education students because we have a shortage of Hawaiian speaking teachers.**
- 4. I have seen Hawaiian speaking teachers leave our program to teach English because we translate and/or create everything we teach.**
- 5. I have seen Hawaiian speaking teachers leave our program to teach at Kamehameha Schools for more prestige and a higher salary.**
- 6. With KĀ« Kia‘i Mauna we see a growing trend in Hawaiian Language enrollment, however, we have a shortage of Hawaiian speaking teachers.**

**I have reached 30 years of service. I am at a crossroads of leaving this shortage area for Kamehameha Schools if I am not compensated for this specialty. I and my Hawaiian Language Immersion ‘Ohana DESERVE the SHORTAGE DIFFERENTIAL. We are SPECIALIST because everything that is taught in English we teach and create in Hawaiian. We are serving the State of Hawaii because where else in the world will you hear about the Hawaiian language and culture? We are preserving and reviving the official language of the State of Hawaii.**

**Support SHORTAGE DIFFERENTIAL COMPENSATION.**

**Dr. Lilinoe Darlene Yong, Windward, Oahu.**

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 10:41:24 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Christine Russo	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments:

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEES ON LABOR & PUBLIC  
EMPLOYMENT AND LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

**RE: SB 2488, SD2 - RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION**

FRIDAY, MARCH 13 2020

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and members of the committees:

My name is Christine Russo and I'm a science teacher at James Campbell High School in Ewa Beach. I am submitting testimony in **strong support of SB 2488, SD2.**

I have often considered leaving the state to teach elsewhere because I know that if I do so not only will my starting salary be greater but I will also benefit from consistent salary increases aligned to my years of service. It is difficult to continue to teach in Hawaii when I cannot reliably gauge what my salary will be ten or twenty years down the road. Furthermore, I cannot rest assured that my commitment to the profession and my enhanced experienced will be honored if I stay here.

Keeping our experienced teachers in Hawaii by adjusting their salaries to appropriately reflect their years of service is a crucial solution to fixing the severe teacher shortage in our state. It is very important we keep our most seasoned teachers in the classroom so we can minimize vacancies and the subsequent replacement of experienced teachers



newer, inexperienced teachers. **While the community and education stakeholders continue to focus on student achievement indicators and bemoan stagnant student performance, they often fail to address the most essential input indicator which is access to a licensed, experienced educator. Research shows that experienced teachers correlate to student achievement gains. When we don't provide all of our students access to qualified and experienced educators can we really expect anything less when student achievement data remains flat? If we truly want to see academic, social, and emotional growth in our keiki then we must invest in a high-quality education for them; this starts with retaining our most experienced veteran teachers.**

Another crucial solution to fixing the severe teacher shortage in our state is providing salary differentials in hard-to-staff, special education, and Hawaiian language immersion positions. **Providing differentials in these areas is key to ensuring equitable access to qualified teachers among our most vulnerable student populations.** For example, over 30% of teachers in some hard to staff areas such as on the Leeward Coast are either unqualified, inexperienced, or out of field. Additionally, it is absolutely crucial we provide adequate access to qualified educators in the areas of special education and Hawaiian immersion not only for equitable access to a quality education but also because not doing so could embroil the state in a lawsuit.

I respectfully request you pass this bill as well as provide an additional \$45 million to fully fund salary compression for veteran teachers and pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard to staff positions. Mahalo for your consideration.

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 10:57:39 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Michael Lau	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:**

**My name is Michael Lau. I am a teacher at Kahuku High and Intermediate School in the Windward District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.**

**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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.**

**I am tired of legislators who give public education lip service. I worked through furlough Fridays. I run 3 after school programs, averaging over 30 hours of extra work a week. I love my job. I cannot count the number of times I have considered moving to the mainland because of financial reasons. However, I was born and raised right here on the north shore. I want to raise my three sons here in the islands. I want them to experience the wonderful culture and place that is Hawaii. Make this happen. No more excuses.**

**Much Mahalos**

**Michael Lau, Windward District, Oahu**

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 11:11:44 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lynn Hartnett	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is **Lynn Hartnett**. I am a Special Education Instructor at **Salt Lake Elementary in Central District on Oahu**. I am submitting testimony in support of **SB 2488, SD2**.

Respectfully I ask 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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of all students especially early intervention to help those with special needs.

**I am thinking of retiring early because working as a teacher is expensive. I spend my own money to support the needs of my fully self contained students K-6. I feed them meals and snacks since many families are not able to afford food that the child specifically eats or they go without eating anything. Multi-sensory instruction is effective yet requires items to buy that peak their interest for academics and life function lessons.**

**I have been trying to fulfill the PD courses to move up in the salary steps but unable to finish due to most of my extra time is needed for meetings, IEPs and behavior strategies. Fixing the salary compression issue and/or differentials will help me continue working as a special education teacher.**

**Please consider my testimony!**

We need your help. Mahalo.

**Lynn Hartnett, Central District, Oahu**

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Fe Dahlia Lapitan. I am a Special Education Teacher at Jarrett Middle School in the Honolulu District on the island of Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been working with the medically fragile, special needs population for over 21 years and I am very grateful to have the differential pay as a special education teacher because every bit helps with the high cost of living here in Hawaii. I have considered getting a part-time job to make ends meet but my teaching responsibilities outside of the classroom does not allow for that. Planning classroom activities and preparing for the Individual Education Programs for my students take up most of my time after hours, with no extra compensation for it. It also takes away from my personal/family time.

Although I enjoy teaching, I have contemplated leaving the profession because I feel that teachers are not valued, aside from the high cost of living in Hawaii. I do believe though that by fixing the salary compression issues, it will aid in alleviating the stressors, and give teachers peace of mind.

On behalf of the Educators of Hawaii, I kindly ask for your continued support of funding the pay differentials and in fixing the salary compression issues by supporting SB 2488, SD2. We need your help to help us continue to educate our future leaders of our society.

Thank you and God Bless!!

Fe Dahlia Lapitan, Honolulu District, Oahu

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC  
EMPLOYMENT AND COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Sharon M. Inouye. I am a Social Studies teacher at Moanalua Middle School on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

These funds could make a big difference in relieving the teacher shortage. Fixing the compression problem would make teachers feel more appreciated for their many years of service and sacrifices. For instance, I have been teaching for over 30 years in the Hawaii DOE and there were years when I felt that the state would try to pay for other expenses on the backs of teachers. Fixing this problem would help make things pono and encourage senior teachers like myself to stay longer.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Sharon M. Inouye, Aiea, Oahu

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 12:23:32 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Taylor Sole	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Pay our teachers. Period. This shouldn't be a conversation at this point.

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 1:20:41 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Susan Russo	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

To our Honorable Senators and Representatives,

I ask your support for SB 2488. My five year old granddaughter will be going to public school in Hawaii next year and I want for her to have the best educational opportunities possible. You all can make that possible by taking these measures to retain Hawaii teachers and pay them a living wage.

Respectfully yours, Susan Russo



**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 1:22:47 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Brandon Cha	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and members of the Committees:

My name is Brandon Cha, a registered voter in Mililani Mauka area. I am a science teacher at Pearl City High School in Oahu's Leeward 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 plus fringe costs, to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest to fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I transitioned out of the SPED department at my school to become a general ed teacher before these pay differentials took effect, but I have already spoken to other teachers at my school who are extremely appreciative of this differential and see it as a way to afford to continue doing what they love as a career. I was initially hired as a non-licensed SPED teacher, but through this pay differential, we have seen an increase in the number of SPED qualified teachers who work at my school to help our students grow and learn.

I appreciate your dedication to our student's future, and I hope we can look forward to your support on this bill.

We need your help. Thank you very much!

Brandon Cha

Pearl City High School

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 3:16:54 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Rose Bagoë	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:**

**My name is Rose Baagoë. I am both a classroom teacher and the WASC/Title I coordinator at Lahaina Intermediate School in Lahaina on Maui. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.**

**Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the *pay differentials* to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.**

**I have given 15 years to the DOE. I had 10 years of experience when I CHOSE to come to Hawaii to teach --- NO PERKS and NO CREDIT WHATSOEVER for my service to the profession. In that time I have ALWAYS WORKED TWO or MORE JOBS as a single person to be able to save any money. I work on schoolwork on every weekend and over the summer with NO PAY to be able to best serve my students and school. I do extra curricular activities with NO STIPEND or PAY. It is a joke that teachers work another job so they can coach and chaperone school activities. I have experienced furlough Fridays. I have experienced a halt on travel for professional development. I have NOT reached my full pay steps yet because I am too busy working other jobs that I have been unable to take all the ridiculously labor-intensive classes to prove I deserve a raise- really, after 25 years of service I have to prove I can teach for any compensation?**

**Veteran, proven HIGHLY EFFECTIVE teachers like myself have watched those with less years of service benefit for our sacrifice.**

**We have STAYED and SERVED and are LOYAL to the profession and our schools yet we have been left in the dark when it comes to compensation for years of service. When I started here, furloughs and step increments were halted. When it started up again, we got nothing.**

**As each contract comes up and goes, veteran teachers have been left in the dark. I feel the union has neglected those who have proven to be dedicated to the profession and dedicated to the keiki of Hawaii.**

**In my years working, i have seen so many teachers come and go because there is no reason for them to stay. There is no way for them to afford a house or start a family without struggling. When money is handed over for mainland trips for admin to "recruit from the mainland", that is an insult because:**

**A) the principals are taken from the schools to recruit and interview ( and travel to the mainland when they should be at their schools but leave everyone else to take up the slack) and the teachers chosen are usually those un-experienced and un- vetted in the profession, they only want to come to Hawaii for personal interest (i.e., to surf), and they do NOT stay because they have neither roots on nor connections to the islands. (Why not make teaching as a profession more attractive to our own youth, who if they do go to college, can only get a high paying job on the mainland -oil, banking, tech- and then move back home because they miss their lives and families and end up like most in the tourism industry. Or is that set up on purpose to fuel the main money-making industry - tourism-in Hawaii'i?) I feel that if teaching were more attractive ( i.e., teachers did not have to work at least two jobs to survive) Hawai'i's youth would stay and be the best professional investment the DOE could hope to get).**

**B) those teachers from the mainland who have chosen to stay despite having two jobs do NOT get the "new perk" advantage in addition to they lose their years of service from the mainland. Are teachers who work until they are 80 out of necessity the best we can give? Is that how we treat our elders who are DEDICATED to the profession and do NOT leave it out of personal gain or money? And do we want experienced teachers from the mainland or do we want the teacher FOB who need to be retrained under the Title II funded program ( the mentor teaching program I am a mentor in is designed to TRAIN the new teachers how to teach- unpacking standards and devising lessons- isn't that what the college and universities are supposed to promise in the certified teachers they crank out?)**

**I have served 15 years in Hawaii and 10 on the mainland, and I have to work an extra 15 to get full benefits. I hav taught for 25 years and have 15 more to go because I chose to teach and stay at the same school I was hired at in Maui 15 years ago.**

**I have 15 more to go for any real medical benefits. That is an insult and a shame on Hawai'i's treatment of its veteran teachers and its elders. I feel like a used workhorse who will not be put out to pasture but will die on the plow.**

**Compensating the teachers who have not received years of service salary IS the FAIR and EQUITABLE thing to do. Do NOT keep throwing money over the ocean. Feed the proven people first.**

**Mahalo,**

**Rose Baagoe**

**Lahaina, HI**

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 4:38:20 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Robert Hu	DOE	Support	No

Comments:

My name is **Robert Hu**. I am a **special education teacher** at **Keolu Elementary** in **Kailua's Windward District** on **Oahu**. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

**Being an educator was something I felt would make a difference in our community. I have also struggled through the years financially with the compressed issues of our pay and the low salary which has made life difficult year after year. Now, I am at an age where I still am not a home owner and I know definitely no lender will help me purchase a home in Hawaii. Please help us pass this bill in order to make the necessary adjustments to our daily lives that will ease many of the financial burdens we've had to endure for many years. I believe it will also ease the stress of teaching which will in turn benefit the children and keep our teachers here in Hawaii.**

We need your help. Mahalo,

**Robert Hu**

**Windward District, Oahu**

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 5:51:39 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Zellie Kamahele	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

To whom it may concern,

I am in favor of this bill because it would be beneficial to our state to have this bill passed to support teachers in the areas of need. This bill is important to not only helping me to be able to stay in Hawaii and support my family but also to the children of Hawaii and their educational journeys. I became a special educator because my daughter, who has severe complex needs, was in a class where I saw a need for more experience and education in this program area. It was unfortunate but at the same time a blessing to point me in the direction of becoming a special education teacher. Our children, community, and teachers need this bill to be passed to help with the massive shortage of teachers. Our children and students are the future of Hawaii, they need the support and the opportunities to succeed in school. This bill will enforce this by giving teachers in these areas the incentive to remain in Hawaii and not leave their homes or school because of cost of living or burn out from second jobs. Thank you for your consideration.

sincerely,

Zellie Kamahele

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 6:56:16 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Deborah Morrow	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am a dual certified special education teacher with a bachelors in elementary education and special education and a masters degree in early childhood education. I taught special education preschool for 15 years, and I am currently in a state funded preschool classroom, teaching a mixed ability group, supporting the needs of students with Individualized Education Plans that are fully included in the general education setting and typically developing peers, without the support of special education staff. I can do that because of the many years of teaching special education under my belt. Years that are neither valued or recognized by the pay differential to special education teachers (as I am currently in a general education teaching line) or by my step increases, which have me at a lower step than I should be, because I came into the teaching profession during the years of frozen step increases. When the step increase freeze was released, I found myself pacing financially with younger, inexperienced teachers. I was disheartened to realize one day that a teacher I mentored, who served as a student teacher in my classroom, entered the field at the same rate of pay I was receiving. As teachers, we tell people we do this job for love, and that's true. There's no money in teaching, it's a passion or a calling, much like small church pastors or missionaries. Except our mission is the country's future. And while it is a satisfying job for our soul, it is difficult to pay bills in Hawaii, to afford college for our own children, to afford rent or mortgages, and to pay exorbitant prices at the grocery store to eat. Please consider taking into account the experienced teachers who are the back bone of the profession, the ones who mentor the new teachers, the ones who provide quality education with more efficiency, and the ones who will encourage or discourage their own children to consider teaching as a worthy pathway in Hawaii's future. Thank you.

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 7:26:36 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Eileen Carr	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

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, SD2.

Please provide funding 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. \$45 million is less than it will eventually take to fully fund these critical measures, but this initial investment will serve as a gesture of good faith on the part of the Hawai'i State Legislature, and demonstrate a commitment to partnering with public schools to ensure a stronger, brighter future for our state.

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 an over \$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. On top of the complex demands of the student population, schools in areas classified as Tier 4 Hard-to-Staff are desperate for qualified teachers, and are routinely required to combine classes (for example, 2 5th grade classes combined into one for a full school year) and staff classrooms with long-term subs for entire school years. 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 2488.

Mahalo,

Eileen Carr, Honolulu, O'ahu

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 7:30:53 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Kati Hedden	Lahaina Intermediate School	Support	No

Comments:

I am a teacher on West Maui. I also live on West Maui, and work in West Maui where they cost of is living very high, and affordable housing is very limited. Since SB2488 went into effect in January 2020, I have been able to save a couple of hundred dollars a month for a mortgage. I really hope that you approve this bill again, our teachers deserve it.

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 7:39:02 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
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 SD2, 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 SD2with the full funding to implement both the Hard-To-Staff Differentials and the Salary Decompression.

Mahalo,

Micah Kalama Pregitzer



**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 7:44:43 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Mari Finn	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and members of the Committees:**

**Aloha KĀ• kou! ‘O Mari Finn kĀ“ia. My name is Mari Finn. 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 plus fringe costs, to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest to fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.**

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 7:45:07 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Eleyne Fia	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**RE: SB 2488**

**My name is Eleyne Fia and I live in Kapolei, Hawaii. I am writing to ask for your support of SB 2488. When this school year ends, so does my 27th year of working for the DOE as a school counselor. I have been through a strike, pay freezes, the pay cut, and the furloughs. Yet, I have not left the education profession. But while this career has been emotionally fulfilling, it has left me being far from financially stable.**

**My husband is also an educator and this year is his 26th teaching year. He is also currently at Step 12. While I have been fortunate to be able to solely concentrate on my profession, as it is demanding in terms of voluntary hours outside of the workday, he has had at least 1 other job, sometimes as many as 2 jobs besides teaching, that he has had to work to make sure our family which includes 2 children, can survive financially. He has never been solely “just a teacher”. Even now, he works a full day and often heads off to work his other business right after. Yet, still till today, we still live paycheck to paycheck, often juggling our accounts with our bill deadlines just to pay our bills.**

**I am currently at Step 12 on our current pay scale. If my years of service were to be comparable on the scale, I should be at 14b. Teachers with much less years of service, possibly 10 years difference from me, could be found at the same step. While that is commendable that people have been in the education profession for 15 years or more, it is not right that someone with way less years of experience and expertise carry the same financial worth as I.**

**The educator I was at 17 years and the educator I am now is very different. The depth of knowledge and professional skill level, the contacts I have made and brought to our school for our students, the awareness and “whole school” vision is much larger and richer than before. The countless trainings and workshops that have been invested in me have resulted in programs such as AVID, the growth assistance of our AP Program, and the accessibility of college and scholarships for our students, to name some examples. The saying that educators help build their school throughout the years is true. Resources and**

**how to assist students with complex issues are more quickly handled and more at my fingertips.**

**In the working world, a person must always “know his/her worth.” The awareness, knowledge and skills that an experienced teaching veteran brings to a school is priceless. The worth that this experienced and highly-skilled person brings with him or her is priceless. Knowing this and being the experience first-hand, I will always choose to have my own child learn from a veteran teacher than from one who still needs to hone his or her skills, and I believe that as a citizen sending my child to a public school that this is my right, not simply a privilege.**

**Please support Bill SB2488 to acknowledge the worth of our veteran educators like myself. We shape not only our keikis’ futures, but we pave the path for our teachers who have less years of experience as well, showing them that they too can both live and work in Hawaii. Thank you for your time and attention to my testimony regarding SB2488.**

**Sincerely,**

**Eleyne Fia**

**School Counselor**

**James Campbell High School**

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 8:08:00 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Shae	DOE Lahaina Intermediate School	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Shane Cunanan. I am a physical education teacher at Lahaina Intermediate School in Canoe Complex on Maui. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been teaching at Lahaina Intermediate School for 12 years now and really enjoy it. I have had multiple job offers on the mainland with much higher pay and better benefits. We are on the verge of moving because we can not afford to live here and my retirement is minimal. I love Maui, Lahaina Intermediate School, and the wonderful west Maui community. I have a great life with a beautiful wife and 3 kids. I want nothing more to stay here on Maui at Lahaina Intermediate but the only way to stay here would be to get a significant pay increase. I have also been coaching wrestling at Lahainaluna High School and the Maui Style Youth Wrestling Program for 12 years now. I know that I have a big impact on these awesome kids in our school and our community. I know a lot of teachers that are in the same predicament as I am and I am sure that fixing the salary compression issue and differential will help keep these veteran teacher. We desperately need these veteran teachers to stay in Hawaii to give the Hawaii keiki the education they deserve.

We need your help. Mahalo!

Shane Cunanan, Maui District, Maui





**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 8:08:29 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Ezra Witsman	Individual	Support	No

**Comments:**

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC  
EMPLOYMENT AND COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Robert Ezra Witsman. I am a teacher at Kealakehe High School in Representative District 7 on Hawai'i Island. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been a teacher for 17 years. I teach Civics, Modern History of Hawai'i, Pacific Island Cultures, Hawaiian Studies, and AP Government and Politics. During this time, I have been involved in many projects. Some of these projects include: We the People Competition (school and state competition), Courts in the Community, various Native Hawaiian projects (working with Lili'uokalani Trust, Kamehameha Schools, Laiopua 2020, Kaloko Fishpond Hui, and the National Park Service), and the Modern History of Hawai'i Bowl.

I do all these projects to enhance the education of my students. As a teacher, I have gone above and beyond the call of duty. I have acted in good faith that the Hawaii Legislature, Board of Education, Governor, and Superintendent would do the right thing in the Future. The future is

NOW. Teachers in Hawai'i cannot wait any longer. Of course, the cost of living in Hawai'i is extremely high and it has been a struggle to afford to live in Hawai'i.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Robert Ezra Witsman, Representative District 7, Hawai'i Island

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 8:22:10 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Heidi Miller	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is **Heidi Miller**. I am a **Special Education Teacher** at **Konawaena Elementary School** in **West Hawaii District** on **Hawaii**. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

**Two years ago I transferred from teaching in Washington State to here in Hawaii. While I knew the payscale was lower I did not fully realize how much. When you assess the salary schedules of other states the difference is not so glaring, but when you factor in differences like: fewer steps on the schedule, additional pay (tri pay in Washington), cost of living and taxes, the pay here in Hawaii for my 17 years of experience is very low. I make 62% of what I would make in Washington state and this discrepancy is even more critical for new teachers. The fact that the state does not fully recognize experience for mainland transfers makes the number of experienced teachers coming here much lower. Research shows that more experienced teachers get better results from students.**

We need your help. Mahalo.

**Heidi Miller, West Hawaii District, Hawaii**

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 8:25:22 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

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-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 8:38:00 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
David Scarlino	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 8:38:12 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Claire Yamada	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**My name is Claire Yamada. I am a kindergarten teacher at Wilcox Elementary School in central district on Kaua'i. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.**

**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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.**

**This will be my 11th year of teacher and I can truly say that teaching is my passion. I love what I do, I love the children I work with and I feel like I am making a difference in the community that once took great care of me. I began teaching during the furlough year. That in itself was a tough start as my pay was so small it forced me to live with my parents when I was starting my career. This definitely was not how I wanted to begin my adult life, but teaching was my passion so I stayed. Today, I find myself frustrated because even 11 years later, with a husband and 3 beautiful daughters, I am still not able to purchase a home of our own with the pay I am earning. Still defeating to me, but again teaching is my passion, so I'm sticking with it but I am struggling with the decision to remain in the profession because of financial goals I would like to attain. I have seen many teachers who are just as passionate about teaching leave towards better paying positions that are not as gratifying, but financially support their families. I have another friend to left the island completely because financially she wanted to be in a better position. I fear that I, too, will come to a place where even though teaching is my passion, I will no longer be able to be here because of the minimal pay that we receive. I would love to be able to purchase a home for my family and I to build a life in and if that means I need to find another position to do so I may need to make that difficult decision.**

**We need your help. Mahalo.**

**Claire Yamada, Central District, Central**



**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 8:39:04 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
KIMI KAWACHI	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I have been a special education teacher for 22 years. I am dedicated, I am hard-working, and I have helped better many, many children's lives. I have taught them to read, to write, to socialize, to problem solve, and so much more. I have completed mountains of paperwork, and attended hundreds of meetings. My focus is always on the children. I am also a single mother living in Hawaii. It is incredibly difficult to provide for my children. I work extra hours every year to make extra money. I take advantage of opportunities such as Department Head, tutoring after school, and working summer school. I have also had to work side jobs such as cleaning houses. Just recently, we have had the good fortune to receive the Special Education differential. This was maybe the first time in 22 years that I felt like people cared about the hard work I put into my job. It felt like people actually wanted me to stay and continue to be a good teacher. Most of the time I feel like teachers have to fight tooth and nail for every penny. If we do get a small raise, it is given so begrudgingly and not with appreciation or thanks. We have an incredibly hard job. We are responsible for the most precious people on the planet. I strongly advocate for the continuing of the differentials for the special education teachers, and I strongly advocate for the funds to allay the compression that teachers have had to endure. I have worked for 22 years and each time the economy dips- the teachers must suffer. We are asked to give, give, and keep giving. In times of a healthy economy, we are still forgotten. I see advertisements where managers of Panda Express or Taco Bell earn \$60,000 a year and it is disheartening. It has taken me 20 years and two Master's Degrees to earn \$60,000. Please think of the teachers. We have waited for so long. We impact the world. The more we invest in our teachers, the more we save in the long run. The teachers impact the children who can either improve our future, or destroy it. We want the best people guiding them to be successful and compassionate humans.

Thank you for considering my testimony.

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 8:39:27 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Peter Rossman	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha, I am a public school science teacher working at Kealakehe High School for 20 years. My salary started a little over \$30,000 and it is currently around \$55,000. As a 42-year-old, I still have at least 20 years left to work and I am dismayed that my experience doesn't show much value. After 20 years of practice, an attorney will earn \$130,000, an engineer can expect \$120,000, a nurse \$70,000 and even a plumber can expect to receive \$70,000 per year after 20 years of experience. Why am I, a highly-qualified teacher with 20 years of experience, earning less than a plumber with comparable years of work? It really doesn't make sense, and makes me want to join another profession that rewards experience better. Please support this bill, thank you.

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 8:42:45 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Zane Meirick	Hawaii Teacher	Support	No

Comments:

My name is Zane Meirick and I'm a Special Education/Math Teacher and this is my first year as a teacher in Hawaii. I have a Masters degree and many years of teaching experience in Missouri. Unfortunately, the state of Hawaii doesn't recognize more than six years of teaching experience, when teachers transfer into Hawaii. My salary here doesn't represent my experience as a teacher. The teachers don't have a salary scale that increases based on years of services. Every other district that I've worked at had these steps.

The cost of living here is so much higher than any place I've lived and the amount deducted from my paycheck is the highest I've had as well. Hawaii is gorgeous, but if you have to work 2 or 3 jobs to pay the bills you won't have money or time to enjoy it.

I'm having a positive experience, other than not being able to pay the bills.

In January, I received a pay increase for being a Special Education teacher, this helped so much. It was a total of \$10,000 increase for the year. It has made me consider staying here long term.

Thanks

Zane Meirick

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 8:47:34 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Germaine Aleena Ancheta	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee:**

**I am a special education teacher at James Campbell High School and I am writing in strong support of SB2488 to continue teacher pay differentials.**

**This is the first step to helping end our teacher shortage crisis. It is not sufficient on its own, but these differentials have made a difference for me as a special education teacher. I currently serve as the Special Education Department Head at James Campell High School.**

**The last couple of months I was able to benefit from the differential for special education teachers. I have been able to live for comfortably. The extra ~\$200 I make every paycheck has helped me be able to not live as close to pay check to pay check as I have had to do in the past. I have been happier coming to work and working with all the special education teachers. Everyone else who has benefited from the recent pay increase has also had a boost in moral in the special education department. Special education teachers not only teach all day but they also have to work with providing special education services and develop IEPs for the students. There are a lot of meetings and time spent outside of work hours to prepare and make sure our students are getting the education they need.**

**Please pass this bill. You will make a difference for our teachers and, by doing so, improve our schools for our keiki. Our students deserve this, too.**

**Thank you in advance for your support.**

**Germaine Aleena Ancheta**

**James Campbell High School**

**Leeward District**

**Ewa Beach, Oahu**



**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 8:56:14 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Reginald Dela Cruz	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT and THE COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD1, RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2:00 PM

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and members of the Committees:

My name is Reginald Dela Cruz, and I am a Special Education Teacher at Roosevelt High School in the Kaimuki-McKinley-Roosevelt Complex, Honolulu District on O’ahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

As a 17 year veteran teacher in the Department of Education, I have seen many of my colleagues struggle to make it in this field of work. I too am finding myself needing to contemplate continuing to teach here in Hawaii. The pay increase schedule is not one where veteran teachers can benefit from. The fast track to higher pay is to get more credits by either returning to college, or to attend workshops that require more time and effort, which would take away time from my family. There are teachers who have just started teaching that have a higher salary than me because they spent a few more years in school to obtain more credits. A better way of compensating veteran teachers needs to be developed.

I love my job, as I get to work with the cognitively disabled and autistic population in the Project SEARCH Program. I get to influence life changing habits that will one day allow these individuals to be a contributing member of society by getting a job. There is not a day that goes by where I am not inspired by the students I teach. This is all part of my job, but what also needs to be a part is fair compensation. Hawaii teachers are the lowest paid when factoring in cost of living. This needs to be addressed, and SB 2488 will be the first step in allowing this to happen. More and more teachers are leaving a profession they absolutely love because the salaries are so low. Please help this bill, and others like it be passed so the teachers of Hawaii can teach in Hawaii. Born and raised here, love to stay here!

Mahalo!

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 9:02:22 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Natalie Sur	HSTA	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Natalie Sur I am a teacher at Olomana School in Windward District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been a teacher for nearly 19 years; 3 years on the mainland and 15 3/4 years in Hawaii. About 10 years ago I came across pay stubs from Los Angeles Unified School District. I was astonished that my net pay from LAUSD was higher than my DOE HI net pay. My current gross pay was higher but since LAUSD paid our medical and other benefits, I was able to survive working one job. Besides working summer school every summer, I work part time to supplement my income. I am one of the majority in my profession that must work a second job to survive in Hawaii.

I have been teaching at Olomana School my entire teaching career in Hawaii. There are only 2 teachers who have been at Olomana School (in the classroom) longer than me. In the nearly 16 years that I have been there, many teachers have left the school, some retired, some went to other schools and some left the profession entirely. It is a difficult environment since we service the incarcerated youth, the detained youth and the at-risk youth. Teaching in and of itself today has become more challenging, not only are the youth today harder to work with but the many mandates, meetings, trainings, etc., are grueling, it's no wonder there is a major shortage in the field.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Natalie Sur, Windward District, Oahu





Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Lynn Zinsius I am a Special education teacher at Kaohoa School in Windward District on Oahu . I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I believe that pay differentials are needed to retain and recruit qualified teachers into the area of Special education. Our keiki deserve educators who can meet their needs in researched based practices. Our public schools deserve educators who know special education law and how to make sure all requirements are being met in each IEP. The cost of living in Hawaii is a factor in attracting and retaining teachers and this differerntial will be a positive step forward in making that happen.

We need your help.

Sincerely,

Lynn Zinsius

Windward district.

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 9:07:35 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Jennifer Sarpi	Individual	Support	No

**Comments:**

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Jen Sarpi. I am a SSC at Pearl Ridge Elementary School in Central District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

Although I will not benefit financially from these salary adjustments, I believe that it will help us to retain veteran teachers. I can attest to the value of veteren teachers in allowing students to learn and grow to the best of their ability.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Jen Sarpi

Central District

Oahu

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 9:10:07 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
anonymous	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Teachers are important, there is no questioning that. I am currently a General Education Teacher in the DOE. I have had SPED students on my roster where their sole academic instruction has only come from me. To say that only certian groups of teachers will recieve additional money because they have certian students on their roster is hurtful, to not only me but all teachers. It takes a team (General Education Teachers, SPED Teachers, Educational Asistants, Counselors, etc) to work with all students, especially students in Special Education. Funds shouldn't be just appropriated to certian teachers, it should be all teachers and staff (including Educational Assistants) that work with the students. I urge you to reconsider moving this bill forward. If you do for one, you should do for all, as all teachers and staff are equally important, not just some.

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 9:10:08 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Mariana Solis Martinez	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

To whom it may concern:

My name is Mariana Solis Martinez, I have been teaching math at James Campbell High School for two years, however, I have been teaching for a total of 12 years, ten years in California. My B.A. is in Math and I have my Hawaii and California teaching credential.

Teachers already have a lot going on with creating lessons, dealing with students and parents, grading, inputting grades, meetings, etc.. Another thing that we think about is, we are not getting paid enough! I understand why teachers go to other states and why there is a high turnover of new teachers, the money we are getting is just not enough. My current salary is just enough to cover my rent, buy groceries, pay utilities, and help my mom.

If you have any questions, please feel free to email me at [solism5@yahoo.com](mailto:solism5@yahoo.com) or call me at 808 825 0693.

Mahalo,

-Mariana

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND  
COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488L, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020, 2:00 PM

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

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, SD2. *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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. 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

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jade.pham@k12.hi.us  
jpham@kaimukihs.k12.hi.us

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 9:36:18 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Cynthia McAnish	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please consider the amount of work it takes to be a teacher, especially a special education teacher. I have worked in this field for over twenty years and have seen very little in terms of pay raises, except for those I have paid for by taking advanced classes. Teachers who have just entered the field are making similar to what I'm earning, although they haven't put in the extra hours, money and effort that I have. Compensation is a must, especially in these days of global uncertainty, if education is to remain a major priority. Teachers are on the front line every day and we also work on weekends, nights and holidays in our spare time. Please help us to continue to help Hawaii's keiki.

Respectfully,  
Cynthia McAnish  
HSTA



**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 9:40:42 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lorna Baniaga-Lee	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**3/12/2020**

**Dear Chair and Members of the Committee:**

**I am writing this letter in support of SB2488 to continue teacher pay differentials with my personal story.**

**I have to work a second job to do what I love to do: teach. I was always in search of that extra job, in school, or out of school, to earn extra money. For the last 24 years, that's what I've been doing and continue to do. My children were raised to see their mom always doing something. That is their norm. Yes, it was a decision that I made. This decision shaped my lifestyle in order to live in Hawaii and raise my 2 boys. This decision motivated me to pursue and renew my National Board Certification for professional growth and for financial stability. My decision to teach despite the financial sacrifices continuously shape me to be a better person. I found my calling.**

**Unfortunately, this is not a success story. This is a sad story of our profession. Too many educators need to find additional jobs to do what they love. And too many give up this profession, just to get by. As a mentor and teacher leader, I often ask myself if my story is motivational. I'm not sure. With such a high turn-over in this profession, I am an anomaly. I don't want to be an anomaly.**

**In reality, how many potential educators can we attract and retain qualified teachers with stories like mine? There will be some, but that some will not be enough to meet the needs of our students. The state of Hawaii needs to change this narrative of what it means to teach here. Supporting SB2488 to continue teacher pay differentials is a great step to that critical change.**

**Please do what you need to do to pass this bill. Our students deserve it.**

**Sincerely,**

**Lorna Baniaga-Lee**

***ELA Department Head  
Lead Mentor  
NBCT '09/'19***

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 9:54:40 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Sharon Saronitman	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Sharon Saronitman. I am a teacher at Wilcox Elementary on Kaua'i. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, proposed SD2

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.

At my school we already have our veteran teachers that are dual certified now interested in the Special Education positions because of the differential that started this school year. We have never had anything to motivate these teachers to move to these positions in the past. I am in my 22nd year of teaching special education at Wilcox Elementary and I have never seen anything inspire teachers to enter into the special education field before this. . We have had a revolving door of teachers from the mainland that stay one to two years and move on. Keeping our local veteran teachers at our school is so important for our students.

As for the salary compression, this would finally get us on the right step after so many years. I have 22 years of teaching in Hawaii public schools and I am currently on step 12. I should be at 14B for my years of service. We need to make this right.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Sharon Saronitman, Kaua'i



Chair Johanson and Chair Woodson,

My name is Charmaine Nuesca-Ganer and I teach at Lahaina Intermediate School. I am in strong support of SB2488, SD1.

SB2488 will help teachers throughout Hawaii who are the least paid teachers in the nation when adjusted for cost of living. This bill provides much needed salary adjustments for teachers who selflessly sacrificed during times of furlough and economic recess. SB2488 will help alleviate the staffing issues in many areas including hard-to-staff areas, special education, and Hawaiian immersion.

SB2488 provides needed salary adjustments for teachers who have been sacrificing for their students for 23-28 years or more and have not been given the appropriate pay increases through negotiations when there was economic turmoil. These are educators who provide some of the best educational environments and outcomes - who have been bearing fruit for the state for years with less to show for it than they were promised. We are in need of 45 million additional dollars to fund teacher compression, money these valuable public servants were promised, but never delivered. Our veteran teachers deserve better.

SB2488 provides salary adjustments to help find teachers in difficult to staff areas. Teachers at rural schools often leave after less than five years, leaving vacancies which are difficult to fill and are often filled by unqualified or underqualified long term substitutes. As a teacher at a hard-to-staff school, the differential pay is incentive to stay at length, makes me confident that more of our staff will be around next year, and helps pay for gas for the longer commute to and from work each day. Hard-to-staff pay alleviates issues found in rural areas.

Our special education students are at a profound disadvantage when they do not have certified special education teachers in the classroom. We have to take steps to ensure our most vulnerable keiki receive the education they deserve. When a special education teacher cannot be found, the students are served by a long term substitute who does not have experience dealing with the intricate nature of special education. Differential pay will help attract and retain more qualified special educators.

Hawaiian immersion teachers are few in number and work tremendously hard to help correct the injustice done by smothering the Hawaiian language and culture for nearly 70 years. These teachers are required to teach in a language with little to no curriculum. If a Hawaiian speaking teacher is not available, students are served by a long term substitute teacher who does not speak Hawaiian. More can be done with increased salary for these hardworking, rare teachers.

A common thread connecting all of these difficult to staff cases is the filling in by long term substitutes. Working at a difficult to staff school, we have several positions held by long term substitutes in both general and special education. Substitute teachers are in short supply, and often enough cannot be found. When substitutes are not available, administrators scramble first to find a substitute, and in the event one is not found must create a backup plan. Teachers are asked to cover classes, take additional students - and ultimately valuable learning time is lost.

We look forward to working with you to solve this teacher shortage crisis. SB2488 is one important step to solve the issues of compression, hard-to-staff areas, and the multitude of difficulties that come with difficulties staffing and low teacher retention.

Please vote yes for SB2488.

Sincerely,

Charmaine Nuesca-Ganer  
Lahaina Intermediate School  
House District 11  
Maui

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 10:04:02 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Pana Kia	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT and THE COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD1, RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2:00 p.m.

Chair person Johanson, Chair person Woodson, and members of the Committees:

My name is Pana Kia. I am a Middle School Math & Science Teacher at Ilima Intermediate in the Leeward District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

I am asking that we 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 plus fringe costs, to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest to fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

We all need your support. Mahalo.

Pana Kia District 44

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 10:07:42 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Christopher Martin	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha

I am a teacher, a head coach and a school event volunteer. I would like to be paid accordingly for the work I put into the youth of Hawaii. My sister-in-law in California teaches 3rd grade. She has worked 10 years less than I have and makes roughly \$10,000 more than me. Her cost of living is much lower than mine, here in Hawaii. I'm a dedicated teacher of more than 20 years. I have coached teenagers for most of those 20 years. Please pass bill SB2488 SD2 for the good of the thousands of teachers like me.

Mahalo

Chris Martin



**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 10:08:32 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Katherine Gopaul	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC  
EMPLOYMENT AND COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION**

**RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION**

**FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020**

**2 P.M.**

**Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:**

**My name is Katherine Gopaul. I am a Middle School Teacher at WHEA PCS (West Hawai'i Explorations Academy PCS) in Kailua-Kona on Hawai'i island. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.**

**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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.**

**I am a divorced, single mother of four who has put herself through college without loans, using merit scholarships, grants and etc. to fund my higher education. Of course good, old fashioned elbow grease and working many jobs supported my endeavors to become an educator. I have been working since the age of nine, first cleaning homes, then babysitting, then McDonalds and so on. I never lost sight of my dream to work in my community to assist in authentically educating our students whether it was through private corporations that worked on a clientele basis with children that have Autism, Aspergers or Angelman syndrome. Next, I continued with the more traditional classrooms found in public**

**education. I am excited to share that currently I am able to truly approach my preferred pedagogy and content of Hawaiian Studies, Language Arts and Leadership via WHEA in cooperation of working with highly accredited colleges like Stanford and our own University of Hawai'i complex. We network with our Hawai'i and global community to bring experts in via huaka'i (field trips), mentorship and technology which enriches and develops engaging educational opportunities for our haumana (students) in project-based, 'aina based and culture based learning.**

**With all that being said, I am a struggling single parent who lives in one of highest cost of living areas for teachers in low income housing that I can barely afford. I eek by and truth be told am in debt just trying to survive the continued yearly increase of necessary medical, food, home, and basic utilities. I am passionate about being an authentic educator but I also want to be able to provide what I have worked hard for all my life, a good, stable life for me and my family. How can I do so with our current financial compensation? The truth is soon I won't be able to. Please know I am real. I am human. I am a mom. I am a teacher. Most of all, know that I request humbly that these monies give back to people like me.**

**We need your help. Mahalo.**

**Katherine Gopaul, Kailua-Kona, HI.**

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 10:09:46 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Sarah Milianta-Laffin	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT and THE COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2, RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2:00 p.m.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and members of the Committees:

My name is Sarah Milianta-Laffin. I am a STEM Lab Teacher at Ilima Intermediate School in the Campbell-Kapolei Complex, Leeward District on O’ahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

It’s 9pm HST on 3/10/2020 and I’m typing this testimony at my kitchen counter. This is pretty normal for me. I do my grading and lesson planning late at night, when most people are sleeping. This isn’t a rare thing; teachers like me 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.

I’m a 14 year public school educator who makes \$49,000. This is the lowest salary of my career. This is less than I made during my 1st year teaching, 14 years ago, in Texas. My entire salary doesn’t even cover our rent, we have little 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 pass funding to fix the teacher salary compression and fund teacher shortage differentials. The current focus of spending \$37+ million on compression and the shortage differentials next year is greatly appreciated, but \$45 million more plus fringe is the amount that's needed to assure the salary adjustments to fix compression happens along with continuing the hard-to-staff, SPED and Hawaiian language immersion shortage differentials. Please make sure teacher compensation is enough to recruit and maintain teachers like me who want to make their homes and serve their communities throughout Hawaii.

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, Teacher

Ilima Intermediate School

Leeward District

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 10:19:03 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Rendall Choy	State of Hawaii DOE	Support	No

Comments:

My name is Mr. Rendall Choy, I have served at McKinley High School for 21 years as a high school special education and science teacher. I am single and am not extravagant or materialistic at all. I use my money to help others and also when hardships beset my family. I currently live status quo with my HELOC to make a living.

This is a good idea to compensate experienced teachers and to have steps that younger teachers will hope to strive to. If years of service do not matter, then young recruited teachers will not make plans to settle down and invest long term.

It would also be very fair to show appreciation to all of the educators who sacrificed to give the keiki of Hawaii (heck even some of your own children) a better future at cost to their own self and families. In a way, we have bore the brunt of some really bad legislative and state decisions that we are not responsible for.

So I ask you to do the right thing... the wise thing.

Mr. Rendall Choy

McKinley High School

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 10:26:48 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Dulcy Dawson	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

My name is **Dulcy Dawson**. I am a **Special Education Teacher** at **West Hawaii Explorations Academy** on Big Island. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

As we look to the future of Hawaii Education it is imperative to provide all students with disabilities the education they deserve by having qualified teachers in these hard to fill areas. It is a human right to have equity in education in Hawaii and it will take bills like this one to provide it.

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 10:28:42 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Richard Toynton	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Richard Toynton. I am a reading teacher at King David Kalakaua Middle School in Kalihi on Oahu where I have been teaching for 10 years. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

Inadequate teacher pay greatly impacts my students and me. As a teacher I have had to quit my second job due to health reasons, which leaves me with a very meager living. My mortgage and maintenance fee for my studio apartment is one entire paycheck, which I don't believe is the norm in most parts of the country. This leaves me with a very strict budget for bills and groceries with nothing left over.

Inadequate teacher pay greatly impacts my students as they don't receive teaching from regular teachers. Teacher retention annually is under 50% at King David Kalakaua Middle School where I work. This means students don't get a consistent education and educators must always adapt, train, and work with new staff.

It is important for Hawaii's public schools to have qualified, experienced teachers without constant turnover or long-term substitutes. Students learn more at schools with less turnover and teachers are free to challenge students academically. Recently at my school there have been so few teachers and substitute teachers that students had to sit during several periods in the cafeteria because there was no teacher to teach them.

We need your help. Mahalo for your consideration.

Richard Toynton, Honolulu district, Oahu





**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 10:52:19 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Allison Daniel	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and members of the Committees:

My name is **Allison Daniel**. I am a **Special Education teacher** at **Lahaina Intermediate School** for the **Hawaii DOE** 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 plus fringe costs, to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest to fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

**Fixing the salary compression issues would be a significant help in remaining a school teacher as the cost of living is extremely high here in Hawaii. Teachers are required to put in a many hours of extra time which makes it challenging to find the time for an extra career. These funds would help my students as they see our school and teachers take more pride in their jobs with a sense of appreciation. We could have classrooms that have adequate school supplies, funds for fixing furniture, and custodial funds for keeping our schools clean. It will also help other teachers from leaving the profession or our state.**

We need your help. Mahalo.

**Allison Daniel**

**Lahaina Intermediate**

**Maui County**

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC  
EMPLOYMENT AND COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

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, SD2.

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 up to 30 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-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 10:54:50 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Mark Gilmore	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Mark Gilmore. I am currently a teacher at Lahaina Intermediate School and have been teaching on Maui for 24 years.

During that time I have only moved up on the pay scale 2 steps twice. I am a single parent

with a teenage daughter. For over a decade I have worked for the department of education and still cannot afford to purchase a home here on Maui. My daughter will be graduating from high school soon and would like to attend college.

Now, along with high rent cost, I will have to live pay check to pay check in order to save what money I can to help pay for her college.

I could have easily stayed on the mainland teaching but chose to do so here in Hawaii. Unfortunately, I feel that I made a bad decision choosing to stay in Hawaii.

By not being compensated for years of teaching experience feels insulting. I have always

been evaluated as a highly qualified teacher but I guess that is only a label. If I had been qualified as any less I would still have received the same pay. So, I work hard to be the best teacher I can be but the state of Hawaii hasn't been compensating experienced

teachers. It is extremely frustrating to have spent so many years here and still not being able

to afford my own home for me and my daughter.

Mark Gilmore

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 10:58:56 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Monica Wilfong	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**Chair Johanson and Chair Woodson,**

**My name is Monica Wilfong and I teach at Lahaina Intermediate School and I have been teaching in Hawaii for the past 12 years for the state of hawaii. I've only taught in Hawaii and I moved here from the mainland. Not too many teachers can say that. I am in strong support of SB2488, SD1.**

**SB2488 provides needed salary adjustments for teachers who have been sacrificing for their students for 23-28 years or more and have not been given the appropriate pay increases through negotiations when there was economic turmoil. These are educators who provide some of the best educational environments and outcomes - who have been bearing fruit for the state for years with less to show for it than they were promised. We are in need of 45 million additional dollars to fund teacher compression, money these valuable public servants were promised, but never delivered. Our veteran teachers deserve better.**

**SB2488 provides salary adjustments to help find teachers in difficult to staff areas. Teachers at rural schools often leave after less than five years, leaving vacancies which are difficult to fill and are often filled by unqualified or underqualified long term substitutes. As a teacher at a hard-to-staff school, the differential pay is incentive to stay at length, makes me confident that more of our staff will be around next year, and helps pay for gas for the longer commute to and from work each day. Hard-to-staff pay alleviates issues found in rural areas.**

**Our special education students are at a profound disadvantage when they do not have certified special education teachers in the classroom. We have to take steps to ensure our most vulnerable keiki receive the education they deserve. When a special education teacher cannot be found, the students are served by a long term substitute who does not have experience dealing with the intricate nature of special education. Differential pay will help attract and retain more qualified special educators.**

**Hawaiian immersion teachers are few in number and work tremendously hard to help correct the injustice done by smothering the Hawaiian language and culture for nearly 70 years. These teachers are required to teach in a language with little to no curriculum. If a Hawaiian speaking teacher is not available, students are served by a long term substitute teacher who does not speak Hawaiian. More can be done with increased salary for these hardworking, rare teachers.**

**A common thread connecting all of these difficult to staff cases is the filling in by long term substitutes. Working at a difficult to staff school, we have several positions held by long term substitutes in both general and special education. Substitute teachers are in short supply, and often enough cannot be found. When substitutes are not available, administrators scramble first to find a substitute, and in the event one is not found must create a backup plan. Teachers are asked to cover classes, take additional students - and ultimately valuable learning time is lost.**

**We look forward to working with you to solve this teacher shortage crisis. SB2488 is one important step to solve the issues of compression, hard-to-staff areas, and the multitude of difficulties that come with difficulties staffing and low teacher retention.**

**Please vote yes for SB2488.**

**Sincerely,**

**Monica Wilfong**

**Lahaina Intermediate School**

**House District 11**

**Maui**

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 11:01:14 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Lorri Sonan	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Lorri Sonan I am a teacher at Mililani Mauka Elementary School in the Central District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 started teaching in 1995. I came into the DOE at a time when there was an overabundance of teachers. I took the first job I was offered, which was in Waianae. A few years into my career times were tight for the state. I was one of the many who went on strike to better the salary for teachers. Like any strike it was a loose loose situation. We lost weeks of pay (which was never made up by the minimal raises we got.

Like all teachers we persevered, but to no avail. Years went by and we received no step increases. At the time I thought nothing of it, until many years later when comparing my spot on the pay scale with a teacher with 15 years less experience than myself. To my surprise, she was only two steps below me. How could that be? I currently have 25 years with the DOE, and am nearing the end of my career. I think it is only fair that those of us with 20+ years of service be compensated for the many years that we were passed over for step increases because of the state's poor economy. Now we are at the other end of the pendulum swing, Hawaii has a teacher shortage. We always talk about raising the starting salary for teachers, but now it is the time to pay those of us who have paid our dues and give us an incentive not to retire. If all of us retire in the next 5 years the teacher shortage will surely hurt our keiki.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Lorri Sonan

Mililani Mauka Elementary

Central



**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 11:01:33 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Colleen Rost-Banik	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments:

Dear Legislators,

I urge you to support SB2488 SD2 as it would be a step in the right direction to assist public school teachers to stay in their jobs. Research shows that the state of Hawai'i ranks last in teacher pay when considering cost of living adjustments. We lose way too many teachers each year simply because teachers cannot afford to stay in the profession. When we have such high teacher turnover and emergency hires, as we do in Hawai'i, student learning suffers. Decreasing teacher salary differentials, which is what SB2488 SD 2 is about, can help more teachers stay in their positions. Of course, this is not enough, but it is a step in the right direction.

Please support SB2488 SD 2.

Sincerely,  
Colleen Rost-Banik  
UH System Lecturer, Honolulu resident

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 11:17:24 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Elizabeth Bowen	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

EMPLOYMENT AND COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

**RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION**

**FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020**

2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Elizabeth Bowen. I am an ELL Teacher at Princess Nahienaena Elementary School in the Lahainaluna Complex on Maui. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 an additional \$45 million plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the

differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I moved to Maui from the Los Angeles Unified School District for the sole purpose of helping to fill the teacher shortage in Hawaii. I was shocked to discover how low teacher salaries are and how they are capped for long term teachers! I can now see why the teacher turnover rate is so extraordinarily high here in Hawaii. It is imperative that the state of Hawaii recognize the value that our educators provide to the children of this glorious state. When I started teaching at my school in 2018 there were 14 NEW teachers!

I work in a hard to staff area in Lahaina, Maui. The cost of living here is so high that most of our teachers cannot live in the area, but must commute for over an hour to our west side school. This differential has made an enormous difference in helping us continue to afford to live here and teach. There are too many teachers moving back to the mainland and our children are severely shortchanged when a long term substitute is placed in their classrooms.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Elizabeth Bowen

Lahainaluna Complex

Maui

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 11:18:09 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Adrienne Pulu	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and members of the Committees:

My name is Adrienne Pulu. I am a 7th grade teacher at Maui Waena Intermediate in Kahului 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 plus fringe costs, to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest to fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

Working in the private sector was much more lucrative for my ohana, BUT not fulfilling. I chose to be an educator to influence young minds to enhance their lives, therefore, positively affecting our community and I have seen the fruits of my and fellow educators labor. In return, we are assessed, observed and scrutinized. I accept it all because the positives outweigh the negatives. I can continue to accept it because I work two jobs and my spouse works overtime. I can continue to accept it because we live with extended family. I can continue to accept it because my in-laws are able to assist with child care. I can continue to accept it because my in-laws help out with bills. It takes 7 adults (5 working, 2 retired) for me to continue making a difference in my students' lives. I consider this a blessing, but in reality we are struggling. You are in a dutiful position to alleviate this struggle for thousands of education professionals state wide! I implore you to make our keiki, the future of Hawai'i top priority by supporting this bill.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Adrienne Pulu, Kahului Maui, Maui Waena Intermediate

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 11:27:17 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Fumi Koizumi-Droge	Individual	Comments	No

Comments:

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is **Fumi Koizumi-Droge**. I am a **Special Education Teacher** at **Kealakehe High in West Hawaii** on **the island of Hawai'i**. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

**The high cost of living has been a concern for my family for some time. We had come close to relocating to the mainland on numerous occasions due to financial reasons, but our deep-rooted connection to the community we serve has motivated us to find ways to remain here longer. When I began receiving the differential pay for Special Education teachers and hard-to-staff schools, it immediately had a huge impact on my family. We are starting to catch up with our bills and have more confidence in our ability to continue living in Hawai'i. This is my second year teaching but I have been a member of this community for over 30 years. I decided to become a public school teacher because of the extreme shortage, however I do not intend to remain in this field at the expense of my family's financial wellbeing.**

**I have built important relationships with my students and their families, and I have a personal interest in making sure that our children have access to quality education. We have lost so many valuable teachers to the mainland because it is just not feasible to remain**

**here given the high cost. Many who remain here rely on secondary sources of income to remain afloat. If we are to speak of valuing education, we need to demonstrate that educators and efforts to retain them are worthwhile causes.**

We need your help. Mahalo.

**Fumi Koizumi-Droge**

**Teacher, Kealakehe High**

**West Hawaii**

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 11:35:45 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Matthew Johnson	HSTA	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Commitee,

I am a teacher at a high school on Oahu. I have been teaching there for over ten years. I enjoy my work, it is both challenging and rewarding. I feel a sense of stisfation from being of service and making an impact on the community that will be felt for generations.

I have four children and I have been financially struggling for the last decade. This year I will file for bankruptcy, something that I am deeply conficted about, in order to keep my family's head above water. We can not get ahead, we can not save for college or a rainy day, the best I can do now for my family's future is cross my fingers and hope. Hope that someday our community will value education enough to provide the compensation in order to entice and hold on to talent who want to dedicate themselves to education.

We all know the value of education, priceless. Would you please honor educators by showing the state of Hawaii that you too honor us and what we do for our community?

Thank you.

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 11:40:24 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Chris	DOE	Support	No

Comments:

**Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:**

**My name is Christopher W. Nepl. I am a 4th Grade teacher at Jefferson Elementary in Kaimuki/McKinley/Roosevelt on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.**

**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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.**

**I am on year 18 of my teaching career timeline. I have taught middle school at Central Middle and currently 4th grade at Jefferson Elementary since 2009. I became a teacher because I enjoy working with kids and teaching them not only academics, but how to be good people. I love what I do.**

**Over the past 18 years of teaching I have had to maintain multiple types of second jobs to supplement my teaching salary to live what I consider a very frugal life in this fiscally challenging economy. Currently, I do not have a second job, but am reconsidering to increase my income to be able to save for things like a car, a home of my own, and retirement. In addition to a second job, I have also had to have roommates for the past 18 years because I can't afford my own place. At the beginning of this school year I had to temporarily move in with family.**

**I have done everything I can do from my end to increase my salary. I have earned my masters degree back in 2011 from the University of Hawaii at Manoa and paid for it out of my own pocket. I have taken the maximum amount of professional development classes, paying for these too, with my money. These achievements have placed me at the highest class (7) on the pay scale, yet stuck**



on step 11 (highest 14B), because this is negotiated by our contract (compression). I just moved to step 11 quarter 2 of this school year. Prior to this I was stuck on steps 9 and 10 for years. My years of service should have me at or close to the top of the pay scale at 14b. Studies show that highly qualified veteran teachers like myself, who have put in the years of class time with students and professional development, are more effective in the classroom. This work I have done the past eighteen years has increased my value in the classroom. For years I have done the work, and have felt undervalued as a professional. All I want is to feel valued for the professional that I have become through my own hard work over eighteen years. I am a valuable highly qualified veteran teacher who would love to stay in the classroom to focus my expertise and energies on my students. I can only do this to the best of my abilities if I remain a teacher only, and not have to have a second job. I will do what I must to get ahead financially, but I don't want to at the stake of my students' education. Please provide the necessary funding to put valuable, highly qualified veteran teachers like me where they belong, at the top of the pay scale, remaining in the classroom, without second jobs.

**We need your help. Mahalo.**

**Christopher W. Neppi-18 Years of Service**

**Kaimuki/McKinley/Roosevelt**

**Oahu**

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 11:56:16 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Florence Tavares	HSTA	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Florence Tavares. I am a teacher at Wilcox Elementary in Lihue on Kauai. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they

should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

A single mom of 2 sons, one a full time college student, a solution to the teacher salary compression issue will be a great help for me financially. We know that the cost of living in Hawaii is a struggle especially on a single income. On more occasions than one, I have used personal funds to enhance my students learning and to provide necessary supplies for certain lessons. Though a personal choice, as a dedicated teacher I strive to provide the best instruction that I am able to even if that means making sacrifices as such.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Sincerely,

Florence Tavares, Lihue, Kauai

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 11:59:46 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
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-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 12:04:53 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Debra Yamakawa	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Honorable Chair Person Johanson and Honorable Chair Person Woodson,

I am asking your support for SB2488 SD2. I had worked at Waianae High school for 3 year, left there to work in Pearl City for 6 years, and returned to work on the coast and am currently working at Nanakuli High and Intermediate school.

I decided to leave Pearl City primarily because of the traffic. I enjoy working with the students at Nanakuli High, but it definitely is more of a challenge working out on the coast. The continuous turnover of teachers and counselors makes it difficult to move the school forward. The Hard to Staff differential will help our schools retain good teachers and counselors. I think it is very important for students to have a diverse group of teachers and staff, and not just have teachers only from this community. The coast community has improved, but we need a diverse faculty to help students develop a growth mindset.

Although I enjoy working with our students, as a School Counselor, working with new teachers every year is a challenge. I often am working to assist new teaches and staff, or listening to their challenges. It generally takes a teacher 3-5 years to become skilled in classroom management and adapt to the needs of our students and their legal guardians.

I left Waianae High School because there wasn't a position available at that time that I could get tenured in. I was the Accreditation Coordinator, which was an enormous challenge there because of the high rate of turnover. Every year I had a third of the staff that I had to educate on Accreditation and why it was important to the school to be accredited.

My experience working in Pearl City was much more positive, primarily due to the lower turnover rate. The challenge working at Palisade Elementary school was the limited funding we received because we were a small school.

The previous hard to fill bonus of \$3000 barely covered gas and maintenance on my car. This amount is not enough of an incentive to remain working on the coast, especially since we receive it with our paycheck which results in half of it being taken out for taxes.

I am asking for your support for SB2488 SD2, which I believe will improve the quality of education for our students.

Sincerely,

Debra Yamakawa, School Counselor / Tech Coordinator

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 12:15:00 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Jason Sahara	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Jason Sahara. I am a **teacher** at **Kailua High on Oahu**. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

I've witnessed many teachers leave the profession over the last decade. Teacher salaries are too low to continue teaching relative to the cost of living. We are often data driven in decision making. The data shows the average home price over the last 8 years has risen over 40% in Hawaii. Teachers have endured furloughs and frozen pay steps and we've finally hit a breaking point. There's been a negative rate of available teachers since 2012 and the number has grown to roughly 1200 substitute or unqualified teachers across the state. We cannot realistically expect our Keiki to get a quality education taught by those without a background in teaching. As the cost of living climbs and teachers continue to be left behind and forced out of teaching the situation will only become more problematic. Let's put an end to this now. Please support the funding we are asking.

Mahalo,

**Jason Sahara, Windward, Oahu**

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 12:16:27 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Nina Buchanan	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Teachers produce the future!! They are under valued in our greedy culture that highly values making money and gathering followers on social media. As a long time educator, first of students in k-12 and then for thirty years preparing new teachers and providing experienced teachers with professional development, I felt sorry for my students who worked hard in our rigorous teacher preparation program when I realized that teachers in Hawaii simply can't live on a teacher's salary. Many of my brightest students either never entered the profession or left it to work for TSA or the Fire Department or other careers that enabled them to support a family.

It is way past time to pay Hawaii teachers what they are worth!!

Don't forget that teachers in charter schools are public school teachers too so MUST be included in any compensation package.



**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 12:17:45 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Beate Arendale	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

My name is Beate Arendale. I am an AP Literature teacher at King Kekaulike High School in 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 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 the bill provides to do so. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been working as an English teacher in the DOE since 1997 and have attended 5 Advanced Placement Workshops to help our gifted students receive the college credit they deserve by scoring well on the AP exam. Over the years, I have used my own funds to buy school supplies and pay for workshops to improve my teaching strategies. In addition, I have mentored two student teachers at King Kekaulike High School. One of these teachers now works at Kihei Charter School while the other student teacher moved to the mainland because the teacher salary was too low on Maui. Please help retain teachers by providing them with enough compensation to be able to make a living wage in Hawaii.

March 12, 2020

House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Representative Aaron Ling Johanson, Chair  
Representative Stacelynn K.M. Eli, Vice Chair

House Committee on Lower & Higher Education  
Representative Justin H. Woodson, Chair  
Representative Mark J. Hashem, Vice Chair  
Representative Sean Quinlan, Vice Chair

State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Aloha Committee Members,

I am a teacher at Waiʻanae Intermediate School and I am proud to support SB2488 SD2 because the hard-to-staff teaching differential has directly impacted my own financial stability, as well as my ability to support my students. Many of my students experience traumas outside of school that have an extreme impact on their learning in school. For these reasons, it is important that there are qualified and caring teachers who serve the populations of students in the most difficult areas. Often times, school is the only safe space for these youth. I fully support the designation of funds for teacher compensation because it will mean I can be more focused on my students instead of on finances, and more qualified teachers will be incentivized to teach in our areas.

As educators, we are tasked with creating a learning environment that can effectively meet the needs of all students. However, it is a disservice to our most vulnerable groups of students when they are not given fully dedicated and prepared teachers, and those teachers who are trained/experienced still fight to afford the high cost of living in Hawaiʻi. I support SB2488 SD2 because it will contribute to increased support for educators in high need areas, allowing for students to gain the most from their education, and promote healthier school communities overall.

Mahalo,



Alike Masei

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 12:52:33 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Shawn Kimball	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and members of the Committees:

My name is **Shawn Kimball**. I am a **Teacher** at **Pearl City High School** in the **Leeward 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 plus fringe costs, to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest to fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

As a high school teacher and a lead CTE teacher of an academy I work very hard and many hours beyond the normal work day than many other teachers do. I do not feel that I am adequately compensated and have been looking for other jobs so that I may return to industry. Having taught in the HI DOE since 2007 I have a lot of experience; my husband and I both have degrees, he started his current job two years ago and he makes 35% more than I do! And he has reasonable job duties! Teachers are overworked and always being asked to do more without additional compensation. It's time to make teaching a respected profession; it's time to change the culture of the value of education in Hawaii; it's time to pay your dedicated, well educated, and mistreated public school teachers a competitive professional wage.

Some day soon I hope that when I tell someone I'm a teacher that they smile and look impressed instead of cringe and say they're sorry for me. Some day soon I hope that I can smile when a student tells me that they want to be a teacher. However, until our profession is recognized as such monetarily, students will continue to pass up this high demand job because of it's low pay, poor work conditions, and mediocre benefits.

We need your help. Mahalo.

**Shawn Kimball, Leeward, Oahu**

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 1:08:24 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Leslie Okoji	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT and THE COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION**

**RE: SB 2488, SD1, RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION  
FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020, 2:00 p.m.**

**Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and members of the Committees:**

**My name is Leslie Okoji. I live 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 plus fringe costs, to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest to fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.**

**Our experienced and veteran educators deserve fair compensation. We need to value them AND place importance on continuing the quality of education our keiki receive.**

**We need your help. Mahalo.  
Leslie Okoji, Pearl City, Oahu**



**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 1:09:50 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Rebecca Kapolei Kiili	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

Aloha mai e Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members,

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 SD2.

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 Kiili, Maui**

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 1:21:08 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Meicha D'Auria	Individual	Support	No

**Comments:**

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and members of the Committees:

My name is Meicha D'Auria. I am a highly qualified, 7th grade 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 plus fringe costs, to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest to fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

In my own personal experience, I willingly took a \$10,000+ annual pay cut to relocate to Hawaii because I loved it people so much. As time has gone on and the cost of living has increased (student loans have not lessened, and life continues to get more expensive), I have had to continuously come back to the idea that I may need to return to the mainland so I can climb out of the debt that living here has incurred. That is so far from what I want to do! The people, culture and island itself has welcomed me the past 4 years, and I hoped to raise my family here. As time has progressed, I have watched as so many highly qualified teachers have had to relocate due to vast differences in pay and support (which is largely due to how staff are spread so thin to cover gaps of ability level). If our wages acknowledged the great impact that experience has on a teacher and their classroom, then perhaps we might be able to maintain experienced and knowledgeable teachers in the classroom. As it stands now, there are WAY too many substitutes that while they have the heart for it, do not possess the training and experience that is vital for our children to learn and have a positive educational experience. In most cases it is simply babysitting, while another experienced teacher must take on the workload, causing even more teachers to be spread thin.

The reality is, our keiki are our future! They are who will be making the legislative decisions, caring for us all in our old age, managing our banks, building our homes. If they are not equipped with all the tools and opportunities they need to succeed, then as the adults we will have failed them immensely and we will reap what we have sown into them (or the lack

thereof). I know many great educators that if given incentive, would be able to not only remain but personally develop themselves thru more in-depth degrees and classes so our own classrooms might be ever more efficient.

This is not a matter of individual greed; far from it! We only ask for our wages to increase with that of the cost of living, so that we might all benefit from our keiki being given the best possible free and appropriate education they all have a right to receive.

We need your help. Mahalo for your time and consideration,

**Meicha D'Auria, Island of Maui**

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 1:26:57 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Jasmine Inman	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC  
EMPLOYMENT AND COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Jasmine Inman. I am an Early Childhood Special Education teacher at Pearl Harbor Kai Elementary School in Central District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and finding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I was born and raised in Hawaii, and I would love to stay here in the islands. My desire is to raise my family here, as well. Although my husband is from Oregon, he considers Oahu his home, and has no desire to move back to the mainland. However, his whole family is still in Oregon, and his parents desperately want us to move there. They keep insisting that the cost of living in Hawaii is much too expensive, and that home prices are significantly cheaper in Oregon. And they're right.

It's very difficult making ends meet in Hawaii, especially when you consider that the dollar stretches farther on the mainland. Most of my husband's peers in Oregon own homes and have large properties. We don't need a big house or even an acre or two, but the pay differentials will definitely help us in our efforts to stay here. I love my job,

and I love my island home, and I want to be able to stay in Hawaii forever, not just as long as we can afford it.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Jasmine Inman, Central District, Oahu

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 1:30:01 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Maile Kawabata	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**Hello, my name is Maile Kawabata and I am a high school math teacher, currently at Castle High School, previously at Kalaheo High School. I absolutely love my job! I feel like this is what I was created to do with my life. Having dealt with struggles in my own adolescence, I understand the challenges many of my students face, juggling home and school life. In the five years I have been teaching, there has been tremendous turnover among teachers, and especially high in the math department. Some of my students have had 3 math teachers throughout one school year; others have had 5 teachers over 3 school years. This constant change is detrimental to their development. There is no consistency as well as significant trouble with motivation and purpose. In addition to the challenges for students, the added pressure on the teachers who have remained stable increases work load and stress levels. One of my colleagues spent her prep periods teaching other classes since the substitutes had little experience with the content being covered. I support SB2488 and hope funding will be found to support our education system and our teachers. We are continuing to support our children regardless of the challenges we face.**

**Thank you for your attention.**

**Maile Kawabata**

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 1:31:08 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Kathleen Jean Keenan	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

As a current special education teacher, this differential has allowed me to continue to live and serve Maui. Without it, the cost of living exceeds my budget to survive without multiple jobs. Currently, I am able to dedicate myself to being an effective teacher and to grow professionally.

**From:** Nohea Goo <ngoo@hawaii.edu>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 12:51 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND  
COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION**

**RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION**

**FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020**

**2 P.M.**

**Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:**

**My name is Nohea Goo. I am a 7th Grade Math Teacher at Dole Middle School in Honolulu on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.**

**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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.**

**I have been a teacher for 18 years at Dole Middle School. I currently live with my mom because it is the only way I can financially survive given my salary. I spend hundreds of dollars a year on my students buying them pencils, pens, folder paper, composition books, and treats. My current car is 16 years old, the automatic locks don't work, and there is no air conditioning but I cannot afford to fix it. I knew coming into the profession that I was not going to be a millionaire but with paying back student loans, buying everyday necessities, and supplying my classroom it has been a financial struggle. I have a master's degree, and am in class 7. I take vacations during the school year because it is cheaper than traveling when I am off from school. I believe that the State of Hawaii should invest in the people who invest in the future.**

**We need your help. Mahalo.**

**Nohea Goo**



**7th Grade Math Teacher**

**Dole Middle School**

**Honolulu**

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 1:32:30 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Waynele Yu	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing to submit testimony in support of SB2488 SD2 to be heard on March 13, 2pm. I submit this testimony as a concerned community member, graduate student and educator who works in a state approved teacher education program at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UHM). Teacher retention is a big problem within the Hawai'i DOE. Each year, the number of teachers that leave the HIDOE exceed the number of teachers graduating from state approved teacher education programs by more than 400%. This makes it impossible for teacher preparation programs to meet the needs of the state. Research shows that student performance worsens when teacher salaries are low and teachers leave for higher paying professions. In my work at UHM, I've seen a significant number of our program graduates leave the HIDOE for higher paying positions in private schools. So in addition to leaving for higher paying professions, the HIDOE is losing qualified teachers to higher paying schools. What makes this an even bigger problem, is the fact that the teacher shortage is an equity issue. It affects schools with higher percentages of Native Hawaiians, Filipino Americans and other Pacific Islanders on the Wai'anae coast of O'ahu, Lahaina and Hana on Maui; Honoka'a, Kealakehe, Konawaena and Kohala on Hawai'i island, Moloka'i and Lāna'i. This bill provides a great opportunity for the state to start addressing inequities in our education system. We need to acknowledge the positive contributions teachers make to our schools and communities by paying them a livable wage that won't require them to work 2nd or 3rd jobs just to make ends meet in Hawai'i. Although I believe teacher salaries in general deserve an increase, this bill is needed to address inequities our students experience every day in public schools. I am submitting my testimony to urge you to take the step to move public education in this state in a positive direction by passing SB2488 SD2.

Mahalo for listening.

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 1:34:22 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Jeremiah Ellard	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha, I am a teacher at Lahaina Intermediate School and am writing in support of this bill because it is essential for the future success of our schools. Teachers in the Lahaina area have a hard time finding anywhere to live based on the salaries we make and the high cost and lack of available housing. The hard to staff differentials we have received so far are a huge help and I am feeling very encouraged with the interest our governor and state representatives have shown in us lately. Please continue to support our teachers and keiki so that we can continue to be prosperous long into the future.

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 1:35:15 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Lisa Morrison	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Honorable Chair and members of the Committee,

My name is Lisa Morrison. I am a teacher at Maui Waena Intermediate on Maui. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, proposed SD2.

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 more than this bill provides to do so. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I won't personally profit from these, because I am at a step that corresponds to my years of service with the department, but it is unfair that teachers with 15 more years of service than myself are only 2 steps above me on the pay scale. I believe this needs to be remedied, and it's not enough to say we will only do it some of it. ALL of the inequity needs to be addressed.

We need to end the teacher shortage crisis by keeping the wonderful, qualified teachers we have.

Mahalo,

Lisa Morrison, Maui Waena Intermediate

## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Michelle Abad <michelle.abad@k12.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 12:53 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Michelle Abad. I am a Teacher at Lahainaluna High School in the Canoe Complex on Maui. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

In Lahaina, one in three housing units are rental properties. This makes it difficult for residents to find decent housing at an affordable price. I grew up on the other side of the island but moved to Lahaina when I became a teacher at Lahainaluna High School. I have grown to love the community I live and work at and it has been important for me to establish myself in Lahaina. However, with the rising costs and limited housing options, moving back to the other side to live and work has become more and more tempting each year.

I have been very appreciative of the recent pay differentials offered to Lahaina teachers for multiple reasons. First, this will not only allow us to fill the hard to staff positions that have remained open year after year, but will provide more stability for our schools in Lahaina as teachers who currently work there would be more willing to stay. Second, the recent differentials have made it possible for me to afford a home in Lahaina making the temptation to live and work on the other side less likely. Average costs of homes in Lahaina are significantly higher than other parts of Maui. I recently applied to Kahoma Homes in Lahaina through the community land trust program, Na Hale o Maui, and needed to make a certain income to meet income guideline requirements in order to apply. The pay differential made that opportunity available to me.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Michelle Abad

Lahainaluna High School

Canoe Complex, Maui District

### **Michelle Abad**

Lahainaluna High School - Math Department

(808) 662 - 4000 ext. 290

[michelle.abad@k12.hi.us](mailto:michelle.abad@k12.hi.us)

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## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Amy Colmenares <mrscolmenares7@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 1:00 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and Committee Members:

My name is Amy Colmenares. I am a teacher at Highlands Intermediate School in the Leeward District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

I am not one to frivolously send emails and rarely ever take part in the politics involved with my profession, but I would like you to understand why funding salary compensation for veteran teachers is a worthwhile expense. This is my 20th year with the Hawaii DOE and I don't intend to leave teaching for a long while. I love what I do and after 20 years, I can definitely see and appreciate the impact of the veteran teachers who mentored me and inspired me. These teachers never gave up, even through years of great disrespect to the profession. My very first year in the classroom was the year of the teachers' strike, and later I experienced the hardships of Furlough Fridays. I, however, have not had to endure the hardships my veteran teachers have had to. They deserve to be honored and compensated for their years of dedication and service. It almost seems a slap in the face to these veteran teachers as they see the compensation bonuses and increase in pay for teachers with far less years of service.

My husband is also a teacher, and my daughter, who is in the 4th grade, aspires to be a teacher as well. I have many family members and friends who are also teachers, and I recognize the hard work, dedication, sacrifice, and perseverance it takes to be a teacher. Please consider our request for fund and fix the teacher salary compression issue.

Sincerely,  
Amy Colmenares  
Leeward District  
Oahu

**From:** Richard Stange <richardstng83@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 1:01 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND  
COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Richard Stange. I am an English Language Arts teacher at Mililani Middle School in Central District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I roommate with two other relatives. We all work full time, and I technically work two jobs. If it was not for my relatives, I would not be able to afford to do what I love to do (teach) in Hawaii. I would have to move somewhere else, because the cost of living is just too high to be sustained on a teacher's salary. After earning three college degrees and a state license, I have earned the right to be able to afford an apartment, yet my salary does not reflect the time and work I put into my credentials or the time and work that I put into the responsibilities of the job, such as planning and grading on weekends. Since I plan and grade on weekends, I hectically work seven days per week. All teachers, even first year general ed teachers, need a living wage. Our wage not only starves us into working multiple jobs, which the consequence is that we cannot put out all into teaching; but it also does not help recruiting new teachers.



We need your help. Mahalo.

**Richard Stange, Central, Oahu**

## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Patty Gorski <pgorski@kkhs.k12.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 1:05 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

Aloha, my name is Patty Gorski, and I am a teacher of special education at Kekaulike High School on Maui. I came to Hawaii in 2012 from Connecticut, where I had been teaching special education for 3 years.

Living in Hawaii is amazing, and teaching Hawaii's youth has become my passion as I work to provide an education that enhances their own self esteem and goals for the future. But living and teaching in Hawaii is not without its pitfalls.

I came to Hawaii making Masters level pay, having graduated with two Bachelor's degrees, and was promised the same level upon arriving. That promise was not delivered. I was a class 2 teacher making \$10,000 less than what I was making in Connecticut. It took me over 5 years of teaching in Hawaii to get back to my Connecticut pay level via coursework and PD classes that I paid for out of pocket.

With the SB2488 \$10,000 differential pay for teaching special education, I am finally making a living wage in Hawaii. I am finally in a position where I am not living paycheck to paycheck and going into debt every month with miscellaneous expenses. I am still not in a position to be able to go back to the east coast of the mainland to visit my family, who I have seen 3 times in 8 years.

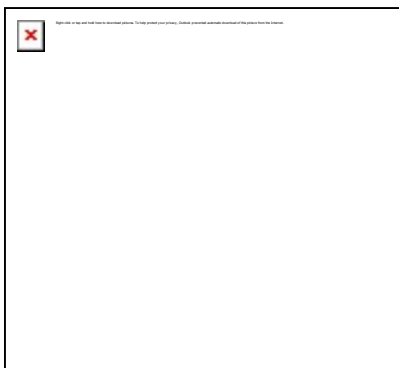
Recently, my son's father and I separated. If it had not been for that differential, I would have most likely had to leave the island to afford life. If not for the differential, I had considered leaving teaching altogether. This extra \$10,000 a year has kept a 10 year teaching vet with master's level education IN THE CLASSROOM where I am needed.

If you walk into any one of my 6 classes, you could see the obvious benefits of having a teacher with ample experience and education who loves teaching. If I were still pushed to my financial limits, I would have had to leave this profession entirely due to the stress of not being able to afford to pay my own rent and grocery bills. Homeless and hungry teachers are most certainly not what Hawaii needs.

This \$10,000 differential could make or break so many other teachers in my position. If the state does not care to spend the money to keep its experienced teachers, the students and the islands themselves will continue to suffer. If we are not preparing students with skills and the love and care they need while in school, we are only contributing to their own struggles later in life. We will continue to lose the teachers who build up the islands if we do not choose to fairly compensate them.

Thank you for your time.

Patty Gorski  
Special Education Teacher  
King Kekaulike HS  
11 & 12 Career and Life Planning



**From:** Agnes Yamauchi <agnes.yamauchi@k12.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 1:19 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Cc:** Yamanaka, Rae  
**Subject:** TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT and THE COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATIONRE: SB 2488, SD1, RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATIONFRIDAY, MARCH 13, 20202:00 p.m.

RE: SB 2488, SD1, RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2:00 p.m.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and members of the Committees:

My name is **Agnes Yamauchi**. I am a **Counselor at Hilo High School in Hilo, HI 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 plus fringe costs, to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest to fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

**There is no other profession that will impact the future, as teaching, yet, our starting pay is considered within the "poverty range." How is that possible? It is so shocking to see how much of a responsibility a school has been given to raise all children. Parents are too busy or just don't care, whatever the reason, the school is parenting the child. If that is not true, then why are we held accountable for a child, when the parents are not? Regardless, this is an expectation placed upon the school- teachers especially! Yet, we are not fairly compensated for this responsibility. The school is expected to make ends meet, get supplies etc, and meet the needs of EVERY child - NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND! So, how do teachers make it, you may ask? Most teachers have some kind of second job. I am a Driver Education Instructor, and that helps to alleviate some financial demands. What does that look like in regards to my days? I'm in school all day and then I spend another 2- 3 hrs either in class or on the road. My day may end at 5 or 6 pm. Behind the wheel can also occur on weekends and holidays, depending when the students are free to schedule lessons. This means that on a regular school day, I have a 10 hr day! Do any other professions do this to themselves? We are losing teachers every year. Our local students**

**don't want to be teachers, and if they do, they won't be able to make it here without the increase in pay. This is leading to a break down of our future. As teachers, we worry about the future of our keiki, our communities, and state. As Legislatures, you should too!**

We need your help. Mahalo.

**Agnes Yamauchi**

**Hilo High School Counselor**

**Hilo, HI**

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## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Amber Fontes <arf22@hawaii.edu>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 1:33 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Amber Fontes. I am a Teacher at Kohala Middle School in Kohala on the Big Island. I am submitting testimony in support of SB2488, SD2

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

Fixing the salary compression issue and differentials will greatly help me to remain a teacher in this small community because it would help me to be able to pay for my housing and essentials. Housing in this small community (Kohala) is very expensive and very limited. As it is, right now I am staying at teacher housing but I will be forced to leave as my term of 3 years is up (at the end of this school year.) By fixing the compression issue and differentials I will be able to purchase (or rent) a home to stay in this community and live and work in this community that I love.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Amber Fontes, Kohala, Big Island

## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Hana Mauldin <hanamauldin@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 1:41 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Hana Mauldin. I am a kindergarten teacher at Mountain View Elementary in the Keaau District on Hawai'i Island. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. 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.

Hana Mauldin

Keaau District, Hawaii Island.

**From:** Jan Mori <morijan32@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 1:51 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND  
COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Jan Mori. I am a grade 3 classroom teacher and department chairperson at Wheeler Elementary School in Central Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

In my 27 years of teaching, the early third of my experience was at Ma'ili Elementary School. While DOE recruiting new teachers from the mainland was helpful, they would only stay a year! The cost of living here and culture shock at the typical lifestyle of a Leeward coast resident was not offset with enough incentive to stay longer than that. Many of those teachers were special education certified, which doubled the loss of qualified educators in the area. I am pleased that you are taking a serious look into compensating teachers for the hard work they do, especially in the field of special education as well as the coast schools.

In those early years, I didn't know what it meant to teach without a contract, though we did so for several years. I was just thankful for having a job right out of college. But now, after 27 years, I realize that Compression greatly affects me. There are younger teachers that have the same

pay scale as me, Class 7, Step 13, who have not only benefitted from the higher base salary that I earned (low \$20K) but are enjoying the same current salary I have now, with half of the years of service.

As of now, I am looking to retire as soon as I can, which is at least 5 years away; although I reach my 30-year service soon, I have to wait until 55 years of age for my full pension, that I sorely need. IF I can afford to retire even then. I'm divorced, and my ex-husband expects me to keep up payments for 2 more years a private mainland college for my older son when his college savings would only afford UH and living at home. I was never asked if I could afford a mainland school, there were no restrictions on where my son "could" attend college. I am even more worried for my younger son, in a private high school here, and where he might want to go for college... I didn't expect to be divorced, and certainly never dreamed that my ex-husband (project manager with a Master's degree in engineering, project manager at a private civil firm) would refuse to acknowledge that I cannot afford to pay the same as he can, as a single parent who pays nor receives alimony nor child support, while he gets annual bonuses and raises.

I know that you are always told how hard teachers work. I am not ashamed to share my weekly schedule with you. I rise at 5, drive 20 miles to school from an old apartment building on Pali Hwy (it has metal pipes, walls and flooring just like my classroom, so it feels like I live in school). After a full day of teaching, which includes probably one restroom break because I stay in to help students that need more time, I am able to leave around 4:00, but that also means an hour of commute time, so I stay in school till around 5:00 to waste less gas. Saturdays are busy with driving 15 miles to visit my 84 year-old mom in her care home, making sure my 86 year-old dad is OK at his residence, and then going back to school to do more paperwork, either for my class or for the 3rd grade department chair position, because I'm close to school and again want to avoid traffic jams back to home.

I am pre-diabetic, have borderline high blood pressure, and have no family that I can rely on if I get hurt or sick. I get monthly "bills" from my ex-husband for my children's expenses that I never gave consent for, such as brand new iPhones or the registration fee for the Honolulu Marathon! He refuses to let me know what expenses are coming up so I can try to save for them, and blames me for not "wanting" to do my fair share of whatever he decides to spend.

Please, I hope that my honesty is helpful in realizing that teachers will sacrifice a LOT for everyone else before even thinking about ourselves. ANYTHING the committee decides they can do to help us WILL be appreciated.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Ms. Jan Mori

Grade 3, Wheeler Elementary School



Central Oahu district

## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Cristy Athan <crisathan@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 1:56 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony for SB 2488 SD2

Dear Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members,

Aloha! My name is Cristy Athan. I am a teacher at Kohala Middle School on Hawaii Island. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

I would like to request 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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I moved to Hawaii from teaching in California and took a significant pay cut of thousands of dollars to teach in this wonderful state. I have lived here for 17 years and am in my last decade of teaching. I am still not at the top of the salary schedule due to the way the department of education has it set up. I work an extra job to supplement my income and any help to adjust the salary would be a welcome relief for me. The best way I see moving forward to solve this problem is to properly fund the profession of education and give the teachers a just salary for the hard work they do for the children and the entire community. The proposed changes are the first time I have seen hope for an improvement in conditions for our teachers. I hope you can look at this proposal and see the unity of vision from the teachers, superintendent and the board and realize the positive impact this will have for generations to come.

Mahalo for your consideration of this important proposal.

Cristy Athan, Hawaii Island

## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Kainoa Arensdorf <kainoaa@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 1:59 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Kainoa M. Arensdorf I am a School Counselor at Mountain View Elementary in Keaau Kau Pahoia School District on Hawaii island. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of school Counseling our keiki.

Ten years ago I chose to move from Maui to Hawaii island due to the cost of living increase and my pay not high enough to rent or buy a place on my own. This is my 15th year, and since receiving the shortage differential this past January, I have \$100 more a month to spend on better food, house electric bill, rewards/supply for my students, gas for home visits (which I don't get reimbursed for), as well, as pay for other necessities I have needed to live on my own. My entire family lives on Maui and I am unable to purchase a home or rent to live on my own. In 2009, I was finding myself "grocery shopping" and doing my laundry at my parents house while struggling to pay rent to live on my own. Please support this bill to help struggling teachers like myself, want to continue being in this profession and enjoy what we do.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Kainoa M. Arensdorf  
School Counselor  
Mountain View Elementary  
KKP District Hawaii

**From:** Ioane Noga <kumu.ioanenoga@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 2:08 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Please fully fund compression and differentials support SB 2488 SD2

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Joshua Noga. I am a **8th grade US History teacher** at **Kailua Intermediate School** in Windward District on **Oahu island**. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I am a graduate of our states Grow Our Own program and I am worried that if you don't fully fund compression and differentials for increasing teacher pay my cohort classmates may seek to teach outside of Hawaii after their three obligation is completed. Teachers deserve fair pay and fully funding compression and differentials will be the first step toward making this happen. Mahalo for your time.



**eli2 - Kevin**

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**From:** David Kaniaupio <david.kaniaupio@hawks.k12.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 2:12 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in capitol.hawaii.gov

To whom it may concern,

My name is David Kaniaupio and I have been a social studies teacher for 4 years in hard to staff Nanakuli High and Intermediate School. My family and I struggle to exist on a teacher's salary even with the hard to staff bonus. Losing it would put a tremendous amount of stress on our single income family. Please support SB2488 and continue to fund the hard to staff differential.

Thank you,

David Kaniaupio

--

David Kaniaupio  
US History  
D203

"But it ain't about how hard you hit. It's about how hard you can get hit and keep moving forward." ~Rocky Balboa

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC  
EMPLOYMENT AND COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

March 12, 2020

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Neva Masuoka. I am a first-grade teacher at Mokulele Elementary School in Central District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been a teacher for 30 years and have gone through hard times in the state. I would like to be able to retire in the next year or two in a comfortable lifestyle. At the current time, this might not be possible without the passing of this bill fully funded. Taxes and Inflation will always be biting at the pay means that I will never be secure to retire. Everyone deserves a rainbow at the end, I would like to be one.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Neva Masuoka  
Central District  
Oahu

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and Members of the Committees:

My name is Darryl K Munetake. I am a Registrar at Lahaina Intermediate 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 plus fringe costs, to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest to fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I've been at Lahaina Intermediate School since 1985 and I drive to school daily from Wailuku because I love the community that I work in. I like other teachers at our school sacrifice a lot of time travelling to school and back because we feel that our presence adds consistency to the quality of education our students deserve.

I've seen so many teachers come to teach at our school and then the reality strikes, not in the job of teaching our students, but in the realization of our extremely high cost of living on Maui.

Our students currently have substitute teachers filling in for a position that cannot be filled due to fact that teachers cannot make ends meet on their meager salaries.

The differentials that we have been given has boosted moral but the reality is that without this additional pay, we are going to lose a bunch of teachers because it affects their livelihood and it's a struggle to make ends meet, even though they love the job being a teacher.

The bottom line is that OUR STUDENTS are suffering because we cannot fill positions with HIGHLY QUALIFIED teachers and pay is definitely an issue. In fact many of our teachers have part time jobs so they can afford to live and work in Lahaina and service the educational needs of our Keiki.

Please support SB 2488,SD1.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Darryl K Munetake- Lahaina Intermediate School- Maui District



Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and Members of the Committees:

My name is Darryl K Munetake. I am a Registrar at Lahaina Intermediate 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 plus fringe costs, to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest to fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

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Please support SB 2488,SD1.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Darryl K Munetake- Lahaina Intermediate School- Maui District

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and Members of the Committees:

My name is Darryl K Munetake. I am a Registrar at Lahaina Intermediate School in the Maui District. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

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Please support SB 2488,SD1.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Darryl K Munetake- Lahaina Intermediate School- Maui District

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and Members of the Committees:

My name is Darryl K Munetake. I am a Registrar at Lahaina Intermediate School in the Maui District. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

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Please support SB 2488,SD1.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Darryl K Munetake- Lahaina Intermediate School- Maui District

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and Members of the Committees:

My name is Darryl K Munetake. I am a Registrar at Lahaina Intermediate 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 plus fringe costs, to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest to fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

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Please support SB 2488,SD1.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Darryl K Munetake- Lahaina Intermediate School- Maui District

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Our students currently have substitute teachers filling in for a position that cannot be filled due to fact that teachers cannot make ends meet on their meager salaries.

The differentials that we have been given has boosted moral but the reality is that without this additional pay, we are going to lose a bunch of teachers because it affects their livelihood and it's a struggle to make ends meet, even though they love the job being a teacher.

The bottom line is that OUR STUDENTS are suffering because we cannot fill positions with HIGHLY QUALIFIED teachers and pay is definitely an issue. In fact many of our teachers have part time jobs so they can afford to live and work in Lahaina and service the educational needs of our Keiki.

Please support SB 2488,SD1.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Darryl K Munetake- Lahaina Intermediate School- Maui District

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and Members of the Committees:

My name is Darryl K Munetake. I am a Registrar at Lahaina Intermediate 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 plus fringe costs, to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest to fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I've been at Lahaina Intermediate School since 1985 and I drive to school daily from Wailuku because I love the community that I work in. I like other teachers at our school sacrifice a lot of time travelling to school and back because we feel that our presence adds consistency to the quality of education our students deserve.

I've seen so many teachers come to teach at our school and then the reality strikes, not in the job of teaching our students, but in the realization of our extremely high cost of living on Maui.

Our students currently have substitute teachers filling in for a position that cannot be filled due to fact that teachers cannot make ends meet on their meager salaries.

The differentials that we have been given has boosted moral but the reality is that without this additional pay, we are going to lose a bunch of teachers because it affects their livelihood and it's a struggle to make ends meet, even though they love the job being a teacher.

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The bottom line is that OUR STUDENTS are suffering because we cannot fill positions with HIGHLY QUALIFIED teachers and pay is definitely an issue. In fact many of our teachers have part time jobs so they can afford to live and work in Lahaina and service the educational needs of our Keiki.

Please support SB 2488,SD1.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Darryl K Munetake- Lahaina Intermediate School- Maui District

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 1:49:28 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Mim Kelihoomalua	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**Dear Chair Johansen, Chair Woodson, and members of the Committees:**

**My name is Mim-Louise Keli'ihō'omalua, I am a middle school teacher at Maui Waena Intermediate School in Kahului, Maui. I am also a parent of a Hawaiian Immersion kindergarten student that attends Pā'ā'ia Elementary Hawaiian Immersion in Pā'ā'ia, Maui. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488 SD2.**

**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 plus fringe costs, to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest to fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.**

**My child is a student at Pā'ā'ia Elementary Hawaiian Immersion. Only 7 months into the school year and she speaks words, phrases and simple sentences ma ka 'Ā'ā' lelo Hawai'i. This is all in thanks to her Kumu and all the Kumu at Hawaiian Immersion. These Kumu spend endless hours not just planning and prepping lessons but also translating material that will be used in lessons. All of the lessons taught by Hawaiian Immersion teachers need to be created from scratch. Teaching is already a challenge in English, but at least there are amazing sources online and in books that are available for English teachers. Hawaiian Immersion Kumu have to research sources and then translate information in a way that is appropriate for the age group they are teaching. It's painstaking work and these Kumu do it because they love to teach in Hawaiian Immersion, same for Special Ed and specialty areas. I know Kumu did not go into this career with the idea of extra compensation, but it is very important to retain all Kumu, especially Kumu in the hard to fill and specialty areas. Please provide enough funds to pay differentials for these Kumu.**

**Mahalo nui,**



**Mim Keliíííího‘omalu, Kahului, Maui**

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 1:49:54 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Marcia Howard	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

UPDATED Version

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC  
EMPLOYMENT AND COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

[FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020](#)

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

Aloha,

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, SD2.

It is imperative that this committee provide enough funds to address and attempt 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 employ this committee to keep the salary compensation for special education teachers especially with 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!

Furthermore, I want to make sure that my voice is heard when it comes to compression for teachers who are veteran licensed and certified special-education teachers. These teachers have dedicated their time and life to working with students with special needs and their years in the Hawaii DOE should be considered when applying the differentials! Again as a teacher of special education here in Hawaii for the past 19 years it would behoove this committee to consider the amount of time, money, and years one has dedicated, to this specialized profession!

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 an excellent start!

Mahalo for your consideration,

Marcia Howard, PhD

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 2:04:30 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Kaylene Sheldon	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha e House Committee on Labor and Public Employment:

Aloha e Committee of Lower and Higher Education:

My name is Kaylene Kauwila Sheldon and I support bill SB2488. I am a registered voter and I am also a high school teacher. I teach in a resource class. My daughter was also in a Hawaiian Language Immersion School during her younger years. I support SB2488 because teacher salaries have not equated the cost of living in Hawaii. I've had several colleagues or co-workers who moved to the states because the cost of living in Hawaii was far too much for them to support a family of four. Many of my co-workers including myself go to food banks and survive on food stamps and WIC to help us get by and at the same time we are part-time or full-time teachers. I support the salary adjustments because many of the Senior teachers have been committed to life long learning. I support this bill because I also feel that the legislature should provide funding for additional teacher pay for the areas of special education, hard-to-staff geographic locations, and Hawaiian language immersion programs. I feel that special education teachers spend at least 20 hours per week extra on gathering information and developing quality individual educational plans. I also know that Hawaiian language immersion programs need to be supported, honored and respected. Hawaiian Language Immersion teachers do not have a 8am-4pm job, realistically I have seen my daughter's teachers start at 7am and end at 10pm at night. I've seen them translate materials, organize meetings, field trips and fundraisers that takes a toll on their lives. I don't feel like savenging grant money is always the answer to fill up the gaps. I'm hoping that the State of Hawaii will invest into our teachers and into our children. Please support this bill, it will really help our children to receive the quality education that they deserve.

Mahalo no,

Kaylene Kauwila Sheldon

March 12, 2020

Aloha,

I'm writing in support of SB2488. I teach because I feel it is the best use of my talents to "touch the future" and make my home the best community it can be.

Since the start of my professional career, I've been a public school teacher rather than going after a career in the public sector. I was able to pursue this noble profession, because my husband (who had a significantly higher salary) provided the primary income for our family. Had it not been for those circumstances, I might have chosen a different career path, based on financial factors. It shouldn't be necessary for a person to become a teacher, only if someone else's income is able to make that career path possible. In losing my husband to cancer, consequently becoming a single-income household with children, I am truly aware of the financial challenges of choosing & remaining in this profession. Teaching is truly a labor of love, but teachers & their families can't survive on the current salary schedule and "love" with Hawaii's high cost of living.

To paraphrase, Reinhold Neibuhr (author of the *Serenity Prayer*): Hawaii needs its legislature (a) to have the **serenity** to deal with the arguments that the state budget can't afford it; (b) to have the **courage** to approve the funds necessary to appropriately compensate teachers for their continued dedication in an increasingly challenging profession; and (c) to have the **wisdom** to know that the investment made in retaining & recruiting dedicated teachers into the profession is an investment in the future of our children and ultimately our community. Our keiki's educational journey is compromised by a revolving door of instructors. Our keiki need (and deserve) dedicated teachers who are able to afford to stay in this noble profession, so that they may provide continuity, consistency, and experience to the lessons taught in the classroom.

Education shouldn't just be given lip service: a strong teaching force is the means to make the next generation thrive in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. I want to encourage you to pass SB 2488 (and to encourage your fellow colleagues to pass this bill) so that **we** can "touch the future".

Sincerely,

Yvette Lam

McKinley High School, Social Studies Department

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 2:33:27 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
melinda.a.martinez	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and members of the Committees:**

**My name is Melinda Martinez. I am a seventh grade ELA teacher at Maui Waena Intermediate 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 plus fringe costs, to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest to fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.**

**I was incredibly excited to finally be offered and be able to accept a teaching position in Maui 2018! This actually was my third offer in four years; both previous offers had occurred at times that were not economically feasible to me as in 2016 my home was under renovation and there was no way a loan to finance my move would have been approved and in 2018 my former spouse was scheduled to undergo a back fusion necessitating my attention as a not only a wage earner but also a caregiver. Finally, in 2018, the stars aligned, and I was finally able to accept employment! My interview was on June 9th. The principal called back the next day with an additional question: she wanted to know if I could accept the position. I asked if I could think things over for 48 hours because there were so many logistics to consider. I had a home, two children, a spouse, pets. My parents and brothers were within a 10 mile radius: everything I knew was readily accessible - within a short road trip certainly.**

**I'd had my teaching license AND a MAEd since May of 2010, but in Colorado, teacher employment was insanely competitive. I sought employment within the district in which I lived, the district my children attended school within, and the district I'd also personally attended and student taught within. I actually completed my student teaching at the middle school I attended and attempted to use this to my advantage as not only a student teacher during a school shooting,**

but also served as a long-term substitute, gaining accolades from the VP who told me that she would hire me in an instant. I never gained permanent employment in Jefferson County despite my 1997 honors high school honors graduation designation: I was unable to rely solely on substitute employment as I needed to provide a 40 hour/week paycheck to keep a roof over my childrens' heads, feed my family, and pay my \$50,000 worth of student loans.

Hawaii seemed like a dream. And to an extent it has been. Except I am now divorced, my former husband could not find employment on Maui and a rift in our relationship became irreparable. My children opted to remain in Colorado where they are comfortable with their roots and have friends, social outlets, and know what to expect seasonally. They've told me that they would rather live with me. But I conceded because: I CAN'T AFFORD TO HAVE THEM LIVE WITH ME! When I was living in Kihei my rent for a two bedroom 600 sf cottage was \$1800/month. That is more than half my net salary. I entered the mortgage industry after my graduation from University of Colorado with a BA in Communications in 2004. I earned Top Sales Person in August 2005 and know that a 60% dti (oh my landlord did not know about my car payment, student loan debt, and credit card debts) doesn't fly, even with flexible underwriting terms.

As an educator with three endorsements, I have finally found my niche and am ... alone... 3200 miles away from everything I have known since 1982, when I moved to Colorado at 2.5 years old. I took out a second mortgage to finance my aspirations. It took \$10,000 to finance my move to Maui. One way airline tickets. Shipping my car. A VRBO for five days as I hustle to find permanent housing (that's a whole other issue). Renting a cottage requires a first and last month. Buying a mattress (not a box spring or a bed frame). Minimalist furnishings for my 600 sf abode so I'm not living out of a suitcase. Shipping teaching supplies. Unfortunately last year the tax code changed and my relocation expenses could not be recovered in my 2018 taxes as I'm not self-employed. Bummer.

But an even bigger bummer is that I do not see my kids each day. They do not come to the kitchen seeking breakfast, to have their Hydroflasks filled, or seek to be supplied with daily snacks to make it through the school day. I don't get to cook dinner and sit down to eat with them. I don't get to nag them about putting down their phones (I want them on their phones because that means they're communicating with me). My Infinite Campus notifications about their grades arrive at 4:00 am due to time zone differences. I struggle with whether I should allow them or turn them off. Do I sleep or sacrifice my sleep to parent across time zones?

They arrive on Maui next week for Spring Break and I can't wait to tell them that I will be receiving a \$10,000 pay raise as I am moving to a SPED position next year. I can start to look for housing for three rather than housing for just one. I can pay my student loans on time rather than continually rolling 89 days to avoid the credit hit. I might even be able to have a minor surgical procedure that I've been

putting off because even with an 85/15 coinsurance I'll owe \$1600, an entire paycheck. I'm hoping that this differential will alleviate emotional stress because I am truly happy teaching in Hawaii. I know I make a difference. I just feel guilty because I've only been in the HDOE for 18 months. All teachers deserve compensation that is truly reflective of our dedication and commitment to include years of service within this noble profession. And it's not about being greedy, our influence should not be diminished: we shape the world.



TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND PUBLIC  
EMPLOYMENT AND COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2:00 p.m.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Joshua Dela Cruz. I am a School Counselor at Keone'ula Elementary School in the Leeward District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 part of the DOE family for 19 years now. I was a student teacher that was affected by the 2000 Teacher strike. I remember starting off as a High School Science teacher at Waianae High School in 2001 and how much joy it brought me to see the awe and wonder of students in my science labs regardless of what happened the year before. It is still a pleasure to see my former students that recognize me and still thank me after 19 years. I still remember getting \$31,000 that year as a first year teacher. It isn't much but I felt on top of the world. It was a painful decision to leave the Waianae Coast not because of the distance to drive, the lack of classroom funds or the lack of resources. It was solely because of the gas prices and my out of pocket expenses. At that time, gas was rising to \$5.00 a gallon and paying \$60 twice a week was draining my savings.

A few years later, Furlough Fridays hit the teachers very hard and I found myself moving back to my parents' house to help me stay afloat financially. I also took on two part-time jobs because of the dip in my salary. Those years have gone, and many veteran teachers have remained loyal to our keiki and the profession. I understand that the DOE has been finding different ways to recruit our teachers. However, this bill is an opportunity to retain those veteran teachers in the classroom. Us veteran teachers

have been through the struggles of shifting from iSped, Common core, Furlough Fridays, and other directives trickling from the top. We see our younger colleagues in for less than 10 years or so, and I'm shocked to hear that they are only one or two steps below my salary scale. Several of my veteran teachers ask ourselves, "I'm at step 10 and have been in the DOE for 19 years and the young guys are at step 8 and have been in for 8 years. Am I missing something?" This is a blow to those who remained in the DOE during all those years of gas prices and inflation and Furloughs. I don't feel valued anymore. I am considering early retirement as many of my colleagues are contemplating as well because of this pay mismanagement. If that is the case, the State is going to not only deal with a teacher shortage but an exit of veteran teachers whose salary advancements were overlooked. Many of us are looking for that extra incentive to continue working for our communities and fulfilling our passion rather than leaving the profession at 55 years old. If this bill passes, this will allow me to stay in this profession longer and help younger teachers, our keiki, and our community

We need your help. Mahalo.

Joshua Dela Cruz, Leeward District, Oahu

My name is Jaclyn Wills. I am a teacher at Makaha Elementary in the Waianae District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB2488, SD2. 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 the charter schools and the DOE . This bill can help change the course of education for the better on the Leeward Coast and for the State of Hawaii. We will need the full \$45 million more than this current bill provides, to do so. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

The shortage differentials will encourage me to stay in the education system out in the Waianae Coast as a special education preschool teacher, and provide stability in my community. I left this position 7 years ago for 3 years, and within those 3 years, there was a turn around of at least 6 different teachers. Most were not with a license in education.

I could have retired 3 years ago, but I found that this need of good education in my community is an important one to fill. The students deserve experienced teachers that have Aloha for the Waianae Community and for the State of Hawaii.

I moved to Kapolei 3 years ago, but stayed teaching in Makaha, as it is what I love. Having the shortage differentials allows me to pay for the gas and mileage to drive to and from the school, and most importantly buy the much needed classroom materials for my keiki ( supplies- including cleaning supplies, positive reinforcements, and even sometimes the basic things such as underwear, clothes and food), without hesitation.

I would also appreciate you helping to remedy the compression issue. We old timers have put the recruiting efforts for the new teachers as a priority. Now is our time for being compensated for our sacrifices on our step movements as we have over 23 years in the DOE system, and come with great experience with helping to meet the educational goals of the State of Hawaii for Keiki of Hawaii.

We need your help, Mahalo

Jaclyn Wills, Waianae District, Makaha, Oahu

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 2:39:55 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Jacquelyn Chappel	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha, I am a supervisor for teacher candidate throughout the state of Hawaii, and I am writing in support of SB2488 to help fund teacher pay differentials and hard to staff geographic locations.

Having a shortage of 500 teachers prior to the start of the fall semester is not acceptable. In order for good teaching to happen, in order for teachers to be prepared for their year ahead, they need to be hired well before the summer. Private schools normally hire in the spring, which allows teachers to prepare their curriculum over the summer and get ready for the fall. Not hiring teachers in an appropriate time frame and hiring teachers moments before school starts is a recipe for disaster.

Higher pay for hard to staff geographic locations and for special education staff will help the Department of education's recruitment efforts to ensure teachers are ready and prepared for the year.

There are many other initiatives that need to be funded by the state--including upgrades to campus buildings and grounds for older schools. Reducing the teacher shortage by improving pay is the bare minimum the state can and should do.

March 11, 2020

Aloha, Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Jennifer De Silva Stevens. I am a science teacher at Kohala Middle School in the North Kohala district on Hawaii Island. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki as well as the future of Hawaii and or economy.

In this time of many teacher shortages, we need to retain our teachers and compensate them appropriately for their work. Many teachers are at retirement age across our state but I know they would consider staying on if they were offered feasible pay. Here in our small Kohala community, we struggle to get substitute teachers on a daily basis because people are not wanting to take on that responsibility for small pay. We also have lost teachers' mid-year and were not able to get a certified replacement and had to rely on a long-term sub to fill in. This kind of replacement is no match for a certified teacher.

I feel that the salary adjustments will encourage teachers to stay and lessen the shortage, therefore our teachers are mainly from our community and know the families and culture of this place and work best with our students. The teachers who get placed here from out of state don't last very long because they don't have the same connections to the people and place. They usually don't last also because they know they can get better pay elsewhere.

Personally, I greatly appreciated the salary increase because it allows me to "breathe" a little easier each month with the added help for bills, mortgage, schooling, car payment and the daily cost of living challenges. All of this aside from the added money from my own pocket to afford things I need for my class and my students that I CHOOSE to do for them. I plead with the legislators to carefully hear our case and budget continued support for teacher differentials that would also show us how valued we are and that we are important in the lives and future of our next generations.

We desperately need and greatly appreciate your help.

Mahalo for your time and consideration!

Sincerely,

Jennifer De Silva Stevens

Kohala Middle School, North Kohala District

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT  
AND COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION  
RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION  
FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020 2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Allison Tanaka. I am a Special Education Teacher at Lehua Elementary School in Leeward District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2. 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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. 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 preschool teacher working with students who are deaf or hard of hearing. 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 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 resigned a couple of weeks ago 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 misses her. Her students 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 and am a National Board Certified Teacher, I am considering transferring to the Hawaii School for Deaf and Blind. I know that a few of the current teachers there are not licensed to teach in Hawaii, yet they continue to work there 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.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Allison Tanaka, National Board Certified Teacher  
Leeward District, Oahu

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC  
EMPLOYMENT AND COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION  
RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION  
FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020  
2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Tricia Sumstine. I am a secondary mathematics teacher at Pearl City High School in Leeward District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been teaching for over 25 years and I still love coming to school and educating our youth. Being a teacher has changed my life and I know am making a positive change for my students. Since getting my Masters in Education 20 years ago, my pay can only be raised when we renegotiate our contracts. I enjoy attending conferences and workshops to become a better mathematics teacher. Last year was my first time teaching AP Statistics. It is a difficult course to teach, but I am loving the challenge as I grow as a math teacher. My focus is the students and I spend late hours at school preparing lesson plans. I do this for the students and for their future to make Hawai'i a better place. Teachers are a vital part of our society.

My family and I are registered voters and we care about our community and we vote in every election. We need your help.

Mahalo.

Tricia Sumstine, Leeward District, Oahu

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC  
EMPLOYMENT AND COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Mitchell Kimura. I am a high school teacher at Kalani High School in Honolulu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

Yesterday I heard on the news that Miki Cacace of Ewa Makai Middle School won the Milken Educator Award. When asked why she went into teaching, she said “to make a difference.” I wanted to laugh, but cried a little instead because that is EXACTLY the same reason I, and many others I know in this profession, went into teaching. The reason why I cried is the constant stress I have, as a teacher, over making ends meet financially every month. I WANT to spend time improving my craft, improving my teaching, doing more for the students and the community. But instead, I do not have much free time because I work at another part time job so that we can continue to live here (just above the poverty level with a family of four), pay the bills, and stay in the profession I love, teaching. I can cite four specific examples of GREAT educators leaving because of the low pay (one that left for Kamehameha, one that went back to Louisiana, one that just quit to do something else, and another that left to teach in Texas). These were all co-workers I knew



that were great educators (anyway, the students loved them), but financially it was just impossible. We often talked about things like how long our car can last before it actually dies and we are forced to get another (used) one. As for me, I know a pay increase will DIRECTLY AND POSITIVELY affect me as it will free up time for me to do my job better. It will also put to rest the annual/ monthly discussions I have with my wife & family about "Should I just retire already? Leave?" Go to Vegas? Washington State? California? I have friends and relatives (maybe you do too) in all those places who have moved chiefly for financial reasons. Listen, if you continue to skimp in the compensation of Hawaii residents you actually want to KEEP in Hawaii--like caring, veteran teachers--you are indirectly forcing us out. You will be left with a bunch of lawyers, doctors, dock & construction workers, and everyone else that makes way more than a teacher. You are saying to us "if you do not like this low pay just quit then and we can find someone better to do the same thing you do for lower pay." I hate to tell you this, but I do not see anyone "better" that will work for this kind of bare-bones subsistence allowance as it is, do you? Honestly? Again, if you do not pass this bill, we (our family) may have to move out (just like the barbaloots, swomee swans, and humming fish in The Lorax). Please help us!

Sincerely,

Mitchell Kimura, Honolulu District, Oahu

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC  
EMPLOYMENT AND COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020  
2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Karen Veriato. I am a 3<sup>rd</sup> grade teacher at Na'alehu Elementary School in Hawaii District (Ka'u, Kea'au, Pahoia Complex) on Hawaii Island.

I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

This is my 12<sup>th</sup> year teaching, all of them at Na'alehu Elementary School, a hard-to-staff school. During the current Teacher Transfer period, we had eight open positions. It is difficult to find teachers to work here. For this current school year, we did not fill three positions: SPED, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup> grade. We filled the SPED and 4<sup>th</sup> grade positions with long-term substitutes. The 4<sup>th</sup> grade position was filled by a certified teacher in January 2020. The 6<sup>th</sup> grade position was filled at the end of 1<sup>st</sup> quarter. The SPED position still has a long-term substitute teacher.

We have a few teachers scheduled to retire at the end of the current contract. At least one teacher is postponing their retirement from this year to next year due to the differentials and the possibility of fixing the pay compression. We have several teachers who would benefit from fixing the

pay compression, including myself. Please do not forget the Charter School teachers.

Students need stability at school, especially since many of our students come from very challenging situations. Keeping and recruiting certified teachers will improve education in this remote location.

We need your help.

Mahalo.

Karen Veriato  
Ka'u District  
Island of Hawaii

## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Rep. Aaron Ling Johanson  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 2:54 PM  
**To:** Rep. Stacelynn K.M. Eli  
**Cc:** eli2 - Kevin; Soana Fanoga; Christine Choi  
**Subject:** FW: SB2488 Relating to Teacher Compensation

**From:** Vickie Parker Kam [mailto:vlpkam808@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 12:08 PM  
**To:** Rep. Aaron Ling Johanson <repjohanson@capitol.hawaii.gov>  
**Subject:** SB2488 Relating to Teacher Compensation

Good Afternoon Representative Johanson,

My name is Vickie Kam and I have been with the Dept of Ed since 1992, I have been at my current school, Ilima Intermediate, since 2004. I am writing asking you to support SB2488.

When I began working in education, my own children were not quite 2 and 4 years old. They are now young adults that have left their home because they can't afford to stay.

During my years in the department, my family had to endure me work 2 or 3 jobs at a time. I have cut every corner to make ends meet. I have struggled through furloughs and still I showed up and taught my students with all my heart. I have worked with thousands of Hawaii's children at this point in my career.

I am asking you to honor that dedication. I am asking you to pass this bill so the department can begin to pay me a wage I have earned through my loyalty and dedication to my students and to Hawaii.

Thank you for listening and allowing me to speak my mind.

Sincerely,

Vickie Kam

HIDOE Educator

SB 2488, SD 2

HSTA Testimony 1  
3/12/20

Yamanaka, Rae

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**From:** Andrea Medrano <andrealmedrano@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 5, 2020 2:50 PM  
**To:** ANDREA L MEDRANO  
**Cc:** Yamanaka, Rae  
**Subject:** SB2488

Aloha Representative,

My name is Andrea Medrano and I teach at Kea'au Middle School. I am grateful for the service you do for our state and and ohana.

As a teacher of over 15 years I have found that our students benefit from having experienced teachers who are able to relate to the changing needs of children. As I am approaching an age milestone, it saddens me that I am still living paycheck to paycheck after working so hard to reach the top of the pay scale the DOE allows me.

I have benefited from the shortage differentials because now I am sending my own child to college and of course do not qualify for aid, as I have a full-time job. The money allows me to her with expenses. Prior to that, I used it to pay off my loans.

I support bill 2488 because it will help teachers, like me, that have missed regular raises since we are compressed in the middle of the pay scale. It will also allow some breathing room for many who need a second job. I have just applied to teach on-line for another income source.

My school is in need of teachers that want to be compensated for the work they do and have some money left in their pocket for their own needs. I encourage you to help and support our teachers and our students by voting to fund this bill. Let's put it right before we lose more teachers to other careers.

With gratitude,  
Andrea Medrano  
Middle School teacher and registered voter.

*Andrea*  
Enjoying each day as it comes!





SB 2488, SD2

HSTA Testimony 2  
3/12/20

**Yamanaka, Rae**

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**From:** Ku'ulei <kumu66@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 10, 2020 11:03 AM  
**Cc:** Yamanaka, Rae  
**Subject:** SB 2488

My name is Ku'ulei Arceo and I teach band at Kea'au Middle School. I would benefit from fixing compression because I will be able to continue my education and complete my credits to become a Class VII teacher. I am in my 15th year of teaching and plan to retire in this profession. I know that many of my colleagues have stayed because it is our calling, but that does not mean that we do not deserve this compensation.

The teacher shortage crisis has affected my students in my school in negative ways. For the first time in my career, I see teachers quitting by the first quarter. When some teachers leave in the middle of the year, students are not able to build relationships with their teachers and do not find value in being in class or at school. Most students in these classes are losing instruction because of the multiple substitute teachers they have on a regular basis, this is not only in my school but in many around the state.

Please consider fully supporting SB 2488

Sincerely,  
Ku'ulei Arceo  
Kea'au Middle School





SB 2488, SD2

HSTA Testimony 3  
3/12/20

Heather Fomenko  
2010 Kilauea Ave.  
Hilo, HI 96720  
heatherfomenko@gmail.com  
(808) 430-1135

Dear Representative Onishi,

My name is Heather Fomenko. I work at Waiakea High School and I have been teaching in Hawaii Public Schools for 18 years. I am writing to urge you to support **SB2488**. I am one of the teachers that is not in the salary step movement that I should be due to the years we were caught in furloughs and recession. By remedying this salary compression model, many teachers will be able to keep up with the expensive cost of living in Hawaii and hold just a teaching job. Now, many of us have to do extra side jobs to earn a little extra cash to keep up with inflation.

I am also a special education teacher and know how difficult it is to attract and keep qualified and efficient teachers. There have been many instances where we were unable to fill a position and had to hire an unqualified special education teacher to teach our IDEA students. This is straining in more ways than one. An unqualified special education teacher doesn't know special education laws and they are untrained to prepare and write IEP's for students with disabilities. They are lawfully unable to be a care coordinator so the load falls on the other special education teachers in the department who are already carrying heavy caseloads and are expected to not only be a case manager, but they are teaching on top of gathering data on their students, progress reporting, holding meetings, and conferring with other teachers.

Supporting and fully funding differentials for hard to fill locations, qualified special educators, Hawaiian Immersion schools and fixing the salary step movements for all veteran teachers that were affected is essential for keeping our qualified teachers home in Hawaii. We don't want to lose our qualified teachers. We need to recruit and retain our teachers by making our profession attractive and provide a livable wage for teachers that have spent years preparing to enter into the profession.

Please fully fund SB2488.

Sincerely,



Heather Fomenko



SB 2488, SD 2

HSTA Testimony 4  
3/12/20

**Yamanaka, Rae**

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**From:** joanna@hawaiiantel.net  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 10, 2020 10:01 AM  
**To:** repcreagan@Creagan.hawaii.gov  
**Cc:** Yamanaka, Rae  
**Subject:** SB 2488

Dear Representative Creagan,

My name is Joanna Mae De Morales Silva and I teach 8th grade English Language Arts at Kea'au Middle School (a title one, hard-to-fill school). This is my 21st year teaching at Kea'au Middle School and I have never seriously considered transferring schools and/or changing careers until a few years ago. I am a tax-paying, law-abiding voter, and I am asking you to please fully fund SB 2488.

I have been stuck in this compression bracket for all of my teaching career. I am the "poster teacher" of this compression inequity. I am at the highest class, yet, despite being highly qualified and having earned highly-effective and effective ratings for my entire teaching career, my years of service have always been completely disregarded.

One reason I have not left Kea'au Middle School yet is the shortage differential of \$3,000. However, this differential is simply becoming "not worth it." Experienced, highly qualified, highly-effective/effective teachers like myself are not only leaving hard-to-fill schools, but they're all together flying the coop out of the Hawai'i public school system. And at this point, I'm not far behind them. I have seen first-hand the effects of having unlicensed, inexperienced teachers in the classroom. EVERYONE is affected. The emotional, mental, and even physical well being of students, teachers, counselors, administrators, and the community is compromised when licensed, experienced teachers are not servicing our students. Most inexperienced teachers lack the know-how to properly deal with subject matter, instruction, and student behavior. I say this not to discredit or disparage these individuals. In fact, they should be commended for stepping into unfamiliar and many times hostile teaching environments. Rather, I say this to expose the truth -- the lack of licensed, experienced teachers causes watered-down curricula and lower behavioral standards which in turn trickle down to all aspects of a school's learning environment, campus, and community. The effects are truly far-reaching. And if you refuse to recognize this, you don't deserve to hold a public office.

Please support SB 2488. Supporting this bill will definitely affect my vote in future elections. Being rightfully compensated for all the time, effort, and emotional undertaking involved in being a teacher in Hawai'i for 21 years will definitely make teaching at a Hawai'i public school, and more specifically a hard-to-fill school, a bit more "worth it."

Thank you for your consideration!

Joanna Mae De Morales Silva  
Kea'au Middle School



SB 2488, SD 2

HSTA Testimony 5  
3/12/20

**Yamanaka, Rae**

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**From:** Carl Soares <cmrhsoares@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, March 7, 2020 7:29 PM  
**To:** reptodd@capitol.hawaii.gov; repcreagan@capitol.hawaii.gov;  
repnakashima@capitol.hawaii.gov; reponishi@capitol.hawaii.gov;  
repsanbuenaventura@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Cc:** Yamanaka, Rae; senkkahele@capitol.hawaii.gov; seninouye@capitol.hawaii.gov;  
senkanuha@capitol.hawaii.gov; senruderman@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Support for SB 2488

March 7, 2020

Aloha Representatives Chris Todd, Kahele, Richard Creagan, Mark Nakashima, Richard Onishi, Joy San Buenaventura!

My name is Carl Soares and I teach 8th grade Math at Kea'au Middle School. 8th grade Math includes grade level 8th grade math as well 8th grade honors-Algebra 1. Our students need licensed, experienced teachers because last school year I experienced something I thought I would never experience.

Last school year, 2018-19, my 8th grade partner quit teaching for the DOE to take on a job for a private company. So we started the year with a teacher who had moved from the mainland. Near the end of November 2018, that teacher quit the DOE – by the way another teacher from the mainland quit along with him. A substitute teacher took over, temporarily, while the search for a qualified math teacher took place. That substitute teacher continued through the end of the quarter/semester.

Then in January, start of quarter 3/semester 2, another substitute teacher took over, temporarily, until a qualified math teacher could be found. That substitute teacher ended up substituting for the remainder of the year. My first thoughts were “are there not any qualified math teachers around somewhere?” – that was the first part of my experience. The second part of this experience was that I ended up helping the substitutes, especially the second one, with lesson planning – math is a high stakes tested subject – so it was expected that I assist where I could to help prepare students for testing as well as high school. The third part of this experience is that I felt the impact on students was detrimental, primarily the lack of consistency of having a single teacher for the year.

I humbly ask for you to vote to pass Senate Bill 2488. Thank you for your support!

Aloha!

Carl Soares  
Kea'au Middle School 8th grade Math teacher



SB 2488, SD2

HSTA Testimony 6  
3/12/20

**Yamanaka, Rae**

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**From:** dteng@hawaii.rr.com  
**Sent:** Monday, March 9, 2020 6:15 PM  
**To:** reptodd@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Cc:** Yamanaka, Rae  
**Subject:** SB 2488

Aloha Representative Todd

My name is Donna Tengan and I am a teacher at Kea'au Middle School. Please fully fund SB 2488. Our keiki and teachers would fully benefit from having SB 2488 funded. Our students would benefit from having licensed, experienced teachers who continue at their school for the entire year or longer. In the last two years at my school has had substitutes to fill vacancies that have occurred in the middle of the year. These substitutes were not consistent and with the constant changes, the students were not able to meet even the minimum requirements for the content that was being taught. Two years ago, my colleague left after being at our school for a year to a better paying position outside of teaching but still in the area of education. Last year, the teacher that was hired to replace that colleague from the mainland, stayed for about a quarter, left and replaced with numerous substitutes. How is the good for our students? Having to learn new routines every day, week, month before learning the actual content.

As a licensed teacher for the last 24 years, I would also benefit with the passing SB 2488. I would finally be compensated for my years of service and experience. I am a part of the compression group and it is very obvious that our pay is not what it should be. Let me tell you why. My colleague and I have been teaching at Kea'au Middle School for many years together however, I have many years more experience, 8 to be exact and I also received my master's in education. Our pay is practically the same. In fact, I make about \$1000 more per year even with my master's degree, years of experience. It is my hope that we would be compensated for all of our years of service so that we do not have to live pay check to pay check as I do now and be able to support our own children.

Again I ask you to please fully fund and support SB 288.

Sincerely,

Donna Tengan  
Middle School Teacher





SB 2488, SD2

HSTA Testimony 7  
3/12/20

**Yamanaka, Rae**

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**From:** dteng@hawaii.rr.com  
**Sent:** Monday, March 9, 2020 6:14 PM  
**To:** repsanbuenaventura@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Cc:** Yamanaka, Rae  
**Subject:** SB 2488

Aloha Representative San Buenaventura

My name is Donna Tengan and I am a teacher at Kea'au Middle School. Please fully fund SB 2488. Our keiki and teachers would fully benefit from having SB 2488 funded. Our students would benefit from having licensed, experienced teachers who continue at their school for the entire year or longer. In the last two years at my school has had substitutes to fill vacancies that have occurred in the middle of the year. These substitutes were not consistent and with the constant changes, the students were not able to meet even the minimum requirements for the content that was being taught. Two years ago, my colleague left after being at our school for a year to a better paying position outside of teaching but still in the area of education. Last year, the teacher that was hired to replace that colleague from the mainland, stayed for about a quarter, left and replaced with numerous substitutes. How is the good for our students? Having to learn new routines every day, week, month before learning the actual content.

As a licensed teacher for the last 24 years, I would also benefit with the passing SB 2488. I would finally be compensated for my years of service and experience. I am a part of the compression group and it is very obvious that our pay is not what it should be. Let me tell you why. My colleague and I have been teaching at Kea'au Middle School for many years together however, I have many years more experience, 8 to be exact and I also received my master's in education. Our pay is practically the same. In fact, I make about \$1000 more per year even with my master's degree, years of experience. It is my hope that we would be compensated for all of our years of service so that we do not have to live pay check to pay check as I do now and be able to support our own children.

Again I ask you to please fully fund and support SB 288.

Sincerely,

Donna Tengan  
Middle School Teacher



SB 2488, SD2

HSTA Testimony 8  
3/12/20

**Yamanaka, Rae**

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**From:** Sandra Bonk <sandra.bonk@k12.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 3, 2020 4:41 PM  
**To:** Yamanaka, Rae  
**Subject:** Hi Rae...Letter to Elected Officials Sent March 3, 2020

March 3, 2020

Aloha to You All...Senators Kahele, Ruderman and Representatives Buenaventura and Todd...and Thank You for Your Service to Hawaii and Her People.

My name is Sandra Bonk; I am a teacher of English Language Learners grades 6, 7, 8 at Keaau Middle School. I am writing to ask you to please consider voting for pay increases for teachers. Please fully fund SB 2488 which asks you to continue funding money for teacher's pay which will help to enhance the education of our children.

I would also personally benefit from fixing compression as I have been working for 14 years for the DOE and plan to continue teaching. I am in Step 9 and it would be a blessing to be in Step 11 where I belong; because of compression this is an \$8,000.00 a year loss for me. I know there is a shortage of qualified teachers and mine is a specialty line; making more money would influence how long I keep teaching.

Generally I am at work 2-3 hours beyond my time daily, in order to complete many tasks and prepare for the next day's classes, designing strategies to fit lessons in order to go beyond just tasks to effect actual learning. I am also studying and taking a class to improve my ability to reach students with deeper understanding and language development.

Thanks for reading this email. Please vote to fund education money for teachers. We really need your support.

Now it's pouring down rain...it sure has been a powerfully crazy storm.  
Stay safe.

Sandra Bonk  
808-313-4837  
KMS  
Keaau, Hawaii

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SB 2488, SD2

HSTA Testimony 9  
3/12/20

**Yamanaka, Rae**

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**From:** Reanna Badua <reanna.badua@k12.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 4, 2020 11:15 AM  
**To:** repcreagan@creagan.hawaii.gov; seninouye@capitol.hawaii.gov;  
senkkahele@capitol.hawaii.gov; senkanuha@capitol.hawaii.gov;  
repnakashima@napitol.hawaii.gov; reponishi@capitol.hawaii.gov;  
senruderman@capitol.hawaii.gov; repsanbuenaventura@capitol.hawaii.gov;  
reptodd@capitol.hawaii.gov; Yamanaka, Rae  
**Subject:** Next Steps SB 2488

Aloha,

**My name is Reanna Badua and I teach 7th grade special education English Language Arts at Kea'au Middle School.**

**Thank you for passing the SB 2488.**

**I support bill number 2488 because our students need licensed, experienced teachers. They deserve an education from trained professionals. Licensure requires time spent researching and learning strategies that help students learn. This spring, I will obtain my Master's degree in Education with a dual licensure in Special Education and Secondary Education. My rigorous training has taught us both research-based and evidence-based strategies in the core subjects, student development, and special education.**

**The teacher shortage crisis has affected my student in my school in the following ways:**

- 1) They are not being taught effective strategies to succeed in education.**
- 2) Because of the above, their self-confidence has dropped because they have no strategy to succeed.**
- 3) Their SBA scores are well-below the national average.**

**I have considered leaving the profession because the pay is so low but these measures might cause me to continue in this profession.**

**Supporters of this bill will affect the way I vote in the next election because I will vote for people that support bills that benefit me. This bill, as an educator, affects me.**

**Thank you,  
Reanna Badua**

--  
Reanna Badua  
Kea'au Middle School  
16-565 Kea'au-Pahoa Road  
Kea'au, HI 96749  
Phone: (808) 313-4878

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SB 2488, SD2

HSTA Testimony 10  
3/12/20

Yamanaka, Rae

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**From:** Katherine DeKemper <queenkatg77@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, March 2, 2020 1:42 PM  
**To:** repcreagan@creagan.hawaii.gov; seninouye@capitol.hawaii.gov;  
senkkahele@capitol.hawaii.gov; senkanuha@capitol.hawaii.gov;  
repnakashima@capitol.hawaii.gov; reponishi@capitol.hawaii.gov;  
senruderman@capitol.hawaii.gov; repsanbuenaventura@capitol.hawaii.gov;  
reptodd@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** SB2488 Testimony

Aloha,

My name is Katherine DeKemper and I teach 8th grade English/Language Arts at Kea'au Middle School.

Please fully fund SB 2488 to compensate teachers for the extensive time and effort we devote to our students on a daily basis.

Our students need licensed, experienced teachers who are seasoned in behavior management, best practices, as well as implementing new strategies to educate young people.

I have benefitted and would continue to benefit from the shortage differentials, along with repair of compression because while Hawaii is my home, I have seriously considered relocating to the mainland U.S. due to the outrageous cost of living in the state of Hawaii. As a veteran professional, I should be able to pay my mortgage, car payments, insurance, groceries and living expenses and still have enough money to save for my children's education. Unfortunately, my paycheck does not allow for that.

The teacher shortage crisis has greatly affected the students in my school due to the high turnover of new teachers, emergency hires of unqualified teachers and substitute teachers. Our students deserve to feel safe in establishing positive relationships with teachers who will be here for years to come.

I implore you to support bill number 2488 because our keiki deserve the best. Too many veteran educators are running from the classroom due to lack of adequate compensation for the professionals they are and have strived to become. Our kids are the future of our nation and should have the opportunity to learn from seasoned professionals rather than a warm body hired to fill a position.

Thank you for your consideration and time in this matter,

Sincerely,  
Katherine DeKemper





SB 2488, SD2

HSTA Testimony 11  
3/12/20

**Yamanaka, Rae**

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**From:** Cheri Alonzo <cheri.alonzo@k12.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Monday, March 2, 2020 1:59 PM  
**To:** senkkahele@capitol.hawaii.gov; senkanuha@capitol.hawaii.gov;  
repnakashima@napitol.hawaii.gov; reponishi@capitol.hawaii.gov;  
senruderman@capitol.hawaii.gov; repsanbuenaventura@capitol.hawaii.gov;  
reptodd@capitol.hawaii.gov; Yamanaka, Rae  
**Subject:** Testimonials - Teachers

**My name is Cheri Alonzo and I teach ELA for Gade 6 at Kea'au Middle School. Please fully fund SB 2488. It is so important to recognize all Teachers.**

**Our students need licensed, experienced teachers because the stakes are high for our students when they enter our communities as adults and into the workforce or institutions for higher learning. They need to be prepared with the skills necessary for success.**

**I have benefitted/ would continue to benefit from the shortage differentials because it is a team effort working with our kids and all teachers should be compensated evenly. As part of a team, teachers should not be pitted against each other - some get paid and others do not.**

**I would benefit from fixing compression because I deserve a fair compensation as my peers.**

**I support bill number 2488 because it would compensate all teachers for their service and a fair alignment with their peers.**

**The teacher shortage crisis has affected my students in my school in the following ways not so much at this time, as we have our positions filled. It does impact teachers that get and teachers that do not - specifically in a co-teaching situation. Why should one get and the other not? It could cause problems between two teachers and eventually that would impact student learning.**

**I have considered leaving the profession because... but these measures might cause me to... I am retiring at the end of this school year, but as I am still in a teaching position, I want to support my peers and try to help and support for the future. I am a sped teacher, and do not agree that we got so much money, and no one else did. I am currently in a co-teaching position. I am not comfortable with me getting the money and other general ed teachers are not.**

**Supporters of this bill will affect the way I vote in the next election because this is an important issue and I will vote for people that are supportive of all teachers.**

--

Cheri Alonzo  
Keaau Middle School  
16-565 Keaau Paho Road  
Keaau, Hawaii 96749

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SB 2488, SD 2

HSTA Testimony 12  
3/12/20

**Yamanaka, Rae**

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**From:** Carlton Loving <lovingmathematics@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, March 2, 2020 10:03 AM  
**To:** recreagan@creagan.hawaii.gov; seninouye@capitol.hawaii.gov;  
senkkahele@capitol.hawaii.gov; senkanuha@capitol.hawaii.gov;  
repnakashima@capitol.hawaii.gov; reponishi@capitol.hawaii.gov;  
senruderman@capitol.hawaii.gov; repsanbuenaventura@capitol.hawaii.gov;  
reptodd@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Cc:** Yamanaka, Rae  
**Subject:** SB 2488

**My name is Floyd Loving and I teach math at Kea'au Middle School.**

**The high cost of living in Hawaii demands higher pay for teachers especially those teaching in subjects or locations that are hard to fill.**

**Mahalo.**



SB 2488, SD2

HSTA Testimony 13  
3/12/20

**Yamanaka, Rae**

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**From:** Kathleen Booth <kathleenbooth4@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 1, 2020 2:37 PM  
**To:** reponishi@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** HB2488

Dear Representative Richard H.K. Onishi:

My name is Kathleen Booth. I have been a resident in Hawaiian Paradise Park for almost 25 years. I have also been a teacher for 13 years in Hilo at Connections Public Charter School. I decided to become a teacher while my son was a student at Connections. I fell in love with the school community. My husband and I borrowed a bunch of money so I could stop working and go to UH for two years as a full time student. This was a wonderful career change, but it was a costly one. We are still paying back the home equity loan which funded my second career. My husband owns an antique store in Hilo which has been struggling for approximately 3 years. (Lava? Trump? We aren't sure.) He has recently taken in three more dealers to share the cost of the rent, and this was a much needed change.

My husband always tells me the only way I can make more money as a teacher in Hawaii is to work fewer hours. I constantly respond I can't work fewer hours because teaching takes many, many hours, and the job is never done. I also can't work fewer hours because I have to take courses in order to make more money. An average PD course costs \$150, 21 hours of classroom time (on Saturdays), and approximately 30-40 hours to complete the portfolio requirements. All of that work is done on the weekends after I complete my prep to teach the following week. Submitting all the portfolio requirements earns me three credits. After earning 15 credits (\$750, 105 hours of classroom time, and 150-200 hours to complete portfolio requirements) I can then request a "class increase." An average increase of approximately \$2,500 a year. (That was how much my most recent reclassification increased my salary.)

I am really beginning to resent the fact I have sacrificed so much family time in order to earn credits to make more money as a teacher. I resent this because I think there should be some value attached to the fact that I have been in the profession for 13 years. I also take part in professional development and I know I am a much better teacher than I was 13 years ago. The teacher shortage is due to the fact that teachers are not compensated for the sacrifices they make. We have many unlicensed teachers at our school. This has to change.

At this time, I ask you to please support SB2488, SD1. This bill will provide funds to fix the salary compression issue. This bill will help end the teacher shortage. This bill will make teaching a profession Hawaii's students can consider as a great future career.

Please, we need your help. Mahalo.

Kathleen Booth

Hilo District, Hawaii Island



SB 2488, SD2

HSTA Testimony 14  
3/12/20

**Yamanaka, Rae**

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**From:** Kaimiloa Yoshida <imiyoshida@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, March 2, 2020 7:29 AM  
**Subject:** SB 2488 Testimony

My name is Kaimiloa Yoshida and I'm a school level counselor at Kea'au Middle School.

Please fully fund SB 2488. Our students need licensed, experienced teachers because our students deserve it. In the diverse community that I live in our students deserve licensed, experienced teachers are who able to relate and empathize with the unique challenges our students face everyday. We as educators have the ability to influence our students to become successful and even go out and change the world.

I would benefit from the shortage differentials because it will help me with paying off my student loans, something that I've accepted in having to be able to do the job that I love.

The teacher shortage crisis has affected my students in my school in the following ways:

- Not receiving the best education from highly qualified teachers.
- Receiving an education from teachers who may be from out of state and are unable to build quality relationships with.
- Unable to build quality relationships because of teacher turnover.

Supporters of this bill will affect the way I vote in the next election because it's time that we acknowledge how important having teachers (and school counselors) are.

We play a key role in shaping what a child could become as an adult. I'm sure you have a teacher that you can recall that was a great influence on why you do what you do today. I'm sure that if you have children, he/she/they have a favorite teacher that they can talk about til your ears fall off.

Please fully fund SB 2488, for us, for the future of this profession and for the future generations.

Mahalo nui,

Kaimiloa Yoshida





SB 2488, SD 2

HSTA Testimony 15  
3/12/20

**Yamanaka, Rae**

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**From:** Catherine Williams <catherine.williams@k12.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 27, 2020 11:47 AM  
**To:** reponishi@capitol.hawaii.gov; senkanuha@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Cc:** Yamanaka, Rae  
**Subject:** Bill SB2488

Catherine Williams  
92-1722 Aloha Blvd.  
Ocean View, HI 96737

Aloha Kakahiaka,

I hope this day finds you well. I am a resident of the Ka'u District on Hawaii Island. My name is Catherine Williams and I am a veteran teacher here on the Big Island. I have been teaching the keiki of the Big Island for 20 years. I am a certified Special Education Teacher, who is currently employed at Pahala Elementary School as an academic coach; supporting other teachers to improve their practice.

I started my career at Waiakea Intermediate School as a single mom of two middle school students looking for a career that would allow me to provide for a family and be a good Mom. I was married in 2005 and moved to Kona where I worked for over 10 years in various classrooms, from fully self-contained with severely disabled students to 4th and 5th grade inclusion general education classrooms, where I co-taught with some amazing professionals. I worked and raised a family, adding another son to our numbers.

Sadly, in 2015 I found myself as a single mother again. Our marriage was a victim of the opioid crisis. Through all of that, I stayed strong and an example for my young son. I found myself in a small 2 bedroom apartment in Seaview estates in Kona, I was barely able to afford it on my own but we did without so that we could have a safe place to live. The rent prices started to increase and I was forced to rent out my son's room because I could not afford a two bedroom place on my teacher's salary, where I had stalled at a step 8 for over 5 years, so with 15 years of experience as a special education teacher I was making approx. \$53,000 a year. My son, Patrick who was 10 yrs old at the time, and I shared the master bedroom. This worked for almost 2 years but I realized that we couldn't continue to share a room as he became a teenager. I really didn't think it would be appropriate for either of us. So, after 10 years of living in Kona, with many friends and my son involved in sports. We uprooted ourselves and moved to the only part of the island that I could find where I could afford to buy a home, 40 miles south in Oceanview Estates. It has been a bit of a difficult transition but I have grown to love my home and the community that I now live in. Although, I have not found friendships or a church like I had in Kona, it is a beautiful place to live.

I eventually found a job at Ka'u High in their Intensive Learning Center with the high end behavioral students. The next year I was moved to the Elementary school as elementary was where most of my experience lay and I found myself in the dream job, A small school with wonderful colleagues and a collective energy for change. As part of that change I was asked to become an academic coach because I have a wealth of experience and strategies for learning to share with colleagues. The latest hard-to-staff differential has helped me immensely by providing me with \$200 dollars extra for food and gas expenses. Even though I am still a single mother trying to make ends meet on now \$60,000 a year. I have been able to meet my mortgage payment every month by opening a BnB in the attached Ohana of my home. Many of my colleagues have second incomes to supplement their income. Unfortunately, that means that many times I am cleaning the ohana late at night or on the weekends to keep up with the guests etc. It does take away from my time with my son who is almost 15 now and has his own room :), My life is wonderful and I love my job. I never did it for the money, but wouldn't it be

nice if teachers could come home and relax at the end of a day teaching our keiki, rather than stressing about making ends meet in this very expensive, wonderful, paradise we call Hawaii. Please fund Bill SB2488. It's the right thing to do for our teachers.

Mahalo,  
Catherine Williams

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SB 2488, SD 2

HSTA Testimony 16  
3/12/20

**Yamanaka, Rae**

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**From:** Nekisa Mahzad-Nolan <nmnolan@viking.k12.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 26, 2020 10:35 PM  
**To:** WAMtestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Cc:** Yamanaka, Rae  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Ways and Means, Thursday, Feb. 27, at 10:25 a.m.

February 26th, 2020

Dear Sir or Madam:

*"In my younger and more vulnerable years my father gave me some advice that I've been turning over in my mind ever since. Whenever you feel like criticizing anyone, he told me, just remember that all the people in this world haven't had the advantages that you've had."*

-----Nick Carraway The Great Gatsby F. Scott Fitzgerald

This is the first line of one of my favorite novels, and the message of this passage echoes loudly in my head when I look at many of my students. So many of the Keiki in our DOE schools are not afforded the luxuries and 'advantages' of characters like Nick Carraway; many of them come from broken homes and have to struggle and work hard to get ahead in life. These young students do not deserve to attend 'broken' schools with a broken system, but unfortunately, many of them do every day. This is precisely why I am addressing you today. We have a 'broken' and unfair pay scale system in the HIDOE.

The effect of this is schools are full of under-qualified, ineffective instructors, and not to mention teachers that feel unappreciated and burnt out. Many teachers work second jobs to pay the bills. Homeownership is unattainable for many. Might I add owning a home almost guarantees a teachers longevity in a local school system. Own a home, you stay.

Students are the ones that suffer the most because of the broken system. Many classrooms are led by long-term subs with little to no content area background. They have no equity in the school and have no accountability; therefore students do not learn and excel. In some cases, students have several teachers in one content area class throughout the year. No consistency. The cost of living and low wages cause many qualified educators to seek employment on the mainland to survive, not to mention this also keeps many locals from going into the profession.

I moved to Hilo, Hawaii in 2014 from California with five years of teaching experience in OUHSD. When I started at Hilo High I was making just about the same as I was in California. Now, working for six years in the DOE I am making \$23,000 less than teachers at my old school with the same amount of service years. I have attached the pay scale from OUHSD. As you can see they award teachers for years of service. As a result of the lack of compensation and a fair and equitable pay system within the DOE, there are teachers with far less years of service that are paid more (higher step) than teachers that have been in the DOE for decades.

Our Keiki deserve the best, most qualified and dedicated teachers in the classroom to lead and guide them towards a life of success and good citizenship. Appreciated, dedicated teachers lead by example and are some of the best role models in a child's life. This is exactly why **SB-2488** must pass. We need to recruit, and most importantly retain the best, first-rate teachers.

All adults, no matter what their background, ethnicity, past experiences and ambitions have one thing in common, a great teacher during their school career that inspired them, motivated them and lead by example so they can become the best they can based on their abilities and work ethic. A work ethic shown to them by teachers that are compensated and valued for their time and efforts.

Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this very important and timely manner. Think of the keiki and the future of our beautiful state.

Sincerely,

Nekisa Mahzad-Nolan  
Hilo High School  
English 11

Attached:

<http://www.oxnardunion.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Certificated-Teacher.pdf>

\*Make note, on their scale each 'STEP' is one year of service

SB 2488, SD2

HSTA Testimony 17  
3/12/20

Yamanaka, Rae

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**From:** Ashley Malama <ashleymalama@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 25, 2020 6:12 PM  
**To:** senruderman@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Cc:** Yamanaka, Rae  
**Subject:** Testimony for Bill SB2488

Aloha Senator Ruderman,

I am a local teacher at a public charter school here on Hawai'i island. I have been teaching for over 3 years. I am also a third generation Hawai'i island resident and have lived in Puna for 26 years.

Please fully fund SB2488, the bill would help pay veteran teachers for their years of service as well as continue to fund shortage differentials in key areas.

Our students need licensed experienced teachers and our newer teachers look to our veterans for mentoring and guidance.

Please let me know if you receive this email and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Mahalo,  
Kumu Ashley Malama-Poplardo



**Yamanaka, Rae**

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**From:** Jadee Oda <jadeeoda@icloud.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 25, 2020 6:27 PM  
**To:** senkkahele@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Cc:** Yamanaka, Rae  
**Subject:** Teacher Compensation

**Categories:** chapter

Aloha,

My name is Jadee Oda and I am a 1st grade teacher at Chiefess Kapiolani Elementary. This is my third year and I have been so very privileged and honored to learn from veteran teachers at my school-teachers who have invaluable knowledge that they have shared so willingly to new teachers like myself. Sadly, in just three years, I have witnessed multiple teachers who have retired and are retiring due to the overwhelming workload and lack of compensation deserved. These teachers need to receive what they deserve and I believe it would change the perspective on these teacher's ability to continue teaching. I believe we as teachers have a huge impact on the children of our future. We are not the only component, but still a vital component who prepare students to be successful, not only academically, but as human beings. In essence, teachers need to be compensated for their hard work so that they can continue to shape the hearts and minds of our children. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding my concerns.

Sincerely,  
Jadee Oda

Sent from my iPhone





SB 2488, SD2

HSTA Testimony 19

3/12/20

**Yamanaka, Rae**

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**From:** Daphna Ehrenhalt <daphnajackson@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 25, 2020 6:34 PM  
**To:** repnakashima@Capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Cc:** Yamanaka, Rae  
**Subject:** SB2488

Dear Representative Nakashima,

My name is Daphna Ehrenhalt and I'm a fifth grade at Kea'au Elementary School in Kea'au. I have been teaching in Hawaii's public school system for 4 years. I currently live and vote in your district.

Please fully fund SB2488, the bill that would help pay veteran teachers for their years of service, as well as continue to fund shortage differentials in key areas.

Although the compression does not currently effect me, it does effect the teachers I work with who deserve to be paid for their decades of service to our community.

I moved here, not knowing if my 9 years of prior teaching experience would be compensated correctly. Although I am being paid less than I made on the mainland, I would love to be able to afford to live and retire in the place that I bought my house. The island that I call my home. Fixing the compression now would allow me to have hope for my future here. Knowing that I will be compensated appropriately during my time teaching here, will keep a highly qualified educator in our public schools until I am ready to retire.

Our students deserve teachers who feel that they are being treated fairly. The teacher shortage has affected them by denying them qualified teachers and long term teachers. Students thrive when they have a sense of security, knowing that they will see a familiar face when they return to school, year after year.

Our students need licensed, experienced teachers and our new teachers look to our veterans for mentoring and guidance. Our students who want to become teachers and stay in our state are disenchanted when they see how hard we fight for the basics. If we cannot afford to pay our bills, or raise our children here, how can we convince them to stay here and teach?

Please feel free to contact me if you have an answer.

Mahalo for your time,

Daphna Ehrenhalt



SB 2488, SD2

HSTA Testimony 20

3/12/20

Yamanaka, Rae

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**From:** Whitney Sugimoto <whitty.sugi@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 25, 2020 7:09 PM  
**To:** reptodd@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Support SB2488

Dear Representative Chris Todd,

My name is Whitney Sugimoto and I am a fourth grade teacher at Waiakea Elementary School in Hilo. I have been teaching for 7 years. I am born and raised here in Hilo. I have attended the University of Hawaii at Hilo and am very proud of my Hilo roots.

I started my teaching career by commuting to Naalehu Elementary School. I am not currently benefiting financially from the hard to staff differentials, but I truly believe that it is necessary for the teachers in that district. The differential I did receive while I was there was barely enough to cover the gas to commute out there. I loved Naalehu Elementary School and would have continued to work out there if it wasn't so taxing on my car and my health. The teachers who continue to dedicate themselves and commute from far to teach there deserve the compensation for their time and energy.

I currently struggle to afford housing for myself and my daughter. I am 30 years old and still live with my parents. My significant other works in Oahu and commutes to Hilo to see us. I refuse to move to Oahu as the cost of living is just too high. Even though we are both established in our careers our combined income is still not enough to cover the basic cost of living. This financial hardship prevents my family from being together.

Even though I do not benefit from the various differentials and/or fixing of compression I humbly ask you to support SB2488. Our students need and deserve qualified and experienced teachers.

Mahalo for your time,  
Whitney Sugimoto



SB 2488, SD 2

HSTA Testimony 21

3/12/20

**From:** "Elizabeth\_Sharrock/KEAAUM/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us"

<Elizabeth\_Sharrock/KEAAUM/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us>

**Date:** Tuesday, February 4, 2020 at 7:18 PM

**To:** "Sen. Sharon Y. Moriwaki" <senmoriwaki@capitol.hawaii.gov>

**Subject:** A Teacher's Perspective on 2844

Dear Senator Moriwaki,

I am writing to implore you to support Senate Bill 2488, funding teacher salary adjustments. I teach 7th grade English at Kea'au Middle School. I've been teaching for six years in Hawai'i and I needn't tell you it is a challenging career. My school in particular, faces poverty - the students, the building, and the staff alike. This year when we got news that pay differentials would be in put in place for us, a small glint of hope shone through our lives. I saw this action as an attempt to recognize the struggle the educational institution is facing. However, I also know that without the help of legislators such as yourself, we can kiss this hope good bye.

Personally, I face the struggles of under-funded schools and staff every single day. The achievement gap our students face is severe. The teachers these students have had, have come and gone, some not even staying a whole semester. The pay does not compensate for the challenging and demanding conditions. Last year alone, four of our newly hired teachers quit, only to be replaced by substitutes who were underqualified in the subjects they tried to teach. With this turnover rate and inconsistency, students are unable to build relationships with their teachers, which is the foundation for the learning process. Struggle is felt in the homes of these students as well. Many are facing ongoing trauma fueled by the fact that their community cannot overcome the jaws of poverty. School is sometimes the most stable environment the students have. They are guaranteed meals and supervision when they come to us. It is for these children and only for these children that many of us stay in this career. The kids need us. Education is worth the money. Education needs your vote.

It will sound dramatic, but society itself, needs our legislators to support education. If one considers the fact that many states estimate the amount of prison beds needed in the years to come, depending on the literacy levels of adolescents, one can surely feel grim about the future of the current students we have. Funding needed to rehabilitate citizens in prison far surpasses the funding needed for preventative action by supporting students' success in school. Their success depends on us, the teachers. And we teachers, cannot last much longer on the current salaries at hand.

My long term plan does not include a long-lasting career in teaching. I simply cannot afford it. I have two Master's degrees. As a result, I have student debt. I am a good teacher. But my plan is to work as a public servant only long enough to get my debt forgiven, so I can then pursue a career that does not entail such stress and responsibility for so little pay. One that pays me like the professional I am. I would love to consider prolonging my career until retirement. However, I barely make ends meet with the pay I get now. At the end of every pay period, I have less than 50 dollars to my name. And since today is the fourth of February, that is literally, what is sitting in my banking account as I write this. I have a son in college to support. I have a son at home who needs food and clothes and fun. I have a retired mother to care for. And I simply cannot afford to keep fulfilling my family duties if I want to keep teaching. Although I know it is the second most important job in the world besides parenting, I am facing the tough decision of giving it up.

I implore you. Please do all you can to support educators, schools, students, and the entire educational institution which is currently diseased with a lack of respect for its significance in our state, in our society, and in our communities. I invite you to visit my classroom. See the dire need for air conditioning, new desks and chairs and books. We get only a few hundred dollars to buy supplies to enrich our 125 students for an entire year. Would you be able to make do with this amount? It's no wonder our students are so far behind when their teachers won't stay and their days are spent wallowing in shame and poverty.

Our state was raised on the belief that if we keep education in disarray and despair, we would produce an ignorant working class that could not fight back, but could instead, work as immigrant slaves. We are the only state that denies our schools money from property taxes. Schools have been deplorably, desperately, denied for hundreds of years. That precedent has been set and has not been addressed. But we do not live amongst cane fields and pineapple farms anymore. We recognize the importance of culture, diversity, innovation, and intelligence. We realize the need for Hawaiian students to rise up and make something of their lives for the sake of their families, communities, and their land. My students deserve better. My colleagues deserve better. I deserve better. I should not be feeding my family hot dogs and

canned food from the Food Basket because it's the end of the month. I am a professional. A career woman. A successful, educated, good-hearted, hard-working individual and as a teacher of this state's children, I ask that you support me and my efforts by supporting education and the Senate Bill 2488.

I appreciate you listening and hope you consider what I have proposed.

Sincerely,  
Elizabeth Sharrock

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SB 2488, SD 2

HSTA Testimony  
3/12/20

22

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND COMMITTEE ON  
LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Amy E. Hinton. I am a sixth grade elementary teacher at Ka'u High and Pahala Elementary School in the KKP district on the Island of Hawaii. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

As a teacher that works at a hard-to-employ rural school there are many challenges that the teachers at our school face. Our school is often underfunded, understaffed, and quite the distance from our homes. Every year I manage to carpool to cut down costs to get to school. Unfortunately this does not take the burden away from excessive gas prices and wear and tear on my vehicle. Just this morning I had car trouble and was late coming into work because I live so far from my school that I can't even hop on a bus to make it on time. The amount of money spent on tires, oil changes, etc. add up quickly and are done more frequently than those who work at a school near their residence. It really can be a financial burden and I do not always have emergency money in my bank account for these situations. Just two years ago I purchased a new vehicle not because my old one didn't work well but because it was a truck and I was trying to find something more fuel efficient for my long drive to work every day. Now I have a car payment on top of high gas expenses.

The school I work at also lacks in the area of highly qualified teachers. We often have emergency hires and new teachers that are working with our children. This is something that drives me to continue working at this school. I am just two months away from completing my master's degree from University of Hawaii at Manoa, Special Education – Literacy Specialist because I wanted to help our school with its' biggest struggle, literacy. This has definitely taken a toll on my pocket book. UHM COE offered me a 2000\$ stipend each semester but that is half the tuition. So now, I pay approximately 500 to 1000\$ a month to pay the remainder of my tuition off. This really impacts my saving and prevents me from paying for things such as my new tires, propane at home, and even nutritious meals. While I see this degree as a benefit to my students it has definitely been a financial burden on myself.

What worries me the most about the compensation is that teachers with the same credentials as me receive the same pay but live in much more expensive areas. I do not understand how a person with the same credentials as me can afford to live and teach on Oahu. This is a whole different issue to address. Ultimately, this opportunity to support us is so important. Please do not forget that we, the teachers, are paying for the paint, prizes, snacks, and even personal hygiene products for our keiki.

Please take all of this into consideration as you ponder if teachers need this compensation. We have major teacher retention struggles in our state and I often believe it is due to many teachers not being able to afford to live here.

Please do not forget that this is not just for the teachers but for our future, our keiki.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Amy Hinton  
Kea'au-Ka'u-Pahoa  
Hawaii Island





SB2488, SD2

HSTA Testimony 23  
3/12/20

Yamanaka, Rae

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**From:** naomi calistro <mscalistro@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 25, 2020 6:32 PM  
**To:** reponishi@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Cc:** Yamanaka, Rae  
**Subject:** SB2488

My name is Naomi Calistro and I'm a fifth-grade special education teacher at Waiakeawaena Elementary School in Hilo. I have been teaching in Hawaii's public school system for 8 years now. I live in Hawaiian Acres in your district. Thank you for meeting with us on HSTA's Lobby day, we really appreciate your support!

Please fully fund SB2488, the bill that would help pay veteran teachers for their years of service as well as continue to fund shortage differentials in key areas.

I am very grateful for the differentials for Special Education. They make me feel valued, and respected as a competent educator.

Our students need licensed, experienced teachers and our newer teachers look to our veterans for mentoring and guidance. Increasing our pay would bring stability to the students and keep more experienced teachers in the classroom.

Aloha,

Naomi



March 12, 2020

Rep. Aaron Ling Johnson, Chair  
Committee on Labor and Public Employment

Rep. Justin H. Woodson, Chair  
Committee on Lower and Higher Education      Re: Testimony in support of SB2488 at the  
hearing March 13, 2020, 2 pm

Dear Representatives Johnson and Woodson and Members of the Committees:

We are six scholars from the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa and Leeward and Windward Community Colleges, who are writing in **strong support of SB2488**. The six of us recently authored a research brief “Increased Teacher Compensation Can Lead to Equitable Education in Hawai‘i” for the Hawai‘i Scholars for Education and Social Justice (HSESJ). HSESJ is a voluntary group of scholars across the State who conduct, review, and disseminate research related to education and social justice in Hawai‘i. Our report summarizes the results of 41 journal articles, three books, two dissertations and 35 other reports on the effects of teacher compensation on students and teachers. We draw on this research in our testimony (see below for a short version of the research brief.)

**Signed by over 120 scholars in Hawai‘i, the research brief presents evidence that SB2488 will make a difference in the recruitment and retention of public school teachers and ultimately affect student learning and other outcomes.** Research indicates that teacher salaries affect students’ achievement scores, even after controlling for students’ background characteristics such as their families’ income. Increasing teacher salaries can lead to qualified teachers staying in their positions, and this improves student achievement through higher student retention rates. One study found that raising teacher salaries by 10% was related to a 3-4% decrease in high school dropout rates. Having a knowledgeable, well-prepared and experienced teacher is the most significant school factor related to student achievement. Teachers have 2-3 times more influence on students’ math and reading test scores than other school factors, including facilities, services, and leadership.

**SB488 is important because it deals with educational equity.** Research suggests that the schools with the highest shortage of teachers in Hawai‘i, are those that serve Native Hawaiian, Filipino American, and other Pacific Islanders. Many of these families also come from low-income backgrounds. Every child deserves to have well-prepared teachers who know their students and their subject areas. By increasing the salaries of teachers in hard-to-fill geographic areas and those with content expertise in special education and Hawaiian language immersion, we can ensure that all students receive an excellent education.

**SB488 will improve the status of the teaching profession in our State** by increasing the salaries of public school teachers in these shortage areas. When adjusted for the cost-of-living, Hawaii's teachers are currently the lowest paid in the nation, and Hawai'i ranks as one of the worst states to be a teacher. Research shows that salaries are as important to teachers as they are to professionals in other occupations. Higher teacher compensation attracts more qualified teacher applicants, influences teachers' career aspirations, enhances teachers' commitment to their jobs, and improves the status of the teaching profession. Thus, SB488 has the potential to attract more individuals to become teachers and to encourage our educators to remain in their positions.

Research suggests that increasing teacher compensation will attract more diverse teachers to the profession. As you may know, Native Hawaiians and Filipino Americans make up over 50% all public school students. However, these groups are only 16% of the teaching force. Research shows that when teachers are the same race or ethnicity as their students, learners display higher academic outcomes, specifically in math and reading, when compared to students taught by teachers from a different racial or ethnic background. **Students from underrepresented groups often do not become teachers because salaries are too low. SB2488 can change this.**

In sum, the research is clear that increasing teacher compensation through enactment of SB2488 can make a difference in our State, and will positively improve public education and equity. We highly urge your support of this bill.

Aloha,

Lois A. Yamauchi, PhD

Colleen Rost-Banik, PhD

Michael Cawdery, PhD

Janet Kim, MEd

Jonathan Okamura, PhD

Klavdija Zorec, PhD



# Hawai'i Scholars for Education and Social Justice

Read complete text of HSESJ  
Research Brief #2:  
<http://hawaiischolars.wordpress.com>

## Highlights of Research Brief #2

### Increased Teacher Compensation Can Lead to More Equitable Education in Hawai'i

#### **Hawai'i needs to recruit and retain more teachers to assure a quality education for all of our 180,000 public school students.**

The greatest shortages are among teachers of special education, science, mathematics, Hawaiian language immersion, and English-as-a-Second-Language. Communities that are home to higher percentages of Native Hawaiians, Filipino Americans, and other Pacific Islanders are disproportionately affected.

The reasons for the teacher shortage are numerous and complicated, including systematic discrimination against Hawaiian and other teachers of color. Long-term solutions require additional funding as the Hawai'i State Department of Education does not currently have the funds to raise teacher compensation in meaningful ways. This research brief draws on research in education and related fields to provide facts about the teacher shortage and to dispel misconceptions regarding the effects of increased teacher compensation and incentives for teacher education.

#### **What we know about Hawaii's teacher shortage and compensation**

- Each year, roughly 1,000 teachers leave their positions in Hawai'i public schools, and these numbers appear to be rising.
- When adjusted for the cost-of-living, Hawaii's teachers are the lowest paid in the nation, and

Hawai'i is ranked as one of the worst states to be a teacher.

- The short-term solution to fill vacancies with non-licensed teachers, including those in "fast-track" teacher education programs, has not worked well.

#### **Misconception #1: People in Hawai'i do not want to be teachers.**

In Hawai'i, there is a large and growing pool of people who aspire to become teachers, especially among underrepresented groups.

- Hundreds of high school and community college students across the State enroll in teaching-focused pathways, and many are Hawaiian and Filipino American.
- Long-term substitute teachers, emergency hires, and others, who live in communities where teachers are needed, have responded to initiatives to become licensed teachers.
- Across the university-based rigorous teacher education programs in Hawai'i, approximately 1,200 people are working toward a teaching credential.

### **Misconception #2: Increasing teacher compensation will not affect teacher recruitment and retention.**

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- Higher teacher compensation attracts more qualified applicants, influences teachers' career aspirations, enhances teachers' commitment to their jobs, and improves the status of teaching as a profession.
- A 25-40% increase in teacher compensation can improve recruitment and retention of well-prepared and motivated teachers.
- Teachers in high demand fields, such as mathematics, and science, are especially vulnerable to salary differences that affect their retention.

### **Misconception #3: Increasing teacher compensation will not affect student outcomes.**

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- Teachers have 2-3 times more influence on students' math and reading test scores than other school factors, including facilities, services, and leadership.
- When teachers are the same race or ethnicity as their students, learners display higher academic outcomes, specifically in math and reading, when compared to students taught by teachers from a different racial or ethnic background.
- Students of color often do not choose teacher education because of financial reasons.

### **Misconception #4: Supporting students to complete rigorous teacher education will not improve the teacher shortage.**

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- Rigorous, university-based preparation of teachers enhances teachers' self-efficacy and performance, thereby improving student outcomes.
- Teacher candidates from fast-track programs display lower levels of instructional knowledge, are less confident in their teaching abilities and skills, and are 2-3 times more likely to leave their schools than those who received rigorous preparation.

### **Misconception #5: Once people become teachers, they no longer need support to stay in their positions.**

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- Research indicates that providing high-quality induction and mentoring is one of the most effective ways to advance teacher retention, satisfaction, and performance.

### **Conclusion**

#### **The quality of public education and Hawaii's future are dependent upon how well the State supports public education.**

The status quo results in academic and economic disparities, with the greatest impacts on Native Hawaiian, Filipino American, and other Pacific Islander families living in rural and low-income areas. The data presented in this research brief make a strong case for increasing teachers' compensation, recruiting and supporting more local teacher candidates, and retaining public school teachers, thereby, improving learning for all of Hawaii's students.

### **HSESJ recommends the following public policies:**

1. **Increase all teacher salaries** in accordance with Hawaii's cost of living.
2. **Offer affordable housing** for teachers.
3. **Provide greater financial support** to low income and underrepresented students aspiring to become teachers by offering tuition assistance and living stipends.
4. **Strengthen and develop more partnerships** among high schools, community colleges, universities, and the communities in which teachers are needed.
5. **Support and reward induction and mentoring** of all new teachers.
6. **Provide more funding** for these initiatives.

*Over 120 scholars in Hawai'i have endorsed this statement. View the complete text of HSESJ Research Brief #2 and see the full list of signatories online: <http://hawaiischolars.wordpress.com>*

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 3:06:26 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Helen Kong	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee:**

**I am a teacher at James Campbell High School and I am writing in strong support of SB2488 to continue teacher pay differentials.**

**This is the first step to helping end our teacher shortage crisis. It is not sufficient on its own, but these differentials have made a difference to teachers I have spoken with regarding their pay and if they are going to remain teachers in our state.**

**I have heard a teacher who told me that he was honestly considering leaving the profession entirely because he was overworked, overwhelmed and unappreciated as a special education teacher. This teacher told me that the pay differential allowed him to spend more time with his family and improved his quality of life as well as recognizing his hard work as a special educator.**

**Please pass this bill. You will make a difference for our teachers and, by doing so, improve our schools for our keiki. Our students deserve this, too.**

**Thank you in advance for your support.**

**Helen Kong**

**James Campbell High School**

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT and  
THE COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD1, RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2:00PM

Dear Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and members of the Education Committee:

My name is Shannon Kaleinani Sagapolutele. I am a 5thgrade teacher at Ka Waihona O Ka Na'auao Public Chater School in Leeward District (Nanakuli Complex) 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 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 Schoolsand 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.

Charter schools have to fight so much harder than DOE schools do. They receive roughly 60% of the per pupil funding that our DOE counterparts do. Why is that? Are our charter school keiki less important? So, the kumu at the charter schools need to be creative in developing their keiki's mind and to keep them engaged with less resources. It is also less personnel resources for our keiki to be molded and shaped by. The differentials helps, at least a bit, to make up a small portion of that gap. Our teachers are generous and kind with their time. It's not just a job. Many of us put money into our supplies for our kids when they can't afford it. Many of us have brought food for our kids because they are hungry and they don't get free lunch. Many of us sacrifice our time to tutor and guide these keiki in much more than just academics. We are teachers too and deserve the same differentials that the DOE teachers received beginning this January.

I implore you to consider the destination of our lahui and our keiki. We are attempting to provide them the same foundation to rise with much less monies. Would you consider evening out the playing field for their future and for ours?

We need your help.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

Shannon K. Sagapolutele

5thgrade Math and Social Studies Kumu

Ka Waihona O Ka Na'auao PCS

Leeward District, Nanakuli



**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC  
EMPLOYMENT and THE COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION**

RE: SB 2488, SD1, RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2:00 p.m. Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and members of the Committees:

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

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND COMMITTEE  
ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION  
RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION  
FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020  
2 P.M.

Dear Representative Sylvia Luke,

For the twenty two years of being a teacher, I spent thirteen years as a woodshop teacher at McKinley High School. I was fortunate to be able to spend the hours, twelve hours a day, to build my shop and to prep for my students' projects and lessons. My starting pay was \$2000.00 a month. Without the support from my Mother, I didn't have to find a second employment; instead, I could dedicate my time on professional growth. I used that time to learn the art of making tenor ukulele; it is knowledge and experience that I have been able to share with my woodshop students. It is a priceless gift to see the pride in my students when they strum the ukulele that they made with their own hands.

My father passed away when I was ten. With my Mother's poverty paycheck (lower than minimum wage because she was paid by the piece as a seamstress), we barely made ends meet. Therefore, I am very conscious about my family's budget. I too, may become a parent that has to support my family, on my salary alone. I am afraid that with the current teaching salary pay scale, I will have the same issues as when I was growing up and struggling. I may not be able to provide the financial support for Ted, (Husband) Shane and Cy (children).

To further my education, I enrolled at University of Phoenix to attain a Special Education degree and courses at UH Manoa to be highly qualified in English, Science, and Math. The State has not provided the proper funding to support the dedication I am continually giving. I see the young bright dedicated teachers losing hope and are now deciding on a career change. Many of them do not have an extended family and have to finance their own basic necessities, such as shelter, or to cope with the cost of living in Hawaii.

This bill will support not just established teachers, it will help retain the next generation of teachers. Our students deserve dedicated teachers who are able to put the time and effort into the profession of teaching.

Please support SB 2488, SD2 and to provide the compensation that is needed for our future.

Thank you,

Lisa Kaneshiro  
McKinley High School

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON  
LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT and THE  
COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION  
RE: SB 2488, SD1, RELATING TO TEACHER  
COMPENSATION  
FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020, 2:00 p.m.**

**Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and members of the  
Committees:**

**My name is Jamie Harden. I live in 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 plus fringe costs, to fully  
fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the  
compression issue will place our teachers where they  
should be for their many years of service and funding  
the differentials will help us recruit and retain our  
teachers in the hardest to fill areas. Our teachers are**

worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

**I just moved here last July to be a certified teacher for Molokai at Kualapuu Charter School. I moved with my husband and three children, ages 11, 13 and 15. We brought only our clothing and a truck. We have moved three times since being on island and it has been very difficult. There have been several times already when I thought we weren't going to make it and would have to pack up and go back to the Mainland. Teachers in Hawaii have incredible hurdles to climb, high costs of living, and not enough compensation to make it day to day. Please consider this urgent matter.**

**We need your help. Mahalo.**

**Jamie Harden**

**Kindergarten Teacher**

**Maui District**

**Molokai-Kualapuu Charter School**

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND  
COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2, RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2:00 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and Committee Members:

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, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. 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

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Natalie Lum. I am a Librarian at David Kalakaua Middle School in the Honolulu District on the island of Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been an educator for over 27 years. I work 2-3 extra jobs to support myself and my 2 children. It was very difficult to raise my children on this teaching pay and often my children went without some of the basic necessities. Often my bills were paid late as I have lived paycheck to paycheck and paid according to priority.

The cost of living in Hawaii has continued to increase while my teaching pay has not. In an effort to raise my pay in any way I could, I advanced to class 7 early in my teaching career. In addition, I returned to school to obtain an advanced degree which only added approximately \$100 per month before taxes. I depended on the step pay increases to help my finances, but have been denied what I feel was due to me. Recently I received a cheap piece of paper with a pin for years of service, but that doesn't help the finances. I have interviewed and was offered many jobs outside of the DOE, but with 27 years of service it is very difficult to leave at this point.

In years past, 27 years of service would mean step 14b. Right now, I would have to work another 4-6 years before I might be awarded step 14b at the rate steps are

being awarded. I am always thinking about leaving the DOE and finding another job where the advancement is fairer and more predictable. Currently I am preparing to leave if the pay situation doesn't improve because I am getting too old and tired to continue working 2-3 extra jobs. I made more money in 3 days as a Registered Nurse than I do in 5 days of Teaching. Now I work as a Registered Nurse and Real Estate Agent to supplement my income. The pay for teaching in the State of Hawaii is terrible, especially if you are a senior teacher who went through the hard times, strike and denied step pay increases over the last two decades.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Natalie Lum, Honolulu District, Oahu



**From:** Wendy Nickl <wendyfivec@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 2:17 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020 2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Wendy Nickl. I am a Teacher, Registrar and Curriculum Coordinator at Kohala Middle School in North Kohala on Hawaii Island. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I am 32 year teacher in the Hawaii public school system. I love my job and want smart, qualified young teachers to continue teaching our Hawaii keiki. Teachers not only teach. We feed students, comfort them, feed them, provide clothing and footwear for them, and provide many other tangible and intangible supports. Please support our keiki by providing the funding needed to give our students the best possible public school system.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Wendy Nickl, North Kohala, Hawaii Island

**From:** Troy Aurio <troyaurio@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 2:17 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

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, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

**I've been in education for about 14 years now and love every part of it except the pay. I was barely getting by in the past but in the last few years, my life has changed dramatically as I have gotten married and had two daughters. I have a 2 year old and a 11 month old. My family is struggling heavily financially and are living paycheck to paycheck. We reside in a two bedroom townhouse and dip into our savings to pay for basic living expenses on a monthly basis. Each month our savings get lower and eventually will run out. Right now I have a few options to make change in our lives prior to this happening. First, I could get a second job and work after school and perhaps get home very late well after my daughters go to sleep. Or I could leave teaching and look for a job that provides more for my family while still having quality time with my girls. I've put many years into my profession to support the needs of all my students with only their best interests in mind. Now I have to put my best interest firsts as my young family is my priority. It would be heartbreaking for me to walk away from teaching but I would do it just as you would walk away from your job to protect save and your family.**

**It doesn't need to be that way if you support education. There are countless teachers like me who are in similar situations. Many of you claim to support education. If you do, this is your time to step up and do the right thing. It's not a difficult decision. Please give us our fair share and support SB 2488, SD2.**

**I appreciate the time you are taking for reading and considering my testimony.**

We need your help. Mahalo.

**Troy Aurio, Leeward District, Oahu**

**eli2 - Kevin**

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**From:** Mercy Puni <mercy.puni@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 2:18 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education

**My name is Mercy Watson. I am a Math teacher at the hard to staff, Nanakuli High and Intermediate School in Leeward District on O'ahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.**

**I enjoy my career as a teacher and I am very proud to be an alumni giving back to my community of Nanakuli. Although this is my first year I have not been able to enjoy my job as an educator because of the financial obligations that I have. With school loans, supporting my new family and paying for my current Masters program I have not been able to be financially stable and focus on my students success. We need to increase teacher pay to relieve teacher stresses at home and support our educators of our haumana. I want to encourage my students to become teachers like we encourage them to become doctors or lawyers.**

**We need your help. Mahalo.**

**Mercy Watson**

**eli2 - Kevin**

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**From:** Renee Murphy <pricessnay@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 2:20 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Renee Llanes. I am a special education teacher at Kapaa Elementary School in the East Complex on Kaua'i. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

As a special education teacher, the differential helps out a little bit every month since I live paycheck to paycheck. It's unfortunate that I should have more than 1 job to survive financially, but with how stressful my current job is, I need my time off to decompress. I am constantly making split-second decisions which is mentally exhausting, and I need all the down time I can get so I do not burnout.

Please continue to provide differentials for special education teachers.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Renee Llanes

East Complex

Kaua'i Island

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** Kryssa Isobe <kryssaa.isobe@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 2:20 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND  
COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Kryssa Isobe. I am a teacher in Wai'anae 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.

Although the salary compression schedule does not personally affect me as I have benefited from step increases every other year since my hiring, I can see how frustrating it is for veterans. There are colleagues at my school that have 5+ more years of experience on me and we are at the same step on the salary charts. I think teachers that are committed to doing quality work and that are sticking with our profession deserve to be compensated for their years of service -- much like you'd see in other sectors. I fully support the veteran teachers in getting the pay that they deserve.

I am a proud product of our public school system in Hawaii. For so long, the public has criticized our public schools and many parents have opted to send their students to private schools. I am a firm believer, and living proof, that a \$20,000 education is not necessary to be a contributing member of society. I also believe that my students -- our state's future -- deserve the same quality education that I received. Many teachers along the coast, myself included, puts in extra hours -- long past our contracted work hours. The school I teach at has

over 10 clubs that students can partake in that requires extra time commitments during and after school hours. For the past 6 years, I've worked as a 6th grade teacher. Every year, my students have ranged from kindergarten to 6th+ in terms of reading abilities. This requires my colleagues and I to differentiate work to accommodate the 7 year learning gap within one classroom. This is not an easy task by many means. Although I've never taught in another community on island, I know that this is not a norm in communities with higher socioeconomic statuses. The hard-to-staff differential will help attract and retain teachers to communities where there is a greater need. Students in hard-to-staff districts deserve a high-quality education; a constant turnstile of new teachers does not help in boosting the learning in communities like mine.

We need your help.

Mahalo,

Kryssa Isobe, Leeward District, Nanakuli-Waianae Complex, Oahu

**eli2 - Kevin**

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**From:** Jennifer Whittaker <jennifer.whittaker@k12.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 2:21 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and the Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13th, at 2:00 p.m.

As a special education teacher on the west coast I support SB2488, SD1, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and the Committee on Lower & Higher Education. This act will help me create and facilitate engaging lessons that will enrich the education of my students.

Thank you for your consideration.  
Jennifer Whittaker

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## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Sheri Preston <sheri.preston@k12.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 2:23 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** SB 2488, SD Relating to Teacher Compensation

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Sheri Preston. I am a Special Education teacher at Kohala Middle School in North Kohala District on Hawai'i Island. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

North Kohala is truly 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 loves 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

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## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Cheyenne Tilford <cheyenne.tilford@k12.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 2:25 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488 and SD2

Hi,

My name is Cheyenne Tilford, and I am a second grade inclusion teacher at Leihoku Elementary School in Waianae. I want to let you know how imperative these salary adjustments are for me and my students. For example, this compensation helps me have the means to stay in Waianae. I live in Kapolei, and it would be much more economically friendly to teach at a school there, but I want to be available to service the students who are in the most need. I spend lots of extra money on supplies for my students who don't have, and things to make my classroom a safe and welcoming space. I am wanting to stay here to service these students, but it becomes hard as a low-payd teacher at times to have those extra financial burdens.

Thanks so much,  
Cheyenne

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**From:** Tracy Kaichi <tracy.a.kaichi@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 2:26 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND  
COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Tracy Kaichi. I am a Special Education Teacher at Waipahu High School in the Leeward District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

Please note that 16% of SpED positions are filled with unqualified teachers, this makes the qualified SpED teachers work even harder than they already are and qualified teachers have to do double the amount of IEP's and paperwork that comes along with those IEP's.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Tracy Kaichi, Leeward Distric

**eli2 - Kevin**

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**From:** Ellen Stone <ellen.stone17@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 2:28 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** In support of SB 2488, SD2

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Ellen Stone. I am a Special Education teacher at Kohala Middle School in Hawaii District on the Big Island. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

I have been teaching in Kohala since 2003, and have experienced furlough days as well as continuous changes taking place in Special Education. You are probably aware of the legal implications of the work we are required to do to help our students, as well as to protect the State of Hawaii from lawsuits. My fellow Sped teachers and I take our responsibilities very seriously, and while I enjoy my work, I am old enough to retire. Knowing that my work is valued enough for my union, the Board of Education and Governor to fight for these differentials for teachers has motivated me to continue working for another year. I am licensed and highly qualified for my positions. In good times and bad times, our children must be educated so they will be prepared for the future. It requires dedicated, qualified teachers to accomplish that, and I strongly believe that you get what you pay for.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Ellen Stone

Hawaii District

Hawaii Island

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## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Renee Bautista <reneecbautista@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 2:30 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** SB2488, SD2 Relating to teacher compensation

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Renee Bautista. I am a Special Education Teacher at Kohala Middle School in North Kohala on the Big Island of Hawaii. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I was born and raised in Kohala and I intend on raising my family here where I grew up, where I went to school, and where I graduated. I am now an employee of Kohala Middle School and I am proud of that. I have two keiki's and work two to three jobs just to make ends meet. I still remain living with family as I struggle to find a home affordable for me and my family. The pay differential and the compression will enable me to earn a living wage where I am able to purchase a home and raise my family in the community where I was raised, the community I call home, and the community I love.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Renee Bautista

Kohala Middle School

North Kohala, Big Island Hawaii

**eli2 - Kevin**

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**From:** Lorianne Salazar <lorianne.salazar@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 2:32 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT and THE COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT and THE COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488 Proposed SD1, RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2:00 p.m.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and members of the Committees:

My name is Lorianne Telles. I am a teacher at Leihoku Elementary in Waianae 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.

As a special education teacher in the underserved area of Waianae, we see a high turnover of teachers yearly, and work with students who must deal with so many factors related to poverty and trauma. My fully self-contained special ed. classroom runs effectively, but the daily work we do as a team is highly stressful - physically, emotionally, and intellectually. In our class, we work on shaping behaviors from highly aggressive to socially acceptable, and shaping increasingly independent individuals. I am lucky to have an amazing team of adults, who need to be given the respect and incentive to remain in their positions and grow as educators, to better serve our students. We lose far too many teachers who have great potential to schools who deal with fewer issues of poverty, states that pay more, and careers that are more lucrative. Differentials would aid in addressing the respect and recognition that needs to be paid to staff who effectively and consistently work in highly stressful, difficult, and many times traumatizing environments.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Lorianne Telles, Leeward District Nanakuli/Waianae Complex, Oahu

## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** stacia sage <s-sage@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 2:35 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

Aloha,

My name is Stacia Sage and have been a Special Education teacher on Oahu for over 10 years. If my significant other did not have good paying job, I would not be able to continue teaching and living on Oahu. Before he secured his job as a social worker for the VA, making 80k a year, we were planning on moving due the cost of living and the low pay to teachers. I have friends back on the mainland who have less education and experience than me who are making 14K more a year than me.

I love Hawaii, I love my profession, I love the students. I want to stay here, I want to raise my family here.

To any law maker who say "throwing money at the situation" won't fix it, I laugh. It will be a huge step in fixing our teacher shortage. Salary is the first thing anyone looks at when applying for jobs.

I have seen young college students recruited from the mainland, come for only a few years and then leave because they realize they cannot afford to raise a family here on their salary.

I can say I am very motivated by pay. The 10k differential that has been given to special education teachers is huge and has changed my tune about moving else where or changing professions.

The legislature needs to think long term and how much money the state will save if we pay our teachers a living wage. We will see less turnover, less sick days out, better quality teaching and teachers.

Thank you for time and ask yourself if you would continue your career if only made 60k a year, with a master's degree, and little room for movement no matter how hard you worked?

Stacia Sage  
S-sage@hotmail.com  
808-366-9746

Sent on my Virgin Mobile Phone.



**eli2 - Kevin**

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**From:** Aaron Yasuhara <aaron.yasuhara@campbell.k12.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 2:38 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony

March 11, 2020 Wednesday

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

I (**Aaron Yasuhara**) work at James Campbell High School and my wife (**Jaycie Yasuhara**) works at Barbers Point Elementary School. I am writing this email in strong support on **Bill SB2488** to continue teacher pay differentials.

This profession has been very challenging for both me and my wife. To make a better learning environment both me and my wife have spent a lot of money out of our own pocket to make learning valuable to our students.

We have also spent countless hours before and after school prepping, planning, contacting parents, collaborating with other teachers, etc. Both me and my wife have contemplated changing professions for jobs that pay better, for jobs that have better hours, for jobs that have better medical and finally we consider leaving for a profession where we are appreciated for what we do.

We both strongly support **Bill SB2488** because it is hard to make it as a teacher. It makes it even harder when your wife is a teacher as well. The time and effort we put into making a difference in our students lives leaves us without time to get another job. Also because we are so strapped for cash we have contemplated on not having a baby because we fear we do not make enough to properly take care of a baby.

Please vote yes on **Bill SB2488** because it would truly help make a difference for both me and my wife. We want to stay in this profession but if we are not supported, then it will make it hard to stay.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. Please consider voting yes on **Bill SB2488** because it will make a difference in many teachers' lives around the state. Hope you have a great day.

Sincerely,  
**Aaron Yasuhara**

**From:** Shianne Watkins <shianne.watkins@k12.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 2:39 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND  
COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Shianne Watkins. I am a kindergarten teacher at Leihoku Elementary in Leeward District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

The hard to staff differential means the difference between making rent and being able to buy groceries in the same month. It means that my students will have a teacher who is not also concerned with money while delivering instruction. It means that the focus is back on the prep and planning and not on a second job or making ends meet.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Shianne Watkins, Leeward District, Oahu Island

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## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Lauren Canton <lkc2983@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 2:43 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Lauren Canton. I am a School Counselor at Kohala Middle School in the West Hawaii district on the Big Island. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have worked in this role for over 7 years. I love my job very much. I love what I do, and I feel so grateful to get to do my job every day.

I am emailing you to ask you to support funding for SB2488. It is so important for educators and counselors, like me, to have a living wage to live and work in Hawaii, especially in small, rural towns like Kohala. In our isolated community, there are very minimal mental health resources. As a School Counselor, I spend my entire day doing individual and group counseling to promote social-emotional health among our youth. In therapy with youth, I work every day to break the cycle of violence and drug abuse that has deeply impacted our community by healing trauma, teaching coping skills, and developing self-worth. It is so important to fund SB2488 so that counselors and educators like me can make a living wage to continue the important work we do. I struggle every month to pay my mortgage and take care of basic needs. On weekends, I work a part-time job answering sexual assault and domestic violence crisis hotline calls to supplement my DOE income. I have 2 Master's Degrees (one in counseling and one in education) from Harvard Graduate School of Education, and I still struggle financially due to the high cost of living and low wages for Hawaii teachers. I love what I do and I feel honored to do this meaningful work, and I believe I should be compensated fairly for the time and energy I put into my work every day. Every day teachers and counselors are working to make the future better and brighter for the next generation.

We need your help. Mahalo.

--

Lauren Canton, M.Ed.  
School Social Worker/School Counselor  
Kohala Middle School  
RPCV Senegal 2008-2010  
cell 301 404 0252  
e-mail [LKC2983@gmail.com](mailto:LKC2983@gmail.com)

**eli2 - Kevin**

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**From:** Sheena-marie Shimose <sheena-marie.shimose@k12.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 2:48 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony

My name is Sheena-Marie Shimose. I am a teacher at Leihoku Elementary in Wai'anae 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 plus fringe costs, to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest to fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

While I am already receiving a hard to staff incentive to teach on O'ahu's leeward coast, nothing can really equate to what teachers face on a daily basis in this area. With the socioeconomic status of the district as well as the dire need for Social and Emotional Learning by our students, the school climate has changed drastically and in turn made the job very demanding. With the increasing demand, we need to address compensation not only for current teachers but soon to be teachers who want to come to the coast.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Sheena-Marie Shimose, Leeward District, O'ahu

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**From:** Athena Victorine <athena.victorine@k12.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 2:51 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is **Athena Victorine**. I am a **Special Education Teacher** at **Mountain View Elementary School** in **Hawaii District/KKP Complex** on **the Island of Hawaii**. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

**I recently moved back to Hawaii from the mainland a few years ago to be closer to family. I have a total of 20 years of Special Education Teaching experience and when I moved back, they only gave me 5 years of teaching experience in which I did before I moved away., I was in shock. Other states give up to 10 years of teaching experience, no matter what state you taught in. This is also a topic that needs to be addressed in order to recruit and retain experienced teachers in Hawaii. Teachers should be shown their worth by getting paid a salary that helps them with the cost of living here in Hawaii. I currently work in a hard to fill area as well as a Special Education teacher and getting the differentials really helped in making my decision to continue to remain a public school teacher here, because I was considering moving back to the mainland in a few years after my children graduate from high school. I strongly believe that fixing the salaries of teachers with the compression issues, and continuing to keep the differentials for Special Education Teachers and hard to fill areas, will help teachers from not wanting to leave the profession or state.**

We need your help. Mahalo.

**Athena Victorine, Hawaii District/KKP Complex, Island of Hawaii**

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## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Doris Aczon <doris.aczon@k12.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 3:00 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and the Committee on Lower & Higher Education

My name is Doris Aczon. I am a teacher at Leihoku Elementary School 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 am concerned because the cost of living is high in Hawaii so our new teachers that come to Leihoku end up moving back to the Mainland. A lot of our Special Ed teachers come from the Mainland and end up leaving after a year or two because they can't afford to stay.

I also spend a lot of my own personal money to purchase things for my classroom every year.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Doris Aczon, Leeward, Oahu

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## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Andrew Watson <awatson@hawaii.edu>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 3:04 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** SB 2488

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and members of the Committees:

My name is Keala Watson. I am a teacher at Ka Waihona PCS in Nanakuli in the leeward district 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 plus fringe costs, to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest to fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

The brave teachers of hard-to-staff areas need to be rewarded for their willingness to educate the highest need students in the state. I have personally considered entering a higher paying profession to afford the rising cost of raising my family in my homeland of Hawai'i. Of all the costs and priorities on your agenda, I pray that the education of our children and the fair treatment of our educators will be near the top of your priority list. If our government leaders will match the investment and sacrifices of my fellow teachers, our kids and future will greatly benefit towards a beautiful Hawai'i nei.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Keala Watson, Leeward District, O'ahu

## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Sherrice Munechika <sherrice.munechika@k12.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 3:10 PM  
**To:** Sen. Donovan Dela Cruz; Rep. Val Okimoto; LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488

Hi Representative Val Okimoto and Senator Dela Cruz,

My name is Sherrice Munechika. I am a kindergarten teacher at Kipapa Elementary School on the island of Oahu. I have been teaching for over 17 years.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our valuable teachers. Our teachers are worth it and as they work hard in educating our children.

As a public school educator I sacrifice long hours of work and dedication to my students. Teaching has only been getting more difficult every year with more things put on our teaching plates. I believe teachers will benefit from fixing the compression/paying teachers based on their years of service because more teachers will be willing to stay in this tough profession. Our students deserve licensed, experienced teachers

Thank You,  
Sherrice

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**From:** Teresa Shimizu <teressa.shimizu@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 3:29 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND  
COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Teresa Shimizu. I am a classroom teacher at Farrington High School in Honolulu district on Oahu island. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

We need your help.

Mahalo,

Teresa Shimizu

Teacher, Farrington High School

**From:** Malia Hanakahi <malia.hanakahi@k12.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 3:49 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** estimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and the Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13th, at 2:00 p.m.

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT and THE COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD1, RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2:00 p.m.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and members of the Committees:

My name is Malia Hanakahi. I am a teacher on the Leeward Coast 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 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 am in my 7th year of teaching on the Leeward Coast of Oahu. I have a Masters degree in Early Childhood Education as well as a Bachelors degree in Early/Elementary Education, however, being a young adult in Hawaii has many challenges. Having a young family, I have considered other ways or jobs to make ends meet. This unfortunately would create gaps in services for the community I work in, as the state tries to fill many vacant positions with people who may not even be qualified. With appropriate compensation, individuals such as myself, wouldn't have to think of other alternatives in order to afford a life in the islands.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Malia Hanakahi, Leeward District, Oahu

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## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Miss Star\* <epadilla@mckinleyhs.k12.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 3:54 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

Hello, my name is Eren Star Padilla, and I am a proud high school visual arts teacher. I am passionate about being a teaching artist and love what I do, more than that, I love my school and even more than THAT, I love my students!

I am writing a personal testimonial because I do have a story to share. After teaching art part time in schools across Chicago, my home town, where I was born and raised, I found myself in my 30's with no insurance, no savings, no steady income, living contract to contract. I decided to go back to school to get certified as an art teacher and did so, racking up 20K in student loans, because you may or may not know, that in a teacher training program, students must student teach full time for a semester to a year. I couldn't work full time in 2 different schools and do my classes to earn my certification so I had to max out my student loans to live. Remember, I'm in my mid 30's and no one supports me. I'm single, so I'm doing this all on my own. During this educational process, the Chicago Board of Education shut down about 400 public schools. So many of my friends and colleagues couldn't find jobs, others were being laid off, and many others had to leave the district. Some quit altogether. But that wasn't me, I devised a plan. I reached out to friends and family around the country and long story short, I heard about an art teacher retiring after over 30 years of service at McKinley High School in Honolulu, and the powers that be opened the doors and 3 months after I finished my teacher training, I was starting a brand new job in Honolulu, relocating thousands of miles, excited and terrified at the same time!

My job at McKinley is a dream come true. I love coming to work, and teaching art, succeeding at it, and inspiring my students is a personal mission I see come to life every single day. But I struggle. My kids struggle. I constantly worry about them. I see my kids everyday on the bus, because I can't afford a car. I worry about the future my students will have because our drop out rate is scary and the cost of living is so high. I want to do more, give more, but I get tired. I am the advisor to art club and I bring snacks to every meeting out of my own pocket because my students are hungry after school and I want them to stay and hang out. I go home after work and keep working in my tiny 380 sq foot apartment on my art work to sell to raise income for myself in any opportunity I can get because any little bit helps. The two times I got a raise because of our union negotiated pay raises, my landlady raised my rent. So after two raises, my rent was raised two times. Apparently, she reads the news. People tell me to get a roommate or drive an Uber, but my apartment is tiny, made for one person, and it makes me sad that it's small for me as a single, knowing that many of my students live in flats like mine but with 5-8 people, taking shifts to sleep. I could drive an Uber like a few of my coworkers, but I can't afford a car, or the extra rent for a parking space my landlady would charge.

This is my 6<sup>th</sup> year at McKinley, and I tell people that I love my school so much, I want to retire here, I don't want to switch jobs or schools or districts, I want to work here my whole teacher life, I absolutely love my coworkers and students. So I'm staying! But I can't say the same for everybody. Daniela couldn't handle the workload and being given so many different preps as a new teacher, so she left after 2 years. Angela's case load was so high as a school therapist she couldn't properly deliver care and with more and more high needs students placed on her, she couldn't do her job well, so she moved to a charter school with a ¼ of the number of kids at our school. Mary Ann, a talented and caring E.A. for special needs students, got married and got pregnant and had to quit because child care cost as much as her full income! She said it was cheaper for her to stay home and be unemployed than to work full time to pay a day care her whole check, sadly, her construction worker husband only makes enough for their now family of 5 to live in a studio, just a little bigger than mine. Deanna moved to the mainland because her bills were too high and in her words, "it's not worth the stress".

Working as a teacher in Honolulu is one thing, but LIVING in Honolulu as a teacher is another. I've had to tell my partner that there's no way I'm ever going to have children of my own because I'll never be able to afford it, and that's the biggest tragedy, because being an adoptive parent is one of my life goals. I'm happy to be a mom to my kids at school, a bunch literally call me mom, but it devastates me that my own dreams of being a mom will never come to pass. On my own in Honolulu, as a mom, it's just not possible. Not when I have to give my landlady so much of my income and a lot of the remainder to the student loan corporation. And this will be the story of many of our future graduates and future teachers. Please help me so I don't have to struggle so much. The fear of The Bus raising fares because of rail, and the fact that I eat so much canned food every week are realities, not over exaggerations. I joke with my kids, "see ya on da bus, cuz I can't afford a moped!" it's sad but true. Help our teachers stay in Hawaii!

Thank you so much for time, for reading this and for all you do. Thanks for listening!

Miss Star\*  
Art Educator  
McKinley High School  
epadilla@mckinleyhs.k12.hi.us

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

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## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** James Millwood <millwooda001@hawaii.rr.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 4:04 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2,

Aloha Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is **James Millwood**. I am a **Teacher** at **Mililani High School** in **Central District** on **Oahu**. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

**I have been teaching at Mililani High School for 27 years. I also coached 3 sports at Mililani High (Football, Track, Softball) for 29 years. I have dedicated much of my life to our youth and student athletes. I take pride in being a positive role model, mentor and coach for thousands throughout the years. Having 4 daughters and trying to put them through college on my teachers pay was very hard and led me to stepping down from coaching and seeking alternative ways of earning income.**

**My wife is also a teacher and it has been a struggle to manage our mortgage, bills, children's tuition, etc... on our teachers pay. By providing funds to raise our teachers salary compression issue, it will allow me to continue to teach and give my 100% to teaching our young adults at Mililani High School.**

We need your help. Mahalo.

**James Millwood, Central District, Oahu**



**From:** Holly <hollybakescookies@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 4:14 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT  
AND COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION**

**RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION**

**FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020**

**2 P.M.**

**Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:**

**My name is Holly Uehara. I am a teacher at Pahoa Elementary in Kau-Keaau-Pahoa District on Hawaii. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.**

**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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.**

**Teaching can be a thankless job at times if you're not looking for it. Thanks for a teacher can come in different forms: a student who can finally count to 100, a smile when a student reads for the first time, or just a good morning greeting. While these variations of thanks are enough to get you through the day, I think that fixing the salary compression issue and/or differentials will help to give that extra thanks to teachers who need a little more thanks for all they do.**

**We need your help. Mahalo.**

**Holly Uehara, Kau-Keaau-Pahoa District, Hawaii**

## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Jaclyn Wiils <jaclyn\_96792@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 4:20 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** SB2488, SD2

My name is Jaclyn Wiils. I am a teacher at Makaha Elementary in the Waianae District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB2488, SD2.

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 the charter schools and the DOE . This bill can help change the course of education for the better on the Leeward Coast and for the State of Hawaii. We will need the full \$45 million more than this current bill provides, to do so. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

The shortage differentials will encourage me to stay in the education system out in the Waianae Coast as a special education preschool teacher, and provide stability in my community. I left this position 7 years ago for 3 years, and within those 3 years, there was a turn around of at least 6 different teachers. Most were not with a license in education.

I could have retired 3 years ago, but I found that this need of good education in my community is an important one to fill. The students deserve experienced teachers that have Aloha for the Waianae Community and for the State of Hawaii.

I moved to Kapolei 3 years ago, but stayed teaching in Makaha, as it is what I love.

Having the shortage differentials allows me to pay for the gas and mileage to drive to and from the school, and most importantly buy the much needed classroom materials for my keiki ( supplies- including cleaning supplies, positive reinforcements, and even sometimes the basic things such as underwear, clothes and food), without hesitation.

I would also appreciate you helping to remedy the compression issue. We old timers have put the recruiting efforts for the new teachers as a priority. Now is our time for being compensated for our sacrifices on our step movements as we have over 23 years in the DOE system, and come with great experience with helping to meet the educational goals of the State of Hawaii for Keiki of Hawaii.

We need your help, Mahalo

Jaclyn Wiils, Waianae District, Makaha, Oahu

## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Alma Holcomb <alma.holcomb@k12.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 4:22 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT and THE COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD1, RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2:00 p.m.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and members of the Committees:

My name is Alma N. Holcomb. I am a Kindergarten Teacher at Leihoku Elementary in Leeward District that resides in Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

Please provide more than 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 plus fringe costs, to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest to fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

Last year, I moved here from Texas and took a \$5000 dollar pay cut. Due to the big cut in pay, I did not sign up for medical, dental, or vision insurance so that I could keep most of the paycheck. You may ask why in the world would you do that? Why would you take such a big cut off your check moving here? Well, I feel that I have been called here to help the keiki of our Aina. I love my job here in Waianae, I love my island home, my community and now I can say my people as I feel I am apart of this special place in Waianae. Last year was really hard for me financially, because I only had one job and I couldn't afford to give my time and attention to having another job. So when I got sick, I couldn't go to the doctor and pay the copay because it was so expensive out of pocket. So I just pushed forward praying to stay healthy and not need to go to the doctor. When April 2019 came around last year, I had to rethink my insurance situation and just sign up for medical insurance but not dental (which I regret as one of my teeth cracked in the fall of 2019 and had to pay \$2,500 out of pocket to get fixed! That is approximately one month of my salary! ) But now I will have to sign up for dental insurance too, so what I get to keep

from my paycheck will, again, be less. I now have a second job and work 7 days a week. I love that job too, but ideally, teaching takes so much time to plan and prepare for that I really rather just have one job. ... my teaching job in Waianae. As it were, I need my second job to help me in my expenses and housing. If you know any teacher you know that they will soon be one less pair of shoes than getting something they need for their class and their kids. That is what I have had to do. I use my old uncomfortable slippers and instead get something for my kids that I need for my lesson. So in short, your decision will affect so many people in our schools. Please, please help fix the salary compression issue. So many people are leaving education in Hawaii because the money doesn't really support having a teaching career and daily living is so hard to do. We need so many people to help our keiki be our next generation of leaders. Will you be one of those people that support our keiki be successful? I hope so.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Alma N. Holcomb

Leeward District

Oahu

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## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Kacey Kikuchi <kaceyk6@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 4:37 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB 2488 - SD1

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and members of the Committees:

My name is Kacey Kikuchi. I am a teacher at Leihoku Elementary in Waianae 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 plus fringe costs, to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest to fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

A couple of years ago I found myself reflecting on my teaching career; where I came from, where I was and what my future would look like. At that point, I had been teaching at Leihoku Elementary for nearly eight years and I fell in love with the community, my students, and my colleagues. However, a part of me felt incomplete. I dedicated the last eight years of my life to my career, my school, and doing whatever it took to give the best to my students. I attended many professional developments, attended every school function, I lead professional developments for faculty members and yet what did I have to show for it in my personal life? At that point, I was single, not living at home and I had moved in with friends and eventually my brother. I was struggling financially, paying the high rents, bills associated with renting, and the cost of food made it nearly impossible to save money, explore new hobbies, and basically enjoy life. Owning a home as a single female seemed like a crazy far fetched idea, I'd never be able to save enough for a downpayment on a place because I was living paycheck to paycheck. Many of my friends that bought homes could do so because they had help from their families, whether it was living with their parents and saving every paycheck or their parents or family members gifting them money for a downpayment. I didn't have that kind of support from my family. I felt like I was stuck between a rock and a hard place. How could I keep going in a career field that I loved if that career couldn't support me financially? It was then I created a 3 year plan. My plan included me attending grad school, getting my masters in education and moving off-island to seek better job opportunities on the mainland that would pay more and eventually allow me to purchase my own home. I completed grad school and I did see a slight increase in my pay, however, I had acquired student debt while attending grad school and some of that pay increase went to paying off my student loan. Financially, I was at a better place but not exactly where I wanted to be.

Fast forward to today: The pay increase that we have received has made me reconsider leaving the island. The hard to staff differential has decreased my financial stress, I no longer live paycheck to paycheck. I can put

more money into my savings and retirement plans and still take care of all my bills and enjoy life. When my friends ask if I am still planning on moving my current answer is no. Hawaii is my home and it was hard to even consider moving away but now I am grateful that I am more financially stable and it feels like I could actually make a life for myself.

My story is not unique. I know there are many other teachers out there who also experience the financial stress of living in Hawaii. Providing the funds to fix the teacher compression issue and pay differentials could be the difference between teachers choosing to stay or leave the islands.

We need your help. Mahalo.

**Kacey Kikuchi**

**Leeward District**

**Oahu**

## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Kathy Shibuya <kathyshibuya@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 4:40 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education

I am writing in support of fixing the problem caused by teacher step-compression. Doing so will help to retained experienced teachers. These experienced teacher are important because their experience helps them to create and deliver effective instruction which has a direct impact on every child in their class. I know that my 21+ years of experience and ongoing training enables me to be more deliberate and effective in my instructional practices.

These experienced teachers also help to guide and influence the next generation of teachers. Every day, I help the younger, less experienced teacher in my grade level in a variety of ways. For example, I often take the lead on developing new lessons and show them how to supplement school curriculum to differentiate and adjust to student needs. When new teacher have a problem dealing with difficult parents or just keeping up with daily responsibilities, they depend on veteran teachers to show them the ropes.

I strongly believe the state needs to recognize the value of teachers' experience. Providing the funding to fix the step-compression problem is one way to recognize that value. When people don't feel valued and appreciated, they are more willing to leave. Fixing the compression problem also helps to keep veteran teacher in the work force. Please provide needed funding for SB2488.

Thank you for your time and consideration,  
Kathy

**From:** Kathleen Nullet <kathleen.nullet@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 4:51 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC  
EMPLOYMENT AND COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION  
RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION  
FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020 2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Kathleen Nullet I am a teacher at Kailua Intermediate School in the Kalaheo District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. 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.

I realize you may be worried about our economy right now, but we are the family members who support our kupuna and keiki in our families, especially if our family members lose our jobs.

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, Kalaheo District, Oahu



## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Leona Watson <lpwright@hawaii.edu>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 4:56 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education

Aloha Mai Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, My name is Leona Watson, I am Special Education Teacher at Nanakuli High and Intermediate School. I was born and raised in Nanakuli and I'm a product of our public school system. I attended Nanaikapono Elementary and Nanakuli High and Intermediate. I have been teaching in Nanakuli for the past 9 years as an early childhood educator for INPEACE a non-profit organization, Ka Waihona O Ka Na'au'ao PCS as elementary special education teacher, and now as a secondary special education teacher at Nanakuli High and Intermediate. As I reflect upon my reason of why I began this journey as a teacher, I understand that I decided to serve my community, Keiki, and 'Ohana of Nanakuli. I plan to remain here in my hometown and I am blessed with the opportunities that our career as a teacher has provided. As a result, I know that teaching requires many hours beyond a school day for planning, grading, and continuing education. Therefore, I ask that the committee please look into supporting our teachers. Although \$37 million on compression and the shortage differentials are greatly appreciated, I hope the committee is able to support \$45 million plus fringe to assure the salary adjustment to fix compression along with continuing the hard-to-staff, SPED, and Hawaiian Language Immersion shortage differentials. I truly appreciate your time in this matter. I know there are many decisions to take into account as state leaders, but I hope our Keiki and Na Kumu (teachers) may be one of your greatest priority.

Me Ke Aloha Pumehana a me Iesu Pu,  
Leona Watson

## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** IRENE BARBER <irene\_barber@msn.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 4:59 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** SB2488, SD2

Aloha Chair Johanson and Chair Woodson,

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, SD2.

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

## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Holly Honbo <holly.honbo@k12.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 5:03 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and Committee Members:

My name is Holly Honbo and I am a teacher at Kaimuki High School in the Honolulu District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2 Relating to Teacher Compensation.

Please provide enough funds to fix  
1-the teacher salary compression issue

and provide funding for the pay differentials for:  
1-Special education teachers, and  
2-and hard-to-staff positions

The DOE will need extra funds plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where we should be.

Both you and I are well aware of the impact good teachers can make on our students' lives, and ultimately the future of Hawaii. Unfortunately, not all of Hawaii's children have this privilege. As a 25+ year public school teacher, I know first hand the hit Kaimuki High School took with the constant turnover of teachers over a 10+ year period. In 2017-18, Kaimuki was accurately ranked in the bottom of Honolulu magazine's list (41 of 50), just above outer island rural schools.

Parents, and therefore students, are different from what we remember. Inexperienced teachers struggle with their first years on the job, and many leave the profession within 3 years, as evidenced by Hawaii's teacher shortage. In addition, because the salary of an administrator is much more appealing as compared to a teacher's salary, leakage is increased as school principals are sourced from the teacher pool.

Student Activities Coordinators regularly spend countless hours working with students for students. Outside of the many tasks we do during the school day, we advise our schools' student councils and guide them through the planning, organizing, and execution of events and activities (Homecoming festivities, school dances, pep rallies, guest speakers, fundraisers, community service projects, etc.). The majority of the planning and the events themselves occur outside of school hours--do you remember attending school dances?--which we happily supervise and must attend, but do not receive extra compensation. We spend money on meals, refreshments, treats for our council members who work for their student bodies. We use gas and put wear and tear on our personal vehicles in transporting supplies and decorations to off campus venues, and also chauffeur students to activity destinations.

All of these expenses are not recoverable and we know it, but we give anyway. However, adjusting veteran's teacher's salaries (and there are many SACs who would benefit) would encourage all of us to delay our retirement dates. We are a strong and tireless group of professionals dedicated to our students. We all know we spend our own personal money on supplies to support our students. Money that could be used on ourselves and on our families.

In addition, we give time from our personal lives for the service of our students and our schools. Most teachers wouldn't consider doing the job we do because it is so time intensive (our job position does not allow us a substitute).

Retaining experienced teachers makes a positive difference to every school and strengthens Hawaii's future. New teachers, students, and administrators benefit from a stable, veteran faculty. We veteran teachers love our jobs and what we do. We've proven it. Please show some appreciation by adjusting our pay.

The need (vs "want") for compensation equity is especially important when recognizing that Hawaii's teachers are already the lowest paid in the nation.

We need your help.

Thanks for the work that you do.

--

Holly Honbo  
Student Activities Coordinator  
Kaimuki High School  
733-4900 ext. 243

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## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Sacha Hemenway <sacha.hemenway@k12.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 5:23 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and the Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13th, at 2:00 p.m.

To whom it may concern,

My name is Sacha Hemenway. I am a teacher on the Waianae Coast 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 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 have been teaching on the Waianae Coast for the past 8 years. In that time I have seen many teachers leave Waianae each year. The top reasons for leaving that I commonly hear is because the commute is too far, teachers cannot afford to live in Hawai'i, or they have difficulty keeping up with the workload and emotional toll that go hand in hand with teaching in a title 1 school. Each year teachers leave Waianae, and our kids take notice. They notice that teachers use Waianae as a stepping stone to get a "better" job. What message does this send to our Waianae students? In my opinion it shows the students that we don't care enough about them to stay. We don't care enough to put in the time. To me this may seem like a small detail, but it's a small detail that makes a huge difference in the students mentality of what they think and want for themselves.

I believe that keeping the hard to staff area bonus will help keep more teachers on the Waianae coast and hopefully lower the amount of teachers who leave Waianae every year. I believe that with the extra support financially many teachers will stay here, maybe even quit their second jobs, giving more time for them to invest in our keiki. Please help us reach a better community and life for our children.

Thank you for hearing me out and for standing up for our waianae keiki out here on the coast.

Sincerely,

Sacha Hemenway, Leeward District, O'ahu

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## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Kristin Lindquist <k.lindquist@seariders.k12.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 5:27 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and committee on Lower & Higher Education

Aloha.

My name is Kristin Lindquist and I am a special education teacher at Waianae High School in the Leeward District of Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB2488, SD2.

I have been working at Waianae High School for the past 14 years. Prior to that I taught for 4 years on Molokai. My original teaching career began in Santa Barbara, California. I have taught for 30 years.

During the time that I have taught at Waianae High School I have sadly seen wonderful special education teachers come and go. The students here in Waianae, more than anywhere, need good, highly qualified teachers that can show that they care about the students by staying and living in this community. Most teachers from the mainland stay less than 3 years. The cost of living, travel to the mainland to visit families and the high cost of rentals keep very talented teachers from staying. This hurts everyone.

My salary was greatly reduced when I moved from California to Hawaii. I was motivated to increase my pay and at age 58 I got my Master's degree and became Nationally Board certified. This only brought me up to the salary I was making 20 years ago in California.

I know that money does make a difference. I have heard from teachers that have left teaching on the Leeward coast. Because of the recent pay increase they are considering moving back and teaching at the high school because they could better afford it.

We lose teachers to the mainland, but we also lose teachers to town. These teachers would consider driving out to Waianae if they were paid a salary that would compensate for the gas that they use. The pay differential does make teaching on the Leeward coast more attractive.

Please consider funding the extra money for special education and for teaching on the Leeward coast. I don't want to keep seeing good teachers leave. Good special education teachers are hard to find. Thank you for considering the continuation of funding teachers in my field and in the community that I live.

Sincerely,  
Kristin Lindquist

## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Alisha Deguair <10056661@k12.hi.us> on behalf of Alisha Deguair <alisha.deguair@k12.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 5:27 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is **Alisha De Guair**. I am a **5th grade teacher at Kahakai Elementary School In Kailua-Kona, Hawaii**. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the Since I was hired in 2008 as a full time teacher, I have also been employed teaching afterschool classes to earn a little more so that my family can have food in the fridge and the utilities paid. I don't know what it feels like to not have two jobs or teach summer school. I do not want to think about the years that I have sacrificed to work after school or in the summer instead of spending those precious moments with my own three children. My mantra has always been- "Our students deserve better," and so I keep plugging away, doing the extra work and hoping to just get by.

Two weeks ago, my electricity was turned off at home. I cried at school in front of my 24 5th graders as my son who was home at the time called me and told me the news of there being no power. I felt embarrassed and ashamed that I could not provide for my family. It led to good discussions with both my class and my own kids about the cost of living and how being a teacher is not a job that can support a family in Hawai'i. I often tell my students that they should not want to be a teacher because although it is very fulfilling, it is uncertain if they can earn a living that way.

Although, I love my very challenging job, I often dream of a life where I do not have to count pennies to pay for bills, or clip coupons to go grocery shopping. I fear that soon, I will follow those dreams and leave the classroom behind to pursue a pay check that will ensure that my electric never gets turned off again. I have come to the realization that if we teachers continue to work for less because we love our students, we are not showing students how to value the role of teaching. What we are showing them is that it is okay to be undervalued, okay to work under your pay grade, and that it is ok to treat our teachers like they don't matter.

You have the power to change this. We are not asking for a miracle, we just want to be compensated for the years of work and sacrifice that we have given for free.

We need your help. Mahalo.

**Alisha De Guair, Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i**

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## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Lisa Tamura <lisa.tamura@k12.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 6:00 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in Support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and Committee Members:

My name is Lisa Tamura. I am a kindergarten teacher at Elsie H. Wilcox Elementary School in Lihue, Kaua'i. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

I have been a teacher for 30 years. I have worked hard to teach over 1,000 students in the State of Hawaii. I have seen a lot of changes in the past 30 years, and it has been difficult to stay in this profession...but I stayed. I kept on showing up for work, year after year, because I wanted to make a difference. Yes, I know, it sounds so generic..."I want to make a difference," but really, I genuinely wanted to teach children, and make a difference in their lives, and their future.

I have spent HOURS in my classroom, and thousands of dollars (my own money) to make my teaching memorable and effective. As my own 2 daughters were growing up, there were a lot of difficult years, as I sacrificed my personal time with my family, and a lot of my money was spent on my students instead of my own girls. My children sometimes questioned me about why I spent so much time and money on my students. My response was that I truly cared about my students, and I wanted to provide the very best education for them.

That's what teachers do. We care. We love our students as much as our own children. We want the best for them, and we sacrifice our time and money. We sometimes grumble about it, but we continue to give and give and give, because that's who we are.

Sometimes I feel appreciated, but there are many times that I don't. Our pay makes me feel unappreciated, and not very respected too. The teaching profession doesn't seem to be recognized as being very important or valued. We are professionals, and we attend many hours of schooling and training to be the best that we can be, but that doesn't seem to be good enough to warrant a respectable level of compensation.

I am not sure how much longer I will teach. It is time to make way for the next generation of teachers. I have been here long enough to have made a difference in my students' lives. I know that I've made a difference because they come back and tell me their success stories. That should be reward enough, that "feel good" feeling. But, in all honesty, more pay would make me feel really good about what I have sacrificed for the past 30 years. It's been a struggle, and teachers will continue to struggle. If you can help to support teachers and show them their worth, then you will be showing everyone the importance of a good education. Everyone deserves a good education. Everyone deserves good teachers. Now ask yourself, "What do teachers deserve?"

I am asking for your support. PLEASE SUPPORT SB2488, SD2.

Sincerely,  
Lisa M. Tamura  
Kindergarten Teacher, Wilcox Elementary School  
Lihue, Kaua'i



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## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Lillian Shaw <lilshaw168@icloud.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 6:46 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education

To whom it may concern:

I'm a special education with two jobs(I used to have 3). Thanks for the \$10,000) increase on my yearly salary. However, it's still \$35,000 shy from a special education teacher in California.

Comparing our housing, the average medium price of a condo or house is about the same where I moved from.(Irvine, California) Our general education teachers are jealous about my raise. Especially the seasoned and senior teachers who have gone through Governor, Linda Lingo's furlough. Their salaries are pathetically low comparing with the new comers. The negligence of their experience in pay should be corrected.

Please help this happen to stop the teachers working two jobs and lost if teachers.

Mahalo,

Lillian Shaw  
Kawanakoa Middle

Sent from my iPhone

## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Gordon Wong <gwonghi@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 6:47 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Gordon Wong. I am a Grade 1 classroom teacher at Kaimiloa Elementary School in Leeward District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our students.

Both my wife and I are public school educators and each with over 30 years of teaching experience. We are fully vested and have been contemplating retirement to seek other forms of employment. If the salary compression was to be approved, it'll definitely be an huge incentive for us to remain in the DOE system. It'll also help reduce the massive teacher shortage that occurs every year in Hawaii.

Thank you for your support.

Gordon Wong,

Kaimiloa Elementary School

Leeward District, Oahu Island

## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** amy shishido <amys4@live.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 7:17 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

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 SD2.

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

## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Bill Spradlin <billie.spradlin@k12.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 7:30 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1

Aloha Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and members of the Committees:

My name is Bill Spradlin and I am the AVID coordinator/elective teacher at Kaimuki High School in the Honolulu District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1. I respectfully ask that you please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue. Fixing the compression issue will help place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I started my teaching career in 1997 at the Hawaii National Guard's Youth Challenge Academy. I taught there for six years before crossing over to the Department of Education. Not all of my years of service transferred over, but I was confident that my service time would count moving forward. I have a BA from UH Hilo, have completed the post baccalaureate teaching credential program from Chaminade University, and an MEd from the University of San Diego. In total, I have been a highly qualified teacher in the state of Hawaii for 23 years...I am currently on step 11 of the teacher salary schedule.

I am *not* a member of the HSTA (see above), however, I am also concerned for our keiki. I have family on Oahu, in California, and in Oregon. We are raising a four year old daughter on Oahu with a teacher's salary that is \$10,000-\$20,000 less than I would earn in many districts in California and in Oregon. As you know, the cost of living is quite a bit higher in our state than in most areas on the west coast, so the salary difference is much more substantial than at first glance. We rent a 480 square foot house and struggle to send our daughter to preschool. We love it here, but are increasingly considering moving to a location where the pay and benefits are more in line with my qualifications and experience. Fixing the salary compression issue will help bring Hawaii's teacher salary schedule more in line with national norms.

SB 2488, SD1 is a step in the right direction for Hawaii's future and will help to ensure that veteran teachers like me continue to support Hawaii's youth. Please do your part to fairly compensate teachers for the job that we do.

Mahalo,

Bill Spradlin  
AVID Coordinator  
Kaimuki High School  
2705 Kaimuki Avenue  
Honolulu, HI 96816  
w. (808) 733-4900 x 269  
c. (808) 227-9038  
[khsavid.com](http://khsavid.com)  
[IG @kaimukiAVID](https://www.instagram.com/kaimukiAVID)  
[Twitter @kaimukiavid](https://twitter.com/kaimukiavid)

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## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** G R <gramirez123@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 7:50 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Gil Ramirez. I am a Elementary teacher at Waipahu Elementary in Leeward District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

As a dedicated public school teacher of 15 years, I would be grateful for the boost in pay to survive financially in today's economy. My fellow teachers and I have dedicated our lives for our students and community by serving in Hawaii's Department of Education. Unfortunately as a single person, I personally struggle to qualify for a home of my own without seeking support from my family. My income does not help me qualify for owning my own home in Hawaii. Although I have taught for so many years as a teacher, my salary is still lower than the average persons income living in Hawaii.

I have served for 15 years in Hawaii as a highly qualified teacher yet my pay does not honor how much years of service I have put in my career. Also much of my money goes back into school by helping purchase resources for my classroom. Also in my teaching position, I service over 1,000 students in my resource classroom from Kindergarten to 6th grade. I even teach fully self contained special needs students in an inclusive setting; as well as english language learners who just arrived from other countries. As a resource teacher, I teach the entire school. It is quite a disappointing feeling that my dedication to our keikis education is not reciprocated in my salary. So I have to work overtime doing after school tutoring and work outside of school to pay monthly bills/support myself.

Could we please get some help to support dedicated teachers financially so we could continue servicing our keiki without worrying about our low income?

We need your help. Mahalo.

Gil Ramirez, Leeward District, Oahu

**From:** Susan Chew <susaaan@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 7:51 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND  
COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

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, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. 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 people it really hurts are our children of Lanai. My own child has been effected and it is disheartening to see the potential of the children being lost due to the lack of teachers. Every moment this miss out on a learning opportunity is one that can not be replaced. We can not make up for any child's lack of learning experiences.

Salary compression will encourage teachers to stay in education and provide stability and a foundation for our children to learn and grow. 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

## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Meghan Flynn <meghan.flynn@campbell.k12.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 7:54 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee:

I am a teacher at James Campbell High School and a member of HSTA. Thank you in advance for taking the time to read my testimony.

This is my first year as a teacher and I am teaching Special Education classes in the resource setting. I am getting paid an "emergency hire" salary and taking online classes to complete my teaching certification.

I could not believe how low my salary is this first year, but knowing that next year will be very different gave me something to look forward to. I haven't been able to save a dime on my emergency hire salary, so I've been banking on my Special Education stipend next year in order to start a real savings account.

I am teaching four different subjects right now-- English 11, English 12, Modern Hawaiian History, and Participation in Democracy-- and also have a full caseload of IEPs. I was astounded by the volume of work I had during the first semester of this school year... I was working constantly to plan lessons and write all of my IEPs. The job of a teacher in Special Education is so much more work than that of a teacher in the general education setting-- not to say that both jobs aren't incredibly challenging and rewarding! I'm not surprised that people aren't drawn to the teaching profession these days. On top of not getting the respect they deserve for their profession, teachers don't get paid the money they deserve (and I'm not just talking about emergency hires!).

In order to begin to improve the quality of public education in Hawaii, and in the U.S., we need to pay teachers a salary that is competitive with other respectable jobs. We need to get bright, ambitious young people into classrooms and, to do so, we need to provide higher salaries.

I hope that you will do whatever it takes to get our teachers, and especially our special education teachers, the salaries they deserve. At the end of the day, the amount of money we are willing to invest into our schools reflects how much we care about the children in our communities.

So please advocate for the teachers of Hawaii. We work hard every single day for our students-- please do the same for us.

Thank you so much for your support and for all that you do.

Best,  
Meghan

Ms. Meghan Flynn  
*James Campbell High School*  
*English/ Social Studies Resource*

[meghan.flynn@campbell.k12.hi.us](mailto:meghan.flynn@campbell.k12.hi.us)

(808)305-3833

## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Angela Cain <cain.angela.r@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 8:04 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Angela Cain. I am a special education teacher at Wilcox Elementary School on Kauai. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

The Department of Education states that approximately 16% of special education positions are held by an unqualified individual. Students who are taught by unqualified individuals are not receiving the education they need and deserve. All students deserve teachers who have had the necessary training to meet their needs, teachers who will invest their time into them, and teachers who will continue to teach in the state of Hawaii because they can afford to.

Special education teachers spend countless hours creating lesson plans, teaching, attending trainings, meeting with parents, and developing appropriate Individualized Education Programs. We want to remain teaching in the public schools to continue making a positive impact on students, and we deserve to be compensated appropriately. Please fund pay differentials for teachers in special education as it is needed to recruit and retain highly qualified individuals to teach some of the state's most high needs students; it is an investment into all of our futures.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Angela Cain, Kauai

## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Jeff Kong <skilldkid@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 8:05 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Jeffrey Kong. I am a Teacher at Mililani High School in Central District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

By fixing the salary compression, you could help the Special Education teachers and myself remain in our positions as Secondary Teachers. I am currently working in a Co-Teaching environment, so I am working in close coordination with a Special Education Teacher. We work as a team to support students in achieving greatness and sparking interest in the science field. I am writing not only on behalf of myself, but also my Co-Teacher. In addition to all he does in helping me with supporting the needs of our students, he is also tasked with his own Special Education case load as the Care Coordinator for multiple students. I always see him working and checking on those students after we are finished working on the curriculum for the class, and we both put in hours that go far beyond that of the work day. So I think that it would only be fair that he be compensated in kind.

I am also writing as a homegrown local boy. As you are well aware, the cost of living in the Islands is extremely high. I am currently still living with my parents so that I can afford to work here as a teacher to support our youth. I have immense pride in our State and can't wait to see all of the wonderful things that our keiki will achieve in the future as contributing adults. But in order to continue on this path, changes to the current salary compression must be made. If the cost of living in the Islands continues to increase as it has, then I, along with many teachers who have been doing this much longer, may no longer be able to stay here and continue to foster our future.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Jeffrey Kong

Central District, Oahu

## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Kim <kkmart@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 8:09 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

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, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

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 senior teachers who have been through 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!

We need your help ,

Mahalo

Kim Holokai

Baldwin Complex, Maui



**Testimony Before the House Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee  
on Lower & Higher Education**

**RE: SB 2488, SD2 Relating to Teacher Compensation**

**Friday, March 13, 2020**

**2 P.M.**

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and Committee Members:

My name is Amy Williams. I am a kindergarten teacher at Wheeler Elementary School in Central District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

Please support our teachers by providing enough funding to fix the salary compression issue, pay differentials for special education teachers, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place teachers at the appropriate step on the salary schedule honoring their years of service, and finally funding the differentials will help the department recruit and retain teachers for hard-to-fill areas. Highly qualified teachers are a critical for the future of our keiki and funding this bill is one way to ensure the state attracts and retains teachers.

I have been an educator since 1992 and have worked for the Department of Education since 1997. Teaching is my passion; I love getting to know my students and helping them learn and grow. During my career I have had the honor of serving as a special education teacher and as general education teacher. My typical work week is about fifty-five hours. I arrive at work each day by 6:15 a.m. and generally leave around 4:00 p.m. I usually spend about five hours each

weekend creating lesson plans, correcting work, and looking for new resources and activities to help supplement the curriculum and increase student engagement. My personal and professional motivation has propelled me forward and I have worked to do all within my power increase my knowledge and to move across the pay scale. Ten years ago, I earned my master's degree, this was an expensive but worthwhile investment. The downside is I am still repaying my student loans for that degree. Like my colleagues I have faced the continual economic challenges of being an educator in Hawaii. I lived through the teacher strike, pay cuts, and furlough Fridays. I know what it is like to make hard choices regarding finances and the worry of wondering whether there would be enough money to cover bills and basic needs. The only reason I have been able to remain a teacher in Hawaii is the fact that I am married, and my spouse works. He is supportive and understanding of both the long hours and money I often use to purchase items my class needs or that help make the learning opportunities better in the classroom. These items are generally not big-ticket items, but it all adds up. Addressing the compensation issue would make a significant difference for me by allowing me to prepare more adequately for retirement. It would also help thousands of my colleagues become more financially stable as well. When I see young teachers entering the profession and single teachers struggling to stay in the profession, I wonder how long they will choose to stay given the current economic realities of the profession. I honestly do not know how colleagues with young families and multiple children are able to make ends meet. Throughout my career I have watched countless colleagues leave the profession or relocate to the mainland in search of better salaries. As a veteran teacher I never dreamed I would still be fighting for adequate compensation at this point in my career. I urge this committee to consider the results of continual teacher shortage on the keiki of Hawaii and far-reaching impact this has on the economic and social well-being of our state.

Mahalo for your assistance with this critical issue,

Amy Williams, Central District, Oahu

## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Joanna Lee <joannalee8@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 8:17 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

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, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. 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. In short, I have seen it go from bad to worse but stayed in for the love of the profession and stability for my family. Back in 1985, I made about \$15,000.00/year 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 and stay in 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 for our "old school thinking" when teachers viewed it 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

## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** julie ko <julieko6866@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 8:43 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor and Public Employment and Committee on Lower&Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Julie Ko-Lee. I am a teacher at Mililani Mauka Elementary School in the Central 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 teaching for over 26 years at Mililani Mauka Elementary School. I have been part of the furlough, teacher strike, and many more changes that the school system has endured. Through it all, I have stayed in my profession because I love teaching and want the best for my students. I have contemplated many times to relocate (to a place they pay more), to a private school, or even to a different profession. I truly believe that it is time that the state addresses the inequality in pay right now. Experienced teachers are being treated unjustly because we are NOT being valued. We have the knowledge that college courses can't teach. We are the mentors to all the new teachers that join our system. We embrace the new teachers and teach them the curriculum/units (which we have developed), best practices, assessment, how to differentiate for all students, dealing with difficult parents, and the day-to-day challenges. I could go on and on. How can this be fair when we are mentoring these newer teachers and we are getting the same pay? I have 26 years of devotion and another teacher at my school only has 15 years, but we are on the same step/pay scale. Where is the justification? In ANY profession (but not ours), experience is valued and therefore compensated appropriately. On a personal note, I have 2 children in college, and it is very difficult to support them with my current salary. If I'm compensated the way I should be, I would definitely stay on longer to teach because I really love it. Yes, you have these new teachers joining the department, but it takes time and experience to be an effective teacher. Everyone says that education is important, but every year there is little change. The biggest change starts by keeping your experienced teachers so that we can do what we do best... which is to education our future generation. So, please make this the year that state officials put their words in action. Show us that experienced teachers are finally respected and valued. We were robbed for many years because we didn't get the step increase that we deserved!

We need your help!!

Mahalo.

Julie Ko-Lee, Central District, Oahu

**From:** Yvette Rapozo <yrapozo0@twc.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 8:44 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday , March 13, at 2 p.m.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Yvette Rapozo. I am a teacher at Kapaa Elementary School in Kapaa on Kauai. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

The above mentioned fund will greatly help teachers like me who need to find another job to help make ends meet. It takes away time that we could use for prepping lessons and takes away time from our classrooms. It will help us maintain our focus on our first job and not wear us out going between 2 (and even possibly 3) jobs. The funding will also help to attract and keep more qualified teachers in the classroom to help alleviate the teacher crisis. If the state doesn't do something soon, the problem will continue and the children of Hawaii deserve and need highly qualified teachers. There are many teachers out there that would stay in Hawaii if the pay would help them afford to live here.

The funding will also help teachers like myself who have been caught up in the compression and haven't seen their wages keep up with the cost of living. Please consider this and additional funding to keep the best and the brightest in the teaching profession.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Yvette Rapozo, Kapaa, Kauai

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10



**eli2 - Kevin**

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**From:** Mike Landes <jmlandes@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 8:52 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND  
COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

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, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. 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

## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** carrie lee <leecarriean@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 8:53 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Carrieanne Martinson. I am a 4th Grade Teacher at Waikele Elementary in Leeward District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our Keiki.

After 20 years of teaching experiences and being considered a senior teacher that supports school efforts and newer teachers, it is important to provide fair teacher pay for this experience. Currently, due to past contract negotiations, teachers with less experience (e.g. 10 years) are making the same amount as us senior teachers. I have seen the frustration of fellow teachers who are questioning if they should remain in Hawaii or even the education field due to the lack of fair compensation. It will be a shame if we lose these teachers who we spent years building their expertise and knowledge to meet children's needs. The salary adjustments to recognize professional service will go a long way to help recognize the hard work and continue improvement efforts of teachers that remain in Hawaii to educate our children who will lead us into the future.

We need your help. Mahalo.  
Carrieanne Martinson, Leeward District, Oahu

## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Michelle Santos <michisantos89@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 9:10 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

My name is Michelle Bagaoisan. I am a 3rd grade teacher at Kaimiloa Elementary School in Leeward District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been teaching for 14 years now. I have a Bachelors and Masters Degree in Education, as well as took PDs for years to make sure I reached level 7, the highest level in education. It's frustrating living paycheck to paycheck because I have a mortgage, which is extremely difficult to keep up with unless I have another income. I can't level up anymore so I have to tutor afterschool to earn more income. My daughter, who is special, has medical bills that aren't easy to keep up with either on my salary. It's not fair at all that teachers who have been working for close to 20 years or more, are not justly compensated. Please support teachers and help us stay in Hawaii and teach by paying us what we deserve.

Sincerely,  
Michelle Bagaoisan

## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Alyssa Moreau <alyssa.moreau@k12.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 9:10 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** SB 2488, SD1, RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and members of the Committees:

My name is Alyssa Moreau. I am a Kindergarten Teacher at Leihoku Elementary in Wai'anae 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 plus fringe costs, to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers.

Why?

I grew up with a single mom. I have witnessed and experienced the struggle of growing up without much. I knew what it was like to not ask my mom for anything because she was doing the best she could financially to support me and my brother. Because of the upbringing I had, I always knew, since elementary school, I wanted to be a teacher. I knew I wanted to be a teacher to those children in high poverty areas because I could relate to those children. I wanted to inspire those kids and build those kids to be resilient children who will believe they accomplish anything they work towards.

Prior to college graduation, I interviewed at one school. One school that I visited with my cohort while completing my Elementary and Early Childhood Education program. That one school that I visited was Leihoku Elementary on the Leeward Coast of Oahu. This school is the school I have had the honor of teaching at for the past seven years. This is the school where I began my teaching career and where I grown into the teacher I am today. This school has great support for teachers from the administration, to the school counselors, to the academic coaches, to my grade level, you will always feel supported.

However, as amazing as this school is, like all teachers, teachers are undervalued. The cost of living in Hawaii makes the salaries of teachers, resource teachers and school counselors difficult to live off from without living paycheck to paycheck. More than half my income per month is used for rent. Which leaves me worried that one day there will come a time where I won't be able to make ends meet. That as a young adult trying to make it in the world, teaching won't allow me to do that and that eventually I will need to leave a school that supports me and leave a career that I honestly love.

So fixing the compression issue, and placing our teachers where they should be for their many years of service and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest to fill areas. These

children are our future. These teachers are our futures future. The children on the coast need passionate teachers, teachers who want to teach them not just teachers who are there to fill vacant spots.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Alyssa Moreau, Leeward District, Oahu

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## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Sui Lan Gomez <suilangomez@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 9:24 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Sui Lan Gomez and I am a Kindergarten Teacher at Waimea Elementary School in the Hamakua District on Hawaii Island. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

In recent years, I considered moving to Seattle as well as to Amarillo, Texas. The entry level teaching salary in both of those cities was higher than what I was currently making. I was torn, as I would like to continue teaching in Hawaii for several reasons. I love my profession, the school administration, my faculty colleagues and the families I serve. I also wanted to continue to build my retirement in Hawaii, having already taught in Hawaii for many years. However, in order to be able to afford housing as a soon-to-be-divorced single teacher, I have been taking on extra jobs and have been considering taking on another part-time job. I am grateful and fortunate to have received teacher housing, which has made my current life transition doable. However, my housing will end in 2.5 years and I will be using the time of reduced rent to pay off my cost of living debts incurred during my marital separation (due to abuse). If I were to take on another part-time job, it would compromise my time for planning and grading. I love teaching in Hawaii and hope to be able to continue to do so until retirement.

We need your help.

Mahalo,

Sui Lan Gomez, Hamakua District, Hawaii Island

## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Lani Gokan <marmugs808@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 9:52 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2 relating to teacher compensation

Aloha Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members!

My name is Lani Gokan. I am a Teacher/Librarian at Wilcox Elementary School on Kauai. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and finding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

Fixing the compression issue will make a huge positive impact on my life. This 19-20 school year is my 27th year teaching in the DOE. Upon working in the DOE for 10 years, I was able to obtain Class 7 on the salary schedule, and at that time I thought I set myself up for a financially comfortable career in the DOE. Fast forward to another 17 years of teaching in the DOE, where I am currently at Class 7, step 11. I am at the same class and step schedule as my fellow teacher who is 16 years younger than me and has taught in the DOE for 10 years. My fellow teacher and I are both discouraged! Will we ever get to the top of the salary schedule? We both did our part in paying lots of money to enroll in courses in order to obtain credits to "move up" in Classes. We both have children (mine in college and hers in elementary), will we be able to help our children with the cost college? We both are seeking employment elsewhere. With the high cost of living in Hawaii, we both are BARELY making ends meet (we live frugally). I have seen so many awesome teachers leave the profession because our cost of living has outpaced our salary.

The brutally honest truth: when my son mentioned that he wanted to be a teacher, my response was "NO!! You will struggle to make a living!". His reply, "yeah, you're right. Lots of students love and thank you, but at the end of the day - the bills still need to be paid."

Please, please we NEED your help! Please help us by finding and providing the funds to value our Teachers! Let's work together to make teaching the DESIRABLE profession it once was.

Mahalo for your time and efforts,  
Lani Gokan, Kauai

**eli2 - Kevin**

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**From:** Alison Hayama <alisonhayama@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 10:05 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488 SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower and Higher Education, Friday, March 13, 2020

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is **Alison Hayama**. I am a **teacher** at **Kaewai Elementary School** in the **Honolulu District** on **Oahu**. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been teaching for almost 26 years in the Kalihi area. During those 26 years, I have experienced economic downtimes when teachers did not get compensated for their years of service. Yet, I truly wanted to make a difference in my students' lives so I continued to teach. With the teacher shortage, and substitutes teaching regular classrooms, it has become challenging for me and many of the veteran teachers who provide support for these substitute teachers. If the compression issue can be resolved and I can get paid for my years of service, I can continue to work another 3 – 5 years and continue to make a difference in the lives of our keiki.

We need your help. Mahalo.



**Alison Hayama, Honolulu District, Oahu**

**From:** Jessica Tennison <tennison@hawaii.edu>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 10:09 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND  
COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Jessica Huggins. I am an FSC Special Education Teacher at Castle High School in Windward District on O'ahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

This is the second time this week (and it's only Wednesday) that I have had to bring my work home with and stay up until 10:00 pm finishing IEPs. Special Education teachers deserve the pay differential. We work with the most fragile students yet our pay does not reflect the time and dedication we put forth.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Jessica Huggins, Windward District, Oahu

## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Sheila Bierwert <bierwertfam@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 1:58 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

Aloha,

Please consider supporting this bill that will recognize the importance of teachers in Hawaii. I love my job as a teacher and I have been working in the Department of Education for almost 10 years. Being compensated for the years that I work would be truly helpful, as well as make me feel respected. I truly feel that showing teachers respect will increase teacher retention, as well as encourage new teachers to work in our beautiful state.

Mahalo,

Sheila Bierwert

## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Lauren Gushiken <lauren.gushiken@k12.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 1:58 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** SB 2488, SD2, RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and members of the Committees:

My name is **Lauren Gushiken**. I am an English Learner Teacher at **Leihoku Elementary School in the Leeward District/Waianae Complex** on **Oahu**. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs, to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest to fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have had the honor of teaching at Leihoku Elementary School for 9 years now. This is the first school at which I have taught, and hope that I never have to move. I was a first grade teacher for the past 8 years and have just moved to a new EL (English Learner) teaching position this year; I chose to move to this position because I saw a need for experienced teachers that could work with our English Learner population and a lack of teacher preparation in this area. I have also been mentoring teacher candidates from the University of Hawaii West Hawaii's education program for the last six years. I chose to mentor teacher candidates because I saw a need for qualified teachers who are willing to work with the Waianae community.

There is sometimes a stigma attached to Waianae schools. When I tell people that I'm a teacher, the question, "Where do you teach?" always comes up. When I tell them, I am sometimes met with faces of pity or disappointment - and sometimes even comments like, "Maybe you can move to another school." I can see why teaching in Waianae isn't even a possibility in some new teacher's minds. When I talk to my mentees, they always tell me they want to work in Ewa, Waipahu, or Kapolei. No one ever considers Waianae. Usually, by the end of their time with me, they've changed their minds to think of Waianae as a possibility. However, if you had a choice to teach in Ewa, 5 minutes away from home, or in Waianae 45 minutes away from home, what would you choose?

There are those rare times we are able to hire great teachers, but it's difficult for schools in our Complex to retain them for many reasons. Because of this, we often find ourselves with many staff members who are not experienced and at the beginning of their careers. While all teachers have things to bring to the table, we constantly find ourselves in a loop, unable to move forward because we're constantly teaching and re-teaching an ever-changing staff.

When is the last time you've been to Waianae? A couple of dear friends of mine have moved because they live in town and the commute starts getting to them. Can you imagine what it's like to drive there every day? I live in Waipahu and leave my house at 6:00am every morning. It takes me 45 minutes to get to work because of the single lane merge in Maili. I work until 6:00pm on most days. It can take anywhere from an hour to an hour and a half because of the one lane merge AND the contraflow of traffic.

Having the differentials can help me pay for gas and make it more worth my time going to work so far away. I love my school and the children that I serve, but it's easy to get burnt out with the population that we serve. I know many teachers who need to work second jobs just to make ends meet, and this would help them not have to do that. A few of my dearest friends have had to move closer to home because they were starting to get burnt out; I know others have altogether left the profession because of the stress.

I think this differential can help retain more teachers. Please continue to support and help our teachers!

We need your help. Mahalo.

**Lauren Gushiken, Leeward District, Waianae Complex, Oahu**

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**From:** Tianzhen Nie <tianie@kamaile.org>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 1:41 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** LAB testimony for Charter school teacher differentials.

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT and  
THE COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD1, RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2:00 p.m.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and members of the Committees:

My name is Tianzhen Nie. I am a Secondary Science Teacher at Kamaile Academy Public Charter School in Waianae on Oahu 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 plus fringe costs, to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest to fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

Personally, I am a recent college graduate that is beginning my profession in teaching. So far, I truly do enjoy the time that I spend with my students and love the community I am working in— however, as an emergency hire, I am barely making enough money to get by right now. In the next couple of years, I am looking to save enough money to obtain a graduate degree; however, the current amount that we are getting paid is hardly enough to pay my rent and regular monthly bills.

I have in my personal experience seen how much the staff differential would positively affect the other teachers at my charter school, which is hard-to-staff Hawaiian-focused charter school. Many of my coworkers that have considered leaving next year have decided to stay because of the possibility of earning an additional differential. In this hard-to-staff school, it is imperative that we have teachers that come from town and other parts of the island that are willing to come serve this community. I have seen firsthand how value this differential is to

keeping qualified teachers at our school, and I hope that it is continued in order to ensure quality instruction for our students.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Tianzhen Nie, Waianae District, Oahu Island.

--

**Tianzhen Nie**  
*Secondary Science Teacher*  
*Kamaile Academy PCS*

**From:** Vashti Daise <vashtidaise@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 1:33 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is **Vashti Daise**. I am a **7th Grade Math Teacher** at **Lahaina Intermediate School** in **Maui County** on **Maui**. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

**We all know that the students in Hawaii generally score below most other States on the standardized tests. It's unfortunate that our wonderful children are compared and found lacking in this way, because they are some of the best kids I've ever worked with. In order to do the best we can for them and ensure their success, we need to attract and keep qualified, caring and experienced teachers.**

**As most people are aware, Hawaii has a very high cost of living, and West Maui is one of the highest. Our kids deserve to have the continuity of teachers who can afford to stay here, and they deserve to have teachers who have the time and energy to plan engaging lessons. Many teachers must work another job which prevents them from being the best educators they can be.**

**If children are our most valuable resource, and our future, we need to actually put our money where our mouths are and do our best to provide for their needs. They deserve the best, and if a major impediment is that we simply refuse to pay teachers a decent living wage, then we are refusing to give them our best. Teachers, like all people, want to have a home and community that they can contribute to and be a part of. Let's all help them to help the Keiki.**

We need your help. Mahalo.





**From:** Pamela Ishihara <pamela.ishihara@k12.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 1:31 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** RE: SB 2488, SD1, RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and Committee Members:

My name is Pamela Ishihara and I am an EL Teacher at Leihoku Elementary School in Waianae on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs, to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest to fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been a teacher on the Waianae Coast for my entire teaching career. I was at Kamaile Elementary School for 3 years and at Leihoku Elementary School for the last 25 years. Most of my teaching career has been teaching second and third graders. I was also reading teacher for several years and the last 7 years I've been teaching English Learners. I live in Kalihi and spend almost 2 hours a day driving to school and back. Although there are so many schools that I could transfer to, teaching in Waianae is where I choose to be.

Fixing the salary compression issue and having differentials will help teachers like myself to remain a public school teacher in Waianae. The students and families in Waianae need experienced teachers like the ones we have at our school and the differentials will ensure keeping our veteran teachers to continue teaching our students on the coast.

We have students who are living in transitional housing and move from school to school. It's really difficult to help them make gains. For some students Leihoku Elementary is the first school that they attend upon arriving to Hawaii. Many times they hardly speak English or sometimes not any at all. Although their parents might value education, they are not able to support them at home because they themselves speak very little English or none at all. They can't come early or stay after school because they ride the school bus and most of their parents do not have any transportation. Even with daily RTI (Response to Intervention) many teachers here are giving up their recess and lunch times to help them.

I am also the New Teacher Mentor at my school. There's no way that just one teacher can help the new teachers that come to teach at Leihoku. It takes our entire staff of experienced teachers to mentor, support, and help them learn what great teachers do. Our experienced teachers not only help them learn about the culture we have at our school but also help them understand the special culture here on the Waianae Coast. Besides our experienced teachers putting in time to help our students to achieve success, they are also meeting outside of school hours to help our new teachers become successful and also support them in helping their students become successful as well. We know it takes a village, but here at our school we are not just the village for our students, parents, and community but for our new teachers and each other as well! Despite all the assistance and support we give them and the relationships that we've built with them, some still leave for various reasons but their common reason is because of the high cost of living and being able to make more somewhere else. We all need to do what we can to survive.

We've also had some really good veteran teachers leave because they want to teach closer to home. The pay differential would have helped them financially so they don't need to take on second jobs to make ends meet. I know if we had these differentials and salary compressions available earlier, many would probably still be here with us because their hearts are with our kids.

Having these differentials and fixing the salary compression issue will help veteran teachers like myself remain a public school teacher on the coast and prevent other teachers from leaving the profession or our state. Personally, this will help me pay for my child's college tuition, pay down my mortgage, and not have to take on a second job that I don't have the time or energy for. I get to school by 7:00 am and usually leave between 5:00-6:00 pm on most days. Because I live so far away, I get home by 7:00 pm. I am physically and mentally exhausted, yet I continue to do this every day because my students need me. This differential will help me to continue teaching in this community and focus my attention and energy on my students and support our teachers.

Thank you for taking the time to read this and I hope you understand that we really need your help!

Mahalo.

Pamela Ishihara, Leeward District Waianae Complex, Oahu

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**From:** Joyce Vea <joycebvea@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 1:19 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND  
COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Joyce Ballesteros Vea. I am a Counselor at Waimea Canyon Middle School in Kauai District (West) on Kauai. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I entered the profession in 2008 during the days of “furlough Fridays” and “Directed leave without pay.” Essentially, I took a 5% pay cut and did not get a step increase for the first few years of my career. I was literally in financial hardship trying to pay back my college loans and be financially independent. I had opportunities to accept position(s) elsewhere but wanted to stay with the D.O.E and really utilize my education and training in the field that I got my degree in with the hope that I’d be properly compensated over time. Fast-forward 12 years, the state has not yet intervened to fix the compression issue. I, along with thousands of colleagues, have dedicated years of service to our keiki

and our communities – knowing & struggling with the fact that we are the lowest paid educators in the nation (when cost of living is taken into account).

Frankly, I do not foresee positive changes in our profession (students being interested in majoring in education, certified teachers staying in Hawaii long-term, and/or education being valued as high priority in Hawaii) unless the compression issue is resolved. There needs to be a whole change in the mindset and culture of valuing educators. You can find the money to finance special projects (i.e. a new stadium, rail, boosting tourism) but where is the commitment to bettering the quality of education in our state. Our keiki deserve qualified teachers/educators – we cannot attract or retain high quality professionals if we do not invest in this profession - although our school is not considered "hard-to-fill" we have a handful of new teachers every year - sometimes having new teachers come in mid-year. Our keiki, and ultimately, Hawaii's communities all suffer. Please consider the question, "if not now, then when?" Are you really ready to gamble on waiting another decade to consider this debate and finding a resolution?

We need your immediate help on this matter. Mahalo.

Joyce Ve'a, KAUAI

**From:** Briann Starkey <kekamaboy4@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 1:11 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** estimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and the Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13th, at 2:00 p.m.

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT and THE COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD1, RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2:00 p.m.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and members of the Committees:

My name is **Briann Starkey**. I am a Kumu at Kualapu'u Public Conversion Charter School, Kula Kaiapuni o Kualapu'u in Na'iwa ahupua'a on the island of Moloka'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 plus fringe costs, to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest to fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been a teacher now for 13 years that has been in the same step and stagnant for almost 10 years. There are new teachers, probies, who are starting and have already passed me in the step and class on the pay scale. The salary compression issue will definitely help me remain in this school setting.

One thing that differs is that I teach in a DOE Conversion Charter School. A lot of funding that is given to DOE teachers, including the differentials, we do not need to have. Luckily, to keep teachers at our school, our DOE Conversion School has agreed to match what the DOE teachers are receiving.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Me ke aloha pau'ole,

Briann Piliāna Starkey, Kumu, Molokai'i, District 13

## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Christine Roberts <Chrissy2277@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 12:59 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and members of the Committees:

My name is Christine Roberts. I am a special education teacher at Ka Waihona Public Charter 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 plus fringe costs, to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest to fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

Unlike DOE and other charter schools in the area, our school has had many issues with the budget and funds are tight. We are the only school in this district that isn't being provided the extra money that all of the other DOE schools are. We don't want to lose our teachers or our keiki because of this situation.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Christine Roberts Leeward District Oahu

O

Sent from [Outlook](#)



**From:** Christopher Castillo <christillo90@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 12:48 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Christopher Paige Castillo. I am a 6<sup>th</sup> grade teacher at Waianae Elementary School in the Leeward District] on Oahu I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

As a teacher, I truly believe in giving my all to my students and being able to provide them as much as I can, but I honestly do not know how much more I can do it. As the cost of living rises and the needs for my students grow, my pay cannot cover both providing my students in need as well as taking care of my personal costs. I currently have spent over \$900 on school supplies as well as personal supplies such as bath products, shoes, and food for my students. Because of that, it has put me in the position many times to choose between making sure my students are ok in order for them to learn or paying my rent.

I now currently work two other jobs and am searching for another to be able to help alleviate those extra costs. But working those extra jobs makes me tired to the point where I get home late and have to figure out whether I am planning for tomorrow or trying to get sleep. Having to work extra jobs takes up time and energy that I don't have, in order to make more money to support myself just to live.

We need your help. Mahalo.

**Christopher Paige Castillo**  
**Leeward District**  
**Oahu**

**eli2 - Kevin**

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**From:** Kristina Caceres <kcaceres@kamaile.org>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 12:38 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT and THE  
COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD1, RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2:00 p.m.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and members of the Committees:

My name is Kristina Caceres . I am a School Counselor at Kamaile Academy in Nanakuli Waianae Complex, 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 plus fringe costs, to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest to fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

This compensation allows for those of us to remain on our home island, raise our children here in the communities we work in, as well as incentivise retention of school professionals. It would also encourage those who have attended college and universities on the continent to return home to pursue their careers for a comparable wage.

MAHALO,

Kristina Caceres Tillis

School Counselor, Waianae Complex, Oahu

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***Kris Caceres Tillis***  
***M.S.EdCounseling, PPS***  
***Kamaile Public Charter School***  
***Counselor PK-2***  
***697-7110***

Colossians 3:23

## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Lisa Staib <lstaib@kamaile.org>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 12:28 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** SB 2488, SD1

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and members of the Committees:

My name is Lisa Staib. I am an instructional coach at Kamaile Academy Public Charter 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 plus fringe costs, to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest to fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Lisa Staib, Leeward District, Oahu

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**Lisa Staib**  
*Instructional Coach*  
*Kamaile Academy PCS*  
808-697-7110

**From:** Ryan Omine <ryan\_omine@momilanes.k12.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 12:31 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** AS A TEACHER, I STRONGLY SUPPORT SB2488, SD2,

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Ryan Omine. I am a 3rd grade teacher at Momilani Elementary School in Pearl City on the island of Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

I have been a teacher for approximately 15 years, and during that time, I have been extremely patient and waited for very minimal step increases only during contract negotiations. I don't think it is fair that teachers need to wave signs and show so much more support in comparison to other state public employees. I don't see policemen or firemen standing on the side of the road asking for public support for more pay, so why should teachers be doing this? If you want to keep highly qualified teachers in Hawaii, you need to pay them adequately and respectfully. Honestly, I feel embarrassed to tell people that I am a teacher at times. I usually get the response, "Oh...so you're a teacher?"

I don't understand how a supposedly respected profession can be so disrespected. It seems that teachers are always getting the short end of the stick when it comes to pay, and that is why so many teachers either quit the profession or move to the mainland. Honestly, if I did not have the financial and overall support from my parents, there is no way that I could afford to live in Hawaii, EVER! Not with the peanuts that I am getting paid as a teacher. I am tired of all the politicians with their sound bites talking about supporting teachers and others being strong proponents of education. Now is the time to show your support for us and "walk the walk" not just "talk the talk". Again, teachers have to beg and plead for raises and show political support. So please help all teachers and my family to be able to have a decent living in Hawaii.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the

differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Ryan Omine

Momilani Elementary School

Pearl City, Leeward District, Oahu

## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Janet Kim <janetmc@hawaii.edu>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 12:31 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and the Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13th, at 2:00 p.m.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and members of the Committees,  
My name is Janet Kim and I am a public school parent, previously licensed elementary and special education teacher, and currently serve as the Special Education Recruitment Specialist at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa.

My current position as the Special Education Recruitment Specialist at UH Mānoa was created in 2013 in direct response to the longstanding and worsening decline in enrollment across our various special education teacher preparation programs. As a dual certified teacher myself, I have personally experienced how a single teacher vacancy impacts not only our students, but the school community as a whole. I remember the day my student from the year prior, who had a learning disability, had begun to come into my classroom every day during recess. He had asked me to continue teaching him math because he wasn't learning anything in his new class. I remember feeling completely disheartened- thinking about how hard we had worked and how many gains he had made the year prior- not only in his math skills, but in his overall self-confidence and feelings of self-worth. And it was being completely wasted because he had been placed with an emergency hire special education teacher who had no formal training and no desire to pursue any. Our most vulnerable students are the ones who depend most on a quality public education. This includes students with and without disabilities, on every island, and in every school.

I have devoted the past 6 years to search for ways to not only increase the number of people entering our teacher preparation programs, but ensuring we find the right people and build in the necessary supports. The HIDOE has been funding our post baccalaureate certificate program for almost 20 years and yet we still struggle in finding people who will commit to pursuing this profession. Why? We all know teaching is a noble and rewarding career, but in the end reality trumps ideology, especially in a place where the cost of living is so high. In addition, I have spent a lot of time and energy focused on supporting our neighbor island schools, as their unique needs and barriers of access and supports are typically overlooked or forgotten.

As special education teachers, we are tasked with meeting the same standards and outcomes of our general education peers; however, we have the added responsibility of often differentiating across multiple grade levels, meeting individualized academic and non-academic needs, and maintaining lengthy legal documents and procedures. We currently have 1,691 amazing and devoted individuals who have committed to this important work. They could have chosen a pathway without all the additional responsibilities and pressures, but they do it because they know what will happen to their students if they don't. Being on the frontline in talking with hundreds of local individuals who have expressed an interest in this career, I am often left helpless when they express their concerns of making a livable wage should they make the commitment. Although, I have already begun to feel the changes that have come with the announced pay differentials for special education. Just in the last two months, I have talked with numerous people from years prior who are now ready to take the leap in joining our rigorous and comprehensive special education teacher training programs; I have spoken with numerous general education teachers who are now looking to become trained to teach students with disabilities; and I have spoken with current teachers who are feeling a renewed sense of purpose and commitment to their work. We need to continue to support and fund these initiatives to do what's right for our keiki and communities.

The quality of our public education system is dependent on having a strong, effective, and STABLE workforce. The first three years of teaching is the hardest, and we find that many new teachers with the best of intentions

are not able to make it over that hump. One of the contributing reasons is that the size of our veteran teacher workforce has continued to shrink over time. We need incentives to support those already in our classrooms in ensuring they stay and are compensated appropriately. The teacher compression problem impacts our most committed and valued members of our workforce. We need to repair our wrongs and honor and value their years of experience and what it brings to our classrooms and communities. We need our veteran teachers to stay and help train and support the incoming generation of educators. Ensuring appropriate pay increases over time also serves as a recruitment tool, as it provides confidence and assurance that a commitment to teaching will be valued and compensated for.

We need to prove that we value our teachers of today and those of tomorrow. Investing in differentiated compensation for hard-to-staff fields and hard-to-staff locales, as well as repairing the teacher salary compression system can serve as the catalyst to reinstilling the public's faith and support in our Hawaii public education system. Having a quality public education system is the backbone of our society. I truly believe Hawaii is on the verge of becoming a leader in the nation in regards to education. We have new educational leadership, partnerships, collaborative agency, and the momentum to push our education system into the 21st century, while staying grounded within the unique qualities of our culture, diverse communities, and place. What we need now is the commitment and resources from you. In working with national workgroups in the area of recruitment in teaching, I have national experts in this field reaching out to me to learn more and follow what we are doing here in Hawaii. They believe these proposed efforts will work and are hoping our success can then be replicated across the rest of the nation. We are unique and should capitalize on being the only state in the country with a unified school district, thereby allowing us to make these changes to support every teacher and student in Hawaii.

SB2488 falls in line with what research across the nation has been advocating for. I commend our educational leaders for targeting the three most significant areas of need in our state (special education, Hawaiian immersion, and geographically hard-to-staff areas) and combating high attrition rates by fixing our teacher compression for veteran teachers. We appreciate the \$37+ million currently proposed, however, I hope you will see that we need the additional funds (\$45+ million) to fully commit to these efforts.

Thank you for taking the time to read this testimony. I look forward to being on the front line to support those who choose to pursue our amazing profession because they would then rightfully be able to afford to do so.

Mahalo,

--



**Janet Kim**  
SpEd Recruitment Specialist  
Phone: (808)726-0054  
Inquiries: [bit.ly/spedinfo](http://bit.ly/spedinfo)  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa  
Department of Special Education





## eli2 - Kevin

---

**From:** Todd Tashiro <todd\_tashiro@momilanies.k12.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 12:28 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and members of the Committees:

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, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. 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

**eli2 - Kevin**

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**From:** Mila Savini <mboucheva@kamaile.org>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 12:28 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT and THE  
COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD1, RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2:00 p.m.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and members of the Committees:

My name is **Mila Savini**. I am a **ELL Department Coordinator** at **Kamaile Academy** in **Leeward Charter** 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 plus fringe costs, to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest to fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

**I have committed myself to the Leeward community. I knew I could've gotten a job at a "better school," with "better" students - students who are on grade level in reading and writing, whose parents have the time and the means to support them. But I wanted to be here. I wanted to be where I am needed most. When I got a job here, I was just fresh out of college. I wasn't thinking about mortgage, a car payment, or raising two kids. Times have changed. My situation has changed, and so did my financial needs. I need support in order to support the community that I love so much. I don't want to leave my school, but if I don't get the money that I need to keep my family afloat we will have to leave the island. This would break my heart. Please support me, so in return I can support our keiki.**

We need your help. Mahalo.

**Mila Savini, Leeward Charter, Oahu**

**Mila Savini**

ELL Department Coordinator

Kamaile Academy

87-180 Ala Akau St

Wai'anae, HI 96792

808-697-7110 (ext. 302)

**From:** Margarete Barsatan <margarete.barsatan@k12.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 12:19 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Differential and Compression

Dear Chari Johanson, Chair Woodson and committee members:

I am writing my testimony in regards to Support SB2488,SD2 Relating to Teacher Compensation for Teachers on the Island of Lana'i. My testimony is in reference to the cost of living not only for the necessary products for the household necessities, travel inter island for doctor specialist visits, prices of rental, cost of gas,electricity along with many other needs. I believe with the extra support is necessary to be an incentive because without it then we would not be able to afford to retain Teachers.

Thank you for taking into consideration my testimony,  
Proud to be a Lana'i Teacher

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.

## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** keith colvin <kcolvinkona@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 12:13 PM  
**To:** labtestimony@capital.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** testimony

testimony before the house committee on labor and public employment and committee on lower and higher education.

re sb2488, sd2 relating to teacher compensation

Friday, March 13, 2020

2 pm

Chair Johnson, chair Woodson and committee members

my name is Keith Colvin. I am a teacher at Kealakehe high school in Hawaii district on Hawaii island. I am submitting testimony in support of sb 2488, SD2.

Please provide enough funds to repair and complete the correct teacher salary compression issue. Also please provide funding for pay differentials for teachers in special education, and hard-to-staff positions. This needs to be done to show that we as a state value our teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more plus fringe costs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teacher where they should be for their many years of service and retain our workforce in the difficult geographic areas. Our teachers are worth every penny and are important for our future keiki.

The cost of living is very high here in Hawaii and specifically here in Kailua-Kona, Big Island. All the insurance, food, utilities and rent needs for all of the consumer goods needed to be shipped here sometimes requires more than I bring home every month. Many times the teacher turn-over rate is due to the extreme cost of living here and a higher wage may attract and retain qualified teachers here in this community. The teacher shortage is due in part to the low pay, so please equalize this injustice and fund the money needed.

We need your help. Thank you so much for the read, Cheers, KC, Hawaii District, Hawaii Island.

Keith Colvin  
Mathematics Teacher  
Kealakehe High  
74-5000 Puohulihuli Street  
Kailua Kona, Hawaii 96740  
Phone (808) 313- 3742  
Fax (808) 327 - 4307  
Hawaii Standard Time

## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** keith colvin <kcolvinkona@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 12:12 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Fw: testimony

Keith Colvin  
Mathematics Teacher  
Kealakehe High  
74-5000 Puohuluhuli Street  
Kailua Kona, Hawaii 96740  
Phone (808) 313- 3742  
Fax (808) 327 - 4307  
Hawaii Standard Time

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**From:** keith colvin  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 12:10 PM  
**To:** labtestimony@capital.hawaii.gov <labtestimony@capital.hawaii.gov>  
**Subject:** testimony

testimony before the house committee on labor and public employment and committee on lower and higher education.

re sb2488, sd2 relating to teacher compensation  
Friday, March 13, 2020  
2 pm

Chair Johnson, chair Woodson and committee members

my name is Keith Colvin. I am a teacher at Kealakehe high school in Hawaii district on Hawaii island. I am submitting testimony in support of sb 2488, SD2.

Please provide enough funds to repair and complete the correct teacher salary compression issue. Also please provide funding for pay differentials for teachers in special education, and hard-to-staff positions. This needs to be done to show that we as a state value our teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more plus fringe costs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teacher where they should be for their many years of service and retain our workforce in the difficult geographic areas. Our teachers are worth every penny and are important for our future keiki.

The cost of living is very high here in Hawaii and specifically here in Kailua-Kona, Big Island. All the insurance, food, utilities and rent needs for all of the consumer goods needed to be shipped here sometimes requires more than I bring home every month. Many times the teacher turn-over rate is due to the extreme cost of living here and a higher wage may attract and retain qualified teachers here in this community. The teacher shortage is due in part to the low pay, so please equalize this injustice and fund the money needed.

We need your help. Thank you so much for the read, Cheers, KC, Hawaii District, Hawaii Island.

Keith Colvin  
Mathematics Teacher

Kealakehe High  
74-5000 Puohulihuli Street  
Kailua Kona, Hawaii 96740  
Phone (808) 313- 3742  
Fax (808) 327 - 4307  
Hawaii Standard Time

**From:** Sara Koide <sara.koide@k12.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 10:15 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Sara Koide. I am a Kindergarten Inclusion Teacher at Wilcox Elementary School in Kaua'i (Central) District on Kaua'i Island. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

Growing up in this public school system and hearing that those issues have impacted some of my former teachers is disheartening to hear. Knowing that these teachers who have made a massive impact on my life as a student did not get their proper pay and hearing about this compression issue is very disappointing. What makes me feel even more sick is the fact that there was a possibility that they may not have been getting the pay they deserve while I was an elementary student. 10-15 years later now as their colleague there is a possibility that they may still not be getting the appropriate amount of pay. Yet despite this issue, they remain here because they value the importance of educating their keikis.

As a new teacher, changes need to be made. Teachers are not just working with their students, they are working with admin, parents, and the community as a whole and yet after all that hard work feel completely undervalued when anything involving their salary comes into play. The retention rate is not high for the hardest to fill areas and this is one of the factors as to why. Pair that with the cost of living in Hawai'i causes many new teachers to leave Hawai'i after that realization. When going to some of these new teacher workshops I heard some of those comments first hand. It is very disheartening to hear that some of these



teachers are ready to leave because of the odds that they believe are already stacked against them. To ensure that we can retain qualified teachers in all our schools, especially our hard-to-fill areas some changes need to be made. Teachers need to be recognized for all the work they put into molding these children to ensure they have lifelong success. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding differentials may be the first steps to doing so to help keep teacher moral high.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Sara Koide, Kaua'i (Central) District, Island of Kaua'i

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**From:** Cindy Deuz <cngdeuz@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 10:18 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT  
AND COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION  
RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION  
FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020  
2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Cindy Deuz. I am a teacher at Red Hill Elementary in Central District on the island of Oahu. I have been teaching for the past 8 years, 4 years in 1st grade and 4 years in 5th grade. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 has been told time and again to not go into teaching because of the low pay and stress involved. But she remains steadfast in her decision because she loves kids and she's really good with them. 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

## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Meg Takahama <iteachecse@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 10:30 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

Aloha,

Monday I was up to midnight (again) completing the paperwork for a student's re-evaluation, the following evening up until midnight drafting his Individualize Education Program (IEP). Tonight I'm up again drafting another IEP for an incoming student. Earlier this afternoon I attended part two of a mandatory three part training for all special education teachers. All these changes further increased the time it takes to prepare and present all the paperwork to the parents and guardians of special needs students. But that's only one aspect of my very full day as a teacher of our State's youngest students (ages 3-5) in an early childhood special education classroom where I have no duty-free lunch because there are milk cartons to open, children who need assistance eating, and always some one who needs to go to the bathroom. (I started this year with 1 out of 8 students in diapers/pull-ups).

While I have had some students in fortunate situations, the majority are not. Every year at my school where I have taught since 2008, I have had at least half of my students in a class of 9 either in foster care, a single parent household, being raised by a relative, often a grand or great grand parent, in a multi-generational living situation, in a domestic abuse shelter and/or has a parent in the criminal system. The back stories of some of these children makes me weep, while some of the extreme behaviors, yes from 3 & 4 yr olds, have at times been terrifying. Yet after 24 years of teaching, I continue with dedication to making a positive difference in their lives. I work hard so that my students have opportunities, despite their challenges, to get off to a good start in life. This means long hours of preparation and being resourceful. My classroom and the experiences my students have are because of my personal expenditures of time and money, as well as from my grant writing and appeals through DonorsChoose projects (think Go FundMe for teachers) that I write up. That is on top of a nonstop very full day that exhausts most parents that come along on field trips or who stop in for a visit. I frequently hear, "How do you do it? You are so patient."

Quite simply the answer is that I love what I do.

And I'm good at it because I am a professional educator. (I have four college degrees, I have passed 7 national exams and am studying for an 8th because in order to be considered "highly qualified" after 24 years of teaching early childhood special education, I need to pass yet one more national exam.) I need to be recognized and compensated as such. I urge your support of this funding bill.

Margaret Takahama  
Make a Difference, Make a Donation  
[DonorsChoose.org/meg.takahama](https://DonorsChoose.org/meg.takahama)

Ps why do the UH football coaches make so much \$\$?

**From:** Glen Eastman <gdeastman@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 10:31 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION  
RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION  
FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020  
2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

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, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. 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:** Lynn Hartnett <mommamiya2000@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 10:55 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND  
COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is **Lynn Hartnett**. I am a Special Education Instructor at **Salt Lake Elementary** in **Central District** on **Oahu**. I am submitting testimony in support of **SB 2488, SD2**.

Respectfully I ask 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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of all students especially early intervention to help those with special needs.

**I am thinking of retiring early because working as a teacher is expensive. I spend my own money to support the needs of my fully self contained students K-6. I feed them meals and snacks since many families are not able to afford food that the child specifically eats or they go without eating anything. Multi-sensory instruction is effective yet requires items to buy that peak their interest for academics and life function lessons.**

**I have been trying to fulfill the PD courses to move up in the salary steps but unable to finish due to most of my extra time is needed for meetings, IEPs and behavior strategies.**

**Fixing the salary compression issue and/or differentials will help me continue working as a special education teacher.**

**Please consider my testimony!**

We need your help. Mahalo.

**Lynn Hartnett, Central District, Oahu**

## eli2 - Kevin

---

**From:** Meg Takahama <iteachecse@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 10:56 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Re: Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

correction (it's late) I started with 7 out of 8 students in pull-ups or diapers  
Margaret Takahama

On Wed, Mar 11, 2020 at 10:30 PM Meg Takahama <[iteachecse@gmail.com](mailto:iteachecse@gmail.com)> wrote:

Aloha,

Monday I was up to midnight (again) completing the paperwork for a student's re-evaluation, the following evening up until midnight drafting his Individualize Education Program (IEP). Tonight I'm up again drafting another IEP for an incoming student. Earlier this afternoon I attended part two of a mandatory three part training for all special education teachers. All these changes further increased the time it takes to prepare and present all the paperwork to the parents and guardians of special needs students. But that's only one aspect of my very full day as a teacher of our State's youngest students (ages 3-5) in an early childhood special education classroom where I have no duty-free lunch because there are milk cartons to open, children who need assistance eating, and always some one who needs to go to the bathroom. (I started this year with 1 out of 8 students in diapers/pull-ups).

While I have had some students in fortunate situations, the majority are not. Every year at my school where I have taught since 2008, I have had at least half of my students in a class of 9 either in foster care, a single parent household, being raised by a relative, often a grand or great grand parent, in a multi-generational living situation, in a domestic abuse shelter and/or has a parent in the criminal system. The back stories of some of these children makes me weep, while some of the extreme behaviors, yes from 3 & 4 yr olds, have at times been terrifying. Yet after 24 years of teaching, I continue with dedication to making a positive difference in their lives. I work hard so that my students have opportunities, despite their challenges, to get off to a good start in life. This means long hours of preparation and being resourceful. My classroom and the experiences my students have are because of my personal expenditures of time and money, as well as from my grant writing and appeals through DonorsChoose projects (think Go FundMe for teachers) that I write up. That is on top of a nonstop very full day that exhausts most parents that come along on field trips or who stop in for a visit. I frequently hear, "How do you do it? You are so patient."

Quite simply the answer is that I love what I do.

And I'm good at it because I am a professional educator. (I have four college degrees, I have passed 7 national exams and am studying for an 8th because in order to be considered "highly qualified" after 24 years of teaching early childhood special education, I need to pass yet one more national exam.) I need to be recognized and compensated as such. I urge your support of this funding bill.

Margaret Takahama  
Make a Difference, Make a Donation  
[DonorsChoose.org/meg.takahama](https://DonorsChoose.org/meg.takahama)

Ps why do the UH football coaches make so much \$\$\$?

--

Meg Takahama



Special Ed Teacher, Waimanalo School

***Make a Donation, Make a Difference***

Check out my classroom projects--

<http://www.donorschoose.org/meg.takahama>

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/13/2020 8:44:47 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Nicholas Wood	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Like many jobs in Hawaii, our teachers need a livable wage. If we want to keep the good teachers here, we need to take action and show them they are a valued part of Hawaii's community.

**From:** Alakai Fernandez <alakai42@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 8:05 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and the Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13th, at 2:00 p.m.

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT and THE COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD1, RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2:00 p.m.

**Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and members of the Committees:**

**My name is Drew Fernandez. I am a Special Education Teacher at Hilo High School in Hilo Waiakea Complex on the 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 plus fringe costs, to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest to fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.**

**In my classroom I always look on ways to help my students. I know financially some of my students are not able to afford some basic essentials for school so I take it into my own hands to use my personal money to buy supplies for my students. Here at Hilo High School we do not have enough money to last for supplies throughout the whole year especially in the Special Education Department, so with the salary compensation it would definitely help me and my student for a better education.**

**We need your help. Mahalo.**

**Drew Fernandez, Hilo District, Hawai'i Island**

## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Brenda Palumbo <brenda.palumbo@k12.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 8:03 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

Dear Chairs Johanson and Woodson:

I am writing to ask that you support bills SB2488 and SD2.

As a teacher who left the DOE and has now returned I am appalled that my colleagues have been denied their earned pay step increases. This should be remedied as soon as possible.

I am also asking for your support on behalf of myself and all the other teachers who teach at hard to staff schools. I live on Lana'i, and while quaint and charming and filled with delightful students, the cost of living is staggering and definitely plays a role in attracting and keeping qualified personnel.

Please pass the afore named bills for the good of our students and the teachers that strive everyday to make a difference in their lives.

Mahalo,  
Brenda Palumbo  
Secondary ELL Teacher  
Lana'i High and Elementary School

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**From:** hughey2000@aol.com  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 7:39 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION-in support

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND  
COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION  
RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION  
FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020  
2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Justin Hughey. I am a special education teacher at King Kamehameha III Elementary in Canoe district on Maui. **I am submitting testimony in strong support of SB 2488, SD2.**

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

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.

As a special education teacher, teaching in a hard to staff area, the differential in my pay is finally able to pay for daycare services. We had taken out a large loan. Why should our keiki go to college to obtain a Master's degree or PHD if this state isn't willing to pay competitive salaries that cover rent and daycare?

This is the first time the Governor, Superintendent, Board of Education and an unanimous vote from the Senate are all on board trying to solve the teacher shortage which has been a problem since 1911(Documented in Hawaii Pono). With the Corona virus you have the rationale to kill the bill. But spending is still going to happen. Will Aloha Stadium be fixed and 60,000 of our keiki continue to go without a certified teacher? This is long overdue. Please vote for this bill and fund it fully.

We need your help!  
Mahalo.  
Justin Hughey, Canoe District, Maui

## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Kevin Tynan <kevin.tynan@k12.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 7:36 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

Ohana,

I am a teacher, and that is the profession I have chosen because I believe it is the responsibility of adults to pass on knowledge and information to our keiki. However, this is not my 1st career, so I have a unique perspective. I sold cars for a living, and the little known dirty secret is that they make a lot of money! Unfortunately, they make a lot of money by getting the poor and uneducated to pay as much as they can. I teach at a school in a neighborhood that could be deemed "poor or uneducated", and it is difficult for me to believe that, as a community, we prize car sales over education. Money, good or bad, is a significant measure of how we value something, and I took a **\$80,000 plus pay cut** to take this job! I have been doing this now for 6 plus years and I still make **HALF** what I did selling cars, and, I can say with some confidence, that I am a far better teacher than I was a salesman.

**Please help stop the madness and vote to show the world that we value our children's education over car sales!!!**

Respectfully,  
Kevin Tynan NHIS  
Math Department (Rm B11)  
(720)220-5583 (Cell)  
[kevin.tynan@hawks.k12.hi.us](mailto:kevin.tynan@hawks.k12.hi.us)  
[kevin.tynan@k12.hi.us](mailto:kevin.tynan@k12.hi.us)

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**From:** Susan Agsalda <slagsalda@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 7:29 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor and Public Employment and committee on Lower & Higher Education

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND  
COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Susan Agsalda. I am a teacher at Kipapa Elementary in Mililani on the Island of Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our children.

I returned to school, 23 years ago, to earn a second degree in something that I believed in, which was the education and welfare of the children in Hawaii. I have taught at Kipapa Elementary for the past 17 years. We have a large free/reduced lunch population.

I recently shared with my grade level, that when I received my first paycheck, I literally cried because I realized I would be making \$20K less than what I was making in a field unrelated to my area of expertise. There were many times that I did contemplate returning to my original field so that I could afford better things for my family. Being part of the second generation of educators in my family, I'm deeply saddened to think that so little has changed. My parents



struggled 65-70 years ago, while trying to raise 4 children on teacher wages, and the struggle continues.

My out-of-pocket expenses average \$800.00 year. Each year, I tell myself I won't do it again the following year, but I think of how important it is to afford opportunities to children who otherwise would not have a chance to experience those activities. Many times, opportunities have been made available to the children in my class, by my supportive and generous family.

There are few employers that require continued education and PD credits to move up in class level. There are some free/low cost classes available – not always classes of interest, but they're affordable. Most teachers cannot afford to pay for the cost of a 3-credit class. Many work 2 jobs, live at home, and need family support for child care.

I have been employed with the DOE for 21 years. My peer, who has been working for 16 years, is at the same step and level that I am at, but the difference is that this is my second career and I am nearing retirement. I would like to feel that I am held in, as high esteem as, the children that I teach.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Susan Agsalda, Central District, Mililani, Oahu

## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Sherwin Pang <sherwin.pang@k12.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 6:43 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony is support of SB2488, SD2 Relating to Teacher Compensation

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and Committee Members:

My name is Sherwin Pang, Student Activities Coordinator (SAC) at Moanalua High School, Central Oahu District. I am testifying in support of SB2488, SD2 Relating to Teacher Compensation, specifically paragraph 3 which discusses senior teachers' pay.

According to the HSTA pay scale, a teacher tops off at Class VII, Step 14bb. After 38 years in the DOE, I reached that milestone a few years ago. While you might think that is great, and I should be thankful. I want to remind you that in the meantime, teachers at lower salaries have been receiving more compensation percentage-wise based on contract negotiations to get them to a higher salary. The problem with being stuck at Class VII, Step 14bb is that you do NOT get equal compensation percentage-wise when such contracts take effect. Instead, you get a one time \$1500 "bonus" per year.

Now, when I received my first \$1500 "bonus," I calculated what I actually receive in net pay. Keep in mind that almost all regular deductions are taken out of that \$1500. It comes out to roughly \$700. Divided by 24 paychecks per year, that works out to about \$30/paycheck. Now, one might conclude that it is better than nothing. True. But I think to myself, as implied in the bill, is that all I am worth to the DOE after 38 years on the job? In addition, the \$1500 does not in any way affect my retirement in terms of years and or pension, unlike teachers at lower pay scales. In many ways, this is somewhat like a glass ceiling. Once you reach it, you either take whatever small reward you get, or leave. At a time where there is a teacher shortage, and whatever new teachers come on board can benefit from more experienced teachers, it would seem prudent to me to do whatever it takes to keep those experienced teachers on the job as long as possible.

I can do the math. I know that my current salary could pay for two rookie teachers. In the eyes of some principals, that is actually a very attractive thing. Now that schools are funded on the weighted student ratio, principals can spend the lump sum however they see fit as long as they keep some for salaries for the minimum teaching staff required by law. Therefore, if you go strictly by the numbers, a principal can actually "save" on salary cost by hiring more "rookies," especially at hard-to-fill position schools where experienced teachers are most needed. You might say to yourself that principals will not resort to this tactic. Well, as SAC, I have seen my colleagues at other schools reduced to 10-month contracts (SACs at most high schools are 12-month employees), or having the position eliminated altogether.

One of my oldest and best friends at a Maui school had his SAC position eliminated only to have the principal reinstate the position a couple of years later with a rookie. He is now working as a TSA-Agriculture Inspector where he is actually making a LOT more, but his experience as SAC at that school will not be replaced for a long time. Replacing an experienced SAC, a position that is not easily replaceable knowledge-wise, with a rookie is like having a rookie doctor in residency do your complicated brain surgery. He does not yet have all of the knowledge and experience but will try his best. I ask if YOU were having the surgery, what kind of doctor would YOU prefer?

Another good friend in Honolulu District just had her position removed altogether. And the worst part is that her principal did not even tell her until the new teaching lines for next year were posted. The transfer period had already passed by then, so she has no option but to stay at the school and take the position he gave her. I actually think that is grounds to file a grievance, but she is such a sweet person, I do not think she will do that. In this particular case, it shows the principal does not think student activities are valuable.

To all on the committee who attended public, or even private schools. Did you attend proms or banquets? Did you enjoy school assemblies? Did you participate in Homecoming activities? Did you work on your HC float or banner late into the evenings? Remember how as Juniors, you almost beat the Seniors that year? Were you a student officer? Well, SOMEONE on staff was in charge of those activities whether you knew it or not. That person was a SAC. To connect this discussion to the pay issue, generally the more experience the SAC has, the better the extra-curricular experience. AND, the same is true for ALL teachers. You might have experienced a time when you had an awesome long-time teacher retire mid-year and s/he was replaced with a rookie, possibly not even certified in the subject (as is common nowadays). What was that like?

I am not saying we should not have rookie teachers as everyone needs to start somewhere, but it would certainly help if that rookie teacher was able to go to a senior teacher for help and advice when needed. Now imagine all of those experienced teachers leaving the profession because they are not valued. That rookie teacher will be moving up the pay scale quickly while the experienced teacher is stuck at the glass ceiling. I never thought about calling myself this, but is that how we treat our kupuna? In our current system, it is like telling grampa "You too old grampa! Just die already!"

--

Sherwin Pang, SAC  
Moanalua High School  
2825 Ala Ilima Street, T4  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96818  
Telephone: 808-305-1026

Check us out at: <http://mohssa.blogspot.com/>

"A good accomplishment is not a good accomplishment if you brag about it." - Copiaco

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## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Lori Ann Koyama <lori.koyama@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 2:29 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Lori Koyama. I am both a classroom teacher and the Student activities coordinator at Lahaina Intermediate School in Lahaina on Maui. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have given 22 and a half years to the DOE. In that time i have gone on strike for higher pay, i have experienced furlough Fridays i have experienced a halt on travel for professional development and much more.

Since the strike, teachers like myself have watched those with less years of service benefit for our sacrifice. We were on the front line and yet we have been left in the dark when it comes to compensation for years of service. When we started, step increments were halted. When it started up again, we got nothing. As each contract comes up and goes, veteran teachers have been left in the dark. I feel the union has neglected those who have proven to be dedicated to the profession and dedicated to the keiki of Hawaii.

In my years working, i have seen so many teachers come and go because there is no reason for them to stay. There is no way for them to afford a house or start a family without struggling. When money is handed over for mainland trips for admin to "recruit from the mainland", that is an insult

B) those teachers from the mainland who have chosen to stay despite having two jobs do NOT get the "new perk" advantage in addition to they lose their years of service from the mainland. Are teachers who work until they are 80 out of necessity the best we can give? Is that how we treat our elders who are DEDICATED to the profession and do NOT leave it out of personal gain or money? And do we want experienced teachers from the mainland or do we want the teacher FOB who need

to be retrained under the Title II funded program ( the mentor teaching program I am a mentor in is designed to TRAIN the new teachers how to teach- unpacking standards and devising lessons- isn't that what the college and universities are supposed to promise in the certified teachers they crank out?)

Compensating the teachers who have not received years of service salary, will not fix what was done to us but it does make me feel a little better and it makes me feel that i do matter.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Lori Ann Koyama, Maui

## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Charlene Villaro <charlene.villaro@k12.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 12:01 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Teacher Testimony

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and members of the Committees:

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and members of the Committees:

My name is **Charlene Villaro**. I am a **4th Grade Teacher** at **Leihoku Elementary on the Wai`anae Coast** 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 plus fringe costs, to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest to fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

**I have been a teacher on the Wai`anae Coast for the past 16 years. Before i explain why I stay, I want to tell you what brought me here. in 1997 I graduated with my B.A. from the University of Hawai`i. Instead of going into teaching as I had planned, I ended up working at an auto insurance company for 6 years. I moved through the ranks quickly, and earned a salary that was well beyond what I could have ever imagined for myself so early in life, and even received yearly profit sharing bonuses; life seemed great. However, my heart was constantly hearing the call of the classroom; as a matter of fact, even in my career detour, I was very much in a "teaching" position at the auto insurance company I was employed at. No longer able to ignore the persistent feeling that I needed to return to teaching, I impulsively quit my job, and made my way back to education. During my practicum hours, I learned more about the Wai`anae coast and made the decision that this is where I was going to teach. I found myself at Leihoku Elementary and have been here for 16 years, with no intention of leaving. I love teaching in this community. I love the relationships I've made throughout the years with these children and with their families. I have experienced and have learned SO much about how children learn in adversity and moreso how to become the teacher they need me to be within the adversity. I am so proud to be part of the fabric of this community-it's become my home...it's made me better at everything--it's made me a better person, and most especially a better mother, and it continues to inspire me to be a better teacher. I don't regret walking away from the corporate life because I got my heart and purpose back.**

**However, in the day to day of being a teacher in this place that i love and respect so much, reality becomes glaringly apparent with the hours and emotional investment, and the unique sets of**

challenges (both academic and character wise) that are presented to myself and my colleagues every, single day. Most of us arrive daily before 7 a.m. to prep for our day, and stay until 4-4:30 at the latest. Within our work days, we are their teachers, but teachers who take on the roles of family, friend, social worker, nurse, counselor, behavior health specialist, mediators, advocates, motivational speakers--just today one of my boys was devastated because a necklace of his Harry Potter Time Turner Spinner broke, and so I found myself being a jewelry repair person during my lunch hour. Many of us have also become club advisors, spending our non-contractual hours teaching children ukulele, tae kwon do, yearbook editing, cooking, performing arts, and polynesian culture all for the sheer reason that we know that many of our kids would otherwise not have the exposure to such things. For years I could tell myself and convince myself that i didn't get into teaching for the money, and that the reasons I did were enough to sustain me. However, from year to year, the demands on my colleagues and I changed as families changed, children changed, values changed, and education changed. What didn't change was our school culture of rising up to meet those demands, but it did wear on us...it does wear on us. I personally find myself at the end of the day asking, "Is it worth it? Are we being fairly compensated for the amount of work and dedication we've exerted on behalf of this community?" While a few of us are able to hold second jobs to supplement incomes, most of us have dedicated our extra hours to planning for our classes so that we can be effective, because in this community, you CANNOT afford to be ineffective, you CANNOT afford not to be impactful--you cannot play with people's lives. We gladly do these things, but reality hits, and where is the fair compensation? Many of our colleagues have left to pursue other careers because of this. Other colleagues have left the coast to teach elsewhere. I lost my husband to cancer almost 3 years ago, and I am now a widow/single mother of 2, with a mortgage, a car payment, and livelihood expenses, etc...and I am struggling! I have often thought of doing what many of my colleagues have done which is leave; leave the profession for less stress and better pay or, leave to work in other districts where the challenges are not of the same nature as of those we encounter on the Wai`anae Coast (maybe then I would still have the time and energy to find a part-time job and earn an extra income to support my family). At this point in time, I find that I still can't leave. I am too connected to the coast and the people I serve here-- I *want* to stay, but at some point, the necessity to find a way to provide for my family will outweigh any wants/ loyalty I have to this community. I humbly ask that you consider helping us with this endeavor. I am willing to open up my classroom to you for a day, even week so that you can see firsthand what we do here, and give you reasons to justify on our behalf why we should be fairly compensated.

We need your help. Mahalo.

**Charlene Villaro, Wai`anae District, O`ahu**

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**Dear Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:**

My name is Pablo Aguilar and I am a fully licensed and tenured high school special education teacher at Lanai High and Elementary School. I have been working here for 6 years. I am also a single parent of two small children and their sole provider. Prior to receiving our differential pay, between rent, food, and all other expenses my budget has led to little to no extra money for the things that are also important. Money for emergencies, doctors bills, holidays and savings towards my children's futures etc.... The strain these limits have put on me has often lead to thoughts of leaving Hawaii for greener pastures. But I love working with my students and I don't want to leave my commitments and service towards them and the Hawaii State DOE. The differentials we've received since January have truly been a blessing. Please don't take these away.

Mahalo-  
Pablo



## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Kilion Palauni <kipalauni@kamaile.org>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 12:07 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education,

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Kiliona Palauni. I am a Polynesian Music and culture teacher at Kamaile Academy Public Charter School in The Leeward District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I love my job and I love teaching in Wai'anae, I love teaching my Oceanic community. I heavily rely on the Hard to staff differential to cover the cost of living on Oahu and my gas as I commute from Kalihi every day. My wife works in town that is why we live in Kalihi. If I do not receive the hard to staff differential I honestly will not be able to continue working on the leeward coast and will most likely seek another profession. We teachers already do not make enough money to survive in Hawaii. I have a two-year-old a girl and her tuition at daycare is \$1400 a month. My wife and I barely make it month to month as is. cutting any more money from my annual salary would be catastrophic to my family.

My wife is already asking to leave Hawaii to find a cheaper place to live. My heart is in Hawaii my heart is in education and helping my people. I fear that not paying charter schools the hard to staff will cause many of us to not just leave the school and or profession but to leave the state.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Kilion Palauni, Leeward District, Oahu

**From:** Danyel Erickson <derickson@lanaischool.k12.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 11:57 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is **Danyel Erickson**. I am a **First Grade Teacher at Lanai High and Elementary School** in Maui District on **Lanai**. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I moved to Lana'i from Seattle Washington in December of 2017. I was promised a job as a First Grade teacher with the contingency that I would complete a State-approved Teacher Training Program. Shortly after I arrived I went to the school to introduce myself to the staff and students. There were several issues that had not been dealt with prior to my arrival. The current teacher had not given formal notice and I was not properly hired for several months. I was not given a paycheck for over 100 days! My husband and I fell into poverty and had to apply for state assistance while I was working full time at the school. The probationary salary that I was eventually awarded was barely enough to cover our bills. Even after I enrolled in the iTeach program, the Emergency Hire salary was quite low. I have since completed the program and am on an early schedule of the qualified teacher salary.

While this is more than before, the salary is extremely low compared to our outgoing bills every month. Our rent is reasonable but we are in no position to buy a home, which is a goal we have. We live on a remote island that depends on weekly barge shipments for food and supplies. We are cut off from the mainstream world and have difficulty staffing teachers on Lana'i. Many teachers leave after just one year because of the reasons listed above. We have much under-qualified staff and several vacant positions due to this shortage. If salary was improved, it would be easier to find professional teachers to staff at Lanai High and Elementary.

We need your help. Mahalo.

**Danyel Erickson, LHES, Maui District**

**From:** Maile Yasui <maile\_yasui@momilanies.k12.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 11:52 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND  
COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Maile Yasui. I am a teacher at Momilani Elementary School in Leeward District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. 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

and not getting paid for it. Is 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.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Maile Yasui, Leeward District, Oahu

**From:** Laurie Fujikawa <lfujikawa@kapunahala.k12.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 11:53 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND  
COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Laurie Fujikawa. I am a teacher at Kapunahala Elementary School in Kaneohe, the Windward District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

I have been a dedicated teacher with the DOE since 1994. I entered the DOE with a Masters in Education and earned all the credits needed to reach "the top" of the pay scale within the first 6 years of being employed. I have experienced the withholding of step increases, furloughs and the strike. These events have had a serious financial impact on my financial well being. My husband was also furloughed at the same time since he works for the city and county of Honolulu. We were living within our means, but still had to file for bankruptcy because we were unable to support a mortgage and a family.

I have been working two jobs and summers for over 10 years just to make ends meet and to raise my two children who attend public school. My husband works overtime which means he's working six days a week. We live a very busy life like most people with school, sports and extracurricular activities. I don't understand how my husband and I can work as hard as we do, have the income we have, and still struggle in this state we grew up in.

What's most defeating is being surrounded by people who work in part time positions and live on welfare, but they drive nicer cars and take frequent family vacations. How is this possible?

We've thought of moving to the mainland, but we both have elderly parents who need our support. Aging in Hawaii is another issue that I won't discuss here.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers like me who have had many years of dedicated service. Our senior teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Laurie Fujikawa

Windward District of Oahu

## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Cami I <camisemail@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 11:40 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION on Mar. 13, 2020

Dear Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson and members of the Education Committee,

My name is Cami Iwanaga. I am a teacher at Konawaena Elementary School in West Hawaii District on the Big Island of Hawaii. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 for 28 years. I have taken numerous courses and accumulated countless credits (out of pocket) to learn the latest strategies and best practices to implement. I am at the top of my class, but have not nor will not reach the highest salary at the time of retirement because unlike other occupations that pay for over time and provide step increases after years of service, teachers like me have had to fight and beg for their step increases and yet will not reach that highest step. My life is rich with knowing what I have invested in our keiki, but salary compression has been unfair. Unfortunately, over these 28 years, I have seen amazing and exceptional educators leave our profession or leave our state because of the hardships of being a teacher in Hawaii. We need your help. Please provide the funds needed.

Mahalo,  
Cami Iwanaga  
West Hawaii District, Island of Hawaii



## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** dorisa pelletier <dsurf73@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 11:36 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor and Public Employment and Committee on Lower and Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND COMMITTEE ON LOWER AND HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020  
2 PM

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and Committee Members:

My name is Dorisa Pelletier-Yamasaki. I am a fourth grade teacher in Maui at King Kamehameha III School in Lahaina. I am submitting testimony in support of SB2488, SD2. 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, care about and value our hardworking teachers. The DOE will need \$45 million more plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers (like myself) where we should be after our many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important to our keiki.

Please allow me to share with you my personal story. I have been teaching for 13 years now on the island of Maui, and I am considering leaving the profession because I cannot afford to take care of my own three children on my teacher salary. We are a family of five, every day is a struggle for us, and the cost of living and housing is terribly high here on Maui. When Linda Lingle was governor, my salary was frozen and I was not given my proper steps and was even furloughed. I have been deprived of pay increases for many years, even though I go above and beyond every day spending many long hours doing extra for the children at our school and for my students. I love Maui, and our children enjoy it as well! I have seen so many teachers come and go since I've been here because they simply cannot make ends meet. I have had to say "Goodbye" to many friends who had to move off island because they couldn't make ends meet as a teacher here on Maui. I sincerely hope you will fix this compression issue for us faithful teachers who are left in this profession, before we have to leave as well! If you don't address this issue now, you will most likely end up spending more money in the end in trying to recruit teachers year after year. In essence, this is not fair to our keiki. They are Hawai'i. They are our future. They deserve experienced, credentialed teachers. Please give our keiki what they deserve! The Kings and Queens of our past valued education. We hope you will too!

In addition to fixing the compression issue, we also need to continue to receive differentials for hard to staff areas, Special Education, and Hawaiian Immersion teachers! I, personally teach at a hard to staff school/area and teacher turnover is high! This does not provide any consistency for our students! One cannot get a good education when they have a different teacher three times during one school year! We want our keiki to

thrive, and not just to get by. For the keiki to thrive, the teachers must be able to afford to stay here in Hawaii. I am not a Special Education or Hawaiian Immersion teacher, however there is a huge need for these teachers here. The ones we have are leaving by the droves! Thanks for the differential you approved of for this year! Please keep these differentials coming in future years, so that our schools will still have very important Special Education teachers and so that we can have Hawaiian Immersion programs as well!

Thanks for your time and consideration in reading my letter. Please remember, it is important to fix small leaks before they become floods. Our teacher shortage has already grown to more than a small leak! Floods of teachers are leaving. If we don't do something now, it will become an even worse problem costing more in the end to fix.

We need your help, I need your help, the keiki need your help! Please fund these initiatives and be a part of fixing this massive teacher shortage problem affecting Hawaii's own--our keiki.

Mahalo Nui Loa,  
Dorisa Pelletier-Yamasaki  
Lahainaluna Complex  
Lahaina, Maui

**eli2 - Kevin**

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**From:** Liz Bowen <love.lizzy.bowen@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 11:19 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

EMPLOYMENT AND COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

**RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION**

**FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020**

2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Elizabeth Bowen. I am an ELL Teacher at Princess Nahienaena Elementary School in the Lahainaluna Complex on Maui. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 an additional \$45 million plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I moved to Maui from the Los Angeles Unified School District for the sole purpose of helping to fill the teacher shortage in Hawaii. I was shocked to discover how low teacher salaries are and how they are capped for long term teachers! I can now see why the teacher turnover rate is so extraordinarily high here in Hawaii. It is imperative that the state of Hawaii recognize the value that our educators provide to the children of this glorious state. When I started teaching at my school in 2018 there were 14 NEW teachers!

I work in a hard to staff area in Lahaina, Maui. The cost of living here is so high that most of our teachers cannot live in the area, but must commute for over an hour to our west side school. This differential has made an enormous difference in helping us continue to afford to live here and teach. There are too many teachers moving back to the mainland and our children are severely shortchanged when a long term substitute is placed in their classrooms.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Elizabeth Bowen

Lahainaluna Complex

Maui

## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Laura Barbato <lbarbato@kamaile.org>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 10:48 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Laura Barbato and I currently teach 7th and 8th grade resource at Kamaile Academy in the Leeward District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been living and working as an educator on the Waianae Coast since January of 2012. I have recently had a son and my husband and I love the people and living in Hawaii. Due to the high cost of living coupled with low teacher salaries, we were on the verge of moving back to the mainland. With the SPED bonuses and hard to staff differentials, we are now making enough of a livable wage that we are considering staying through to retirement. If these bonuses do not pass, we may be forced to once again leave the island and leave a void in the lives of many children and families. I know many teachers that are in the same situation. The only way to improve public education in Hawaii is to retain and recruit good teachers who are committed to building a life on the islands.

We need your help.

Mahalo,

Laura Barbato, Special Education Teacher, Leeward District, Oahu

## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Laura Leger <lleger34@hawaii.edu>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 9:50 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB 2488 - SD1

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and members of the Committees:

My name is Laura Leger]. I am a Physical Education Teacher at Kualapu'u School in Moloka'i District/Maui County on Moloka'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 plus fringe costs, to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest to fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

This will be my 7th year teaching in the DOE. For my first 5 years of teaching I was a PTT juggling 3-4 jobs at a time to support myself in school. Of course, this was my choice but kept on this path because I love my students and found great benefit in what I was doing.

Since moving to Moloka'i I have many colleagues that find themselves compressed over many years. They are in good spirits but I see that as time goes on it is more of a struggle to stay in the profession without proper compensation. I write you today to fix the compression situation to keep amazing teachers like we have now in the profession. It is hard enough to get good teachers to be in and committed to the profession-our keiki deserve to have them stay.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Laura Leger, Moloka'i Complex, Moloka'i

## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Jill Harai <blueberrymochi@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 9:36 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020 2 P.M.

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Jill Harai and I am a school counselor on Oahu employed with the Hawaii Department of Education for 24 years. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas.

I feel it is increasingly difficult to continue working in a school system that doesn't pay teachers fairly according to years of service and loyalty to the department. I have colleagues that came in 10 years after me but are at one or two steps below me on the pay scale. This was due to the Governors Cayetano and Lingle years of being offered 0 percent increases or having a pay cut during their furlough years. We all suffered during those poor economic times but this was at the expense of state workers taking the brunt of it. We weren't fully compensated for those lost wages.

Because we missed those step movements and pay raises, those with less experience benefited from the more prosperous years to follow. There was never a correction to this problem and we were always told that monies given to teachers needs to benefit all and not only some. Because of this reasoning, teachers and counselors like myself, who have many years of experience are feeling the frustration of working just as hard as teachers with less experience but are not fully compensated to reflect the difference in experience. If the same rationale of dividing the pot equally is always used, the compression issue will never be resolved.

If I work until I have 30 years of service, I will not be able to reach the end of the pay scale which I feel should be achievable and I deserve a reward for a lifetime of service to the department, students, and their families. If we never correct the compression issue or at least not in near future, I will not stay in the Department of Education. I will leave the department five or more years sooner, find another job that rewards knowledge and experience, and pass the torch on to a brand new counselor who will use the same time

learning how to become a counselor. Our students deserve and need the support of experienced/qualified educators who are valued and rewarded fairly.

Sincerely,

Jill Harai, School Counselor, Oahu



## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Nicholle Omayas <nicholle.omayas@k12.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 9:33 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** RE: SB 2488, SD1, RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and members of the Committees:

My name is Nicholle Omayas. I am a special education teacher at Leihoku Elementary School in the Leeward 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 plus fringe costs, to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest to fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have lived on the Leeward Coast my whole life and have seen and have even been one of the "disadvantaged youths." Growing up on the Leeward Coast is completely different than I remember from the elevated drug use in the community, social-emotional issues, homelessness, crime, and hardships our students today face.

My whole goal in becoming a teacher is to help the students on this side know and believe that they are worth more and meant for more than what some of them see every single day.

I want to tell a story that I encountered while attending college. One of my professors said that he worked at one of the schools on the Leeward Coast (in fact he was speaking about my elementary school) and most times he could not understand what the students were saying. He said that he would have to ask them to repeat themselves two and three times and sometimes still not understand what they were saying. He said that with "those kids" who say, "Hey Mister, can I go batch-troom?" You have to read between the lines at what they're saying and he was at a point of not correcting them in the Standard English way of asking (May I please use the restroom?). By the tenth "those kids," I had had enough of what he was saying about my people.

At that point my blood was boiling because he spoke so harshly and dismissively of the school I attended and of the students I taught and was just 25 years ago. My retort went something like this, "I work and live on the Leeward Coast and, in fact, went to the elementary school you are speaking about. As a teacher I will correct the students 100% of the time when they ask to go to the "batch-troom" and model how to ask politely, "May I please use the restroom?" because perhaps I am the only person who will expose them to that form of communication, and wouldn't it be a shame if I passed on that opportunity to expand their communication ability? I understand that Pidgin is now considered a recognized language, but Pidgin does not transfer everywhere, to everyone, and every situation. The power in Pidgin is knowing when it's appropriate to use it and when to turn it off. Because even though I speak Pidgin or even broken Pidgin on a daily basis, I would not be sitting here if I had done my writing Praxis in Pidgin." That was my moment of clarity and after that I decided to take pride in being able to use or lose Pidgin depending on the situation. I am and have never been ashamed of being from Waianae and I hope that that students I teach never do either. It is my personal mission to make sure that they know that they come with a different set of knowledge and that they are important, and special, and worth every opportunity.

My plea is to afford the families and students the same opportunities I have had with the same kind of people. A salary raise for those who have put in the years of work, sweat, and tears for the students deserve it and we all know it. The ability to obtain and retain teachers who will give our students a chance and possibly the chance that will change their life for the better is priceless. Offering the hard to staff and special education differential is only a small asking for such a possible large payback. The teachers on the Leeward Coast and in hard to staff areas are

asked unvoiced to foster students in their community. Doing this will only benefit our community and make it stronger, which is the goal. In this time, where everyone is retreating to the mainland for better opportunities, we have an opportunity to make us better and make our community grow. It is imperative for us to keep the hard to staff and special education differential for exactly those reasons. Nobody is flocking to our side to live or help our community grow, we need to offer incentives that help keep and compensate those who put in the effort. This is the side of the island that needs the most support, but as educators, we need more support as well. I am one of the teachers who leave at 6pm and later sometimes because I am trying to make a difference. My hope is for my co-workers and myself to start being compensated as the educated professionals that we are and what we are striving to do.

We need your help and your mahalo.

Sincerest Aloha,

Nicholle Omayas, Leeward District, Waianae, Oahu

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Mahalo,  
Nicholle Omayas  
4th Grade Inclusion Teacher  
Leihoku Elementary School  
Phone: (808) 697-7100

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**From:** Nathaniel Tom <nathaniel.tom@k12.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 9:29 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** SB 2488, SD1, RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and members of the Committees:

My name is Nathaniel Tom. I am a SPED Teacher at Leihoku Elementary in Waianae 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 plus fringe costs, to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest to fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I am a first year SPED and I love teaching here where I grew up. I would love to teach here for my entire career. The one thing that would stop me from doing that is if I cannot support a family off my salary. I am already seeking a part time job just to make ends meet. I have several other friends who already have two part time jobs on top of being a teacher. This is necessary for them to live comfortably. Please seek funding for teacher differentials. Please also seek to find a solution for the salary compression issue. It is not fair that I am making more per year than teachers who have taught decades more than me. Please take into consideration inflation and the exponential increase of living costs.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Nathaniel Tom, Nanakuli/Waianae, Oahu

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## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Ian Barbato <ibarbato@kamaile.org>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 9:13 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Ian Barbato, I am the Dean of Students at Kamaile Academy in the Leeward District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been living and working as an educator on the Waianae Coast since January of 2008. I have recently had a son and my wife and I love the people and living in Hawaii. My wife has been a special education teacher in Waianae for several years as well. Due to the high cost of living coupled with low teacher salaries, we were on the verge of moving back to the mainland. With the SPED bonuses and hard to staff differentials, we are now making enough of a livable wage that we are considering staying through to retirement. If these bonuses do not pass, we may be forced to once again leave the island and leave a void in the lives of many children and families. I know many teachers that are in the same situation. The only way to improve public education in Hawaii is to retain and recruit good teachers who are committed to building a life on the islands.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Ian Barbato, Leeward District, Oahu

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Ian Barbato  
Kamaile Academy Public Charter School  
Dean of Students  
Phone: 808-697-7110 (Ext. 114)  
Fax: 808-697-7115

## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Rich Harragan <rharr66@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 9:11 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and members of the Committees:

My name is Richard Harragan I am a Teacher at Nanakuli Int & 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 plus fringe costs, to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest to fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I came to work here from the main land because I love the beauty of the Island and the culture. I received my degree in secondary education ( History ) in 2010 worked two years as a sub on long Island when I noticed Hawaii DOE was coming to New York to recruit teachers. After I was told to get my licence on line I will get a call. I have been here for eight years and love my job and my students and my community. I have struggled but with the new compression and compensation I receive the break to save a little. I look forward to remaining here and will need the help of the new bill to further my stay here. I love my job and the relationships I have built with my students and my colleagues . This pay increase will keep me here beyond the offers I get from long Island to come back and teach there. My heart and soul are here with my students and this community .

We need your help. Mahalo.

**Richard Harragan, leeward, Oahu**

## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Michelle Dressler <michelle.dressler@k12.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 9:07 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in Support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower and Higher Education

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Michelle Dressler and I teach fine arts at Kauai High School on the island Kauai. I am a National Board Certified Teacher and I am licensed/highly qualified to teach English, fine arts, and social studies. I began teaching in Hawaii in 1993. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

Please provide the funding needed to fix the teacher salary compression issue for hard working teachers who have proven their dedication through their time commitment. The Department of Education needs \$45 million to fund the essential needs of our teachers. Fixing the compression issue, a wrong that should have been corrected years ago, will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service and will help retain experienced teachers who offer quality education and learning experiences for our students.

The salary compression will help to retain experienced teachers who are nearing retirement and leaving the profession for jobs in the private sector where they are paid accordingly to their experience and treated with respect. I know several of my colleagues will reconsider other options and remain teaching if the compression issue is addressed and corrected.

I urge you to do the right thing and correct this wrong that many of us have endured for years with a negative impact on us and our families. Your help is needed.

Mahalo.

Michelle Dressler  
M.A. Ed / N.B.P.T.S  
Kauai High School: Fine Arts Department  
3577 Lala Road, Lihue, HI 96766  
808.274.3173. ext. 201

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## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Christy Nii <christy.ak.nii@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 9:02 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

My name is Christy Nii, and I am an art teacher at Wilcox Elementary School on Kaua'i. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have taught here for 26 years, been through 6 principals, a teacher strike, and countless movements of teachers in and out of our school. Sadly, many who left us, were excellent in their profession, but teacher salaries, along with our high cost of living just made it too difficult to make ends meet. Many have 2 to 3 jobs, many moved to the mainland, and we lost 2 to the fire department. I am asking you please to help fix the compression issue for teachers like me who have been here, serving our island's keiki for so many years. Please help to fund hard to staff areas so our keiki can get and retain the best teachers for their needs. I love this job and I love teaching all 700 of my students, but financially it has a strain.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Christy Nii, Kauai



## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Jim OBrien <jobrien@kkhs.k12.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 8:57 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor and Public Employment and Committee on Lower and Higher Education, Friday March 13 at 2:00pm.

My name is James O`Brien. I have been a teacher for 15 years at King Kekaulike High School on Maui. I have taught a range of subjects to fill in for vacant teachers. I am licensed in and highly qualified in Industrial Arts and Social Studies. I am in support of this bill to keep great teachers in the teaching profession. I have seen over and over, good, qualified teachers leave after a year or two and even leave in the middle of the year. This creates a big void for the students and negatively impacts their education. We need to pay for qualified teachers to stay in Hawaii and help our keiki succeed in life. Because of the high cost of living, these qualified teachers move back to the mainland or seek jobs in the private sector. It is vital that we pass this bill. Thank you, James O`Brien

**From:** Kellie Fujii <kellie.fujii@k12.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 3:12 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Relating to Teacher Compensation

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT and THE  
COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD1, RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2:00 p.m.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and members of the Committees:

My name is Kellie Fujii. I am a Special Education Teacher at Leihoku Elementary School in Waianae 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 plus fringe costs, to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest to fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I was born and raised on the east side of Oahu (Aina Haina), and found myself teaching at Leihoku Elementary, on the Leeward coast when I joined Teach For America five years ago. Even though my TFA program ended after my second year of teaching, I continued as a Special Education Teacher at Leihoku, as I developed a passion to teach the students in the Waianae community, alongside my amazing coworkers. Throughout the years, my commute from the east side of the island to the west everyday (80 miles round trip) had taken a toll on me, and two years ago I was fortunate to find a place to stay with a friend in the Kapolei area. However, all of my family still lives on the east side, and every weekend I make the commute home to spend time with my family.

Working as a Special Education Teacher on the Leeward coast is extremely rewarding, but also takes a lot out of me. Every year I manage a caseload of 16 to 20+ students, who have a variety of needs. It is so rewarding to see the gains that my students make over the years, but the work that I put into it is very taxing day to day. On some

days, especially recently, I wonder what it would be like for me to teach at a school closer to home. I sometimes also wonder what it would be like if I left the teaching profession altogether. The differentials for teachers in special education and hard-to-staff positions will give me an additional reason to remain a teacher on the Leeward coast. I love the students and adults that I work with, but I honestly feel like I am burning out, even though I am only in my fifth year of teaching.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Kellie Fujii, Leeward, Oahu

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# Late Testimonies



**LATE**

2850 Kahawai Street  
Honolulu, HI 96822

February 5, 2020

808 988 5505  
www.ppsHI.org

Committee on Education  
Senator Michelle Kidani, Chair  
Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Vice Chair

Lois Yamauchi  
President

Kashmira Reid  
Vice President

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim and Members of the Committee:

Erin Yagi  
Secretary

**On behalf of Parents for Public Schools of Hawai'i, I write in support of SB2488,** which will fund necessary discretionary salary adjustments for experienced public school teachers.

Ernestine Enomoto  
Treasurer

Deborah Bond-Upson

Kay Fukuda

Clare Hanusz

Mary Weir

Susan Wood

Parents for Public Schools of Hawai'i is a non-profit organization made up of over 1,200 parents and other family members across the State whose children attend public schools. Our members have stated that what they value most about their schools are their teachers. **Teachers are our schools' greatest assets.** Yet, teachers' salaries in Hawai'i have not kept up with the rising cost of living. As the cost-of-living has increased, we have seen many excellent teachers leave the profession and our State. Our teacher retention problem is the worst in the country, with nearly half of our teacher leaving within five years on the job.

**Although we have made some progress in addressing the pay of new teachers, the salaries of many experienced teachers have remained the same.** Experienced teacher salaries are unfairly close to that of their newer colleagues. We know that teachers grow steeply in effectiveness in their first five years of experience. Experience leads to teachers honing their craft. Experienced teachers often have more responsibilities, as they mentor newer colleagues and take on leadership positions at their schools. Experienced teachers deserve to be compensated for their expertise and services.

Salaries make a difference for teachers, as they do individuals from other professions. **Compensating veteran teachers with a salary that reflects their experience will influence these experienced teachers to stay in their positions.** Assuring adequate compensation of experienced teachers will also affect the recruitment of new candidates who are contemplating entering the profession. If capable young people do not view teaching as career that will afford them a living wage throughout their lives, they will not choose it as a career. Our teachers deserve to be compensated at a rate that will express our value of them as our greatest educational asset. Please support SB2488.

Sincerely,

Deborah Bond-Upson  
Board Member, Parents for Public Schools of Hawai'i

*Parents for Public Schools Hawaii (PPSHI) is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) volunteer organization of parents, community members, and educators working to improve and support public education through family engagement. We are committed to ensuring all children in Hawai'i have access to a quality public education.*

**LATE**

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 10:44:28 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Michael Golojuch Jr	LGBT Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawaii	Support	No

Comments:

**From:** Kanoemaileokalani Keaweehu <kanoemaileokalani.keaweehu@k12.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 3:55 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** RE: SB 2488, SD2, RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and members of the Committees:

My name is Kanoemaileokalani Keaweehu. I am a teacher at Leihoku Elementary School in Leeward District on O'ahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs, to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest to fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I am a proud product of the Wai'anae Coast and it was always my dream to return here to teach. I had great teachers who guided me along my path to finding what I wanted to do, which is return to teach in Wai'anae. I didn't really pay close attention to the comings and goings of the teachers, because many of my teachers were there from before I got to the grade they taught. My senior year in high school I noticed that there were a few temporary teachers who came from the mainland, but it wasn't too many; the amount of returning teachers outnumbered the amount of new teachers. It wasn't until I myself became an educator and had my children going to school in Wai'anae that I realized the importance of retaining highly qualified teachers in our schools. Teaching in the community that I grew up in, I remember the feeling I had when I learned that my high school teachers who had made an impact on me, had moved on to better opportunities in other communities. Many of my teacher friends in my many years of service have also moved on for various reasons; whether to further their own studies, being closer to family and home, better pay in another profession, or even a position that will allow them to just teach rather than be a combination of teacher, counselor, mother. It is disappointing to know that many great teachers have left due to these reasons because the children of the Wai'anae coast need them.

This differential and/or fixing of the salary compression issue will go a long way in helping to keep highly qualified teachers in our Leeward schools. Being a teacher, I am not the only one making a sacrifice for my job, my own children sacrifice right along side me. We leave home early in the morning and get home late at night. Right now we are a single working parent home and struggle to make ends meet. Many times I have deliberated on whether I should get another job to ease our financial burdens and lose out time with my kids or stay where I am at and spend time with my kids. Just in these few months of getting the differential I have been able to feel that I have a little more room to work with; I can put my own kids into sports outside of school (cause I have a little more flexibility with my budget). This differential and/or fixing the salary compression issue will help my situation. My own children and the students out here on the Leeward Coast need highly qualified and committed teachers who are invested in building better communities through educating the children of Wai'anae.

We need your help. Mahalo.

[Kanoemaileokalani Keaweehu, Leeward, O'ahu]

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**From:** Dr. Phaedra Robinson <drphaedra@me.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 3:59 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** I support SB2488

My name is Phaedra Robinson. I am a teacher at Hokulani EI 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 also 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, and our children are with it as they are the future of Hawaii. An investment in our teachers and children is an investment in our future.

Please support this bill in favor of giving our veteran teachers, special education teachers, Hawaiian immersion teachers and hard to fill teaching positions more money in terms of a bonus and in increased salaries granted for years of public service. We face a grave situation in our public schools that can no longer be ignored. The states' attempts in trying other solutions in attracting and retaining teachers have proven to be ineffective for decades now. The only solution is an increase in salary.

Incredibly low pay scales have driven our veteran teachers to leave the profession due to the fact that their experience and dedication to public education and the teaching profession is not worthy of compensation. We cannot survive and thrive on the low pay. If it were not for the recent momentary bonus I received for teaching special ed I was planning on leaving the teaching profession in Hawaii.

Please support us in this. We can't afford to loose teachers and have our public schools suffer the detrimental effects of teachers leaving schools every year. This extra money will also help the cause in drawing in good teachers who will stay here in Hawaii for their teaching career and have an invaluable impact on the future of Hawaii. Thank you for supporting teachers and the future of public education here.

With aloha,  
Phaedra Elisabeth Robinson, Ph.D.





**From:** Chrystie Cobb <chrystie4salsa@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 4:14 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Chrystie Isaacs I am a General Education Grade 5 Teacher at Moanalua Elementary School in Central District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been an educator since 2003. When I first started teaching, the pay was very low. I worked to get my Master's degree with the hope of increasing my teacher pay, but all it did was increase my student loan debt. It took me a while to even get to a Class VII. On top of teaching a full day, planning, prepping and grading student papers for countless hours outside of my day, I had to take 20 DOE classes to move up the pay scale to a Class VII. It took me almost 5 years to take 20 classes. The pay was still not enough. I couldn't afford to pay rent, students loans, car insurance, utility bills on my own so I ended up moving in with my parents. I also had a daughter to raise during the furlough Friday teaching year. Living with my parents is what helped me to stay in this teaching career. I was never able to purchase my home. During the first 5 years of my teaching career, I purchased a lot of supplies and incentive materials for my students out in the Waianae community. Many of the students out there were homeless. Out of the 5 years that I taught in the Waianae community, only 2 of those years teachers were paid a differential of \$3000. I am very happy for the teachers out there that are now receiving an \$8000 differential.

Fixing the salary compression and differentials will definitely help all public school teachers, librarians, counselors, and students. This will also help me to remain in this profession on this Island of Oahu. I am a veteran teacher who was not given regular step increases during hard economic times. I have had to take out several loans to help pay off my debts over the years. I have seen many teachers leave the profession. I have seen the repercussions this has had on the students as well. This has even happened to my own child. I have seen the negative effects of students stuck with long-term substitutes. I believe this is a start to help keep teachers in this profession in the State of Hawaii. I, myself, have thought about retiring early and making a career change. Addressing teacher salary pay will help me to stay in this profession longer. The cost of living is so high here in Hawaii. We need to do better than just making it from one pay check to the next one.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Chrystie Isaacs

Central District

Oahu

**From:** collparl2000@yahoo.com  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 5:30 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment & Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2020, at 2 p. m.

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND  
COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Colleen Parlee. I am a teacher at Wheeler Elementary School in Central District on Oahu Island. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

It is very important to adjust veteran teacher' pay as we were not given regular step increases during hard economic times. I am close to retirement age, but would consider staying a few more years if my pay increases. My years of service and dedication to the teaching profession should be properly honored. At this point I feel so disregarded as the cost of living has outpaced my salary. I also want the best for our students so we can keep qualified teachers in the classroom!

We need your help. Mahalo.

Colleen Parlee, Central District, Oahu

**From:** E Kagawa <ekagawahsta@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 11:08 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and the Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13th, at 2:00 p.m.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and members of the Committees:

My name is Edwin Kagawa. I am a Special Education teacher at the “Hard-to-Staff” Kea’au Middle School in the Puna District on the Island of Hawaii I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

I am one of the 6,300 teachers that are affected by the teacher salary compression issue. Over the past 20 years, I have worked as a teacher in the Ka’u-Kea’au-Pahoa Complex, one of most socio-economic areas in the state and identified as a hard-to-staff complex. Throughout these years, Hawaii has gone through a lot of economic challenges. During these times, teachers were often asked to sacrifice to help the State and agree to contracts that ultimately resulted in our current compression issue. I am currently working at the same salary level as someone who started 6-7 years after me. That means I was already considered a veteran teacher, several years past tenure and making the same as a brand, new teacher. This is not a raise. This is to provide professionals their salary based on their experience and years of service.

Money will not solve all of the problems in our public school system. But, it will help to provide a living wage where teachers can really use their time after school hours to plan and prepare for our future, our keiki. Instead, teachers are having to work other jobs or live in situations (several roommates, far commute, unsafe, etc.) just to afford to live in Hawaii. The schools in my area, my school particularly, has teachers leaving in the middle of the year. Sometimes before the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter! In addition to my own responsibilities, I, as well as other teachers in the school, go over and beyond to either help the rotating subs that come in to but a band-aid on the missing teacher or work extra with our students to compensate for the instability these situations cause.

We need to provide our base group (The 10-30 year teachers) who are the 6,300 affected by the comprehension with a salary that they should have been getting all this time. These are the ones that have not left before five years and may look to retire as soon as they can if they don’t get their well-deserved and earned salary.

In addition, I am dually certified and was not teaching in a SPED line for over 15 years. But due to the fact that our school has always been short of licensed SPED teachers, I got placed back in a SPED line. All because our school couldn’t find license SPED teachers! Another teacher in the same situation as me, retired! And it was an early retirement but she couldn’t see herself doing the SPED any more. She was burnt out so she left.

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. Please show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need at least \$45 million plus fringe costs, to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest to fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

We need your help. Supporting teachers means that our keiki get an education they deserve. This is for our future. Please save it and supp SB 2488, SD1!

Mahalo.

Edwin Kagawa, House District 2, Hawaii

**From:** Dana Corpuz <dana80222@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 10:04 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and the Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13th, at 2:00 p.m.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and members of the Committees:

My name is Dana Corpuz. I am a second year Special Education Teacher at Kaimiloa Elementary, 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 plus fringe costs, to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest to fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I've spent two years working as a Special Education emergency hire while earning Sped credentials and am now a licensed Sped Teacher because I strongly feel that Sped students are disserved by the lack of qualified professionals to work with them. I knew that this specialized area's demands are such that there is a high turnover and/or unfilled Sped Teacher positions. The main reasons for this are due to work burnout and/or inadequate compensation. However, I still decided to continue on this track as I'd rather have done something about it, at least for some time, than done nothing at all. So I am now in my second year of teaching Sped and am wary of what the future holds. Sped Teachers with 5 years or more under their belt are increasingly rare. I see a lot of recruits from the mainland that are returning home next year and an increasing number of Sped students and grade levels that need to be serviced by the remaining Sped Teachers. I do not see any Dual Certified (Gen Ed and Sped) Teachers readily jumping in to fill Sped positions. I do not hear of any local students signing up for Sped degrees.

We need your help to bring qualified professionals to Special Education in Hawai'i and create a better working condition so that Sped Teachers can remain in their positions with an optimal balance of job satisfaction and financial compensation. Please provide enough funds for pay differentials for Sped.

Mahalo,

Dana Corpuz

Leeward District, Oahu



**From:** Lily Gong <lilycggong@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 9:58 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Lily Gong. I am a Special Education Teacher at Fern Elementary in Honolulu on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been teaching for five years. I have seen many teacher left their loved positions because of financial difficulty. I met one great SPED teacher the year I started teaching. She not only engaged students in learning, but also inspired them in other areas. One student with special needs won an award after this teacher encouraged him to enter a poetry contest. As a former college softball player, she also led the students to participate in the Special Olympic Games. The students were thrilled to play along with nondisabled peers. But she decided to leave us because she told me that the living expenses were too high and she couldn't even afford a bedroom. She had to share with others in a small apartment. She also missed her family and friends but she couldn't save enough money to travel during the break. Eventually, she went back to the mainland.

I enjoy working with my students. They brought so much joy and surprise every day. I worked in the travel industry before I became a teacher. When my own child started Kindergarten I volunteer in her class. It was then I realized how important the teachers are and how hard they worked. But also I loved helping students in the classroom. So I decided to change my career. I had to study hard and took all the required exams. It's a challenge to switch a whole new field but I was so confident that it was a good decision. Yes, it's been a good decision when I see my students grow and make progress and when I believe I am changing their life in a good way. However, I have also doubted my decision when I told my children we couldn't afford to travel and visit their grandparents. I have to tell my children you cannot do everything you like because we cannot afford all the activities. I also worry about their college tuition since basically we are living paycheck to paycheck. I don't want to leave

my classroom because I know my students count on me. I don't want to leave them to long term subs or teachers who don't know how to work with students with special needs. But if I cannot afford my own children's education and/or support their passion, I might have to leave teaching.

So it is really important to fund shortage differentials.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Lily Gong, Honolulu, Oahu



**From:** Julie Reyes Oda <mrs.reyesoda@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 9:50 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

My name is Julie Reyes Oda. I am a math teacher and math department head at Nanakuli High and Intermediate School, a Title 1 school, on Oahu. I have 13 years of teaching experience in Hawaii. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, proposed SD2.

I am writing because this bill does not provide enough funds to fix teacher salary compression and pay differentials. The DOE will need \$45 million more than what is requested in this bill.

I work at a hard-to-staff school in the Nanakuli-Waianae complex. There are many reasons the schools in the Nanakuli-Waianae complex are hard to staff. Statistically, turnover rates are 50% higher between Title 1 and non-Title 1 schools. And specifically about math teachers, turnover rates are 70% higher between Title 1 and non-Title 1 schools. I currently have seven math teachers in my department. Of those seven, I have 4 tenured math teachers, 1 probationary math teacher, 1 TFA, and 1 substitute. This has been the best composition since I've been a department head. Last year, we had two substitutes. Three of the tenured teachers came in 2015. I am one of them. The rest started after that time. One transferred from another school in Waianae. My department has churned teachers who have quit. None of the math teachers transferred anywhere, they left the DOE.

There are many possibilities in retaining teachers in general or retaining teachers in hard-to-staff areas. One of them is fixing the salary compression. I started teaching during the recession years. Step increases are negotiated and during that time, the steps were not coming. Because of that, teachers who started after the recession contracts, got step increases and those who were there for the recession years are at the same level. Essentially you could have teachers who have 5-10 years difference in experience in the DOE, at the same salary scale. Anyone gets better the more years you do something. That's no different than teachers. I know that this is not a perfect equation. Experience does not equal better teaching, but I can tell you from the first time I stepped into the portable at Campbell High in January 2007 to now, I am a much better, efficient, and dedicated employee.

The next item is salary differentials. I looked that up and pay differentials are compensation that an employer pays to get employees to take certain assignments. We typically hear of differentials for people who have shift work or hazardous duty. They get paid more for a certain 8 hour shift or paid more to work in a location that is undesirable. I believe this is the exact definition of what the DOE is trying to do. There are positions or locations that are undesirable or not preferred. They can entice or persuade teachers to take a position they normally would not have. The DOE is having a hard time staffing certain locations and certain positions. The fact that those differentials are not guaranteed isn't going to help much. I'm not going to lie. I work more at Nanakuli than I did at Campbell. It's the nature of the beast out here. Wish I could write more, but if anyone needs more info, you are welcome to contact me.

Sincerely,

**Julie Reyes Oda**

"Success is the sum of small efforts, repeated day in and day out." -Robert Collier

"The greatest mistake you can make in life is to continually be afraid you will make one." -Elbert Hubbard

"Don't bunt. Aim out of the ballpark." -David Ogilvy

**From:** A Downard <adownard@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 9:40 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

Dear Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Amy Downard, and I am a special education teacher for the blind and visually impaired for Honolulu District. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

I am writing to request that you focus on support to attract and retain our teacher workforce through funding for teacher compression (addressing veteran teachers who spent years of hiring freezes, furloughs and pay freezes that kept salaries static with no step movements or pay raises). I have seen first hand the vast exit of teachers at so many schools. Teachers retiring early, teachers leaving the field after just a few months. I have never seen the classrooms so bare as I do now. Working conditions, working environments, more frequent lawsuits in special education and more. My love of teaching, improving the lives of our students, is marred by the above reasons. All I want to do is teach, AND still have a livable wage. I have taught on Kauai and Oahu for the past 21 years and still do not own a home, do not have any savings, and constantly have raises in rent/cost of living that are not matched in my paycheck.

Please fund the 45 million more needed (and fringe benefits) to cover the Special Education Differential, hard to staff, compression in pay and Hawaiian Language Immersion. This will make a big change in the feeling of being valued and ability to get ahead just enough to make a difference. The mass exit from teaching will only increase if something drastic is not done to keep teachers in the classroom.

I know first hand that I have changed the lives of my students for the better, every chance I get. So many teachers do the same. But the costs are high for me, providing materials for them when they and their families cannot afford. Working a second job, then coming home to prep lessons for the next day of my main job. Debt is a never ending cycle. Once I catch up, I fall right back.

Please support SB2488, SD2, to invest in the future of so many.

Mahalo for your support as always for all that you do on behalf of our community.

Aloha,  
Amy Downard  
Special Education teacher for the blind and visually impaired  
Honolulu District

eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Merri <merri808@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 9:12 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** SB 2488, SD1

**LATE**

Aloha Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and members of the Committees:

My name is Merri Hofherr, I am an Elementary teacher with a dual Elementary and a Special Education teaching certificate. I am working at Ka waihona o ka Na'auao PCS in the Leeward district on Oahu.

I am in support of SB 2488, SD1 for all public schools that apply. Please increase your funding to include Public Charter schools for this current school year (2019/20). I understand that the current budget will not include funding to fix the funding for all Public school teachers, including charter schools.

I can barely afford to remain a public school teacher. I am working an extra job in order to keep a roof over my head and drive a car. I have invested my 14 plus years working in Nanakuli at Ka waihona PCS because I now how important it is to stay. Our youth need teachers who will stay and continue to have an impact and believe in the kids on the West side! It's so important to keep teachers and fund us so we can impact their future.

I currently teaching 5th graders the Universal Human Rights document. Asking my students why we should care about it. They know that all people deserve to be treated equally and with dignity. I'm asking you please don't miss the opportunity to treat all public school teachers equally! Please increase funding to include all Public Charter school teachers that work in the hard to staff areas!

I appreciate your attention in this matter. Thank you in advance for being fair and just.

Mahalo,  
Kumu Merri Hofherr  
[808.840.9040](tel:808.840.9040)  
[Merri808@gmail.com](mailto:Merri808@gmail.com)

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** Brittany Engbarth <bengbarth@mililaniuka.k12.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 8:54 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

Aloha,

My name is Brittany Engbarth and I work at Mililani Uka Elementary School. I teach 5th grade special education in an inclusion class. I have been teaching for six years (all on Oahu).

We teachers struggle to pay our rent, graduate school expenses, and daily living expenses with the cost of living being so high and the teachers salaries being so low. I am from Long Island, New York and I am considering going back home because I know I can make \$100,000 after teaching for some years.

I can not afford a house or an apartment on Oahu, so I have to rent, which does not help me save any money.

The \$10,000 bonus you gave special education teachers was *huge* and that should continue next year and the years to come! That can only help keep special education teachers here which we know is a constant problem for the state and the keiki. The state should invest *more* money in the schools and in the teachers because Hawaii's future economy will be in the keiki's hands. If we do not teach and produce enough engineers, businessmen, doctors, computer scientists, and technology industrialists, Oahu's economy will be in *trouble* and could be similar to a third world country.

If you value the future of Oahu, then you will support the teachers. If you want to keep teachers, then pay them a reasonable amount. Please support the \$45 million amount needed to compensate teachers for the endless hours we put in.

I personally have a connection with future special education teachers in New York from Marist College. I promote special education teachers coming to Hawaii and more teachers would come if they knew they would not have to struggle financially.

Allow the teachers to continue to stay on island and teach the keiki. Allow the teachers to do their job and help inspire the keiki to strive high, go to college, and lead Hawaii's future economy.

Vote yes to support the \$45 million amount needed to compensate teachers for the endless hours we put in.

Sincerely,

Brittany Engbarth

**eli2 - Kevin**

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**From:** Rachel Silverman <rbsmurray@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 8:54 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** SB2488

**LATE**

*Aloha,*

*My name is Rachel Silverman and I am middle school teacher at Innovations Public Charter School in Kailua Kona. This is my 3rd year of teaching and I love my job!*

*My family and I are very thankful for the current shortage differentials that I am now receiving. Innovations PCS is one of only two charter schools that I am aware of that is giving these differentials to its teachers.*

*Please vote in favor of SB2488 to enable teachers like me to better afford the cost of living here in Hawaii as we serve the keiki in our communities.*

*Mahalo,*

Rachel Silverman  
Sent from my iPhone

**From:** The Burtons <kauaiburtons@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 8:53 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2



TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND  
COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Laura Burton. I am a classroom, general ed teacher at Kapa'a Elementary School in the Kauai East Complex District on Kauai. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I began teaching on Kauai in January 2009. Since that time, I have seen many hardships and frustrations on the part of our veteran teachers, who still struggle to make ends meet, despite being a teacher for the Hawaii DOE for 20 or more years. They have not received a pay increase for over 10 years, and have been stuck at the "top tier" of the salary scale, which does not compare with other mainland cities/areas with a similar high cost of living. Not to mention the constantly increasing cost of health insurance plans.

A bigger concern has been the mass exodus of teachers leaving the profession and/or the state because they are unable to have a sustainable life on the current salary scale. Many teachers I have had the pleasure to teach with have left Hawaii in recent years. Many more have been

beginning teachers, who simply realized the stress and high high demands of our profession, was not worth the low income level, and returned to waiting tables (with good tips) or trying to start a new business in order to be more successful financially, and to have a more balanced and less stressful life. Demands on teachers are high, and we deserve a professional, life sustaining wage. There are also the many teachers have taken 2nd jobs - which takes their focus away from planning time and rest/recovery time in order to give 100% to our keiki.

Finally, as a parent of two teen boys in the Hawaii public school system, I have seen many of my own boys' teachers leave the profession or the state. In middle school and high school now, my boys are often are being taught by long-term substitutes. While I "cross my fingers" and hope for the best that these substitutes are providing a decent education to my sons, they often seem confused about what is happening in those classes, and from day to day aren't sure why their grade is as it is, or what the project expectations are, for example. It is concerning and frustrating as a parent.

Please consider all of the testimony submitted by our teachers as you go into session March 13th.

We LOVE what we do and want to be the best teachers we can be, but we also need your support.

Mahalo.

Laura Burton, East Complex District, Kauai



eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Jason Lees <jlird808@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 8:45 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony; JUDtestimony  
**Subject:** Pass SB2193!!

**LATE**

I STRONGLY SUPPORT SB2193, a measure in OHA's 2020 Legislative Package. This bill would amend Hawai'i's current "ban the box" law to limit employers' allowable inquiry into applicants' conviction records from the previous ten year period (excluding periods of incarceration), to five years for felony convictions, and three years for misdemeanor convictions. By reducing the impacts of older, less relevant convictions on people seeking to obtain or maintain legitimate employment, this measure – particularly with the three- and five-year limits as originally drafted – would discourage employment decisions that are expressly or unconsciously based on such convictions; reduce the stigma carried by former offenders; make it easier for those that have paid their debt to society obtain legitimate employment to support themselves and their 'ohana; and support the rehabilitation, reentry, and recidivism prevention goals of the state. OHA notes that SB2193 purposefully does not affect state and county employment processes and state and county lookback authorities. I respectfully submit this testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of SB2193.



**eli2 - Kevin**

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**LATE**

**From:** thesandpebbles HURST <thesandpebbles@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 7:53 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** In support of SB2488, SD2, Rlating to Teacher Compensation

Honorable members,

I've been a teacher with the Hawaii Department of Education for the last 24yrs. I'm a recruited special education teacher from the Felix Consent decree era.

At that time, I felt I was joining a system trying to improve services for children with disabilities. I left a tenured position that I would be retired from today had I stayed. I was treated as a professional.

At the school I work, the impact of teacher turn over and retention is visceral. Children of Hawaii deserve a future.

Making salary adjustments will ensure senior teachers remain as the backbone of an educational system in crisis, by recognizing them as professionals. Many have worked 2 jobs for decades to be able to live in the complex they work.

Providing funding for additional teacher pay for the areas of special education, hard-to-staff geographic locations, and Hawaiian language immersion programs, or some combination is a first step in the right direction. It will ensure the current crisis does not become a complete failure of the State of Hawaii to provide a free and appropriate education for all of its citizens.

Altruistically,

Howard Hurst, M.S.Ed

**LATE**

**From:** Lisa Nakama <nakamalisa@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 7:34 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND  
COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

[FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020](#)

[2 P.M.](#)

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

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:** Bryceton Carvalho <bryceton@hawaii.edu>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 7:27 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** SB 2488, SD1, RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT and THE COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD1, RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2:00 p.m.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and members of the Committees:

My name is Bryceton Carvalho. I am a teacher at Leihoku 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 plus fringe costs, to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest to fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

As a proud graduate of our public school system, it has been my dream come true to be able to give back to my community by becoming a teacher. Although I love what I do, it is disheartening for me to see droves of talented teachers leave our profession for the sake of finding better financial opportunities elsewhere. I will not hold a grudge against anyone who seeks a better life for themselves and their families because I believe that it is our right to do so as citizens of Hawaii.

My husband and I are both teachers, so this issue hits close to home for us. We have two children, a son who is three, and our daughter who is one. We live a simple life making ends meet and providing all of the basic necessities for our two children. Given our advanced degrees and certifications that we hold, it feels as if we are unfairly compensated for the amount of time and effort that we have given to our

careers. Funding the requested pay differentials and addressing the salary compression issue is something that would aid my family in securing our own financial security.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Bryceton Carvalho, Leeward District, Oahu

**eli2 - Kevin**

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**LATE**

**From:** thesandpebbles HURST <thesandpebbles@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 6:34 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** In support of

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

**From:** Kahanu Nguyen <kahanunguyen@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 6:26 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND  
COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Kahanu Nguyen. I am a 1st grade teacher at Waiakeawaena Elementary School in Hawaii District on the Island of Hawaii. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

Addressing the compression issue and differentials will personally affect me so that I can pursue professional development opportunities and still provide for my own family. I do not want to have to choose between extracurricular opportunities for my own children and my own professional goals; I should be able to do both with this increase in funding. I can better serve my students with keeping abreast with the latest research based practices through professional development opportunities and not have to have worry about my own personal children's learning experiences. I want to serve and care for all of our keiki, including my own. To me, ensuring healthy and happy families of teachers mean successful and thriving students in our schools and community! I humbly ask for your support and consideration.



We need your help. Mahalo.

Kahanu Nguyen, Hawaii District, Island of Hawaii

**From:** Laurena Burigsay <lburigsay@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 6:25 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Laurena Burigsay. I am a teacher at Mililani Mauka Elementary School in Central District on O'ahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been a teacher for 24 years and with enough funding, it will allow my family and I to live more comfortably here on O'ahu. I began my career as a teacher back in 1995. However, during the hard economic times, I did not receive regular step increases. I remember taking many classes so that I could move up the pay scale and of course, learn more on how to better help my students. I didn't understand at that time though, that my pay was also being affected by movement/steps as well. Now, I see how many years have gone by and also realize how much my pay was affected. It makes me sad and disappointed, because I love teaching, but I'm so underpaid. It's tough living here in Hawaii with this kind of income. Both my husband and I are full-time teachers with one child beginning her studies as a freshman in college. My husband is currently tutoring after school as well as teaching an extra curricular activity to help us financially. With the current cost of living so high here in Hawaii, having a better salary would help us financially to live here comfortably and to pay for a good education for our child. I am also considering finding a second job to do during our breaks to help with our financial situation. It's been difficult, especially since we are both teachers with these salaries. Fixing the compression issue will allow me to be paid fairly for the amount of years I've served as a teacher.

As a veteran teacher of 24 years, I also feel that it is unfair that teachers with a lesser amount of teaching years are being paid more than I am. I do have more experience with the curriculum and with students, yet I feel I am not being compensated. Teachers with more experience also tend to mentor teachers with lesser experience yet they are being paid less. I feel that is unfair. With a

higher salary, I believe that this would motivate me to remain in the teaching field a bit longer than planned. I also feel it will raise teacher morale and help us to be or feel more valued as professionals.

WE help to mold the children who will someday be the future leaders, yet we are not valued for doing this. With your help with this funding, it will make our current teachers work harder than they already do, ease the teacher shortage crisis, and improve the lives of our students. This will also help our FUTURE teachers and students. Experienced teachers will remain in the classroom longer leading students to a bright and fulfilled future.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Laurena Burigay, Central District, O'ahu

**From:** Kristina De Witt <kristinakauai@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 5:57 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Kristina De Witt. I am a Special Education Teacher at Pearl Harbor Elementary School in Central District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I myself was considering leaving SPED next school year. as I am dual certified I know the difference of being a special education and general education teacher. in special education comes a lot more responsibility, stress, and workload. A lot of people know that which is most likely why they do not go into special education. The differential from the superintendent and Governor Ige encouraged me to stay in Special Education with hopes that the legislature will take over the differentials in the future. Another reason you should support the differential is because there are not enough sped teachers for the amount of special education students. It is scary to think that there are many emergency hire, non-certified teachers teaching our students with special needs. This to me sounds like many lawsuits waiting to happen because there are so many legalities that come with being a special education teacher.

I have also spoken to many veteran teachers at my school. They are feeling very burnt out and very discouraged. They have not received a pay increase for many years and are on the same pay scale as someone with as much as 10 years less experience. they are seriously considering leaving the DOE which will cause more of a teacher shortage and crisis.

On another note it is very depressing to me to think about how I am a successful adult with a degree and in my career and struggling to make it by. I put in way more hours than my scheduled time to complete the basic responsibilities that my job requires. Not only do I put in extra hours, but I have to have a second job to be able to make it by. I am killing myself mentally and physically just to get by because I love what I do. I don't know how long I'll be able to do that for without the differential increase.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Kristina De Witt, Central District, Oahu

**From:** Ella Joy Grande <ellajoygrande@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 13, 2020 10:54 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND  
COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is **Ella Joy Bolosan**. I am a **Special Education Teacher** at **Wheeler Elementary School** in Leilehua-Mililani-Waiialua on **Oahu**. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. 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 SB 2488, SD2 because all teachers deserve to be viewed as being in a profession that is respected with a salary to show that. Having been a special education teacher in a hard to staff school for 5 of the 6 years I have been a teacher takes a toll mentally, emotionally, and physically. Working with students of varying disabilities from cognitive, to academic, to behavioral requires a lot of love and a lot of hard work. As a special education teacher, I did not

always get the adult bodies or resources I needed when I was assigned a case loads that seemed to be beyond my abilities due to staffing and funding shortages, etc. Therefore, I needed to be the PPT, the EA, and the teacher. As a special education teacher, especially while at a hard to staff school, I have gone without taking my lunches to be with students with modified recesses and lunches due to behaviors, I have stayed back in school to prepare lessons, stay for COUNTLESS peer reviews, IEP meetings and grade level meetings, and more until 5:30 pm in which the custodians needed tell me it was time to go home. Home, meaning another hour drive. I did all of this because even though I knew I had more students on my case load enough for two teachers, I knew that there was nothing I could do BUT TAKE ON THE RESPONSIBILITY because there is a shortage of teachers. At the end of the day, "A PERSON WHO FEELS APPRECIATED WILL ALWAYS DO MORE THAN IS EXPECTED." The Department of Education NEEDS to start taking care of teachers financially and with more resources to PREVENT teacher burn out, with those teachers eventually finding another career path. That cycle needs to stop because we have amazing teachers in Hawaii, but the burn out and the lack of pay to support living in Hawaii will force many to take on other professions.

Veteran teachers who have invested so many years of their lives also can not go unnoticed and the unfortunate circumstance of them not having been able to get increase steps during economic downfalls NEED to be rectified. They deserve to know and feel that the years they invested and continue to invest in our keiki has not been forgotten.

We need your help. Mahalo.

**Ella Joy Bolosan**, Leilehua-Mililani-Waialua, Oahu

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**eli2 - Kevin**

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**From:** Corey Cherry <hicoreycherry@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 13, 2020 10:54 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony

**LATE**

*Aloha,*

*My name is Corey Cherry and I am an elementary school teacher at Innovations Public Charter School in Kailua Kona. This is my 2 year of teaching here and fourth year as a full time teacher. I've worked part time or as a substitute at many schools in west Hawaii.*

*My family and I are grateful for the current shortage differentials that I am now receiving. Innovations PCS is one of only two charter schools that I am aware of that is giving these differentials to its teachers. With three children I can use every extra dollar.*

*Please vote in favor of SB2488 to enable teachers like me to better afford the cost of living here in Hawaii as we serve the keiki in our communities.*

*Mahalo,*

*Corey Cherry*

--

Corey Cherry  
Innovations Public Charter School



eli2 - Kevin

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**LATE**

**From:** Rosie <roselani3@aol.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 13, 2020 10:48 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Help Teachers

It is with a humble heart I come before you to ask your consideration of passing this bill to help teachers.

As I sit and listen to the news regarding the state of the world, it saddens me to think how important we put the world of entertainment before education. I went into teaching to help build and change lives. Raising my three children alone on a teacher's salary have been a very difficult challenge for me and my children.

I have a masters degree in educational counseling and currently pursuing an Ed.D degree in Instructional Leadership to again make a difference. However, athletes and other professions make an astronomical amount more. It is sad that our county values entertainment over education.

Please consider the impact teachers make everyday. We have to go above and beyond just teaching a curriculum. We have to be mothers and fathers, counselors, doctors and nurses, coaches and pastors to the broken and needy. So many of our children are not taught the simple things in life like manners, hygiene, health and nutrition, and kindness towards others. Teachers do this everyday and all day. We care. We love. We matter because they matter. If we lose teachers because the profession cannot support their families, who will help them? Currently we have substitutes that have only a high school degree and EA's that have no educational training teaching classes because we have no teachers to do the job.

Don't let us down please. We matter because they matter.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Aloha,

Catherine Roselani Carpenter

from Kamaile Academy Public Charter School in Wai'anae

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** Chelsey Nakashima <cnakashima@kaimukihs.k12.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 13, 2020 7:35 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD1, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and the Committee on Lower & Higher Education

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and members of the Committees:

My name is Chelsey Nakashima. I've been a school counselor at Kaimuki High School in Honolulu on Oahu for 10 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 plus fringe costs, to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest to fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

Teaching is a calling. For those great teachers out there, it is something that they enjoy doing and it is not influenced by the paycheck. Teachers are more than just the person in front of the classroom, writing facts on the board; they are mentoring and parenting students; schools are not just teaching English, math, science and social studies. Schools are teaching social skills, how to balance a checkbook, opening a bank account, how to be a contributing member of society through community service, how to treat friends and neighbors, how to get a job, the list goes on. The schools are teaching things to students that the older generations learned in the home, but our current students need to turn to their schools to learn because their parents cannot teach them or do not have the time to teach them. Schools have to now be multilingual and translate documents into many different languages. Schools are expected to do so much more now, but without extra funds to make these things happen.

Special Education is one area that these extra tasks and teaching points is the most extreme. Care coordinators have to maintain their caseloads' by holding annual/re-eval meetings and keeping good communication with families regarding their student's academic progress, but there is so much more to those "simple" tasks. Chasing parents who agree to meetings and then never call or show to the meeting causing the teacher to reach out again to reschedule the meeting. Many times having to arrange interpreters to come and help with meetings so that families can understand what the school is trying to do. Having other documents translated so the message is sent home. Other times, a fruitless home visit because the family has left their apartment without notifying the school and their phone numbers have been disconnected, and still being held responsible for investigating that student's whereabouts. Doing ALL of this, while still having to teach classes during the school day. There is just not enough time for them to accomplish all that is required of them by law during the work day and many times have to do things before or after school, beyond their contracted hours. Compensation and incentive to take these high stakes positions that have shortages will help alleviate and ensure our schools are compliant.

For the general education teachers, many I know have to buy their own supplies for their classrooms because either the school can't fund it, or won't because it's not offered by an approved vendor. Paper & colored pencils/pens/Crayons for projects or adding extra special things for school sponsored events that make it even more special for students. Though we live in one of the most expensive cities, they still find a way to make students feel special, though it may have to come out of their own pockets. This does not count the HOURS that teachers put outside of the school day, correcting papers, setting up their classroom for projects/assignments, providing after or before school tutoring to students, even coming in during the breaks to help students try to complete work, though many of those students did not utilize their time wisely during the school days before the due date. Instead of allowing students to flat out fail, they sacrifice time with their families, free time, vacation time, to help our students all without compensation.

For me personally, owning a home for my two sons is a dream of mine that I cannot make a reality yet because of the cost of living plus day care is too much that I could afford to pay a mortgage on top of just living necessities. Without the help from my parents, we would not be able to live in the apartment we live in now. Providing funds to adjust the salaries for the teachers who have put in their time through the recession and furlough Fridays and all that was taken away or not provided to teachers is only fair. I feel public schools are taken for granted and are required to do more for students than their own families in many cases. Can we please support the pay adjustment so that we can keep talented teachers instead of losing them to the mainland or to private schools? Can we please make being a public school teacher desirable enough to fill all the vacant positions so that our children can be taught by highly qualified teachers instead of emergency hires or long term subs? Our children are suffering because the state cannot staff all the public schools. Education and scores on the high stakes tests like SBA will not improve unless we make some changes to retain teachers. Please help support our teachers and not only help fund the \$37 million, which will not cover all the staff shortages and the compression salary issues, but the full \$45 million plus fringe to address the needs of the teachers.

We need your help. Mahalo.

**Chelsey Nakashima, Honolulu, Oahu**

**From:** Maile Naki <soopamaria808@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 13, 2020 7:34 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** SB 2488, SD1, RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and members of the Committees:

My name is Stacey M Naki. I am a Music Educator at Ka Waihona O Ka Na'auao Public Charter 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 plus fringe costs, to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest to fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been teaching for 26 years (9 years at Pū'ōhala Elementary as a classroom teacher in grades 2, 3 & 4 in the Hawaiian Immersion Program, 5 years at 'Aiea Elementary as a K-6 Music Educator and 12 years at Ka Waihona O Ka Na'auao as a K-5 Music Educator). A teacher is a teacher whether it is public, charter or Hawaiian Immersion. All teachers should have fair compensation. However, it takes a SPECIAL teacher to teach on the West side of O'ahu, those students need STRONG, COMMITTED and DEDICATED teachers. Many teachers on the West side are EXACTLY that. I drive in from Salt Lake every morning because I want to INSPIRE these students to be the BEST that they can be. I see the EXTRA time that many put in and it's tough but we all believe that these keiki DESERVE it. The funding differential will help keep teachers on the West side and perhaps INSPIRE many other teachers to teach in these hard to fill areas.

Although it takes a SPECIAL teacher to teach on the West Side, you need to be a SUPER DYNAMIC teacher to teach in the Hawaiian Immersion Program. I was blessed to teach in the Hawaiian Immersion Program for 9 years. Back then, you needed to create your own curriculum, translate it into Hawaiian, create your own graphics, and then teach it. You would have to coordinate parents to help you cut and paste books, you would need to purchase all the materials and that was just for your own class and you would do all of this while simultaneously teaching your own class. Differential funding is a MUST for all Hawaiian Language Immersion teachers!!! It is already difficult to find and keep teachers, it is even more difficult to find a certified teacher who can speak Hawaiian. I believe Hawaiian Language Immersion Teachers should get a BONUS on top of the differential for all they do.

Please 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. We need to keep as much of our local teachers teaching in Hawai'i.

We need your help. Mahalo for your consideration!

Mahalo nui loa,

Stacey M Naki,

Ka Waihona O Ka Na'auao Public Charter School

Leeward District

**From:** T Ozawa <todd.ozawa@wheelermiddle.k12.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 13, 2020 7:21 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020 2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Todd Ozawa and I am a 7th grade English and Social Studies Teacher at Wheeler Middle School in Central District on O'ahu. I am hereby submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

Jennifer King Rice of the Department of Education Policy and Leadership at the University of Maryland and a researcher with the Economic Policy Institute, reported in her book, *Teacher Quality: Understanding the Effectiveness of Teacher Attributes*, on key research indicating that **“Teacher quality matters. In fact, it is the most important school-related factor influencing student achievement.”**

Consider what this means. Class size. Access to technology. Bell Schedules. Nutrition. There are so many factors that affect students, and all of them are worthy of attention. Certainly we should address every one of them if our children are our priority. Realistically, however, there are limits in time and money on what can be done at any given time. So what, then, should be the first priority? Where would that time and money be best spent to improve the education of these students who will become our business, cultural, and political leaders in the future? Not just in Hawai'i but throughout the world? As teacher quality is 'the most important school-related factor influencing student achievement,' the answer is clear. We need to train, recruit, maintain, and retain the highest quality teachers for our children.

In addition, some poorly trained or poorly motivated teachers or teacher substitutes that are in so many positions now as a result of the teacher shortage crisis can also blunt the effectiveness of many great teachers in whom we have already invested so many years and dollars.

Please provide funds to remedy the teacher salary compression situation while also providing funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions, and make clear that we are being authentic, not just politic, when we say that our children are our priority. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers.

I have been teaching for almost 20 years. I have taught from Niu Valley to Wahiawa. I have been an ELL Program Coordinator and teacher, a choir director and a club advisor, and a supporter of and friend to numerous fantastic, dedicated teachers over the years. I have seen so many leave the profession, and have heard from many discouraged potential teachers, and it hurts me to think that so many of our youth are losing the opportunity to be taught and mentored by such caring and capable teachers.

We, the teachers, the children, your community, and your world, need your help.

Mahalo.

Todd Ozawa  
Central District  
O'ahu

eli2 - Kevin

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**LATE**

**From:** Cleda April Kalama <cledaaprillkalama@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 13, 2020 12:12 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Funding for Charter School Teachers

Aloha,

My name is Cleda April Kalama, I work at a Public Charter School in Waianae, Kamaile Academy PCS. I am a Special Education Teacher.

I am writing to ask for addition funds for differential pay for Charter School Teachers.

Please update your request for funding to cover Licensed Teacher in Charter Schools in Hawaii, not just fot DOE schools.

Mahalo nui.

Cleda April Kalama  
Teacher and Resident in Waianae



**From:** Harmony Seivert <hseivert@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 13, 2020 11:18 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND  
COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

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, SD2.

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 team 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:** Mike D'Amico <damico@whea.net>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 13, 2020 11:29 AM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION  
RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION  
FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020  
2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

Aloha,

My name is Michael D'Amico. I am a Teacher at West Hawaii Explorations Academy in Kealakehe District on the Big Island. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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. I am also requesting that you make these funds available for teachers of charter schools who fall under the above categories. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

Fixing the compensation issue will show teachers that we are truly valued for the time, energy and emotions we pour into our work. It will also help show our spouses that what we chose to do as a career is worth all the extra time we put in outside of a normal workday. Those of us who work in hard to staff areas would like to be appreciated for feeling called to work in stereotypically unfavorable areas. We love the youth at these schools, and we want them to succeed. Unfortunately, many of the socioeconomic issues of these districts make it hard to reach these youth and their families, and thus, extra time is given on our parts trying to reach out to them.

Teachers who have spent their careers in the system (like my mother, who taught for the HDOE for over 40 years), deserve to be rewarded for their time they put in. My mother passed away when she was at a salary level way lower than where she should have been. I do not wish to see the same fate fall upon teachers and their families without being rewarded and shown appreciation for the time they put in.

We need your help to prove that this job is worth keeping. Mahalo nui loa for your time.

Sincerely,  
Mike D'Amico  
Kealakehe District  
Island of Hawaii

--

Mike D'Amico  
West Hawaii Explorations Academy Educator

(808) 327-4751

"The teacher who attempts to teach without inspiring hammers on cold iron."

***Gloria V. A. Ilagan, EdD***

(808) 987-1972  
P.O. Box 624 Capt Cook, HI 96704  
**drgilagan@gmail.com**

**LATE**

Aloha Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Dr. Gloria Ilagan. I have been an educator for thirty years with the Dept. of Education at Konawaena and Kelalaheke Schools in the West Hawaii District on Hawaii Island. I teach- coach, mentor, consult and design curriculum and instructional programs in the field of Physical Education and Health. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

Please provide the necessary funding for the teacher salary compression issue, including additional funding to the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to instill the value of education to teachers during the daily instructional delivery. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our Keikis.

I have been in rural Kona as an educator for the past thirty years, as a graduate of Konawaena High School, University of Manoa, Florida State, and Argosy University, I have been trained at the highest level of excellence to make a difference in the lives of many people. I have provided access to at-risk and vulnerable populations to gain certification programs to provide a bridge of alternatives to gain skills and get a job to support and feed their families. I barely survived those periods where I had to be furloughed and

stood up for my union in bargaining negotiations with the State for better work conditions and acceptable pay.

Collaborating with local community leaders, Universities, and non-profit as well as for-profit corporations, I am able to continue to secure grants and funding for the purpose of having students stay healthy, learn a skill, stay out of jail, and secure a job.

I am unable to do this without the support and assistance from my colleagues, part-time teachers, librarians, special education assistants, Hawaiian Language Immersion and the educational Ohana I am Blessed to work with. However, the cost of living, the years of service and the Educational Talent that I have to offer have not been properly compensated as the cap on step increases and the number of education credits earned is at a crisis that makes reconsidering location to another state or leaving Public Education to compete in the Private Sector more appealing. Your support in this endeavor to provide for proper compensation will continue to provide the services we all do in the Public Education business and prepare our Keiki for our future in the State of Hawaii.

We need your kokua. Mahalo Nui Loa!

Gloria V.A. Ilagan, EdD  
Kealakehe High School  
West Hawaii District.



**LATE**

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 4:32:29 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Linda Jones	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha! My name is Linda Jones and I am a product of the local public education system. I have been a teacher in the state of Hawaii for over 20 years. I am licensed in special education and I am designated Highly Qualified to teach Language Arts by the federal government. In 2009 I was frozen at step six. This past year, 10 years later, due to the contract negotiations, I was moved to step 11. This does not jive with my years of experience. I am considering retiring from the DOE and moving to the mainland where I can afford to retire. I do not want to move to the mainland as I have not lived there in 50 years. I want to retire in the state that I grew up in...that I was educated in...that I raised my family in and where I cared for and taught thousands of students who came into my classroom. If this bill passes and I am moved to the top of the steps where I am supposed to be... then I will continue to teach. I will not retire. And when I do retire I'll be able to retire in my home state Hawaii. In 2009 our economy went bust! Teachers' pay was frozen to help the economy. It worked. It is time to pass this bill and ensure teachers are paid what they deserve for decades of service. Mahalo



**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 4:40:13 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM



Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Elizabeth P Young	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Elizabeth P. Young. I am a teacher at Aliamanu Middle School in the Central District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been teaching nearly twenty years and have NEVER been part of a school staffed completely with certified teachers for even one school year. The substitute teachers struggle valiently to keep on top of the curriculum and other school expectations, but it is a struggle that is apparent even to the students. By not completely staffing the schools with qualified teachers, the state tells the students that school really isn't all that important. That is NOT the message we want to give our most valuable assets.

Please find it in the budget to cover the cost of providing ALL our students with the highly qualified professionals they deserve.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Elizabeth P. Young

Central District, Oahu.

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 5:21:25 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM



Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Sherry Ly Nguyen	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is **Sherry Nguyen**. I am a **2nd grade gen. ed. teacher** at **Lincoln Elementary** in the **Honolulu District** on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

For as long as I can remember, I have always wanted to be an elementary school teacher. I had such encouraging, passionate, and dedicated teachers throughout my public-school education and wanted to provide that same nurturing environment to future children. Without hesitation in searching for a major, I graduated from UHM with an Elementary and Early Childhood Dual Bachelor's Degree and started what I thought would be my lifelong career at 22 years old.

Heading towards the end of my fourth-year teaching, I'm not sure if I'll be retiring in this profession like I was so sure I would at the beginning of this journey. I believe wholeheartedly

the amount of work and pressure placed on teachers to implement and complete, both administrative and curriculum/instruction related, will continue to drive young, eager, and willing teachers like myself out of this underappreciated profession. We are constantly critiqued and belittled based off our instruction and student assessment scores, yet not given enough resources or time to make improvements in the student's best interest. We aren't acknowledged for additional things that should also matter such as providing snacks for children that didn't eat breakfast, comforting students with family challenges, creating a loving and safe environment to nurture growth, or simply teaching and modeling on a daily basis good citizenship characteristics and qualities.

With all that aside, the criticism, neglect, and lack of resources, I could still see myself continuing to be a teacher because this is the one and only thing I want to be. What I cannot overlook or disregard; however, is the unlivable salary that teachers are currently in. I struggle living paycheck to paycheck. For over a year, I carried a second job where I worked over 20 hours per week on top of my full-time teaching position just to make ends meet. Along with that, I have continued taking PD courses for credit towards reclassification. The amount of work required for these credits is time consuming and content heavy, I felt as if I was back in school full-time.

I am getting by month to month without much of a financial cushion. In the unfortunate case where I would need more assistance, I would not have it because this low-living salary has not allowed me to develop emergency funds.

One day, I will become a mother and have a family. I would not be able to provide for my children based on the current teacher's income. I would not be able to afford day care and preschool. I would not be able to afford all other necessities that children need and deserve. Because of this sole reason, I will leave the education profession if rapid change does not take place on increasing teacher's wages and salaries.

Please take my heartfelt and personal story into consideration. We [teachers] need your support in making positive change.

We need your help. Mahalo.

**Sherry Nguyen, Grade 2 at Lincoln Elementary, Honolulu District, Oahu**

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 5:24:31 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM



<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Graham Crookes	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Senators,

I write as a concerned citizen, voter, and longstanding member of the Hawai'i higher education community, in support of SB2488. It is quite clear, on the basis of data over many years, that public school teachers in Hawai'i are underpaid. There will always be a severe shortage of teachers if the entry-level salary for a teacher is at or close to the official State poverty line. Recruiting teachers from the mainland doesn't work, for various reasons including that they just don't stay.

This also applies to higher education, incidentally. As a department chair at the University of Hawai'i I have lost almost a quarter of my young professorial staff in the last couple of years because they can't afford a house, raise a child, or indeed put food on the table for a regularly-sized family with only one income.

A thorough analysis has been provided in testimony submitted by a group of my colleagues, the *Hawai'i Scholars for Education and Social Justice*, in their Research Brief #2. That analysis is thorough, measured, calm, and correct. It provides far more detail than I need to go over here in support of the proposed bill. Please support this bill.

Graham Crookes

**LATE**

Aloha,

My name is Alison Johnson and I teach 5/6th grades at Innovations Public Charter School in Kailua Kona, Hawaii. I've taught at this school for 3 years after teaching in Brooklyn New York. Upon moving here, I suffered a tremendous pay cut leaving the New York City DOE to the Hawaii DOE and cost of living remains about the same. I have stayed in Hawaii because I love the Hawaiian culture, the beauty that surrounds the ever-changing island and the incredible aloha from the community.

I have benefitted from the teaching shortage differentials because I have very high student loans that I have to pay off and I would like to try to start a family (if I can afford it) within the next few years. I end up paying for items for the classroom out of my pocket throughout the year which adds up, getting the differential has helped keep me staying in the teaching profession.

In conclusion, funding teacher salaries will help keep teachers in the field, benefit students from extra teacher funds for the classroom and provide quality education to the next generation of leaders.

Mahalo for taking the time to read and consider continuing to fund teaching shortage differentials.

In the spirit of service,

Alison Johnson  
ajohnson@innovationspcs.net

**LATE**

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 5:28:40 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Gordon Wong	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

This is my testimony in support of Bill SB2488. I'm supporting this bill because as a second year teacher in the field of special education since 2018, I can honestly say that this job requires a lot of hard work and dedication. However, the salary for teachers do not reflect the amount of value we put in to teach our Keiki to be prepared for the future. I hope that you will pass this bill so that hardworking teachers can afford to live in Hawaii and help teach our keiki to get ready for the future ahead.

**LATE**

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 6:52:49 PM  
Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
erich smith	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Joahnson, Chair Woodson, and committee members,

I humbly ask for your support in passing this bill to address the compression issue for teachers. I have struggled for many years to make ends meet. We went years without a pay increase and it has made it difficult for my family to continue to stay in Hawaii.

I have taught high school science in Hawaii for the last 25 years. Our students need teachers that are experienced. We need to encourage those teachers to stay and compensation is one thing that will make a huge difference for me and other teachers.

Thank you for your consideration,

Erich Smith

Chemistry and AP Environmental Science Teacher

Kalaheo High School

**LATE**

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 7:43:09 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Caleb Stroud	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Caleb Stroud and I am middle school teacher at Innovations Public Charter School in Kailua Kona. This is my 11th year of teaching and I love my job!

My wife, children and I are very thankful for the current shortage differentials that I am now receiving. Innovations PCS is one of only two charter schools that I am aware of that is giving these differentials to its teachers. My wife and I are using this money to help pay down debt from our Home Equity Line of Credit.

Please vote in favor of SB2488 to enable teachers like me to better afford the cost of living here in Hawaii as we serve the keiki in our communities.

Mahalo,

Caleb Stroud



**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 8:08:35 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM



Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Samantha Tomori	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC  
EMPLOYMENT AND COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

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, SD2.

I live in the Hilo complex area and commute to a school in the hard-to-staff complex, Kea`au. 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 or a district position, which I've been recruited for. 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 the grit and passion to work through these stressors. 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.

**LATE**

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC  
EMPLOYMENT AND COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION  
RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION  
FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020  
2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

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, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I realize we are in some uncertain times due to the Covid 19 situation, however, I still believe that educators should be compensated for their years of service. We've been underpaid for years. It is time to correct this situation.

This is my 26<sup>th</sup> 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 10-11. 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**

**LATE**

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 8:39:21 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ashley	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and members of the Committees:

My name is **Ashley Monden** I am a **special education teacher** at **mililani mauka 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 plus fringe costs, to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest to fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

**I'm a homegrown teacher. I started as a 1:1 paraprofessional for students with autism, then became an educational assistant for 10 years before becoming a special education teacher. The differentials have helped me to pay the interest on my student loans instead of just the bare minimum. It's given me some hope that one day I will be able to afford to buy my own place to call my own and not live with my parents. The differentials have helped me to continue to stay in Hawaii and not move away from the place where I was born and raised. It has also helped me to want to keep teaching as a special education teacher.**

**Although I received the differential pay I can't help to think about my fellow veteran teachers. As a brand new teacher it's hard to learn first hand on the job and even harder as a new special education teacher. If it wasn't for the veteran mentor teachers that took me under their wing and took the time to teach me when I first started teaching 4 years ago I wouldn't still be teaching. It's the veteran teachers who continued to stay in the profession after all these years who make the biggest difference in the school success. Teachers have sacrificed through the compression by continuing to give the best education possible despite their struggles financially. Teachers who have put in more than 20 years are not getting paid nearly enough of what they deserve and it's the lack of value**

**that makes teaching no longer of interest to the upcoming generation. If you truly value our schools I humbly ask you to support all of us.**

We need your help. Mahalo.

**Ashley Monden, central district, oahu**

**LATE**

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 8:41:37 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Owen Tomori	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC  
EMPLOYMENT AND COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Owen Tomori and I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2. My wife has been a public school teacher for 12 years in the hard-to-staff complex area, Kea`au-Ka`u-Pahoa on the island of Hawai`i.

I'd like to offer you my perspective as a person who has worked as a Firefighter/EMT within the same poverty stricken community that she works in. These hard-to-staff complexes are hard-to-staff for a reason. There is an abundance of drugs, violence, and crime. These teachers are expected to provide a quality education, while also providing basic human needs, such as a positive relationship with a stable, caring adult and even spending personal money buying supplies, snacks, and clothes for students in need. The emotional toll is taxing. My wife has been diagnosed with PTSD and has spent thousands on therapy addressing the issues she's encountered as a result of her career, including the murder of her student by the student's own father.

This is not just an issue in the Kea`au complex. Teachers across the state are struggling to make ends meet and are having to supplement their income with second jobs. When our teachers struggle, our students suffer. The teacher shortage crisis needs to be addressed if we want our students to receive quality instruction from quality educators. To address this shortage, we need to start by creating a salary that attracts and retains teachers. Please do what is right and support the funding of teachers' compensation.

Thank you,  
Owen Tomori (Firefighter/EMT on the Big Island of Hawaii)



**LATE**

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 8:51:55 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Robert Underwood	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC  
EMPLOYMENT AND COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is **Robert Underwood** I am a **teacher** at **Kaunakakai Elementary School** in **Maui District** on the island of **Molokai**. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

**I have been teaching at Kaunakakai Elementary School since 2003. I currently teach regular 3rd grade during the day, and I teach instrumental music as part of our school's after school program. I started the instrumental music program from scratch about 10 years ago, volunteering my services for many of those years.**

**The experiences I have gained from working with children every year, along with ongoing professional development, have given me a deeper understanding of**



**how to be an effective educator. I am grateful for the opportunity to work with children, and I believe I should be fairly compensated for all that I do. Please help! Your support of our effort to address the salary compression issue is crucial in keeping teachers like myself in the profession.**

Respectfully,

**Robert Underwood, Maui District, Molokai.**

**LATE**

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 10:03:28 PM  
Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Lisa L Espiritu	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I have worked as a teacher in Hawaii for 10 years. I love the career I have chosen, but not the financial struggles that come with it. My family of 5 lives in a small 2 bedroom apartment. Homeownership seems like an unobtainable dream. We are considering moving to the mainland. Something needs to be done to so that teachers can afford to stay in Hawaii. Though I know the compensation in this bill will not mean a large pay increase for me, I know it is for many of my colleagues. These are colleagues that have been in the fiels for many more years than me, yet their salaries do not reflect it.

The differentials and incentives for hard to staff areas are a good starting place to address the teacher shortage and by helping teachers to be able to afford being teachers in Hawaii.

**LATE**

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 10:43:13 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Jemeil D Deliz Alicea	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Mr. Jemeil David Deliz Alicea, NÄ• nÄ• kuli High and Intermediate School, Leeward-NÄ• nÄ• kuli/Waianae Complex, Hawaii DOE. I am a CTE Health Services Pathways Teacher / Public/Clinical Health Pathway, Health Services Core, Biomedical, Emergency Medical Services, Health and Nutrition and Directed Services Health Services, Grades 9-12, 105 students and teaching over 6 years. I am a Army Veteran, US Army Human Resources Instructor/HR Specialist/Staff Sergeant, US Army Reservist over 15 years service. My current capacity as an Professional Public Teacher In general, we'd like you to explain that spending \$37 million on compression and the shortage differentials next year is appreciated, but \$45 million plus fringe is needed to assure the salary adjustment to fix compression happens along with continuing the hard-to-staff, SPED and Hawaiian language immersion shortage differentials.

**LATE**

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2020 11:12:39 PM  
Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Juan Espinal	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION**

**RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION**

**FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020**

**2 P.M.**

**Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:**

**My name is Juan Espinal. I am a 5th Grade Teacher at Konawaena Elementary School in West Hawaii on Hawaii Island. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.**

**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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should**

**be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.**

**The past few months of shortage differentials I've been blessed to receive have changed my life. The few hundred dollars a paycheck have allowed me to be able to eat food all month with money left to invest in my future in this community. Teaching is essential to a community, because schools are essential to a community. I am necessary for my students' safety and their families' safety.**

**In times like now, with pandemic viruses sweeping across the world, it is imperative that essential personnel at schools are supported enough by their leaders to be able to thrive and lead. We need teachers now more than ever to be strong leaders that can bear the burden of being the most visible civil servant to most families in a given community. This money has helped me eat and be able to consider my future. I am thankful, and I believe this is necessary to continue to develop strong workers.**

**We need your help. Mahalo.**

**Juan Espinal, West Hawaii District, Hawaii Island**

**LATE**

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/13/2020 12:08:32 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Marina Keizer	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha, My name is Marina Keizer and I am a 5th grade teacher at Holualoa Elementary School on the Kona side of Hawaii Island. I have been a public school teacher in Kona for 15 years and now teach at the elementary school where I attended from Kindergarten through 5th grade as a child, in the neighborhood in which I live, and at the school my children have attended. I have and would continue to benefit from the shortage differentials because it is expensive to live in Hawaii. Holualoa has suffered from the teacher shortage and we currently have emergency hire staff filling teaching positions at our school--while I am grateful to these staff members, it would be better for our keiki to have highly-qualified teachers instructing them.

It is difficult to keep our teaching positions filled and I have had many colleagues over the past 15 years leave the profession as a result of the low pay which results in not being able to afford a comfortable quality of life or a place to live that did not make them feel like they were still in college (when you are a professional, you don't want to be forced to live with roommates in order to afford housing). Often, our young teachers move to the mainland as soon as they begin to consider starting a family. We need to entice young people from Hawaii to join the teaching profession because they will be most likely to stay and support their own communities. Unfortunately, the pay of a public school teacher is neither enticing nor financially advantageous.

I would financially benefit from increased pay based on years of service because I have been teaching for 15 years. I deserve to receive compensation for the experience that I have gained over the past 15 years. I have mentored many new teachers and a number of student teachers--15 years as a public school teacher qualifies me as a veteran since most teachers leave the profession far earlier in their careers. My years of experience benefit my school and my students because I work hard to continue to improve my instruction. Increasing pay based on years of service would encourage other teachers to remain in the profession which, ultimately, would benefit our students.

**LATE**

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC  
EMPLOYMENT AND COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Phillippe Fernandez Galicinao. I am a teacher at Hālau Kū Māna 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 Mānoa. 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 Kāne‘ohe, and have lived in Makiki and Mānoa 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 kōkua.

Mahalo,

Phillippe Fernandez Galicinao

Student, PhD in Education: Curriculum and Instruction

College of Education

University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

Kumu, Hālau Kū Māna New Century Public Charter School

Honolulu, O'ahu



**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/13/2020 5:56:49 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM



Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Caroline Freudig	HSTA	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson and members of the committee,

My name is Caroline Freudig and I am a first grade teacher on Kaua'i. I have taught for 27 years total with the most recent 15 years on Kaua'i.

I am writing to thank you for supporting SB2488 and providing 37+ million dollars towards teacher salary compression & shortage differentials for the 2020-2021 school year. However, at this time, with the number of teachers that we have on the incorrect pay step, we are in need of 45 million more plus the fringe. By providing the extra amount, the Department of Education would have the funds it needs to place our hard-working, dedicated teachers on the correct step as they should be as well as pay the shortage differentials.

From 2011 to 2018, I worked as Resource Teacher for the Kaua'i Complex Area. My role was to support our newly hired teachers and work with instructional mentors. During that time, I travelled to our 15 schools on Kaua'i as well as collaborated with other resource teachers across the state. It was through this work that I met teachers who were teaching in Hawai'i for over 20 years yet getting almost the same salary as a teacher with many years less teaching experience. They would tell me how they felt upset, ignored and devalued by the fact that our DOE was not providing them with a salary that would afford them to live in Hawai'i without worry or stress. Many of these experienced teachers had to work a second or even a third job to be able to afford to live here.

So, while we know that our teachers work so hard for the love of their students, isn't it time to show them, especially the ones who have given years of service to our state, that we value them and the contribution they are making to the future of Hawai'i?

Please increase the funding amount.

Much appreciation,

Caroline Freudig, 1st Grade Teacher, HSTA Kaua'i Chapter President

March 13, 2020

**LATE**

Lynn DeCoite  
Hawaii State Legisltor  
House District 13  
Hawaii State Capitol  
Room 441

Dear Representative DeCoite,

I am writing this brief testimony in support of SB2488, SD2 Relating to teacher compensation. I know you are well aware of the benefits of living and working on Molokai, as am I. I have worked for 10 years as a teacher on Molokai and currently work as a 6<sup>th</sup> grade teacher at Kaunakakai Elementary School. I have 57 11 to 12 year olds rotate through my English Language Arts classes and my Science classes each week and enjoy teaching this group of enthusiastic students each day. I feel fortunate to live and work in this tight knit community.

With all the positives, there are many financial hurdles for me. The prices of everyday items are more expensive on Molokai. Here are some examples: unleaded gas is \$5.05 per gallon, electricity is \$0.40/kwh, a gallon of milk is over \$10 and a loaf of bread is at least \$6.00. I share these common economic indicators to show what the everyday price of living on Molokai is.

I have been teaching with four individuals in classroom teacher positions who have not gone through a teacher training program. While for some this may be a small technicality, for me I can recognize the differences in their classroom management, their curriculum knowledge, and their professionalism at work.

Increasing teacher pay in hard to fill locations will motivate certified and trained teachers to fill these positions. This bill will encourage Molokai residents to consider teaching as a profession and go get the schooling required. Increasing the hard to fill differential will help with the high cost of living on Molokai.

Mahalo for your time and I appreciate your efforts to adequately compensate teachers.

Sincerely,

Joyce Haase  
National Board Certified Teacher  
Kaunakakai School  
P.O. Box 482242  
Kaunakakai, HI. 96748

**LATE**

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/13/2020 7:17:41 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Karen Poepoe	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support the teachers of Hawaii. They deserve this compensation as they have been passed by for many years and have not been given a fair adjustment to cost of living increases. Additionally, they have had to incur out of pocket expenses as the resources for teaching and classroom funding have decreased over time. Please consider this bill and support it!

**LATE**

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/13/2020 7:17:51 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Theodore Jaderstrom	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

This is regarding SB2488 SD2 that is up for consideration.

I have been a teacher with the Hawaii State Department of Education since 1974. I graduated from the University of Hawaii in May of 1973. I attended the graduation ceremony at the Waikiki Shell. The different colleges were acknowledged as the ceremony proceeded, and each was getting applauded. However, when the College of Education was asked to stand, we were heckled by the audience "No Jobs!" Then we were asked to report to Kuykendall Hall, at the University of Hawaii campus, for a briefing regarding our career. When there, we were told "There are 5,000 teachers on the wait list, what are you going to do now?". I thought to myself, "I want to be a teacher". So that year was spent cooking pizza at Chico's Pizza and teaching band classes at Lunalilo Elementary School, for which I was given \$1,000.00 for the year, that was collected from the students' parents, that was to be used for equipment, supplies, and music. The small balance that was left after the purchases was for my services. When January came about, I tried to see if there would be any possibilities for a teaching job for the next school year. I heard about some teachers who were either retiring or leaving the field, but these jobs were not made available to new applicants, as all tenured teachers currently unassigned, and there were many, needed to be placed before any new person would be considered. The Supervising Teacher, whom I worked with as a Student Teacher advised me to "Go out and sell myself" if I expected to have any chance of getting a teaching job. I called the schools where I heard there were possible openings, but I got the same response at every school that I called: "Are you a tenured teacher?, Sorry, the principal will only talk to tenured teachers." Then a "Foundations Program" was created to provide elective classes for schools with small enrollments. The Principal at Lunalilo School told me about this and he "Dropped my name" with some of the Principals who were at a Principal's meeting. I was fortunate to be selected for one of these positions. I was assigned to Pahoehoe High and Elementary School on the "Big Island". When I met the Principal for the first time I was told "Oahu has been without a music program for a number of years. Your job is to revitalize the Music Program. You have \$200.00 to do it. If you don't like it, I will get somebody else". At one of our faculty meetings the "Probies" were told, "If you don't like it here, we can find somebody else". Over the years when a new contract was being negotiated, the teachers that started around the same time as me were left out of the raise that the other teachers received. Some of us "Stuck it through" and were faithful to the

department, school, and students. I feel that we should be given credit where credit is due. Please pass this legislation.

Thank you.

**LATE**

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/13/2020 7:19:20 AM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Todd Ozawa	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020 2 P.M.**

**Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:**

**My name is Todd Ozawa and I am a 7th grade English and Social Studies Teacher at Wheeler Middle School in Central District on O’ahu. I am hereby submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.**

**Jennifer King Rice of the Department of Education Policy and Leadership at the University of Maryland and a researcher with the Economic Policy Institute, reported in her book,**

**Teacher Quality: Understanding the Effectiveness of Teacher Attributes, on key research indicating that “Teacher quality matters. In fact, it is the most important school-related factor influencing student achievement.”**

**Consider what this means. Class size. Access to technology. Bell Schedules. Nutrition. There are so many factors that affect students, and all of them are worthy of attention. Certainly we should address every one of them if our children are our priority. Realistically, however, there are limits in time and money on what can be done at any given time. So what, then, should be the first priority? Where would that time and money be best spent to improve the education of these students who will become our business, cultural, and political leaders in the future? Not just in Hawai’i but throughout the world? As teacher quality is ‘the most important school-related factor influencing student achievement,’ the answer is clear. We need to train, recruit, maintain, and retain the highest quality teachers for our children.**

**In addition, some poorly trained or poorly motivated teachers or teacher substitutes that are in so many positions now as a result of the teacher shortage crisis can also blunt the effectiveness of many great teachers in whom we have already invested so many years and dollars.**

**Please provide funds to remedy the teacher salary compression situation while also providing funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions, and make clear that we are being authentic, not just politic, when we say that our children are our priority. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers.**

**I have been teaching for almost 20 years. I have taught from Niu Valley to Wahiawa. I have been an ELL Program Coordinator and teacher, a choir director and a club advisor, and a supporter of and friend to numerous fantastic, dedicated teachers over the years. I have seen so many leave the profession, and have heard from many discouraged potential teachers, and it hurts me to think that so many of our youth are losing the opportunity to be taught and mentored by such caring and capable teachers.**

**We, the teachers, the children, your community, and your world, need your help.**

**Mahalo.**

**Todd Ozawa**

**Central District**

**O'ahu**

**LATE**

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/13/2020 9:20:38 AM  
Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jennifer Solmirin	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Jennifer Solmirin. I am currently a classroom teacher at Henry J. Kaiser High School in Honolulu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

Please support SB 2488 so we can 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, plus fringe costs, to fully fund these essential needs for teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place teachers where we should be for dedicated years of service. Additional funding will also help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been with the Hawai'i Department of Education for twenty years. I reached the highest level of compensated educational credits back in 2008, yet I have continued to pursue higher education in order to best serve those in my classrooms. No pay raise or compensation has been awarded for my additional educational credits. This out-of-pocket cost, along with my stagnant compensation level has been a challenge financially. I also work a second job to help supplement my income, even though I work in the classroom full-time and attend University full time. The pay for a classroom teacher just does not cover the cost of living here in Honolulu or anywhere across our pae 'Ā• ina.

Every day I watch colleagues who look tired and worried about their financial status, but come to work in order to make sure our keiki are cared for at school. I have also watched friends and colleagues leave the profession because the amount of effort involved in teaching in the classroom every day is not fairly compensated and does not



allow many teachers to keep a decent place to live. Please consider very seriously supporting out teachers. It is time to make a positive change for education.

We need your help. Mahalo nui loa.

Jennifer Solmirin;  
Farrington-Kaiser-Kalani Complex Area; Honolulu, Hawai'i

**LATE**

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/13/2020 11:50:39 AM  
Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Jeffrey Uyeda	Hawaii State Teachers Association	Support	No

Comments:

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT and THE COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD1, RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2:00 p.m.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and members of the Committees:

My name is Jeffrey Uyeda and I am a Special Education Work Preparation teacher at Pearl City 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, 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 plus fringe costs, to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest to fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

My wife and I have “grass roots” in Hawaii and are educators for 22 plus years, during this time we have not have any increases in salary due to our years of service. This

“fixing the compression issue” will help BOTH my wife and I remain school teachers in the HAWAI’I PUBLIC EDUCATION system.

Both of us have highly considered other professions, due to the high cost of living on Oahu (food, gas, mortgage, children, education...). We both have master’s degrees in education but have NOT felt we have been financially compensated as educators. A raise due to compression will be an action that shows we are “appreciated” and it will be a sign of “aloha” that these combined 40 years of teaching (without a raise for years of service), has NOT gone unnoticed. Such an action will definitely keep us in the teaching profession for the “long haul.”

We need your help. Mahalo.

Jeffrey Uyeda, Leeward District, Oahu

# LATE TESTIMONY

March 13, 2020

Aloha chair, vice chair and members of the committee,

Aloha my name is Kaleo Ramos and I am a veteran teacher at Halau Ku Mana Public Charter School. I have been teaching for a total of 23 years. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] I carry a total of 6 college degrees, full licensure and worked my way up to the highest class level of teacher salary, which is 7. I'm a hard worker who comes from a family of teachers and my life involves working with students and delivering trauma-informed care to youth sex offenders at an all-male group home where I've worked the last 10-years to supplement my teacher income. Soon I will enter into a PhD program at UH to add to the chaos and seemingly never ending saga of trying to be the best and making the largest impact at what I do best- teach.

At my charter school, I am the Student Services Coordinator where I oversee our special education program, carry a special education caseload of 11 students; I teach English 8th and 10th grade, boys Health 9th, and am the faculty mentor to a senior on her senior project. My responsibilities on our charter school campus are heavy, but necessary being that we are a public charter school with extremely limited funding, therefore we wear many hats on campus.

I am obviously in support of SB2488, SD2 Relating to teacher compensation as I do qualify as a veteran and special education teacher; I would also hope they would add public charter schools, [REDACTED] to the hard-to-staff positions as we suffer greatly when it comes to hiring staff to support our indigenous education.

Teachers are only as valued as their communities values them. Across the US teachers are constantly disrespected and undervalued by students, parents and the system, yet we hold the most important position of all professions, we are expected to have a professional education to prepare us for these positions of leadership, but when we get here we're not treated as so; instead we are treated in a way that brings more stress to our positions by nearly forcing us to work second jobs to support our income of living here in Hawai'i. It doesn't make sense. This is my home state, I am part of Hawaiian ancestry willing and wanting to teach Hawai'i's kids- please support this bill so that I can remain in my home, to teach, to thrive and to contribute to our future.

\*I cannot express to you enough of the difficulties that come with being a special education teacher in a public charter school. I've been hit, spat on, blood was drawn from my face by a frightened child and yet between countless meetings, collecting data, wiping noses and contentious cases, I must develop and redevelop lessons to provide the best to my students. These things are compiled when I am required to teach general education classes because we do not have enough money to fund/hire/keep teachers in our charter school.

**LATE**

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/13/2020 12:08:18 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Andrea Quinn	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Honorable Committee Members,

Please support SB2488, which will help alleviate the severe teacher shortage Hawaii is currently facing.

Thank you,

Andrea Quinn

Kihei, HI

**LATE**

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/13/2020 12:51:21 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Michael Hino	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I have been working as a teacher on the island of Molokai for the past 20 years. Being in a rural area resources available to schools on Oahu, Maui, and Hawaii Island are not available to students here. In order to differentiate, accommodate, modify, and engage different student needs and learning styles many of us often use our own monies to purchase supplemental and supportive resources. I imagine that many teachers even on Oahu, Maui and Hawaii Island do the same. The DOE asks much of us but do not supply us with the resources we need to fulfill their directives and initiatives. I spend around \$70.00 a month on supplementals needed in classes for students every year. Though I am appreciative of the measures already taken I have been struggling to provide for our students over the past 20 years and feel that Senate Bill 2488 will be greatly appreciated and needed by thousands of Educators throughout the state who have been sacrificing much throughout the past decades. Thank You, Michael T. Hino

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/13/2020 1:37:56 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

**LATE**

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Tes Kaulia	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**LATE**

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/13/2020 1:57:08 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Samantha Cook	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

My name is Samantha Cook and I am a Grade 4 teacher at Holualoa Elementary on the Big Island of Hawaii. I have taught here for 8 years and now call Hawaii my home. However, my ability to stay in my home is threatened by my own inability as a single-income teacher to have my own home. Every year I consider returning to the mainland, not because I want to go, but because the cost of living here is barely manageable. I looked at purchasing a one-bedroom home here, as I would like to stay long-term, and even if I married another teacher with a similar income, we would be hard-pressed to find a home we could afford. I spent weeks this past summer trying to find a studio or one-bedroom situation I could afford and just the rent for a bedroom (shared living areas with roommates) averaged at \$1,000 a month. Further funding for teacher salaries may bring an opportunity for those who call this island home to truly sink our roots in deep. Not only do we benefit from having this stability, but our community and our keiki benefit as well with the continuity and longevity of residents. Mahalo for advocating for us.



**LATE**

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/13/2020 3:18:44 PM

Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Lauryn Castro	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE**

**RE: SB 2488, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION**

**Friday, March 13, 2020**

**To Whom it may concern:**

**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**



**LATE**

**SB-2488-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/13/2020 3:32:58 PM  
Testimony for LAB on 3/13/2020 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Adrienne Hale	HSTA	Support	No

Comments:

**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 better!**

**Mahalo,**

**Adrienne Hale, Hawai'i Island**

## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Celestino Palacio <celestino.palacio@k12.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 13, 2020 4:20 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and members of the Committees:

My name is Celestino Palacio. I am a Special Education Teacher at Kapolei Middle School in the Leeward District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD1.

As a teacher who has been educating our keiki on the Leeward side of Oahu for many moons, I have arrived from a long journey sharing my mana'o, nurturing, and providing nourishment for our students at the targeted and disadvantaged populations. We have students at levels Tier 2 and 3 with learning disabilities due to carelessness and inconsistency in their life experiences, mainly not-their-fault situations. I would like to continue to serve our keiki who have disadvantages in their lives due to physical and mental challenges. Nevertheless, it's difficult to help others if my wife and I are also a single paycheck away from joining other struggling families near the poverty threshold. So, we need to hold onto our extra side jobs to assure us that it will be okay to continue on living in the most beautiful place on our planet Earth. It would be way better if I just have my teaching job, thus I am praying for our leaders in our legislature to embrace and invest in our keiki by keeping our professional life long learners on the job.

A quote by Simon Sinek, "Consistency, not intensity builds leadership traits." We look at our legislative elected officials to measure the facts and to show consistency as our leaders and major stakeholders to support our educators who spend the majority of time, on a daily schedule from 8 am to 2:30 pm on weekdays, and sometimes weekends for school related projects and studies, teaching Hawaii's children.

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 plus fringe costs, to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest to fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki. We really appreciate and humbly ask for your support for SB 2488, SD1.

Mahalo Nui Loa,

Celestino Palacio  
Special Education Teacher  
Kapolei Middle School

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**From:** Jeffrey Nishihara <jeffrey.nishihara@k12.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 13, 2020 2:59 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND  
COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Jeffrey Nishihara. I am a teacher at Washington Middle School in Honolulu District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I was not working for the Department of Education at the time of "Furlough Fridays", however, many of my colleagues were and I think it is not fair to them that their pay was fixed during that time, and they still haven't been given their step for time served. I understand that during that time of economic hardship it was a choice that was made, however, now that those times are behind us. I think rewarding those who stuck through and continue to teach the future generations should be given their due.

I have a CDL, and I have seen how much commercial drivers make, I know that there are many opportunities for people out there. I would prefer that those who became teachers continue to teach and not be forced to find another job to pay for basic needs. I would rather these people

stay where they are, because the wealth of experience and knowledge they can impart onto these students is more valuable than having a sub read a textbook to them.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Jeffrey Nishihara, WMS, Honolulu, Oahu.

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## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Julia Pinkerton <julia.pinkerton@whea.net>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 13, 2020 1:59 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is J. Pinkerton. I am a student at West Hawaii Explorations Academy in the 7th District on the Big Island. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in hard-to-staff positions, such as special education, to pay our hardworking teachers what they're worth and provide for their retirements. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

Young teachers often come and go because they see very little future in teaching, as do older teachers, who have to reckon with the dimming possibility of retirement. I truly wouldn't be surprised if many of my teachers' retirement plans include marrying rich. Not only do our teachers deserve better, students deserve better. As it is, our younger teachers show up at school with toes stubbed to the point of bleeding from exposed, rusty nails, concerns about getting tetanus, and horror stories of the haphazard homes and apartments they can barely afford. The older teachers have barely gotten any pay-raises since they were licensed, worry about retirement, and have to consider whether there are any other jobs that could let them have something to retire with. It's hardly a wonder if they are stressed or leave for greener pastures when given the chance.

And they often do. A man I know used to be a special education teacher. Considering that his son has autism, it would've seemed like the perfect fit. Eventually though, he and his wife decided that they couldn't afford to have him keep teaching; they were raising a family, after all. Now, he lasers people's tattoos off for a living. While there's nothing wrong with tattoo-lasering, his students lost a wonderful teacher who could understand a great deal of what people on the spectrum go through and explain topics creatively and in depth.

I imagine many of you have higher wages than our teachers, so unless you want to get busy marrying the fine teachers of our state and paying for their retirements yourselves, our teachers need your help. Mahalo.

J. Pinkerton, 7th District, Big Island

**From:** Cedric Ranchez <cedric.ranchez@k12.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 13, 2020 1:58 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND  
COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020 2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Cedric Ranchez. I am a teacher at Kaimuki High School in the Honolulu district on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund this and other essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I am a high school teacher who has been with the DOE for nearly 16 years. From my experience, teachers choose this profession because they recognize the value and impact they have on their students. I have also come to learn that our students need their school to be a stable place. We talk about the school as a place of learning and discovery. However, it is difficult for a student to learn and discover when he or she does not feel safe. Many times this feeling of a lack of safety can be directly attributed to instability in the school. And you can't have this stability when teachers leave.

In a national survey cited in a 2019 article in *The Atlantic*, the number one reason teachers consider quitting the profession is the low salary. In order to have a better chance at establishing stability in our schools, we must retain our teachers. And in order to retain our teachers we must compensate them fairly. Nearly every school year, I think about leaving the profession. The number one reason for this is that I know I am underpaid. Many people may see a teacher's job as one that starts at 8 a.m. and ends at 3 p.m. every weekday. But this is never the case. Suffice to say is the amount of careful planning and preparation needed each day in order to provide the quality education any parent would want for their child. And quality and necessary assessment always occurs during and long after the 3 p.m. school bell rings. Moreover, I cannot think of one night, since I began teaching 16 years ago, where I have not thought or worried about a particular student in my class. The work of a teacher is never-ending. But I and my fellow teachers persist because we see each of our students as being our own children, and we recognize our impact on their lives. It is my worry; however, that we may eventually have no choice but to leave this profession due to our low salary.

I am writing to you because we need your help.

Mahalo.



Cedric Ranchez, Oahu

[Testimony in support of SB2488](#)

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## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Liz Noetzel <lizziecakes@icloud.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 13, 2020 1:49 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488

Aloha, Chair Johanson and Chair Woodson:

I am writing in support of SB2488. I am a middle school teacher at Waikoloa Elem and Middle School on the Big Island, where I am a seventh grade English Language Arts teacher. I have been in the DOE for about 23 years now and I love my job and the keiki of Hawaii, who deserve nothing but the very best educators.

I have a child attending college on the mainland at Denison University, a small liberal arts school that actually is more expensive than Harvard.

Without the differential, to be very honest, I do not know that my husband and I can afford to stay in Hawaii, mainly because of my daughter's exorbitant college tuition. Although I know it is only for four years, it is \$57,000 a year, plus books, plus airfare to and from Ohio several times a year. Receiving the recent differential made it possible for us to catch our breath and relax a little bit. Living in Hawaii has so many benefits, but we pay dearly for them financially. My husband has family in Michigan with an available cottage near a lake for us to live in for low rent, and it is tempting to leave. But as I said, I love my job, I love my school, and I have taught here for my entire teaching career. I do not want to leave, but I do not know if I can afford to stay. Additionally, if I were able to receive compression compensation, that would be incredibly appreciated, as there are much younger faculty on my staff making almost as much as I do. They did not suffer through the years without raises that I did. I feel I deserve this, truly.

I urge you, no, I beg you, to please find it in your hearts to fund this bill to its fullest extent.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions. I can be reached at (808) 989-9100.

Mahalo,

Elizabeth Noetzel

Waikoloa Middle School

## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Gina Saneishi <gsaneishi@mules.k12.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 13, 2020 1:22 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education,

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020

2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Gina Saneishi. I am a teacher at Leilehua High School in the central district on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

We need your help. Mahalo.  
Gina Saneishi, Central District

## eli2 - Kevin

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**From:** Diane Arakaki <darakaki@kamaile.org>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 13, 2020 1:16 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** SB2488 SD1 Relating to teacher compensation

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and members of the Committees:

My name is Diane Arakaki. I am a PreK Teacher at Kamaile Academy PCS in Waianae on the island of Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB2488, 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 plus fringe costs, to fully fund these essential needs for our teacher. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest to fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been affected by the compression issue. Due to the mandatory, government imposed deduction and freeze on our pay I had to get creative. In order to keep my mortgage payment going I had to sacrifice other bills. I could not keep up with my student loan payment so I had to go into deferment. Because I did that I do not qualify for the 10 year forgiveness. My utility bills were paid late and that affected my credit score. That affected my ability to get a better interest rate when I tried to refinance. My cell phone bills were so late they suspended my account. To restore it I incurred a restore charge and a fee per phone. There was a time when I had to ask my daughter's school if we would qualify for free or reduced lunch for her during those hard times. To help ends meet I began tutoring. That meant I worked 2 extra hours 2 times a week but, because I left later I ran into the contra flow that made my travel time from 45 minutes to 90 minutes costing me more travel time and gas. My tutor pay did not help me stay ahead it just kept me afloat. At this point in time I feel the trash collector may be making me than me. I feel very unappreciated for the time and money I invested in my staying current in my profession and providing for the kids in my classroom. They don't come with supplies, clothes or breakfast. But I as an individual do what I can. The kids appreciate me but I don't feel it from the state. Many have come and gone at my school but I have been here 15 years but my pay does not reflect that.

We need your help. Mahalo  
Diane Arakaki, Waianae, Oahu

**From:** Jaime Edwards <jedwards@kalanihs.org>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 13, 2020 12:56 PM  
**To:** LABtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of SB2488, SD2, Committee on Labor & Public Employment and Committee on Lower & Higher Education, Friday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC  
EMPLOYMENT AND COMMITTEE ON LOWER & HIGHER EDUCATION  
RE: SB 2488, SD2 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION  
FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020  
2 P.M.

Chair Johanson, Chair Woodson, and committee members:

My name is Jaime Edwards. I am a Test Coordinator at Kalani High School in Honolulu on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, SD2.

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 plus fringe costs to fully fund these essential needs for our teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service, and funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

My husband is a Special Education teacher and as two public school teachers, we struggle to make ends meet. We have two small children and the pay increase he received as a Special Education teacher has helped us immensely. He was actually considering transferring out of Special Education but the pay increase is keeping him in his current position. Should it not be renewed for recent years, he will most likely transfer out of Special Education as the

extra workload is not worth the pay. Please continue this bonus as these teachers put in a lot of extra work and their time and efforts deserve to be recognized.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Jaime Edwards, Kalani High School, Honolulu

Thank you,

Jaime Edwards  
Test Coordinator  
Kalani High School