

SB206

**Date:** 02/06/2009

**Committee:** Senate Education and Housing

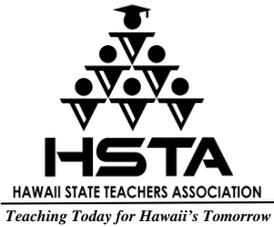
**Department:** Education

**Person Testifying:** Patricia Hamamoto, Superintendent of Education

**Title of Bill:** SB 0206 RELATING TO TEACHERS.

**Purpose of Bill:** Establishes the teacher housing allowance program to provide housing assistance to teachers employed in schools in geographically isolated areas or hard-to-fill positions within the State. Appropriates funds for the program and appropriates funds for repair and maintenance of existing teacher housing. Requires the department of education to report to the legislature on teacher housing options.

**Department's Position:** The Department of Education appreciates the Legislature's attempt to deal with the shortage of teachers and other educational staff members in geographically isolated communities and in schools plagued with hard-to-fill vacancies by establishing a teacher housing allowance program through Senate Bill 206. However, the Department **cannot support** this bill because of the fiscal problems faced by the State at this time.



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TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON  
EDUCATION AND HOUSING

RE: SB 206 – RELATING TO TEACHERS.

February 6, 2009

ROGER TAKABAYASHI, PRESIDENT  
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Chair Sakamoto and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association supports SB 206, which establishes the teacher housing allowance program to provide housing assistance to teachers employed in schools in geographically isolated (GI) areas or hard-to-fill positions within the state and appropriates funds for the program.

HSTA appreciates the Legislature's acknowledgement of the teacher shortage that currently exists. We agree that the issue of teacher housing is a priority in order to strengthen recruitment and retention of teachers. We believe this bill will assist in the state's efforts to recruit and retain teachers by allowing assistance for the purchase or rental of a home and to provide housing aid to teachers currently employed in GI areas or in hard-to-fill positions within the state.

We urge the committee to pass this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.