

TESTIMONY BY GEORGINA K. KAWAMURA
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
STATE OF HAWAII
TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION
ON
HOUSE BILL NO. 2133

January 22, 2008

RELATING TO NURSING

House Bill No. 2133 establishes a nursing teacher loan forgiveness program that would provide payment of a loan if a person earns an advanced degree in nursing and agrees to teach in a qualified position for at least five academic years. The program would be financed by the Nursing Teacher Loan Forgiveness special fund created by this bill. The fund would generate revenues through legislative appropriations, gifts, grants, and donations. House Bill No. 2133 appropriates \$100,000 from the general fund for deposit into the special fund.

We are opposed to this bill. As a matter of general policy, this department does not support the creation of any special or revolving fund which does not meet the requirements of Sections 37-52.3 and 37-53.4 of the Hawaii Revised Statutes. Special or revolving funds should: 1) reflect a clear nexus between the benefits sought and charges made upon the users or beneficiaries of the program; 2) provide an appropriate means of financing for the program or activity; and 3) demonstrate the capacity to be financially self-sustaining. It is difficult to determine whether the fund will be self-sustaining.

UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI‘I SYSTEM LEGISLATIVE TESTIMONY



HB 2133 – RELATING TO NURSING

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Higher Education

January 23, 2008 at 2:00 pm

by

Karen C. Lee
Interim Associate Vice President for Student Affairs
University of Hawaii System

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HB 2133 - Relating to Nursing

The purpose of HB 2133 Relating to Nursing, is to create a nursing teacher loan forgiveness program and to create a nursing teacher loan forgiveness special fund. This program is to provide students who intend to become instructors in nursing the funding to pursue a masters or doctorate program.

The University of Hawai'i appreciates the intent of the Legislature to provide financial support to students who wish to become nursing educators. However, the University cannot support this bill because of the extensive administrative hardship this will place on our various offices, in particular our financial aid offices and general accounting office, to track students over five years and to administer such a loan. With our current capacity of staffing and resources, we would not be able to develop and maintain such a program at the appropriate level.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



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Hawaii Government Employees Association
AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO

January 22, 2008

To: Committee on Higher Education
Fr: HGEA/AFSCME, Local 152
Re: **House Bill 2133- Relating to Nursing**

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

Date: Tuesday, January 22, 2008
Time: 2:00p.m.
Place: Conference Room 309
State Capitol
415 S. Beretania Street



HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION
Rep. Jerry Chang, Chair

Conference Room 309
Tuesday, January 22, 2008 at 2:00 p.m.

Testimony in support of HB 2133.

I am Coral Andrews, Vice President of the Healthcare Association of Hawaii, which represents the entire spectrum of health care, including acute care hospitals, two-thirds of the long term care beds in Hawaii, as well as home care and hospice providers. Thank you for this opportunity to testify in strong support of HB 2133, which is designed to increase the number of nursing school faculty by creating a loan forgiveness program for students seeking master's or doctoral nursing degrees in nursing, either of which is required to become a faculty member.

Hawaii and the rest of the nation are facing an unprecedented shortage of nurses that is expected to become even more severe in the decades to come unless corrective measures are taken now. The shortage is so severe in Hawaii that many nurses are regularly being recruited from the mainland to work here on a temporary basis. Bonuses have to be paid to "fly ins" to entice them to work in Hawaii, which increases the costs of health care.

Nurses are the primary caregivers of patients in settings such as hospitals and long term care facilities. The nurse shortage has the potential to have a serious impact on health care quality. It is imperative for a sufficient number of Hawaii residents to be educated to become nurses. However, Hawaii's public and private nurse education institutions do not have sufficient capacity to graduate enough nurses to fill the need.

One reason is that there are not enough nurse educators. The University of Hawaii, for example, is turning away students who are fully qualified academically to enter nursing programs because there are not enough faculty to teach them. This bill seeks to encourage interest in nursing faculty positions by forgiving the repayment of a loan in exchange for an employment commitment as nursing faculty. This bill will facilitate increased educational capacity to teach nursing students and positively impact the nursing shortage in Hawaii.

For the foregoing reasons, the Healthcare Association strongly supports HB 2133.