

SB 1249

WRITTEN ONLY

TESTIMONY BY GEORGINA K. KAWAMURA
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
STATE OF HAWAII
TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
ON
SENATE BILL NO. 1249, S.D. 1

February 25, 2009

RELATING TO TEACHERS

Senate Bill No. 1249, S.D. 1, provides initiatives for the recruitment and retention of public school teachers. This bill establishes a Homeownership for Educators Second Mortgage Revolving Trust Fund to provide deferred-interest second mortgages for Hawaii public school educators.

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. We are unable to determine whether the proposed fund meets any of the statutory requirements.

WRITTEN COMMENTS

Date: 02/25/2009

Committee: Senate Ways and Means

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Patricia Hamamoto, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: SB 1249,SD1(SSCR185) RELATING TO TEACHERS.

Purpose of Bill: Provides incentives for the recruitment and retention of public school teachers. (SD1)

Department's Position: The Department of Education's position on S.B. 1249 S.D.1 is as follows:

The Department of Education (Department) agrees that a teacher housing allowance would be a valuable recruitment and retention incentive for newly hired public school teachers. The allocation of general revenue monies for this housing allowance is much appreciated. However, the \$300.00 monthly allowance for newly hired teachers for each of their first three years of employment would mean the following expenditures based on 1,300 new hires each year: \$4.68 million the first year, \$9.36 million the second year, and \$14.04 million in the third year. The Department would request allocation of these additional funds accordingly as long as its implementation does not impact or replace the priorities set forth in the Executive Biennium Budget for Fiscal Year 2009-2010.

The Department does not support Section 3, §302A-B, Homeownership for educators program. The home ownership for educators' second mortgage revolving trust fund program may not have sufficient funding remaining—after providing mortgages for teachers—for staffing to implement the program. Additionally, the Department does not currently have the expertise to implement it.

The Department does not support Part II, Section 10, §302A-Teachers, the peer review program, as it is written. This bill combines the peer

review program with the induction and mentoring program. We believe the peer review program and all of its elements fit within the purview of the collective bargaining process between the Department and the Hawaii State Teachers Association. The induction and mentoring program is a coaching, collaborative, relationship building process, while the peer review program is more evaluative in nature and teachers' evaluations are the school administrator's responsibility. These two programs, if implemented, should remain separate.

The Department supports Part III, Section 12 which would extend the maximum allowable years of prior teaching experience from the six-year cap to 10 years for newly hired teachers for salary placement credit. This would be a budget neutral change since newly hired teachers with six years of experience would receive the same starting salary as those with ten years of teaching experience.

The Department recommends revising Section 13 (a), line 6 to read unit (5) instead of unit (6) since the former is the correct bargaining unit for teachers.

The Department requests allocation of additional funds to implement this bill as long as the bill's implementation does not impact or replace the priorities set forth in the Executive Biennium Budget for Fiscal Year 2009-2010.