

**LATE**

To: Chairperson Michelle Kidani  
Members of the Senate Education Committee  
From: Corey Rosenlee  
Subject: Support for HB11 RELATING TO EDUCATION

I am a Nationally Board Certified teacher from Campbell High and I am supporting HB11. I am asking for one significant change. When SB847 was in front of this committee the bill included funding for Nationally Board Certified Teachers who taught in title 1 schools. That provision was stripped in Ways and Means. I asking you to reinsert that provision.

Income inequality is growing in this country. One of the greatest barriers of people moving class is a quality education, and research has shown one of the best ways to improve education is to have a high quality teacher in every classroom. Hawaii already pays its teachers the lowest in the nation when you factor in cost of living, even though other districts with higher cost of living pay their teachers significantly more. This leads Hawaii to have the third highest teacher turnover rate in the nation and the inability to find enough teachers to fill our openings. I am for any bill that puts more money into teachers pockets. The bill originally was going to achieve that. It was going to take high quality teachers and put them into low income(title 1 schools), but we cut that provision because it was too expensive. Studies show the wealthy are increasing the amount they spend on education, thus increasing the education gap. We need to invest in all of our children, in fact we need to spend more on our poor children just to give them a shot at competing.

By reinserting the title 1 provision we will reward some of our best teachers to stay in some our neediest schools. It also makes it much easier for nationally board certified teachers to understand what schools qualify.

I ask for your support and on amending the bill.

Thank you.

**LATE**

Dear Chair Tokuda and Committee Members,

My name is Nancy Laukea and I am a National Board Certified Teacher (NBCT) currently working at Pahoa High and Intermediate on the Big Island as a Special Education Science Teacher. I am writing in support of SB847 SD1.

Passage of this bill is of the utmost importance for the following reasons:

1. National Board Certification is an indicator of excellence. Teacher quality has long been recognized as an indicator for student success and achievement. The National Board process is rigorous and demanding. It challenges each teacher to provide evidence of his or her exemplary teaching quality. Upon successfully earning the certification, teachers should be provided a financial reward for doing so.
  2. Teachers who would like to earn certification deserve to be supported. Many teachers covet this certification but are unable to pursue it due to expensive application fees. This measure would provide a financial incentive for teachers to pursue this certification knowing that they would be all/partially reimbursed upon successful completion of the process.
  3. Struggling schools need NBCTs. Under the provisions of this bill, teachers who teach at high-turnover, Focus, Priority, Superintendent's Zone, or Title I schools would receive an additional financial incentive, even once a school loses its classification. This is an important provision because it rewards teachers for their longevity at and commitment to a struggling school, where teacher leaders are sorely needed to help motivate students and staff toward continuous school improvement.
2. Personally, I meet all of the above mentioned criteria. I teach at Pahoa High and Intermediate on the Big Island. I am a single mother who has raised two boys alone for the past 20 years. During that time I have gone from being on Food Stamps/Quest to earning my teaching degree, Masters Degree, and National Board Certification. I have been named Teacher of the Year at my school and in 2012 I became District Teacher of the Year for Hawaii Island. I have earned the first ever presented Green Ribbon for our school, and I have successfully taken numerous Pahoa students (both regular and special education students to our District and State Science Fairs. I tell you all this because I have worked hard to better myself and provide a life for my sons. When Gov. Abercrombie decided to cut teachers' salaries to balance the budget – I had to make a hard choice – pay my electric bill or put away money for my retirement. As I started late in this career (after age 40) I now do not have a retirement plan to fall back on when and if I do retire years from now. At 53 I had to borrow money from my parents (ages 83 and 94) to apply to attain my National Certification, and I had to reimburse them with my tax refunds for the past two years. I have lived through 2 weeks of no power from Iselle, the June 27<sup>th</sup> lava flow aiming at my home and my work, and recently another 5 days of power loss due to falling Albezia trees. Not receiving this additional funds feels like it would be the straw that broke the camel's back.
  3. My intent was to take the money I was promised as supplemental incentive for working at a "hard to fill" school and begin investing this toward a retirement plan. I am asking you to very carefully consider the passage of this bill as it has a direct impact on my life and that of my sons.

Thank you for your attention in this matter. If you should have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at

Nancy laukea

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LATE

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February 5, 2015

**Testimony to Support SB847 SD1**

Senate Bill 842 provides the bonus for NBCTs in Title 1, Priority, Focus and Zone schools.

I am a Nationally Board Certified teacher from Henry J. Kaiser High School, and I am supporting SB847 SD1.

Passage of this bill is of the utmost importance for the following reasons:

1. National Board Certification is an indicator of excellence. Teacher quality has long been recognized as an indicator for student success and achievement. The National Board process is rigorous and demanding. It challenges each teacher to provide evidence of his or her exemplary teaching quality. Upon successfully earning the certification, teachers should be provided a financial reward for doing so.
2. Teachers who would like to earn certification deserve to be supported. Many teachers covet this certification but are unable to pursue it due to expensive application fees. This measure would provide a financial incentive for teachers to pursue this certification knowing that they would be all/partially reimbursed upon successful completion of the process.
3. Struggling schools need NBCTs. Under the provisions of this bill, teachers who teach at high-turnover, Focus, Priority, Superintendent's Zone, or Title I schools would receive an additional financial incentive, even once a school loses its classification. This is an important provision because it rewards teachers for their longevity at and commitment to a struggling school, where teacher leaders are sorely needed to help motivate students and staff toward continuous school improvement.
4. Furthermore, I have had the unexpected misfortune of my partner passing away this past month. In order to qualify for any rental housing, I must demonstrate a net income of three times the monthly rental cost. I do not qualify. With the \$2000+ invested in the National Board Certification process, and while simultaneously pursuing my MFA in Oregon State University's Low-Residency program in Creative Writing, I only qualify for a room shared in a house with three or four other roommates. How can I afford to investment in myself, to improve my knowledge and skills so I may stand confidently and competently in front of 32 students in each class x 6 classes, if my employer cannot support my improvements?
5. I am a highly qualified teacher in English and currently teach AP Literature and Composition with my students' scores surpassing Hawaii's state average and just shy of matching the national average scores. How can teachers continue to prepare rigorous lesson plans, assess 60-160 essays weekly, while living paycheck to paycheck, in an 8x10 room, and one shared bathroom with numerous roommates?
6. This year alone, I have written over thirty letters of recommendations for my students. In the past 2.5 years teaching at KHS, our students have been accepted to Boston, MIT, Harvard, Harvey Mudd, USC, and many, many other universities of their choice. Our students have also received two- and four-year scholarships at Kapiolani Community College and the University of Hawaii's Regent Scholars, so I know we are doing our best. Yet, my home is someplace I would never invite anyone over.

Returning to the classroom with five years of teaching experience and 13-year break, I can draw no other conclusion except teaching in this state is feasible only if individuals are married with a spouse as the major breadwinner. What kind of role model does that truly make me for my students?

While I whole-heartedly support SB847 SD1, I hope this testimony affirms the overall need for the state of Hawaii's investment in its teachers and their impact on its future leaders and citizens.

Respectfully submitted,

Shareen K. Murayama  
March 16, 2015