

Telephone: 808.536.2351 Facsimile: 808.528.4059

Hawaii Government Employees Association AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO

February 4, 2008

To: Committee on Health

Fr: HGEA/AFSCME, Local 252

Re: House Bill 2133, HD 1 (HSCR 12-08)

Please find attached HGEA/AFSCME's testimony in support of this bill. The hearing has been scheduled as follows:

Date: Monday, February 4, 2008

Time: 9:30a.m.

Place: Conference Room 329

State Capitol



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HAWAII GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION

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The Twenty Fourth Legislature, State of Hawaii Hawaii State House of Representatives Committee on Health

> Testimony by HGEA/AFSCME, Local 152, AFL-CIO February 4, 2008

H.B. 2133, HD1 (HSCR 12-08) – Relating to Nursing

The Hawaii Government Employees Association, AFSCME, Local 152, AFL-CIO supports this bill. H.B. 2133 proposes to establish a nursing teacher loan forgiveness program whereby a student attending a public or private post-secondary educational institution in the state of Hawaii which ultimately leads to a master's or doctoral degree in nursing, and who intends to teach in a nursing program in Hawaii, shall be eligible to receive a loan for up to \$20,000. The individual shall agree to remain in a teaching position for not less than five consecutive academic years after completion of his/her advanced nursing degree. If he/she completes all obligations for the loan, it shall be forgiven. Other conditions apply should the individual not fulfill his/her five-year teaching commitment.

Currently there is a severe shortage of nurses to fill the needs in Hawaii. The fact that there is a shortage of nursing teachers at the college level has resulted in a shortage of classes offered to nursing students, thereby limiting the number of students graduating in nursing.

We believe this bill will increase the number of available nursing teachers, increase the availability of nursing classes and ultimately increase the number of students graduating with a nursing degree. Hopefully, this bill will help to curtail the severe nursing shortage in the State of Hawaii.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit our testimony in support of this bill.

Respectfully Submitted,

Nora A. Nomura

Deputy Executive Director

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