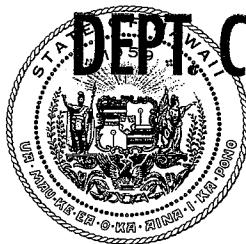


STATE OF HAWAI'I
OFFICE OF THE AUDITOR
465 S. King Street, Room 500
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813-2917



DEPT. COMM. NO. 65

MARION M. HIGA
State Auditor

(808) 587-0800
FAX: (808) 587-0830

February 27, 2009

The Honorable Colleen Hanabusa
President of the Senate
State Capitol, Room 409
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Madam President:

I transmit to you a copy of our report, *Study on the Appropriate Accountability Structure of the Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board*.

This study of the Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board was requested by the 2008 Legislature because of complaints from teachers about the board's handling of teacher licensing. We found that since assuming the licensure function from the Department of Education (DOE) in 2001, the board has been unable to develop, administer, and deliver an effective teacher licensing program. Moreover, a lack of oversight and poor management of the contracts to develop an online application system have resulted in a waste of teacher licensing fees totaling more than \$1 million. Creating an independent body composed of teachers employed by the DOE with a mission to provide qualified teachers, promote professionalism and teaching excellence, build public confidence in teachers and provide more accountability to the public, has yielded no benefits to the teachers and students it was meant to serve to warrant its continuation.

We hope that the report will assist you in reviewing the issues examined. We will place the report on our website, www.state.hi.us/auditor, and release it to the public and press, on Monday, March 2, 2009.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Marion M. Higa".

Marion M. Higa
State Auditor

Enclosure

c: ✓ Carol Taniguchi, Senate Clerk