

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



CRAIG K. HIRAI
DIRECTOR

GLORIA CHANG
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM
HAWAII EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH BENEFITS TRUST FUND
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
P.O. BOX 150
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96810-0150

ADMINISTRATIVE AND RESEARCH OFFICE
BUDGET, PROGRAM PLANNING AND
MANAGEMENT DIVISION
FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION DIVISION
OFFICE OF FEDERAL AWARDS MANAGEMENT (OFAM)

WRITTEN ONLY
TESTIMONY BY CRAIG K. HIRAI
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
ON
SENATE BILL NO. 2819

January 28, 2022
3:00 p.m.
Room 229 and Videoconference

RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

The Department of Budget and Finance offers comments for this measure.

This measure appropriates unspecified amounts for FY 23 for the Department of Education and Charter Schools to fund teacher compensation as negotiated and executed in separate memoranda of understanding between the Superintendent of Education/State Public Charter School Commission and the Hawai'i State Teachers Association, Bargaining Unit 5, for an experimental modernization project pursuant to Section 78-3.5, HRS.

B&F notes that the federal Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act requires that states receiving Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) II funds and Governor's Emergency Education Relief II funds must maintain state support for:

- Elementary and secondary education in FY 22 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for elementary and secondary education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19; and

- Higher education in FY 22 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for higher education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19.

Further, the federal American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act requires that states receiving ARP ESSER funds must maintain state support for:

- Elementary and secondary education in FY 22 and FY 23 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for elementary and secondary education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19; and
- Higher education in FY 22 and FY 23 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for higher education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19.

The U.S. Department of Education has issued rules governing how these maintenance of effort (MOE) requirements are to be administered. B&F will be working with the money committees of the Legislature to ensure that the State of Hawai'i complies with these ESSER MOE requirements.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



KEITH T. HAYASHI
INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
P.O. BOX 2360
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

Date: 01/28/2022

Time: 03:00 PM

Location: CR 229 & Videoconference

Committee: Senate Education

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Keith T. Hayashi, Interim Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: SB 2819 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION.

Purpose of Bill: Makes an appropriation to fund an experimental modernization project pursuant to Section 78-3.5, Hawaii Revised Statutes, to make necessary discretionary salary adjustments.

Department's Position:

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) supports SB 2819, which funds an experimental modernization project pursuant to Section 78-3.5, Hawaii Revised Statutes, to address compensation equity issues through necessary discretionary salary adjustments.

The proposed funding will allow the Department to implement discretionary pay adjustments to address equity and compression issues for teachers. The Department agrees that addressing the pay compression issue will positively impact both teacher recruitment and retention and looks forward to having meaningful discussions with critical stakeholders about this important endeavor.

Thank you for your continued support during these unprecedented times. Please know that the Department is committed to working collaboratively with the Legislature to ensure the hiring and retention of qualified individuals throughout the Department's tri-level structure.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on SB 2819.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



JOHN S.S. KIM
CHAIRPERSON

STATE OF HAWAII
STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION
('AHA KULA HO'ĀMANA)

<http://CharterCommission.Hawaii.Gov>
1111 Bishop Street, Suite 516, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Tel: (808) 586-3775 Fax: (808) 586-3776

FOR:	SB 2819 Relating to Teacher Compensation
DATE:	January 28, 2022
COMMITTEE:	Senate Committee on Education
ROOM:	Conference Room 229 & Videoconference
FROM:	Yvonne Lau, Interim Executive Director State Public Charter School Commission

Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim and members of the Committee:

The State Public Charter School Commission ("Commission") appreciates the opportunity to submit this testimony in **SUPPORT OF SB 2819**. This measure appropriates funding for an experimental modernization project to address compensation equity issues and make discretionary salary adjustments for teachers whose current base salary does not reflect their years of professional service.

The Commission appreciates the support and attention of this committee and the Senate in ensuring that public charter schools are included in the effort to address teacher salary inequities.

The Commission would like to note that provisions of this measure pertaining to potential collective bargaining negotiations may require further inquiry and a possible amendment to Chapter 302D, Hawaii Revised Statutes; which is the governing statute for public charter schools and the Commission.

At this time, the Commission is unable to provide a cost estimate or an estimate on the number of teachers that would be eligible for the proposed project created by this measure. Charter schools have already been contacted and requested to provide the necessary, pertinent information which will be compiled and provided to this committee as soon as possible.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Education
Friday, January 28, 2022 at 3:00 p.m.

By
Nathan Murata, Dean
College of Education
And
Michael Bruno, PhD
Provost
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

SB 2819 – RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on SB 2819, Relating to Teacher Compensation.

The University of Hawaii at Mānoa, College of Education supports the intent of SB 2819 which provides an experimental modernization project aimed to address compensation equity issues and discretionary salary adjustments for experienced senior teachers by recognizing their professional service. Such discretionary adjustments may help encourage senior level teachers to remain in the profession thus increasing retention in our schools.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 2:30:27 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Patricia K Kanakaole	Testifying for Ka Haka ʻUla O Keʻelikolani, College of Hawaiian Language, University of Hawaiʻi at Hilo	Support	No

Comments:

Distinguished Members of the Senate Committee on Education, Aloha nui kākou!

I support SB2819 as it addresses to strategies designed to improve the recruitment and retention of qualified teachers here in Hawaiʻi. It is my sincere hope that it will also attract Hawaiʻi's smartest innovators to pursue a rewarding career in education thus inspiring generations of keiki to become dynamic contributors to their local communities. Mahalo.

ʻO au me ka ʻoiaʻiʻo,

na P. Kanoe Kanakaʻole



1200 Ala Kapuna Street ♦ Honolulu, Hawaii 96819
Tel: (808) 833-2711 ♦ Fax: (808) 839-7106 ♦ Web: www.hsta.org

Osa Tui, Jr.
President

Logan Okita.
Vice President

Lisa Morrison
Secretary-Treasurer

Wilbert Holck
Executive Director

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

RE: SB 2819 – RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, JANUARY 28, 2022

OSA TUI, JR., PRESIDENT
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Chair Kidani and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association **strongly supports SB 2819**, relating to teacher compensation. This bill makes an appropriation to fund an experimental modernization project pursuant to section 78-3.5, Hawaii Revised Statutes, to make necessary discretionary salary adjustments.

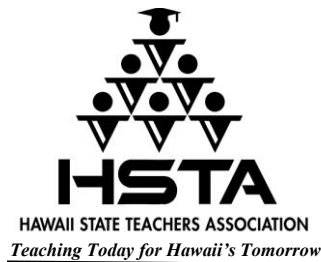
We do ask for two amendments.

First, the charter school commission does not have the authority to engage in negotiations with the Hawaii State Teachers Association BU5. The proper negotiating entity would be each public charter school's governing board. However, please do appropriate funds separately for the Department of Education and public charter schools so that charter schools do get those funds to fix salary compression for their teachers. We calculate these amounts, with 62.78% fringe added, would be about \$88 million for BU 5 members at the DOE and \$6 million for BU 5 members at our public charter schools.

The second amendment would be to strike from HRS 302A-624 section (c):

(c) A teacher shall be required to spend at least one year in Class III before going on to Class IV, at least one year in Class IV before going on to Class V, at least one year in Class V before going on to Class VI, and at least one year in Class VI before going on to Class VII.

Currently, statute limits the maximum classification that a teacher can reach to Class VII. By removing this section, HSTA would be enabled in future negotiations to pursue switching from a combination step- and class-based system towards a strictly class-based system where teachers can continue to seek professional



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development throughout their career to advance on the salary schedule. Currently, 4,300 teachers are at Class VII and have little to no incentive to continue with their professional development. Making sure that teachers will want to engage in continuing education will ultimately benefit students whose teachers will continue to advance their knowledge and pedagogy.

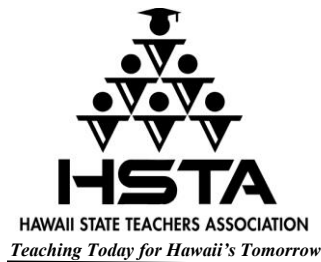
This bill is needed to address compensation equity issues and to make the necessary discretionary salary adjustments for approximately 8,700 experienced teachers by recognizing their professional service to the department of education and our public charter schools through discretionary salary adjustments, as negotiated between the superintendent of education and the exclusive representative of collective bargaining unit (5) Hawaii State Teachers Association.

In Hawai'i, teacher turnover is high, it is not just our new teachers leaving, and the number of teachers leaving continues to rise. Chronic teacher turnover, in turn, forces the department of education to rely on emergency hires and long-term substitute teachers, who are not licensed teachers, to fill vacancies resulting in thousands of students each day in a class without a licensed teacher. Our teacher shortage problem is further clarified in the DOE's 2020-21 Employment Report, which shows that teacher voluntary separations increased from 961 for SY2019-20 to 1,199 for SY2020-21, an approximate 25% increase. When looking only at retirements, the numbers went from 287 to 428 over the same time period – a 49% increase!

Unlike many school districts in the country, Hawaii educators' years of experience are not automatically taken into consideration to determine when they earn salary movements. Hawaii public school teachers only receive increased pay for years of service if those rates are negotiated with the state, which has rejected increases during economic downturns.

The current distribution of teachers on each level of the salary schedule is inconsistent and compressed, contributing to senior teachers leaving. Current figures show nearly 5,000 certificated teachers alone clustered on just steps 9 and 11 with each step representing spans of 6 and 8 years of service, respectively. That's why the problem is called compression.

This lack of equity causing the compression in teacher salaries is impacting the retention of licensed, tenured teachers who are essential to closing the achievement gap to ensure equity and excellence for each student.



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During 2013-2021, teachers were making step movements every other year. At that rate, teachers should reach their career salary (the top step, step 14B) after serving 22 years. Data shows that nearly 2,000 teachers are trapped on steps 12 through 14A with years of service ranging from 24 through 32 years. Teachers are leaving the profession disheartened and with no expectation of reaching their career salary. Fixing this problem will have an immediate effect on retaining our most experienced teachers who have honed their crafts the longest and know our students best.

During furlough years and times of economic downturns, tenured teachers with over 10 years of service have sacrificed higher salary increases when the steps were only adjusted up for newer teachers in efforts to recruit more during economic downturns, without a step advancement for teachers already working for years within the DOE and at our public charter schools.

Data from the 2020-21 school year shows that only 51 percent of teachers remained in the Hawaii DOE five years after hire. In addition, about 1,000 long-term substitutes and emergency hires filling vacancies in classrooms are not graduates of a state-approved teacher education program. In fact, some of those subs and emergency hires are not even college graduates.

HSTA supports this bill that requests our state lawmakers to approve funding for a one-time salary adjustment to be negotiated as part of an Experimental Modernization Project for eligible teachers to address pay compression.

HSTA believes the teacher shortage extends throughout the profession, which is why all educators' compensation should be increased and this is one major step that will help right away. Research shows that teachers become more effective the longer they are in the classroom.

A study published by the Learning Policy Institute in 2016 showed the following: Based on a review of 30 studies published within the last 15 years that analyze the effect of teaching experience on student outcomes in the United States and met specific methodological criteria, researchers found that:

- Teaching experience is positively associated with student achievement gains throughout a teacher's career. Gains in teacher effectiveness associated with experience are most steep in teachers' initial years, but continue to be



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significant as teachers reach the second, and often third, decades of their careers.

- As teachers gain experience, their students not only learn more, as measured by standardized tests, they are also more likely to do better on other measures of success, such as school attendance.
- Teachers' effectiveness increases at a greater rate when they teach in a supportive and collegial working environment, and when they accumulate experience in the same grade level, subject, or district.
- More-experienced teachers support greater student learning for their colleagues and the school as a whole, as well as for their own students.

We have to do more to encourage educators, especially those who have years and even decades of experience, to remain in the classroom. This proposal is part of a multi-phased plan to ensure that all of our keiki, regardless of where they live, what their special needs are or their ethnicity, are taught by highly qualified licensed teachers.

We need the legislature's help to end the teacher shortage crisis.

To take care of the needs of our hardworking public school teachers, and to provide our keiki with the quality education they deserve, the Hawaii State Teachers Association asks for your **strong support** of this bill.

ADDRESSING TEACHERS COMPRESSED ON LOWER HSTA SALARY STEPS

EXHIBIT A TEACHER'S ANNUAL RATE SALARY SCHEDULE (10-MONTH) Effective the First Working Day of the 2021-2022 School Year

Yrs of Svc (Span)	Curr Count	Yrs of Svc (Span)	Realign Count	Initial Classification	CLASS II BA	CLASS III BA+30 or MA	CLASS IV	CLASS V	CLASS VI	CLASS VII Doctorate
				Reclassification		Class II + 15	Class III + 15	Class IV + 15	Class V + 15	Class VI + 15
33+	513	22+	2898	14B ⁵	T02-14B 71,403	T03-14B 77,115	T04-14B 80,200	T05-14B 83,408	T06-14B 86,744	T07-14B 91,948
32 (1)	143	20-21 (2)	637	14A ⁵	T02-14A 67,361	T03-14A 72,750	T04-14A 75,661	T05-14A 78,686	T06-14A 81,835	T07-14A 86,743
31 (1)	174	18-19 (2)	684	14 ⁵	T02-14 65,399	T03-14 70,631	T04-14 73,457	T05-14 76,395	T06-14 79,450	T07-14 84,218
27-30 (4)	796	16-17 (2)	813	13 ⁵	T02-13 63,493	T03-13 68,573	T04-13 71,317	T05-13 74,169	T06-13 77,136	T07-13 81,764
24-26 (3)	848	14-15 (2)	796	12 ⁵	T02-12 61,645	T03-12 66,577	T04-12 69,241	T05-12 72,011	T06-12 74,889	T07-12 79,383
16-23 (8)	2569	12-13 (2)	686	11 ⁵	T02-11 59,850	T03-11 64,638	T04-11 67,223	T05-11 69,911	T06-11 72,707	T07-11 77,069
15 (1)	495	10-11 (2)	745	10 ⁵	T02-10 58,105	T03-10 62,755	T04-10 65,265	T05-10 67,875	T06-10 70,589	T07-10 74,827
9-14 (6)	2374	8-9 (2)	1130	9 ⁵	T02-09 56,414	T03-09 60,928	T04-09 63,365	T05-09 65,900	T06-09 68,535	T07-09 72,648
7-8 (2)	931	6-7 (2)	1035	8 ⁵	T02-08 54,771	T03-08 59,152	T04-08 61,517	T05-08 63,979	T06-08 66,538	T07-08 70,531
5-6 (2)	931	4-5 (2)	947	7 ⁵	T02-07 53,176	T03-07 57,429	T04-07 59,727	T05-07 62,115	T06-07 64,600	T07-07 68,476
3-4 (2)	1125	2-3 (2)	1189	6 ⁵	T02-06 51,627	T03-06 55,756	T04-06 57,988	T05-06 60,307	T06-06 62,718	T07-06 66,482
0-2 (2)	1727	0-1 (1)	1064	5 ⁵	T02-05 50,123	T03-05 54,132	T04-05 56,298	T05-05 58,549	T06-05 60,892	T07-05 64,545
					1706	2684	1762	1217	955	4300

Counts do not include Steps 1-3
nor teachers at charter schools that
do not utilize HDOE payroll.



↑ STEPS Vertical movement happens only via negotiations. Seeking to realign teachers whose step does not align with their years of service based upon two years of service per step.

→ CLASSES Initial placement based upon credits when entering the profession and subsequent horizontal movement based upon earning of professional development credits. Seeking to remove Class VII cap to allow future negotiations to incentivize continuing professional development.



CURRENT DISTRIBUTION OF TEACHERS BY SALARY STEP AND YEARS OF SERVICE

HSTA BU05 Years completed after 2021-22 SY (10/1/21 data)

Step	Total	<1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	>37
14B	513																	1								1		7	5	8	9	11	14	15	111	105	62	52	29	84
14A	143																									1	1	5	2	1	5	7	13	106	1			1		
14	174																										4	2	1	3	10	17	132	6						
13	796										1		1									8	14	8	24	13	44	183	180	177	138	6				1				
12	848															1		1		24	24	18	19	21	37	206	206	262	28	3										
11	2569			1					1		2	10	14	10	12	34	103	367	366	347	263	295	262	248	207	11	6	2	2		4	3		1					1	
10	495				1				1	1	8	23	27	23	53	61	261	14	8	6	2	2	2	1		1		1												
09	2374			1	4	11	74	79	86	107	393	357	303	262	275	295	28	27	17	5	9	11	9	4	8	4	1	1	2	1		2					2			
08	931	2	6	8	75	79	34	38	313	311	25	5	8	5	4	3	2	2	1			1	4	2	2	2														
07	931	3	3	4	37	53	360	377	45	15	5	6	2	3	6	3	2	2	1			1	1	2	1															
06	1125	1.5	76	98	442	397	42	21	22	5	6	1		1	3	1	1	1	2	1	1		2								1									
05	1727	509	556	519	53	32	17	11	5	5	6	2		1	2	1	2	2	1		1	1				1	1	1												
03	25	5	7	2	3	6		2																																
02	12			1	10		1																																	
01	321	170	75	50	6	1	7	1	4	1	2		2				1	1																						
*	12980	690	723	683	631	578	534	529	476	444	448	404	357	305	354	398	399	418	396	383	302	332	305	290	262	249	232	325	223	196	205	179	165	128	112	105	65	53	30	84

(some totals may differ due to rounding)

(*Information from charter schools that do not use DOE payroll were not provided and are not reflected in this data.)

Affected

8626			568	59	429	67	410	76	337	44	371	315	295	342	397	399	417	396	383	302	332	305	290	262	248	232	318	218	188	196	168	151	113	1		3	1	1	
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(some totals may differ due to rounding)

DISTRIBUTION IF SALARY STEPS WERE CONNECTED TO YEARS OF SERVICE

HSTA BU05 Years completed after 2021-22 SY (10/1/21 data) Step Corrected

Step	Total	<1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	>37	
14B	2898																	1						290	262	249	232	325	223	196	205	179	165	128	112	105	65	53	30	84	
14A	637																					332	305																		
14	684																																								
13	813										1		1						416	396		383	302																		
12	796																																								
11	686			1					1		2	10	14	305	354																										
10	745				1				1	1	8	394	340																												
09	1130			1	4	11	74	79	86	442	435																														
08	1035	2	6	8	75	79	34	447	385																																
07	947	3	3	4	37	481	419																																		
06	1189	2	76	617	495																																				
05	1064	509	556																																						
03	46	5	7	2	3	7	8	3	4	1	2		2				1	1																							
02	67			51	16																																				
01	245	170	75																																						
*	12980	690	723	683	631	578	534	529	476	444	448	404	357	305	354	398	399	418	396	383	302	332	305	290	262	249	232	325	223	196	205	179	165	128	112	105	65	53	30	84	

(some totals may differ due to rounding)

(*Information from charter schools that do not use DOE payroll were not provided and are not reflected in this data.)

(rev 1/19/22)

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 8:58:41 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Logan Okita	Testifying for Hawaii State Teachers Association	Support	Yes

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee,**I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2819.****My name is Logan Okita and I am a National Board Certified Teacher at Nimitz Elementary in Central District and Vice President of the Hawaii State Teachers Association. This is my sixteenth year as a teacher in Hawaii.****I am in the middle of our salary schedule at step 11 along with 2,568 of my colleagues, many of whom have more experience than I do. I have missed step increases a few times during my career and will hopefully reach the top of the salary schedule near my twenty-fifth year of teaching. This has not been the case for my colleagues who missed stepped increases during negotiations and are only on step 12 in their twenty-fifth year. Colleagues who I respect and have mentored me have said that they will retire or leave the profession if compression is not addressed soon. These educators have so much more to give to our students, but will not continue if they can never make it to the top of the salary schedule before they qualify for retirement.****Please vote in support of Senate Bill SB2819. Thank you for the opportunity to testify!****Sincerely,****Logan Okita, NBCT**



Committee on Education
Senator Michelle Kidani, Chair
Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Vice Chair

January 28, 2022

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Mercado Kim, and Members of the Committee,

We support SB 2819, which makes an appropriation to fund an experimental modernization project pursuant to section 78-3.5, Hawaii Revised Statutes, to make necessary discretionary salary adjustments.

HE'E Coalition continues to be a fierce advocate for students in Hawai'i's public school system and will support measures to help our students thrive and reach the goal of college, career, and community readiness. We agree with the legislature that recruitment and retention of qualified teachers is critical to the success of our education system. We support any mechanism that supports teacher recruitment, retention, and teacher satisfaction, which will ultimately benefit our students.

Hui for Excellence in Education, or "HE'E," promotes a child-centered and strength-based public education system in which families, communities and schools are valued and empowered to help every student succeed. HE'E works to bring diverse stakeholders together to harness collective energy, share resources, and identify opportunities for progressive action in education.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Our support represents a 75% consensus or more of our voting membership.

Sincerely,

Cheri Nakamura
HE'E Coalition Director



Academy 21	Kaua'i Ho'okele Council
American Civil Liberties Union	Keiki to Career Kaua'i
Alliance for Place Based Learning	Kupu A'e
*Castle Complex Community Council	*Leaders for the Next Generation
Coalition for Children with Special Needs	Learning First
Education Institute of Hawai'i	McREL's Pacific Center for Changing the Odds
*Faith Action for Community Equity	Native Hawaiian Education Council
Fresh Leadership LLC	Our Public School
Girl Scouts Hawaii	*Pacific Resources for Education and Learning
Harold K.L. Castle Foundation	*Parents and Children Together
*HawaiiKidsCAN	*Parents for Public Schools Hawai'i
*Hawai'i Afterschool Alliance	Special Education Provider Alliance
*Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice	*Teach for America
*Hawai'i Association of School Psychologists	The Learning Coalition
Hawai'i Athletic League of Scholars	US PACOM
*Hawai'i Children's Action Network	University of Hawai'i College of Education
Hawai'i Nutrition and Physical Activity Coalition	<i>Voting Members (*) Voting member organizations vote on action items while individual and non-voting participants may collaborate on all efforts within the coalition.</i>
Hawai'i Scholars for Education and Social Justice	
* Hawai'i State PTSA	
Hawai'i State Student Council	
Hawai'i State Teachers Association	
Hawai'i P-20	
Hawai'i 3Rs	
*Hawai'i Youth Service	
Head Start Collaboration Office	
It's All About Kids	
*INPEACE	
Joint Venture Education Forum	
Junior Achievement of Hawaii	
Kamehameha Schools	
Kanu Hawai'i	



TESTIMONY SB2819

January 27, 2022

Support Intent with **STRONG** recommendations for Change

Aloha Chair Kidani and Committee Members,

The Network supports the intent of SB2819 with **STRONG** recommendations for change to include:

1. Support ALL teachers with cost of living increases in alignment with the current inflation rate of 6.9%, and
2. Support ALL teachers with a step increase through the traditional collective bargaining process, and
3. Delete *“as negotiated between the state public charter school commission and the exclusive representative of collective bargaining unit (5) in a memorandum of understanding to address compensation equity issues and make the necessary discretionary salary adjustments for teachers whose current base salary does not reflect their years of professional service; provided that the moneys shall not be released until the memorandum of understanding is executed between the state public charter school commission and the exclusive representative of collective bargaining unit (5).”* **This is not in compliance with the current charter school statute 302D.**

Mahalo for your time and service to our communities,

Amanda Fung, President

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "A. Fung".

Sione Thompson, Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sione Thompson".

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 9:14:36 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Elizabeth Wiggans	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments:

Good afternoon Members of Hawai`i State Senate,

My name is Elizabeth Wiggans and I teach 6th grade science at Konawaena Middle School in Kealahou, Hawai`i Island, and I support SB 2819.

The teachers at our school and complex that have shouldered the burden of compression are heroes for enduring the fiscal punishment incurred. They are teacher leaders of rigor and structure at our elementary, middle and high schools, without whose direction we'd be lost. It is clear that when teachers are kept longer, their craft is improved and therefore the academic output of their improved. In this time of change, uncertainty, and tumult, let's value the static pillars of our system and rectify the pay they have earned.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 5:56:28 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Aaron Kubo	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments:

Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819.

Thank you for your consideration.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 9:56:20 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Lisa Morrison	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments:

I am Lisa Morrison, an Arts and Communication teacher at Maui High School. I have been teaching in Hawaii for almost 11 years, which means I am at the make or break point with this career. I have taken as many education credits as I can use to advance across the salary schedule, so now I am earning as much as I ever will without raises, unless this bill passes and allows me to be compensated according to the years of service and expertise I developed while working with children in the public schools. Inflation and cost-of-living increases ensure that my salary will be more inadequate the longer I work for the Department of Education. I never expected teaching to be a dead-end job after only a decade, but if there is no hope for increased compensation I need to consider whether staying in a job I love is worth endangering my family's financial future. I am not alone with this worry; thousands of teachers are in the same position I am and deciding right now whether we can afford to stay. We all hope you'll decide it's worth having knowledgeable, qualified teachers in Hawaii public schools and pass this bill. Mahalo, Lisa Morrison, Maui High School

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/25/2022 9:23:21 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Phillippe Rivera Fernandez-Brennan	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819.

I have taught in Hawai'i public schools for the past 7 years. This is my 8th year teaching in the Honolulu District. I am also in my 4th year as a PhD student at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa in education, curriculum and instruction.

Compression has created an exodus of veteran and highly qualified teacher because of the unfair lack of compensation due to compression. If this issue is not address, there is less insentive for teachers to stay in the profession. I know a teacher who has resigned because they had to work another job in addition to teaching in order to afford rent and to support her family. It is also hard for teachers to purchase our own home.

If teachers are earning graduate degrees and doctoral degrees, becoming leaders in education, sacrificing out own money and resources to fund our classroom and projects, and enduring disrespect from the public and our lack of salaries keeping up with inflation, as many other countries, teachers in Hawai'i must be compensated for our education and experience.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819.

Thank the committee for the opportunity to testify.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/25/2022 10:02:36 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Sandra Afuso-Fernandez	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the committee:

My name is **Sandra Afuso-Fernandez**. I am a teacher at Ma'ema'e Elementary School in **Honolulu District** on the island of 'Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2819.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue. The Department of Education will need additional funding to ensure that teachers who were consistently overlooked and undervalued for many, many years will finally receive the pay that they deserve. Our veteran teachers are worth it as they are important to the future of all of our children in Hawaii.

I have been teaching in Hawaii for the past 20+ years. When was little, I always admired my teachers and aspired to be one when I grew up. Through college, people would tell me that teachers don't make money and would struggle to make ends meat, but still decided that teaching was for me. Little did know that I would end up working a second job for 15 years to supplement my income as a teacher.

There have been many times that I have second guessed my decision to become a teacher through the tough economic times where we had furlough Fridays, pay freezes, step freezes, and spent time lobbying at the State Capitol to gain the attention of law makers to value teachers. Perhaps it is time for me to finally consider leaving a profession that I love because it is a struggle to provide for my family due to Hawaii's high cost of living outpacing my teacher salary. Or perhaps it is time that I consider "retiring" at the age of 48 and explore other opportunities to provide for my family. Sadly I know that I am not alone in this delimma.

As a veteran teacher who has been teaching for over 20 years, I have seen many highly experienced teachers retire and replaced by "rookie" newbie teachers who need time and experience to hone their teaching skills. Being an effective teacher takes years working with students and parents, understanding curriculum, and really knowing how to make a difference in students' education. Valuing experienced teachers with salary adjustments that they deserve will keep them in the classroom longer and ensure that students have veteran, experienced, and qualified teachers.

We desperately need your help to correct a great disservice to our veteran teachers. Now is the time to show teachers that they are valued.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Sandra Afuso-Fernandez

(Honolulu District, 'Oahu)

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/25/2022 9:40:13 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Christy Sakamoto	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

RE: HB 2819

Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Christy Sakamoto. I am a teacher at Kamali'i Elementary School in Kihei on Maui. I am submitting testimony in support of SB2819. I greatly appreciate your consideration of adjusting the salaries of employees based on years of experience. We continue to feel that this is necessary and right in order to compensate faithful employees fairly and retain qualified teachers.

I have been a dedicated teacher on Maui for over 20 years. During this time, my fellow teachers and I have endured a strike, many contracts with no step increments embedded, furlough Fridays, and increased demands and paperwork with no extra compensation. I have been willing to tolerate all of this, despite the financial burden put on my family, because I am passionate about teaching. I have been steadfast in remaining loyal to my profession here on Maui while being underappreciated and underpaid.

As teachers, our main priority is our students. We consistently put students' needs in front of our own, sometimes even in front of the needs of our own families. In difficult times like these, however, we must also realize the importance of taking care of ourselves and staying physically and emotionally strong. If we are dedicating ourselves to our students, we must be in a position where we are able to do provide for them with continued passion and confidence. Teachers have already faced the harsh disappointment of not receiving the benefits from fixing the salary compression issue, as we have been fighting for this for years. We continue to hope for this great step in the right direction for fair pay.

Teachers work hard, we will continue to work hard, and we deserve to be paid fairly. PLEASE help us make this happen.

Mahalo.

Christy Sakamoto, BKM Complex Area, Maui

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/25/2022 9:52:14 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Erich Smith	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Good day,

I have worked in the Hawaii DOE as a secondary science teacher for the last 25 years. I am still not at the top of the pay scale. I continue to struggle financially. This is not acceptable and the compression of the salary schedule needs to be addressed. We should have annual pay increases and not have to bargain for these. Many of my colleagues have either left the profession or moved to private schools where the pay is better. I hope that I won't have to join them.

Thank you,

Erich Smith

Science Teacher

Kalaheo High School

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 2:27:26 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Evelyn Gamez	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2819. My name is Lynsi Melia and I teach at Maui High School.

The change in salary compression will allow for a raise in pay that doesn't depend on negotiations. This bill would realign teachers whose step does not align with their years of service based upon two years of service per step. Having this option to increase your salary would incentive teachers to continue being teachers in Hawaii for longer periods of time and help with the teacher shortage crisis. Many teachers are leaving the profession due to the high living costs which are unique to the islands. Combine those living costs with high student loans and teachers end up stressed with nothing to show for their wages.

The teacher, whose position I took over in 2015, left abruptly at the end of the year after being offered a better position in another state where he could own a home and a new vehicle. These options seem ever further away for so many teachers on the islands who have to settle for renting an apartment and depending on a "maui cruiser" for their commutes to work. There are numerous accounts of this same scenario playing out across the islands. Please take the first step to stop the teacher shortage in Hawaii.

This bill will give teachers an opportunity to continue to grow their wages while staying in the profession.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819.

Mahalo for your time,

Aloha Chair Michelle N. Kidani and members of the Committee on Education

Scheduled public hearing 01-28-22 3:00PM; CR229 & videoconference

I am submitting testimony in **Strong Support** of S.B. NO. 2819.

My name is Justin Hughey, Special Education Teacher at King Kamehameha III Elementary.

Our State Constitution never allocated property taxes to fund public education. We are the only district in the Country that doesn't fund public education with property taxes. We have suffered from dilapidated buildings, meager funding and too few teachers since 1911. The only entity that can change this is the legislature.

Thank you for addressing teacher compensation. My wife and I were looking to move to Washington State because we would gain \$77,000 more combined income there, compared to what we were currently are making here.

In order for our local economy to work, we need a functional public educational system. In order to obtain that we need to fill the teacher shortage. Fixing the decompression is one step in the right direction. I spent ten years working nights serving tables until I suffered a slipped disc due to my body breaking down from being overworked. You can't expect good results when teachers have to work two full time jobs. Once you pay teachers a comparable salary, you will fill all the positions. This couldn't come at a better time because a tsunami of teachers are about to retire early because the job has gotten too dangerous, due to the pandemic.

This bill is long overdue. I am in **strong support** of S.B. NO. 2819.

Stay Safe,
Justin Hughey

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 8:56:59 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
peter celebre	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Hello,

My name is Pete Celebre and I have been teaching at Ilima Intermediate in Ewa Beach for the past 17 years. I am also the husband of Kim Celebre who is in her 18th year of teaching for the Hawaii DOE. I am writing this testimony in support of SB2819 because I, like thousands of other teachers across the state, are not getting the pay that we rightly have earned with our years of service. Many of us are struggling to make ends meet and support our families with the pay that we are receiving. Due to the compression issues over the years my salary has not been adjusted proportionally in comparison to my counterparts that have come into the DOE in more recent years. There are teachers that have been working for 6 years that make close to the same amount as I do with 17 years of service and this should not be.

Every year I watch teachers leave the DOE for the simple fact that they cannot support their families on our inadequate salaries and that deeply saddens me. I have seen some amazing people walk away from this profession and while I do understand why it never makes it easy. Our kids deserve better than that! I sit here today as a 17 year veteran of the DOE and humbly ask that my salary be appropriately adjusted to match my years of service. Please understand it is the teachers left standing such as myself that have not given up on our Keiki and this wonderful profession that we have dedicated our lives to. Please do what is right now and pass SB2819. It would truly be a tragedy to let this opportunity slip by and face the risks of seeing more of our veteran teachers leave this profession. Stand with us and support SB2819. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,**Pete Celebre**

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 8:50:14 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
L. M.	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am a 14-year veteran teacher who has gotten the opportunity to reach the highest class on the pay scale by my 5th year of teaching. Since then, it is not in my interest or capability to take any more professional development classes, not due to my lack of wanting to better my teaching for the students and their success but rather because of the time away from my family and cost it takes to do so. Without any type of incentive (yes, we still need an incentive to take something extra that will take away time from our families and money from our pockets) it makes it unlikely for me to ever take more PD classes. In addition to that, knowing that I will never be able to get any raise after all the extra time and effort I put into my profession outside of work hours not only feels offensive but also not keeping up with the times (aka inflation, covid-related ramifications, etc.).

I have honestly thought about leaving teaching many times, especially recently, and I have wanted to be a teacher since I was 5 years old. My mother was a teacher who left the profession but still inspired me to become one. I have 5 very close friends who have also left the profession for various reasons but the cost of living and the reality of raising a family in Hawaii are not aligned with our pay in general (especially compared to the salary/cost of living in the rest of the US) and knowing that we can't get any compensation to STAY in our profession without renegotiations which we can't personally affect is a major reason I would be leaving. There are very few other professions that need a degree where the "top" are capped at a salary and cannot go anywhere else in pay other than changing to a 12 month position, becoming an administrator or simply leaving the profession. I humbly ask that you give us what we deserve and keep up with the times, as many of us are trying to make a life in this expensive state, me including. Our hope is to move into our own home and not have to live with family members and with our current pay situation, we can't even affect it if we wanted to. Thank you.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 5:43:13 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Julia Davison	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Supporting this bill will aid teacher shortage.

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819.

I, Paul Tokuno have been a teacher in Hawaii for the past 20 years. I have been through prolonged strikes both as a teacher and as a son of teachers. I have seen different administrations come and go but the one thing that has remained constant is the fact that teachers in Hawaii are underpaid!

For many years during my tenure, the only way to increase my and my wife's pay was to give up our weekends and sit in a cafeteria with hundreds of other teachers trying to reclassify. We weren't able to receive "Step" raises each year due to our contract. As newly weds with kids on the way, each year we didn't reclassify we took a pay cut due to inflation. Each year became harder and harder and a future in Hawaii didn't seem possible for us. We saw many of our friends and family leave the state or the profession due to financial reasons. None of them regret it, instead they are thriving because they are truly talented and no doubt it was a huge loss for the DOE.

It's been some time now since the early days of struggling and through hard work and perseverance we are somewhat comfortable. We still teach summer school and I work a separate job to provide travel opportunities. Getting to the highest step now will be huge for our family since it impacts two incomes. Being recognized for our longevity will also be great for our morale!

The last point I'd like to make is that the decision to stay here in Hawaii is not solely based on pay. Being public school teachers, our family does not have the extra 3-4 thousand dollars a month to send our kids to private schools. We must trust and rely on the same public school system we experienced and are currently working in. Our greatest fear now is that if teachers are not compensated or offered a competitive salary, many will either retire, leave or just choose not to become teachers all together. We see the effects of low staffing and long term substitutes. Emergency hires, unlicensed and unqualified teachers are becoming more prevalent in our schools and that is what will ultimately force us to leave.

We've been looking at different public school systems in the mainland which outperform many of our top private schools. With the equity in our home we could easily buy something 2-3 times larger than our current home and the cost of living will be much less. We would be coming in with similar salaries with the potential to make much more. In fact, with the small percentage of retirement we would both receive from Hawaii, we would make much more.

Obviously a move to the mainland if this bill does not pass is definitely on the table. I'm sure it will be difficult to do but once we leave I have no doubt we will thrive. As mentioned above, my wife and I have been through some of the darkest times in Hawaii's educational history and have survived with a lot of sacrifices. Moving forward, I

feel that now is the time to solve our educational issues with this Bill. I think there are many other teachers like us who feel they have been wronged by the system and will not let that happen to another generation. Please do the right thing and pass Bill 2819 for the sake of Education and the future of our Keiki!

Mahalo for your time,

Paul Tokuno

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 9:38:39 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Arnold K. Martinez	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the committee. I am submitting testimony in support of Senate bill SB2819.

My name is Arnold Martinez and I have been teaching for the Hawaii DOE for 18 years. I currently teach at a title 1, hard to staff school. Prior to teaching in Hawaii, I was teaching in California for 5 years. My prior experience out of state gave me a unique perspective regarding contracts and teacher salaries. Each of my 5 years of teaching in California resulted in a step increase based on years of experience and I was surprised to learn that was not the case here in Hawaii. The step increases based on years of experience served many purposes. They rewarded teachers for their hard work, they helped retain teachers and they tried to help teachers keep pace with cost of living and inflation. Living here in Hawaii, we all know the cost of living is very high. For my 18 years of teaching here, I have worked additional part time jobs to make ends meet. My wife works 3 jobs in order for us to raise our family here. We love it here, I love teaching the kids here and inspiring them to go to college and realize their dreams. As I approach 20 years of teaching here, I have considered my options to continue, I would love to continue teaching another 10 years however being compressed /stuck on the same salary step is discouraging. Many of us feel we did our part during the 2009 economic recession and we did not recover from that financially. Add that to the issue of compression and we have been underpaid for many years.

Thank you for listening to our testimony. Please vote yes in support of Bill SB2819.

Mahalo!

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 9:41:09 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Paul McDonnell	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee.

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819.

I have been teaching full time here as a middle school science teacher for a little over 15 years and am woefully underpaid compared to my counterparts in other states. In order to have a reasonable standard of living, I also work again right after school teaching adult classes for a non-profit 3 days a week. On the 4th day of the week I work providing support to a disabled individual. I have one day a week free to run errands, work late in my classroom, or catch up with my friends/family. On the weekends, I work one full day at a third job. It is tiring and difficult. Fixing the salary compression and underpayment would enable me to free up more time for myself which turns into a win for myself, all of my students, DOE, and ultimately the entire state. Please support SB2819. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Paul McDonnell

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 9:35:26 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Colleen Rost-Banik	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha. My name is Colleen Rost-Banik. I am a resident of Honolulu and an instructor within the University of Hawaii system. I encourage you to support and pass SB2819, which makes salary adjustments in order to pay senior teachers--those who have experience and we should keep--more equitably. Increased pay will help our experienced teachers be able to afford to stay in the teaching profession. This has proved to be a beneficial step in other states. Because Hawaii's teachers already receive the lowest pay in the nation when considering the cost of living, we need to raise the wages of all teachers. This is one step in that direction.

Respectfully,
Colleen Rost-Banik, PhD

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 9:33:29 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Reinaldo Corpuz	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee.

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2819.

My name is Reinaldo Corpuz, special education teacher for 28 years with the DOE.

I am one of the 8000 plus teachers who have had their salary compressed on the salary schedule. My 28 years of service to the DOE fall out of alignment with salary steps and with more years of service. By passing this SB2819, veteran teachers such as myself who have made a career commitment to teaching our children, will be compensated with more equity based on their years of service. As I am closer to retirement, the passage of this bill will give me an added incentive to continue my teaching career in Hawaii.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill SB2819.

Thank you to the committee for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Reinaldo Corpuz, special education teacher, DOE

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 6:24:21 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
May Anne Kim	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Greetings Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee.

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2819. My name is May Anne Kim and was born and raised in Hawaii. I started to pursue my degree in education at a mainland university, however I felt the need to come back home to complete my degree at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. I was grateful for my opportunity to leave the state, as it opened my eyes to the special place Hawaii holds in my heart. It was at UH where I met teachers with the similar passion for education. Many of us wanted to be the teacher we needed when we were in elementary school. After meeting all of our program requirements, we were excited to start in our own classrooms in school year 2015-2016.

Fast forward to today, eight years later. I have taught at the same Title I school in the Leeward district. I have taught my own third grade classroom, co-taught with two other teachers in a third grade classroom, and spent the last five years teaching kindergarteners. While on the kindergarten team, we even started a Summer Bridge program with the support of administration to help ease our young learners transition to school (since most of them do not have access for free/affordable) preschool -- but that is another issue for another time).

In the past 8 years, I have managed to take enough professional development courses to reclassify to Class VII. It was a wonderful incentive to better my craft by taking professional development courses. The courses helped me learn strategies to better help the large population of English Learners at my school. I learned how to engage students through Project Based Learning, Design Thinking, and with technology. However, after the eight years, I am still stuck on the 5th step. If I'm being honest, without the incentive of a pay raise, I have no desire to partake in more professional development courses out of my own pocket.

I am constantly wondering, "What's next?" I ask other educators and they say, "Become a Curriculum Coach", "Become an administrator", and some just say, "Move to the mainland and find a better paying job". I hope you're not surprised when the teacher shortage worsens in the future, and more teachers are leaving the profession and/or leaving the island for better opportunities. There are many resources available online to help teachers transition from the teaching profession to other professions. I know this, because I have looked into them.

In my heart, I don't want to look elsewhere. I came back to Hawaii and to the Leeward district because this is where I grew up. I still want to be the teacher I needed when I was in elementary

school. I want to help students see they are capable of so much more, and there is a whole world out there waiting for them. I don't want to be a Curriculum Coach, or an administrator. I definitely don't want to move to the mainland. I want to remain in the classroom with my students for years to come, however with the compression, I'm also thinking maybe I should just plan my exit now. This might be the testimony of just one teacher, however I can assure you these are not just the thoughts of one teacher. Please help be the voice for all techers and vote in support of Senate Bill SB2819.

Thank you for time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

May Anne Kim

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 9:29:37 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Ms. Fawzia Ali	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Good Morning,

I am writing to support SB2819. I am a special education teacher with 22 years of teaching experience, six of those years with the Hawaii DOE. When I started working for the Hawaii DOE, I met a first year teacher with the same credentials, but he was a graduate of a Hawaii University. This Hawaii graduate was making more money than I was in his first year of becoming a teacher. I came to the state of Hawaii bringing 16 years of experience in the teaching field, but I was making less money then a local graduate born in Hawaii. The salary schedule for mainland teachers moving to Hawaii is completely unfair. As educators, we are not in the field for the money, we only ask that the DOE offer compensation fair across the board to all teachers by incorporating our years of teaching experience into the salary compensation equation. If you want to retain teachers with experience, it is only fair that they are compensated for their experience in the teaching field.

Mahalo,

Ms. Fawzia Ali

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 9:02:44 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Kenisha Strong	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Senior teachers deserve fair compensation. Quality public education is essential to our growth and productivity as a community and society. The importance of teaching should be reflected in the salaries we prescribe for teachers.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 7:29:37 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Gil Ramirez	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha, My name is Gil Ramirez and I'm in support of SB2819. I am a dedicated public school teacher of over 17 years and my salary is compressed. It is heartbreaking that my salary does not support the years of service for my fellow teachers and I. In my career, I have dedicated my life to support our keikis education. I come to work at 6:30 am (way before the contractual hours of 7:45) and prepare lessons after school as well. Throughout the years I have helped our school receive grants and many donation projects. I have seen former students graduate and many ask for letters of recommendations. Why do I do it? I make sure my students are getting a quality educational learning experience.

Unfortunately, after so many years of service, I'm not getting paid to do extra for my students nor have I received any gains financially for my years of service. Does that make sense? What other careers work overtime for free? Around this time last year, my mother, Perlita Ramirez, passed away. She was a retired public school teacher for the DOE. She served for over 27 years as a dedicated teacher. I believe her salary was compressed too. What did I do right after she passed away late at night? I worked on my sub plans for my students so they could learn the next day! Doesn't that sound crazy but it's true. Teachers are expected to provide even during tragic moments of our lives. We go above and beyond for our students.

Unfortunately we are taken for granted as teachers for many years. When will the government support teachers and recognize all the years of service that they have done for our keiki? We financially need support in improving our salary.

Salary compression? I feel robbed, financially, without any salary increase. I look at many friends and family receiving bonuses from their jobs. Yet here I am, in a profession that does not value our educators by not improving our salary.

In closing please value our public school teachers by adjusting our salary based on our years of service. Please end salary compression. We need the support of our leaders and community. We are dedicated to our students. I think it's time for our government to be dedicated in supporting our teachers as well so education could improve exponentially. Mahalo for your time and serving the people of Hawaii like our public school teachers.

Mahalo,

Gil Ramirez

Public school teacher of 17 years

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 7:42:44 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Terri Mei	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2819. I'm Terri Mei and currently a teacher in the Honolulu district for over 10 years. I have a bunch of teacher friends who have left this profession to find other jobs that make more to help support their family. Please vote in support of Senate Bill SB2819.

Thank you,

Terri Mei

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/25/2022 10:04:03 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Holly Uehara	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819. My name is Holly Uehara and this is my ninth year teacher on the Big Island.

While doing my undergrad I remember bumping into people who would ask me the same question, “What are you going into?”

I’ve wanted to be a teacher since I was in kindergarten, so I would always say proudly, “I’m going into teaching.”

Often, when interacting with someone not in the education field, I would get an enthusiastic answer about how great being a teacher would be.

On the other hand I would bump into an old teacher who would try to discourage me or try to push me in another direction.

I was always confused. These were teachers who I admired. I sat in their classroom for a year and learned so much from them. I didn’t understand why they wouldn’t want me to go into teaching.

After teaching for 9 years, I can see where my old teachers were coming from. If the job was just teaching 8:00AM-2:00PM, it would be that amazing job that non-educators see and think about. But the job is not just teaching. It’s teaching AND all the extras that come along with it. It’s collecting loads of data, analyzing that data, tracking students, adjusting your teaching to reach all the students in your classroom, new curriculum, observations, reflections, the list can go on and on. But we do it. Somehow, we do what we need to do, because we know it’ll help our students.

This is what my old teachers have done and probably what their teachers have done before them. Doing what we can with what we have. But the question is, why are they still discouraging me?

I believe the answer to this question lies in value. With all the hours that teachers put into their career, does the pay reflect all of the work that teachers do? Do teachers feel valued for the years they put into this school system? With the current salary schedule, the answer would be “no”.

I am at the beginning of the first part of “compressed” teachers. If this bill is not passed, I will stay at this pay for the next six years of my career. That is not saying I won’t do my best for the next six years. I will continue to work as hard as I can to be the best teacher I can be for my student. But I would be lying if I said it’s not disheartening knowing that there’s nothing I can do to help myself financially except take on a second job or start a side business, which is what a lot of teachers do. Should teachers, who work more than 40 plus hours a week, have to take on a second job to make ends meet? Should teachers feel valued for all the work they do?

That answer is up to you.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/25/2022 9:44:59 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Cynthia Reves	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

My name is Cynthia Reves. I teach English and Journalism at McKinley High School. I am in my 26th year of teaching in Hawaii's public schools. I urge you to pass SB2819, which will positively impact my family.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 4:34:11 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Richard Stange	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Hawaii is an expensive place to live, and we lose teachers who go back to the mainland each and every year. We are having a difficult time retaining teachers. Teachers, myself included, are facing a rising cost of living across the board. We need salary decompression. We need annual step upward mobility. I just got my apartment lease renewal. My association is raising my rent \$300 per month. Teacher healthcare went up this year. Gas is over \$4/gallon. Teachers lost our 21-hours of job embedded professional development and the pay and PD credit which was attached to it. I'm a highly qualified licensed teacher. I do not know if I am going to be able to afford to stay in Hawaii or not. Teacher pay is not keeping up with the cost of living when associations mercilessly raise our rent \$300 per month. Students in Hawaii deserve better than emergency hires, long term substitutes, and non-licensed teachers; and I say that with all due respect to those who fill those positions. We have got to keep the teachers we have, and we are not going to keep teachers by continuing to feed us excuses. The governor has boasted how well our economy is doing, conveniently after we had already ratified our contract.

In addition to retaining teachers, since there is already a large enough shortage, we must recruit more. The University of Hawaii releases [data](#) pertaining to how many students graduate every fiscal year, and with which degree/certificate. During the fiscal year of 2018-2019 (before the pandemic), The University of Hawaii - West Oahu has produced 643 graduates. Out of those 643 students, only 30 were in education. That is only 5%, and with only 4 bachelor's degree programs. That same fiscal year, The University of Hawaii at Manoa graduated 4,551 students; 532 of which were with degrees in education. That is only 12%. The student body percentages have remained consistent since before the pandemic. In addition to retaining those who we have, we need to make our profession desirable to new professionals or those who are working who have returned to college to change careers. With these [statistics](#), I have proven to you that our field is clearly not desirable to the vast majority of young professionals. How can a baccalaureate university with only 4 bachelor's degree programs only produce 5% of education majors? We must do better than that. We must make our field more attractive to young professionals. We will not attract young professionals to our field by continuing to pay teachers a salary that does not keep up with the cost of living in this state.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 6:33:43 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Derek Bishop	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Subject Line: Testimony in Support of SB2819

Dear Hawaii State Senate,

My name is Derek Bishop. I am a 32-year special education teacher veteran at Paauilo Elementary and Intermediate School on the Big Island. This is my testimony regarding SB2819.

Currently I am on Step 11 rather than 14B, or 5 steps lower than I should be, earning \$15,000 less than I ought. As a full-time special education teacher, I have 15 years from California and 17 years from Hawaii. After a lengthy absence, I relocated to Hawaii from the mainland when the special education and hard-to-staff differentials took effect. Even with the differentials, I still took a \$16,000 pay cut to be here. In Hawaii, every dollar of compensation counts. The cost of living in Hawaii is tremendous, and has only been exacerbated by COVID and the influx of wealthy families to the islands during the pandemic.

On the mainland I received yearly salary increment moves in line with years of service. These moves, typically 2-4% each, were automatic. I believe such moves based on years of full-time teaching service are fair, equitable, and extremely helpful to anyone trying to live on a teacher salary. I believe such a policy of automatic salary movement based on years of service should be instituted in Hawaii, where the cost of living is so high.

Also, another related matter is one of years of service granted for service in other school districts. On the mainland the standard is 10 years granted, with many granting 12, 15, 20, or unlimited years of service in order to attract the most qualified and experienced teachers possible. Hawaii grants a maximum of 6 years of service. This is a disincentive for any teacher with 10 years or more of experience, as they will lose their place in their respective salary schedule, forcing them when in Hawaii to accept the pay of a beginning teacher, when they have a wisdom and skill set that should receive a much higher compensation.

Please invest wisely Hawaii's students and their teachers. Please provide pay commensurate with years of service -- and the wisdom and communal stability that they represent.

Mahalo,

Derek Bishop

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 6:21:38 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Maile Atay	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I have been a DOE school counselor for 23 years. Prior to that I was a county worker in HGEA. I've been through two strikes, furloughs, freezes, and rising health care. My take home paycheck has been stagnant for the past 5 years due to rising insurance costs.

Even though I am a veteran teacher, I've often considered early retirement as the workload and stress increases each year. But then I think of the students I'll miss and the possibility of them being left in the care of someone less seasoned or qualified.

Addressing the teacher compression/steps issue would mean a lot to veteran educators. Although I have so many years of service, I am on step 11, class 6. In order to move to higher pay, I often need to pay out of pocket for classes.

Please support SB2819. I wholeheartedly support this bill.

Mahalo for listening.

With gratitude,

Maile Atay

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 7:37:18 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Claire Gearen	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chair Michelle N. Kidani and Vice-chair Donna Mercado Kim, and other members of the Senate Committee on Education,

My name is Claire Gearen, and I am a teacher at Mililani High School. I write in strong support of Senate Bill 2819 relating to teacher compensation.

I graduated from the Master's of Education in Teaching program at UH in 2000 and have been teaching in public schools ever since.

In 2007, I moved back home from Seattle to teach in Mililani. I took a 40% pay cut to do so, yet felt the move was worth it. I calculated that I could recover most of the pay within ten years, and I planned to teach the rest of my career in Hawai'i.

Instead, in the first ten years with the Department of Education, I moved only two steps on the salary schedule. In my intake interview, I was not informed that salary steps must be approved as if they are raises, and that step increases often don't happen.

I love teaching, yet I'm honestly at the point where I may not recommend to enthusiastic youth to enter the profession in Hawai'i. In Seattle, in just four years I saved enough for a 10% down payment on a house. I took the plunge into home ownership in 2004 when the Seattle superintendent promised we would be the fifth highest paid teachers in the Seattle metro area within five years.

In Hawai'i, I have built no equity despite dutifully paying the mortgage on my condo. My savings had to cover the deficit from pay cuts during Furlough Fridays. I recently refinanced my mortgage so that if we do not get step increases in the coming years, I can still keep my home.

Thank you so much for your support of public education, Senator Kidani. I ask for everyone's support on Senate Bill 2819.

Sincerely,
Claire Gearen

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 7:58:31 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Perry Buchalter	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am a 25-year veteran who has now submitted my paperwork for retirement. My wife left the profession this past October. According to the contract, I have been underpaid at least \$12,585 since the announcement 3 years ago that the compression pay was going to be addressed. When COVID hit, the Senate pulled back the compression pay but kept the \$10,000 bonus for SPED teachers. I teach a large number of SPED kids in my line and am at every meeting. How am I any less important? We know that the State has money and that you prioritize it; The State made its message to those of us in the compression track loud and clear, we are not a priority. This has been very difficult to swallow, especially knowing that there is a teacher shortage, why would you not pay us what we are worth?. Over the last decade, I could easily argue I have been underpaid over \$100,000. Since the compression pay was announced and then rescinded, I have lost \$37,775 while we have struggled to make ends meet.

In these tough times, I have been blessed to have a job, I am a National Board Certified educator and have loved this career. I have built a dynamic arts and media program during my career and was planning on staying until at least 2024. I am very grateful for the retirement package and will cut my losses because I still do not believe the State legislators will find it in their hearts to do what is right, and long overdue for those of us on the compression track.

At this point, the only thing that could entice me to stay is to not only reinstate the compression pay but also offer a bonus for past pay that was denied. Knowing this is highly doubtful, I will say aloha and thank you all for allowing me to have enjoyed this wonderful career.

Respectfully,

Perry Buchalter

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 6:06:49 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Shannon Allen	Testifying for HSTA - Aikahi Elementary	Comments	No

Comments:

Good afternoon everyone. I would like to speak about salary compression by starting with something one of my first graders said to me the other day. “Mrs. Allen, I want to be a teacher like you when I get older”. Those words should be flattering, but they are disheartening. I would love to explain to my first grade students that every drop of sweat, every last bit of energy is worth putting into this profession because in the end, society recognizes you as one of the foundational stones that everything else rests upon. Sadly, that is not the case. Instead I would tell my student, teachers earned 11.1% less than other workers with comparable education and experience, according to the nonprofit [Economic Policy Institute](#). In a 2020 study on teacher compensation, Stanford University researcher Eric A. Hanushek found that entry salaries for teachers in 2016, in real dollars, had not changed since 2000, and average salaries for all teachers actually declined slightly over that period.

Teaching is not a profession held in high regard like becoming a doctor or a lawyer; it is not valued monetarily like being a professional athlete or a famous movie star; some people do not even think of teaching on the same professional level as being a police detective or a nurse. I do know people in these professions, but no one can affect change in our lives like teachers do. Ask anyone in any profession, who encouraged them to pursue their dreams or who made it possible for them to get where they are and a majority will name a teacher. We lay the foundation for all dreams to be possible. We create safe places to make mistakes and feedback on how to learn from those mistakes.

Like Aaron Sorkin says, “Education is the silver bullet. Education is everything. We don't need little changes, we need gigantic, monumental changes. Schools should be palaces. The competition for the best teachers should be fierce. They should be making six-figure salaries. Schools should be incredibly expensive for the government and absolutely free of charge to its citizens, just like national defense.” All labor has dignity, and that dignity must be reflected in pay. As Amy McGrath, Democratic candidate for Senate in Kentucky, tweeted, “At the end of the first day of my kids being out of school after our attempts at ‘homeschooling’ ... my conclusion ... teachers are superheroes. The end.”

I’m not sure what a superhero’s salary is supposed to be, but every teacher deserves a whole lot more than what we’re currently paying them.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 8:28:33 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Milanie Dumapit	Testifying for Hi DOE	Support	No

Comments:

I'll keep this short. I've been a teacher for more than 23 years; 11 years on Guam and 13 here on the state of Hawaii.

I've made Hawaii my home and for the number of years I've taught here on Hawaii, I was a SPED teacher, a social studies teacher, a counselor, a parent, and sometimes a classroom cleaner when we were short on classroom cleaners, a school security when the need arises at our school due to shortage of school security, I prepare multiple lessons plans for at least 2 content areas, I get certified on a yearly basis to administer an SBA or ACT exam for our keiki, I took PDE courses so I can get a little in my pocket for at least gas money, I call parents during my planning period, and have to deal with their responses that at times are inappropriate but I continue to keep my composure because we have to be professional, I deal with students who may be on the brink of giving up AND/OR I've had to purchase some of my supplies even if the school provides "some" funding for me for the more than 200 students I get on a yearly basis in an art classroom with no AC at times. The list is never ending.

I've been a VERY patient educator with talks about higher pay, teacher compensation, differentials, etc. only to find out during a pandemic that we may not see any of this but we listen to our governor who offers families \$100.00 to increase our economy?! Nothing against giving an extra to everyone, but this really hurts many of our educators when we hear of this.

I would like to see some kind of care, and intent for our educators throughout our state by any of our politicians who may consider or "care" to give our teachers some kind of incentive to stay in Hawaii and teach with passion.

Supporting this measure would greatly help not only our educators but for our keiki who need consistent and "effective" teachers on our islands. Your consideration to this measure would greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Mrs. M. C. Dumapit

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 9:59:08 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Janice Javar	Testifying for DOE bargaining unit 05	Support	No

Comments:

I am in support of SB2819

Aloha, my name is Janice Javar and I am a Special Education high school teacher at Ka'u High and Pahala Elementary School on Hawaii island.

After working more than 20 years in the public school system, I find that I have not made much progress in regards to moving up the payscale due to compression. It took me 20 years to move horizontally across the classes but moving vertically has not happened for many years. I am in the middle of the salary schedule after 20 years!!! I intend to retire soon but if the legislature approves this bill, it would convince me to remain teaching for a few more years. I have friends who have given up and left the school system because of the frustration they experience trying to provide for themselves and their families.

Please vote in support of SE2819.

Mahalo for providing me the opportunity to testify.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 10:39:19 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Katrina Karl	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2819. I am in my ninth year of my teaching career and have been increasingly concerned about the issue of salary compression. In the past few years I've been in the highest class of our salary schedule, I have already seen that some of my colleagues with over twice as many years of experience hardly earn more than I do. I strongly feel that salary compression must be addressed soon. No matter where teachers are in their careers, the promise that their salary will be commensurate with their years of experience—rather than dependent upon step movements that may take far too long to come—will help to ensure that far more remain in this field. Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819. Thank you for your consideration and for the opportunity to testify.

Katrina Karl

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 11:08:40 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Alex Kendrick	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee,

I have been an English teacher at my alma mater, Kalani High (c/o '87), since 2007. Prior to this I taught at Moanalua Middle for eleven years. I love teaching and helping my students to succeed. I teach Advanced Placement Literature and I started the AP Capstone at Kalani. My students go on to the best schools in the country.

I have twenty-six years of service, and this will be my last. I have worked through strikes, furloughs, and the pandemic. I have mentored thirteen student-teachers over the time of my career. Only two are still teaching in the public school system, and one will be leaving at the end of the year. The teaching salary was never enough. I have worked at least two jobs for my entire teaching career to pay my bills. I can no longer afford to stay in public education and need to get a job that pays a living wage before I can retire. Remaining in public school is not a financially viable option.

Though it will not benefit me, I urge you to pass SB 2819 so my colleagues will be able to remain teaching. After twenty-six years I am still at Step 11, though I achieved Class 7 early in my career. My salary has not kept pace with inflation. Na Keiki o Hawaii are our future. They deserve experienced teachers who can guide them to achieve their goals. And those teachers need a financial incentive to stay in the profession.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Alexander Kendrick

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee.

Re: My Testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819

Aloha! I'm Angelita laea, a school counselor in the Central District at Mililani Waena for over 23 years. I am sharing my testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819 and want to share how I have been undercompensated in a career that I committed my life to during an untimely school year in 1997.

I loved the fact that I was going to impact student lives after I received a Masters in Education in school counseling. I entered into the DOE system also beginning a family being 3 months into my first pregnancy. Little did I know how the teachers contract worked; little did I know that I was going to be caught in this compression group for my entire career.

My salary did increase with the credits that I submitted to move classes within the salary schedule. But unfortunately, I didn't have consistent contractual step movements. I went from claiming 2 exemptions on withholding taxes to claiming 9 so I could more out of my salary to pay my bills. My former husband picked up extra work hours to be able to pay for the mortgage. Our family life became so unbalanced with our work schedules, taking care of a newborn and trying to be financially stable. Unfortunately, our teachers' contract was up for negotiations again during an untimely year 2001 when teachers did go on strike and I was pregnant, picketing the lines, throwing up and feeling nauseated and sick. However, I needed to do what I needed to do - for my family, to continue being in my school counseling career and just as important voicing my concerns and taking action to be fairly compensated. Sadly, the strike and being out of work on strike put me back even further in pay - not being paid, being without a contract even longer, furloughs and a delay in the new contract being established. I have yet to recuperate and ever be fairly compensated.

I am now a single parent and have been since 2008. We cannot change what has happened in the past or the timing of getting into school counseling and starting a new family. Further, I don't regret becoming a school counselor. However, in evaluating my present career and financial status, what would help me to persevere in this career without having to pick up a part time job, would be to be compensated fairly after 23 years of service. I'd rather spend my last years continuing to positively impact young children's lives and also mentoring college student interns getting into school counseling. With the cost of living doubling as a result of the pandemic, it will be impossible to keep my home, pay bills, help my daughter with college debts and paying for necessities without finding another part time job.

When the compression was going to be remedied in January 2020, I was hopeful then but the pandemic happened. Then the cost of living skyrocketed.

I humbly ask that I along with other teachers, librarians, counselors, IRA's be fairly compensated at this point in our careers. We have shown commitment, integrity, care and patience being in the DOE system despite financial inequity. Allow us to be treated as we deserve to be in our tail end of our careers.

Again, I am in support of Senate Bill 2819. Please vote in support of this Bill.

Thank you Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee for giving me this opportunity to share my testimony.

Mahalo,

Angie laea

School Counselor, Mililani Waena Elementary School, Central District

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 11:32:10 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Nohea Goo	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819.

My name is Nohea Goo. I am currently on sabbatical from Dole Middle School in the Honolulu District.

During last school year (SY 20-21) I questioned if teaching was still for me. Pandemic teaching took its toll on me and is the reason I applied for a year long sabbatical. As a 19 year veteran with the Hawaii Department of Education, the expectations put upon teachers has increased exponentially and therefore I feel that teachers in Hawaii, like other teachers across the nation, should have their salaries based on their years of experience. I have gone through furloughs, no child left behind, common core, taught at a CSI (Comprehensive Support and Improvement) school, being at a school on WASC (Western Association for Schools and Colleges) probation, various curriculum changes, and more recently taught through a pandemic. If Hawaii wants to retain qualified teachers, paying them based on years of service is a small ask for all that is done to help Hawaii public school students be successful.

I come from a family of educators, and we have been extremely lucky to continue to educate students given our salary but I know some teachers who have not. I know teachers who have second and third jobs just so that they can support themselves. I know teachers who live with their parents (or in some cases grandparents) because they cannot afford a place of their own. I know teachers that drive cars that barely make it to campus each day because they cannot afford a newer car.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819.

Thank you for the oppportunity to testify.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 3:38:37 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Shelly K Andrews	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

As a school counselor and teacher working at Kailua High School since 2003, I am in support of SB2819. As a teacher, counselor, and a parent of two teenagers also attending public school I believe that teachers are underpaid and are unable to work in Hawaii as a teacher without having a part-time job or finding that due to salary constraints can not afford to live in Hawaii and need to move to the mainland in order to continue in the teaching profession. Over the years I have seen numerous colleagues as well as my son and daughter's teachers either change careers or move to the mainland because they could not afford to teach in Hawaii. As an experienced teacher and counselor, I could be making over \$20,000 more a year if I worked in Connecticut in the same district my father-in-law worked for over 30 years. It is a sad reality that due to the added pressures of the COVID-19 Lockdowns many of the teachers and counselors including myself have thought about retiring early from teaching or finding a new career. If teachers' salaries are not raised in Hawaii I believe that the teacher shortage we currently face will double if not triple in the next few years. Due to the lack of fair teacher salaries in Hawaii, new teachers will decide they will be better paid on the mainland and veteran teachers will decide to retire early or to change careers. Sadly, it is the students attending Hawaii's public schools that will suffer from inexperienced teacher substitutes rather than being taught by a qualified teacher due to the lack of fair teacher compensation.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 3:05:46 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Ben Blakemore	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I have worked in the DOE for more than 20 years and like so many others like myself, I have very little financial incentive to continue working for the DOE due to the fact that my employer has not kept pace with the cost of living nor fully compensated my length of service and experience in my profession. My appeal to pass this bill is not so much for myself, since this bill will be too little too late, but for the sake of my peers who are struggling to continue working in Education. Our keiki need experienced well compensated professionals more than any other time in our history!

Mahalo for your time and consideration for this bill

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 1:21:13 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Richard Toynton	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2819.

I have taught English and reading at King David Kalakaua Middle School for more than 10 years. If this bill passes, my steps would increase by two, which would make a significant positive impact on my finances. I manage a rental apartment and my car is available full-time for Turo car sharing in an effort to make ends meet financially right now. Inflation, the high cost of living, and low pay make it difficult to not entertain thoughts of joining former coworkers who have taken teaching jobs in Seattle for almost double my current salary. These teachers Facetime me occasionally to show me the homes, cars and high quality of life they enjoy while working only one job. I don't require a four-bedroom house with pool and garage, but it would be nice to afford an apartment with a bedroom in Hawaii where I was born and raised.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill SB2819.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify and for your consideration.

Sincerely, Richard Toynton

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 12:33:06 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Cynthia Fong	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Legislators,

I am a teacher who is salary compressed and I support this bill as an initial effort to improve teacher compensation.

I started at a T5-3 in 2004. I am now a T7-11 on the salary pay scale. I have worked for 17+ school years (since the Fall 2004) as a middle school Science, STEM and CTE educator on Hawaii Island in a Title I school, Hilo Intermediate. I also voluntarily run a variety of successful and popular STEM programs during the school day and after school. This is a lot of work and effort and is certainly not well compensated.

I voluntarily mentor and support other teachers (elementary to high school) to support them in these STEM efforts. But I keep questioning myself if I should continue to do this career path. I know my local school community appreciates it, but appreciation only goes so far if you are not compensated adequately.

1. compensation, like other teachers who are in my similar situation on the pay scale, is not up to par with the professional services we provide. It bites when you know a teacher with less experience is close to making what you are making after almost 2 decades of work. A skilled laborer in construction will make more than I do with less educational requirements and professional development expectations.

Shouldn't my compensation be reflective of my efforts and service time?

It took me time to become good at teaching - a lot of hands-on learning (time) and a lot of reflection, professional development (paid for by me with some hours credited, some not due to the vagaries of the PDE3 rules). Prior to this career change, I came from private industry and if I needed to take a professional development class, the company paid for my time and the class. In order to move up pay class, a teacher has to pay for a course, take it, submit a portfolio and then wait until they accrued 15 credits to get an increase in salary (takes years if you do other programs with students). This is ludicrous.

After being hired, my pay was low compared to what I was earning in private industry prior to moving to Hawaii. We then had an immediate drop in the economy and well, my effective pay

stayed stagnant. It essentially became a pay cut since my cost of living increased. Adding years of service would mitigate this.

However, I decided to do a career change and teach based on the need for science teachers. I'm glad I did. I enjoy what I do. But I'm questioning myself over this decision since my colleagues, whom I left, are easily making double or more of what I earn and they live in a lower-cost of living area. I have a second flexible job to supplement my income so I could be sure to provide myself and family a reasonable level of living and put my children through college with minimal debt.

I would have never entertained teaching as a new college graduate due to my debt level at the time (which is nothing compared to our young adults today). I don't encourage our young graduating college adults to entertain teaching if they have substantial student debt because they will not earn enough over their lifetime, to pay it off and still have a reasonable life. This is due to our high cost of living (rent, food, transportation - nothing fancy, just the basic needs).

I'm glad that new teacher salaries are higher but an unintended consequence is those of us who have been around and committed, are barely above the salary levels these new teachers are earning and yet, we have more responsibilities and expectations due to our experience level. This is not conducive for an energized workforce.

Already, due to this pandemic and the continued bureaucracy, I know of many excellent educators who have simply retired early and are now working at local stores. We don't have a good stream of new teachers coming in and those that do, don't often stay long because it takes a certain mindset and willingness to tackle many educational and social concerns all at once. Instead, lowering of the qualifications to teach is becoming more prevalent which has not led to an improvement of student learning. (I've seen this in science where the passing praxis scores were lowered to get more teachers).

We are now in a situation in which substitutes only need a high school diploma to be qualified to teach for a credentialed, college educated teacher. This could have been a student who graduated last year being in charge of our class for a day, week or even as an emergency hire. Really?!

What can fix this is:

1. Pay teachers as professionals.
2. Fix the salary compression because it is not fair to your experienced and veteran teacher. Experience counts a lot.
3. Include years of service as a normal in the pay scale.
4. Pass and FUND this act.

Invest in your teachers. They are the foundation of our communities. High quality and experienced teachers provide our communities with an educated workforce that will positively affect the economy. It makes monetary sense to do this for the long range health of our local economies.

Sincerely,

Cynthia Fong

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 3:07:42 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Leilani Yamauchi	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee. I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819.

My name is Leliani Yamauchi and I am a fourth grade teacher at Waiākea Elementary on the island of Hawai‘i. I have been teaching for 11 years and am directly affected by the salary compression.

For the past 5 years, I have been actively working on achieving movement in class by seeking out professional development courses that align with curriculum and standards. Although I enjoy the useful knowledge I've gained taking these courses, my main reason for taking them is to see an increase in my salary. I am close to achieving my last class increase (class 7) and was so proud of how far I've come until a teacher friend of mine shared the almost similar salary she receives. My teacher friend hasn't been teaching as long as I have and it was disheartening to hear how close in income she is to me. I would like to give you an idea of what my net pay is. I am the sole provider of medical, vision, and dental for my family of four. Every two weeks I bring home a little over \$1,600.

I absolutely love the profession I am in. I make sure that I am creating a safe classroom environment for my students. I spend a great deal of my own personal time planning lessons and completing work. Yet I feel greatly underappreciated and cannot see myself in a career where I am not being paid what I am worth and what my family deserves in order to live in Hawai‘i comfortably. I have considered seeking employment outside of the D.O.E to continue in the profession I love. I am also at the point where I've even considered quitting this profession altogether.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819. Thank you for this opportunity to submit my written testimony.

Bill: Senate Bill 2819
Title: Relating to Teacher Compensation
Position: STRONGLY SUPPORT
Committee: Senate Committee on Education
Date: January 28, 2022 3:00pm

Aloha Honorable Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Mercado Kim and Members of the Committee,

My name is Vickie Parker Kam, I have been employed as an educator for over 20+ years with the Hawaii Department of Education, HSTA active since 2004. I am writing today to strongly support SB2819.

We have presented testimony for years that the current pay scale does not accurately reflect the years of dedicated service teachers have provided to our keiki. We are asking you to support SB2819 to begin addressing this issue. We are proud of the work we do and the difference we make in students' lives, we also deserve a pay scale that reflects this dedication.

Immediate needs include:

- Fixing step compression, and creating additional classes on the salary schedule;
- Provide competitive salaries and benefits reflecting Hawaii's high cost of living;
- Reestablishing annual step increases, honoring current negotiated salaries;
- Provide funding for increased preparation time, teaching positions, and additional personnel.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify, and thank you again for your support of Hawai'i's s teachers, students and families.

Sincerely,
Vickie LP Kam
HIDOE Educator
HSTA Board of Director, Leeward
(speaking as an individual)

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 12:42:46 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Barbara Jensen-Haight	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I am a middle school teacher of over 20 years with a master's degree and qualified in SPED. Please support improving conditions of salary compensation for us. It's so hard to convey the dismal circumstances of working so hard, spending so many years of education for this career, yet needing a second job to make ends meet with the salary I receive. Very few younger people are willing to do this. Fewer and fewer qualified teachers will be available over time. People in their twenties now (an example is my daughter) can have starting salaries in companies here and the mainland close to what I make after working as an educator for over 20 years. That's an unconscionable level of neglect of our educators. Please support our qualified educators.

Mahalo,

Barbara L. Jensen-Haight

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 1:59:09 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Michael Johnson	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in support of this bill. Many teachers I know have left the job due to not being able to have the finances to live in Hawaii. The ability to buy your own home is far out of reach for most teachers. That is a large stressor that forces them to leave the state. My wife and I were almost in that group but with financial help from family we were able to stay. We still have to budget and save in order to meet our goals and now that we have kids it is becoming harder. We will love to save for their college but right now we do not have that system in place. With the step movements in place we can plan a budget that will grow with our family in the future.

Mahalo,**Michael Johnson**

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 3:07:52 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Rowan Puaa	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I, Rowan Puaa, am a teacher at Kaunakakai Elementary School on the island of Moloka'i. I write in support of Bill SB 2819, Salary Compression and hope for it to be rectified to save the fidelity of Hawaii's teachers.

We want to try our best to retain our Hawaii teachers from either leaving the profession or moving to the mainland in search of a higher pay. Hawaii has been in a "teacher shortage crisis" we NEED to retain our teachers before it turns into a catastrophe! Giving teachers the pay in accordance with their years of experience would help us to retain our teachers WHILE continuing to provide our keiki with the teachers they deserve.

I have been an educator for only 5 years. And within this short period of time I see how teachers are over worked, under-valued and not to mention substantially under paid, we do not get over-time yet we still put in the time because teachers continue to do things for the betterment of our keiki, we are shaping the people of tomorrow! We don't want our great teachers to stop teaching our keiki, WE NEED THEM!

Fixing compression will boost the salaries of most teachers, helping and hoping to persuade many of them to remain on the job and stay in Hawaii where our keiki can benefit from their experience.

Sincerely,

Rowan Puaa

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 2:25:38 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Liz King Salz	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I thank the Legislature and the Governor for the salary gains that teachers have experienced over the last 20 years. I am here to tell you that it has made a world of difference for us. But still, there is room for improvement, and this bill is a good way to address the inequalities that are built into the current salary system. Please support SB2819.

Thank you,

Liz King Salz, Olomana Youth Center

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 11:34:01 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Angela Huntmer	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I have been a special education teacher for 17 years. Please pass this bill so that I and other veteran teachers can finally be paid the salary we are supposed to be paid based on our years of experience teaching. There are funds available for this so it can finally be done. We must do everything we can to encourage teacher recruitment for the long term and teacher retention. Mahalo.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 12:06:16 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Aaron Kubo	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee.

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819.

My name is Aaron Kubo I am an eighth-grade social studies teacher at Hilo Intermediate School in the Hilo-Waiakea Complex area on Hawai`i Island.

Recognizing teachers' years of service and experience is important in demonstrating the worth and retainment of qualified educators. Having that recognition be reflected in their salary with incremental step movements is one way to improve retainment.

Many districts across the nation have incremental and automatic step movements where they move up every year; not based on funding availability. I have been tempted many times to leave Hawai`i, my home, and go back to the school district where I got my teaching license from. There I'd be making 20% more than I am right now just based on the yearly automatic step movements and when factoring in years of experience that goes up another 40%.

My mother, an elementary educator, worked almost 30 years in the state of Hawai`i and did not make it to the top of the pay scale before she retired. How disappointing that she dedicated her life to the keiki of Hawai`i for almost three decades and did not reach the top of the pay scale for years of service. Unfortunately, my mother's story is not unique and incredibly disheartening.

In the end, how is the state of Hawai`i going to retain qualified educators? One way is to pay them better by decompressing the salary, step, schedule. To place educators where they deserve to be. Second, you need to continue to move teachers consistently upwards on the salary scale, otherwise, we will end up right back here with 1000's of educators compressed and being underpaid. If nothing is done many educators are going to leave the profession either because of retirement or because they can make more money for less work/stress elsewhere.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Aaron Kubo, Hilo-Waiakea Complex, Hawai'i Island

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 12:20:03 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Bruce Lin	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please support this bill as it will help limit the number of teachers who are looking to leave the profession. We already have a teacher shortage and many more are leaving every year. At our school alone we have 3 full time teacher positions that are unable to be filled and are using long term or daily subs to fill the vacancy. Our school is highly regarded and not a hard to staff location and we are still having trouble filling these positions. Passing this bill will help keep our teachers who are thinking of leaving the following school year and it will give teachers some compensation for the years of service they have already given. With no contractual pay raises for the next school year and as teachers are going to school everyday in Hawaii unlike other states where virtual learning is pursued this bill needs to be passed to help teachers across the state.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 1:23:22 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Shannon Kealoha	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha ,

I am writing in support of SB 2819 Salary Compensation for Teachers. I am just one of many teachers who have put our heart and soul into education our keiki, our future, that are not properly compensated.

I am a veteran teacher of 27 years, and currently also the Math Department head at Maui Waena Intermediate.. I am a single parent and have worked tirelessly as an educator, and feel so disheartened that year after year, teachers are the ones that when financially hard times come around for the state, we are the ones to take the big HIT. I feel that our profession is not regarded with the respect it deserves.

Most years I have to take on a part time job to help support my family. It is so hard financially to teach here in Hawai'i. What makes it even more disheartening is working with colleagues that have maybe 10 years of teaching under their belt, but they are earning the same as my 27 years. I feel that my years of service are not at all valued. I have worked through a strike, Furlough Fridays, pay cuts, pandemic and by God's grace am I still here. There are many times that I think about moving out of Hawai'i or changing profession, but I am still here.

I was born and raised here in Hawai'i and I truly want to stay here and continue to help teach this new generation. I humbly ask for your support and thank you in advance.

Mahalo Nui,**Shannon Kealoha**

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 1:46:07 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Laila Popata	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

Please do something to address the salary compensation issue. I have been working for the Hawaii D.O.E. since 2004 after working in California. My colleagues in California have seen their salaries increase each year with their years of service. I have only seen my salary increase after I have taken professional development courses. My salary is 40,000 less per year than my teacher friends in California and they have asked me over and over again, why I would stay in a state that does not reward my experience?

Yes, paying teachers based on years of service is costly, but we must compensate our teachers fairly! Teachers will not stay in this state if they can not afford to pay for the basic cost of living. We are professionals, who are trained and in very high demand across the country! There is a teacher shortage!

I know that I could leave, like so many others before me, so that I could be paid a fair salary. I do not want to leave. I love Hawaii and my job, but being stuck at the same wage for so many years while prices are rising is very frustrating.

Please support this bill so that teachers could be fairly compensated for their years of service. The teachers and the keiki of Hawaii deserve this!

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 1:51:08 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Naomi Oshiro	Testifying for HSTA	Support	No

Comments:

I support SB2819 for compression salary and hope that you will also. For years, teachers have been short changed and had to fight for pay raises, which we should not have to do as professionals.

Thank you,

Naomi Oshiro

Testimony 1-26-22
Andrew Henderson
In Support of SB2819 Relating to Teacher Compensation

Aloha,

My name is Drew Henderson and I am the Math and Computer Science Department Leader at Kohala High School. I have taught in the Hawai'i DOE for the past 15 years, have twin boys in 3rd grade at Kohala Elementary, and 2 of my children have graduated from Kohala High School. I am writing on behalf of myself, my children, my students and my coworkers. I am writing to discuss two issues regarding teacher pay:

- 1) Salary Compression
- 2) Differentials

Salary compression has been my priority issue on every HSTA survey since the Abercrombie administration and still nothing has been done. My wife who started 1 year before me in 2006 is actually 2 salary steps ahead which in itself accounts for a ~\$2,000 annual discrepancy in pay. I don't need to go through all the numbers, but the point is that teachers that "took one for the team" during economic downturns of the Lingle and Abercrombie Administrations are not paid proportionally to their experience relative to newer teachers. I have only received 4 step increases in 15 years of service. Had the annual step raises provided for in earlier contracts "subject to legislative approval" been granted I would be looking at ~\$6,000 increase in annual salary and my wife who works with me as a High school Counselor would be earning another ~\$4,000 + annually which would increase our total household income by almost \$10,000+ annually!

We are fortunate enough to have been receiving differential pay for the past couple of years and it has made a real difference in our ability to sustain ourselves financially. In addition to both of us teaching full time, we also run an aquaponic lettuce business to make ends meet. Between our \$21,000 in lettuce sales and the combined \$10,000 in differential pay last year, we had the first year in our lives (in our forties!) where we didn't accumulate additional debt. It took us 15 years of teaching, a successful side business, and 2 hard-to-fill salary differentials to reach a basic level of financial solvency and people wonder why we have a teacher shortage!

Unfortunately most people haven't been able to pull off what we have and I have seen countless talented coworkers come and go as a result. Too many to name in fact. I was thinking about the TFA (Teach for America) teachers alone last night and I counted 9 at one school over about 6 years! Maureen, Simone, Qi, Amber, Monet, Santana, Jason, the sparkley blonde girl whose name I can't even remember, and the one a student threw a chair at. They are only a drop in the bucket of squandered opportunities and wasted resources.

We lost our best math teacher and department head last year because she had a baby, couldn't afford her rent and moved back to Indiana after 5 years of service. Students cried, she cried, and I cried typing this.

COVID-19 brought on a mass exodus of early retirement because people don't think it is worth it to keep working despite the risk of exposure in addition to the regular stress load that our profession entails. Our tiny school alone lost about a quarter of its most experienced faculty in the past 3 years.

Our students (my children included) need stability now more than ever. I urge you to do what is necessary to recruit and retain as many high quality teachers as possible as an investment in our future and our childrens' future.

In summary I am exactly half-way through my career, I am one of the oldest and most experienced teachers at my school at the ripe old age of 41, I have more responsibility and am working harder than ever before, I am underpaid ~\$6,000/year, and my wife is sitting beside me (underpaid by ~\$4,000) in the same boat hoping things will get easier with time.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

Andrew Henderson

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 2:34:08 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Anna Crawford	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Measure Title: RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION.

Report Title: Department of Education; Charter Schools; Teacher Compensation; Experimental Modernization Project; Appropriation (\$)

Description: Makes an appropriation to fund an experimental modernization project pursuant to section 78-3.5, Hawaii Revised Statutes, to make necessary discretionary salary adjustments.

Dear Legislators,

Thank you for taking the time to consider SB2119, the important bill that will rectify inequities in teacher pay.

I have been teaching at the same Title I high school on Maui since 2003. I love my job, school, and students but feel unfairly treated. I have been directly impacted by salary compression. I have a Masters and have taken as many professional development classes as I can. The only way for me to earn more pay is if we are able to negotiate salary STEP increases and this does not happen every year. I was stuck for years at the same STEP and now I am stuck again. Teachers who started later than me have advanced faster than I have and now make what I do, this does not seem fair.

Not only did I not advance in pay many years, my pay was reduced several times. Remember Furlough Fridays? My pay went down 9%. More recently, our pay was frozen for 2 years and the 21 hours of professional development pay was taken away. Meanwhile healthcare costs have increased. It is demoralizing to see my pay go down. Inflation and the cost of living are not going down.

Thank you for taking this serious matter into consideration,**Anna Crawford**

Teacher, King Kekaulike High

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 2:47:26 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Tiffany Edwards Hunt	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am writing to express my wholehearted support for this bill. As a teacher in Hawai`i, I struggle to pay my bills and I currently work a second part-time job in order to make it. This makes my work life pretty arduous, 60 hours per week, plus raising my kids and being a loving wife. We have been put through the wringer in the last couple of years with COVID-19, trying to teach students online and with COVID-19 protocols in place. We would greatly appreciate some recognition for our hard work with better compensation. Thank you so much to those of you who see the need to rectify the inequities involving our pay.

With sincerest aloha,

Tiffany E Hunt

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 2:51:47 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Heather J Fomenko	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

January 26, 2022

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and Members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2819 relating to teacher compensation (salary compression.)

My name is Heather and I am an 18-year veteran teacher in Hilo. This particular bill has been of interest to me since it was first researched a few years ago. I am one of those teachers stuck at step 11 because of our infamous period of economic decline and furloughs where we did not get steps negotiated into our contracts. I should be at least 2 more steps above this because of my years of service.

Passing this bill will be impactful to many members of our teaching ohana. Since we are seeing more and more incredibly high inflation with everything from food to construction materials as well as prices of homes and rent, by remedying the compression for those teachers that are affected, we can feel a little more comfortable when paying for goods and services for our family. Right now, with the prices skyrocketing on everything, we feel the pinch because we haven't had any raises that commensurate with our current rapid inflation. It hurts!

Also, by compressing the salary steps to where they should be, we would most likely see a few less teachers calling it quits and retiring. Our most valued and experienced teachers would stay on for a few more years and with our teacher shortage crisis, this bill needs to pass so we can keep them on.

I know too many teachers who have gotten fed up with the lack of professional pay for teachers in Hawaii because of the enormous cost of living. Federal employees qualify for COLA to assist

with the high cost of living for a reason. Let's fix this for teachers and I bet we will see far less jumping ship. Qualifications for teachers are a big part of our profession but so are our years of experience. At this rate, I wonder if I'll ever make it to the top of the salary steps before my time comes to retire especially since we are now in another 2-year contract with no negotiated steps. I am hopeful that this SB2819 bill will move forward as it will help so many of our teachers.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819.

Thank you for your consideration and for the opportunity to testify on behalf of all of my fellow colleagues,

Heather Fomenko

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 2:53:17 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Joshua Jacobs	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am writing in full support of SB 2819. This bill is necessary in order to fully and fairly compensate the teachers who have been faithfully serving our community for years. We all know how poorly our teachers are compensated and this has obviously resulted in the teacher shortages which have been exacerbated due to the pandemic. This is a very small and necessary step required to begin to remedy this situation.

Mahalo,

Joshua

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 2:59:17 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Desiree Abreu	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha. I am a 27+ year educator for the DOE. As a minority woman from lesser socioeconomic circumstances, born to teen parents, getting my Master of Education in School Counseling was a huge accomplishment. I became a counselor because of my middle school counselor, Mr. Ono. When I was first employed in the DOE as a middle school counselor myself, I felt so proud. Now, looking back on what I have endured economically, I wonder if I made a wise decision. I am one of those who have been negatively impacted by salary compression (Step 12). Teachers survived a strike, economic downturns and now COVID. Educators always seem to take a hit although their premise and true love are the children. It baffles me that we do not put our keiki first by paying those who spend the most waking time with them fair compensation. Please consider passing this Senate Bill, that will help to pay teachers what they are worth based on their years of experience, retain teachers in Hawaii and keep those who are ready to retire on board. Mahalo for your kind consideration.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 3:00:42 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Daphna Ehrenhalt	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing in support of SB2819. I've been a teacher in Hawai'i for the last six years of my fifteen year career. In that time, I have had a raise of \$3,499. That equates to less than \$600 a year. When I was recruited, I took a pay cut, hoping that the Hawai'i Department of Education would pay fairly eventually, not knowing that when I would reach my ninth year of teaching here, I would have to wait six years to have a pay increase. That means my pay will stagnate until my 24th year of teaching. Do you think that's fair? I would essentially be paid the same amount as a teacher who has only worked nine years. Only to have two pay increases before waiting another eight years for a third. For me to reach the top of the pay scale, I will have to teach another 28 years. Which means after 43 years of teaching, I will finally be financially secure enough to retire. This is not a sustainable way to hold on to teachers. Not in Hawai'i. Not with the cost of living as it is right now. Not with everything else we have had to contend with over the past three years.

If you support this bill, you will be supporting teachers. You will support their earnings, their education, their families, their ability to afford to continue teaching. You will support new teachers coming into the profession, so they can feel appreciated. You will support veteran teachers who have given their heart and soul, despite the low pay because they held on to hope that one day they would be compensated fairly for the care they provided. Be that hope. Please, show us that you care for the people educating Hawai'i's future.

Mahalo for your time,

Dapha Ehrenhalt

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 3:01:53 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Tara Gumapac	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

As a teacher within the DOE, I have been teaching for 10 years in the regular system and 5 years in the charter school system. My teaching experience spans around 15 years however my experience to pay is not accurate according to the pay scale we currently have. I am stuck in the middle and cannot move for multiple years. I should be compensated based on my years experience especially with the rise and cost of living in Hawai'i. I have contemplated multiple times moving to private school and also moving to the continent. I don't want to leave Hawai'i but my growing family and my children and husband who have disabilities cannot survive here. With my pay as a teacher, I make too much for disability benefits, but I also don't make enough to pay my bills and have a stable home for my family. Please give the teachers what they deserve and give retro to the teachers who have been in stagnant positions on the scale.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 3:11:24 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Jane C Torricer	Testifying for HSTA	Support	No

Comments:

I've been teaching for 13 years. I love my job. I love my students. I love the people I work with. I am dedicated to serve my community. I am passionate about inspiring and changing my students' lives. I not only stay late to plan lessons. I use my own money to buy my students incentives, materials for a lesson, or even just basic needs like deodorant or toothbrushes for my students in need. I do it because I care.

However, it has crossed my mind several times during my career to leave the profession. There are other careers out there that are willing to pay more for my skill set, knowledge and hard working character than what the Department of Education is offering. I'd be willing to stay if we were compensated for our dedication.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 3:36:20 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Lynn Wakahiro	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Greetings, Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill number 2819, which would guarantee that teachers in Hawaii, like their counterparts around the United States, would have their salaries adjusted based on their years of experience. I am one of those teachers. I have been a teacher since 1992, and have seen my pay raises disappear with furloughs and the removal of professional days. I have had to strike two times, in order to get the pay raises that people in our profession deserve and need to continue living and working in Hawaii. During that time, I lost wages and service time. It seems like every time we move forward, we are forced to take a step back, so we end up gaining very little. We continue to work at this job because we did not go into it for the money, but there are times when I feel like people outside of my colleagues do not appreciate what I do. I feel rewarded by the difference I make in children's lives, and know in my heart that what I do makes an impact on the future, but my compensation and benefits speak otherwise. I am one of those teachers whose "steps" (equaling pay increases) were almost at a stand-still for many years. During those years, I worked on my MEd, started a family, bought supplies with my own money to build my teaching toolbox, drove the same car for 15 years, became a National Board Certified Teacher, and sent my first-born to college. The pandemic dealt us a hard blow, and we are like soldiers on the front lines, choosing to be here. Please give us credit where credit is due. Please approve Senate Bill 2819. I will be truly grateful and motivated continue doing this job that I was destined to do. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Lynn Wakahiro

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 3:49:45 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Donna Tengan	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

My name is Donna Tengan and I have been teaching for 26 years. I currently work part-time after school doing contact tracing, in part because I have two daughters in college and I cannot afford their tuition with my teacher salary alone. Some of my colleagues and I are making about a \$1,000 difference, and yet I have been teaching a decade longer than them. I am appreciative of any and all efforts to try and rectify these sort of inequities. I sincerely hope this bill becomes law. Mahalo to any and all of you supporting this and helping us teachers get fairly compensated for our very hard work that has become increasingly stressful with COVID-19.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 3:55:31 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Heidi Frattalone	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting my testimony in support of Senate Bill number SB2819.

My name is Heidi Frattalone, and I have been a 6th grade teacher at Waipahu Elementary school for 21 years. I have also been an English professor in Japan, a State Resource Teacher, and High school Athletics coach. The following excerpt in the opening statements of the proposed Bill highlights an issue that has been haunting us for more than a few decades.

“The legislature finds that the recruitment and retention of qualified teachers is essential to the success of Hawaii's public education system. The State continues to face a chronic teacher shortage, which undermines student learning and achievement.”

When I returned home to Hawaii after college graduation, there was a teacher shortage. This was over 20 years ago, and today we struggle with an even greater shortage. An example that continues to hit home for me can be seen in military personnel and almost every other profession in our community. Military personnel, and many other professions receive a raise every year of service while in grade, and also have the opportunity to advance in rank due to the acquisition of additional skills. The military and other professional companies will also pay to send their employees to school to increase their knowledge and skills.

The school district is unable to provide money for additional education and training. Any additional education received and required by a teacher is provided at the cost of the teacher. I have personally spent thousands of dollars acquiring two Master's Degrees in Education, one of them specifically being in National Board Certification. My salary over the years does not reflect all of the professional development and education that I have acquired over my 21 years of teaching. Credits earned do not apply to any bump in my salary. New teachers now make almost the same as veteran teachers. How is that possible or fair? It would be the same as a first year Fire- Fighter making a similar salary as the Fire Chief.

Many teachers that I know have left the profession entirely due to the lack of salary. Many have changed professions entirely, or moved out of state in order to better provide for their

families. I personally love the profession, but have always needed to work multiple part time jobs to be able to supplement my income. Hawaii is ranked among the lowest in the nation for teachers salaries and cost of living.

Education has always been my passion, I believe in the empowerment that it provides to our students and their families. The only way to build up our communities is through education. This is why I became an educator, to give everyone in our community a chance to rise up and be productive members of society. Currently, many teachers who are close to retirement are just hanging on, waiting for the opportunity to retire. There is no incentive for them to stay any longer than they have to in our current system. Although I love my job and my students, I too constantly look for better opportunities that will offer a better salary for my qualifications and experience. At this point in my career, I would not hesitate to take another professional opportunity. I feel as if I am doing myself an injustice for staying in a system that doesn't recognize my worth. Please vote for Bill number SB2819, it would make a world of difference for our students to keep highly qualified teachers in the classroom.

Mahalo for your time.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 4:01:03 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Dawn LW Shiota	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Good Afternoon Senate Education Committee,

My name is Dawn Shiota and I have been an Educator in the Hawaii Department of Education for over 24 years. I was born and raised on the island of Maui and reside in my home town Ha'iku, Hawaii. I am a graduate of Baldwin High School , University of Hawaii, and San Jose State University with a Master's Degree in Education. I earned my Master's Degree prior to working in the Hawaii Department of Education. I am currently a Counselor at King Kekaulike High School.

I am writing to you to urge you to support Senate Bill 2819. Prior to Covid 19 pandemic, our experienced dedicated teachers saw some hope when HSTA advocated for compression pay, then the unprecedented COVID pandemic hit us.

Now several years later, we have seen seasoned teachers as well as new teachers leave in droves. We hear on the news the enormous amount of substitutes needed daily in the State of Hawaii. We also have knowledge that the requirements to be a substitute teacher is a high school diploma and a short preparation course.

Do we want to have more of these substitutes to teach our children for about \$150-200.00 a day or do we want to invest in our children's education and keep our most seasoned experienced and effective Educators who have been working tirelessly to support our "keiki"?

It is time for our Educators who have dedicated decades of services to this profession to be fairly compensated for their dedication and time to this profession. Please support SB 2819 so Educators can be fairly compensated for their years of service .

Sincerely,

Dawn Shiota

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 4:09:40 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Cindy Asato-Kochi	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I humbly ask for your support of SB2819 in regards to the salary compensation issue. I am a teacher who has worked in the Hawaii DOE for 29 years. I worked hard to continue my education and earn credits so that I could increase my salary through Class movement. My last available Class movement was in 1998 as I earned the maximum credits for movement. Since then, I have only been able to achieve Step movement through contract negotiations. I have been through a two recessions and now a pandemic, all of which have had long lasting effects preventing Step movements.

Our current salary schedule does not encourage growth of new teachers to Hawaii. I have watched, every year, teachers come from another state and leave within a year or two. Sadly, I have seen teachers give 10 years to the Hawaii DOE and leave because they just cannot support themselves and a family. Our school currently has five vacant positions - the most I have ever seen. I do not wish to contribute to this shortage of teachers and would like to work well beyond that goal of 30 years of service. However, it has been very defeating to not receive annual raises for all that I have done and continue to do.

I contribute to the school not only as a teacher, but as a department chair, a trained mentor to new teachers, an extra curricular advisor for the past 20 years, and a volunteer for numerous student events and activities throughout the school year and during the summer. Our schools are filled with many teachers like me who do much for the school but may walk out the door soon if there is no incentive to stay. Not only will schools not be able to obtain new teachers, they will soon be losing the veterans who support those new teachers. The shortage will be incredibly overwhelming very soon if something is not done.

Please support this bill so that ALL teachers will be fairly compensated for their years of service and future years of service.

Mahalo,

Cindy Asato-Kochi

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 4:12:23 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Ronda Goo	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am a veteran DOE elementary teacher who is highly qualified but I have been salary compressed for years at class VII. When the HSTA gave away our merit pay, I voted not to ratify that contract as I believed it was not a fair change contract. I am very disappointed and discouraged by the State/DOE's position to ignore my experience and expertise. It's disheartening and disrespectful to expect professionalism from teachers but expect us to accept salary compression. I have been working 7 days a week to meet student and employer needs since 3/2021 and my last year's class out performed the complex and state in the HSA but there is no financial recognition for my competency. I am being encouraged by family and friends to move to the private school system where my educational experience and competence will be rewarded financially and with classroom support/supplies. Mahalo.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 4:31:47 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Romeo Eleno	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Senate Education Committee,

My name is Romeo Eleno and I'm a teacher at Lanai High & Elementary School. I'm writing in support for SB 2819 Relating to Teacher Compensation.

Now is the time to finally respect the teachers of Hawaii by compensating the veteran teachers that have sacrificed a lot to educate the keiki of Hawaii. To help attract and retain certified teachers, we need to be treated as professionals and be compensated for our worth.

I have been teaching for almost 30 years and I'm still not at the top of the salary scale. I've spent almost \$6,000 out of my own pocket on my students' needs to help provide a quality education for them. I have gone through a strike, pay cuts, and furloughs that has on the average taken away more than \$8,000 from my salary. These sacrifices need to stop. We need you to do the right thing and compensate teachers.

If there's a time to make that right decision to support teachers, it is NOW! Please support SB 2819.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Romeo Eleno

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 4:32:27 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Colleen T Parlee	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819.

My name is Colleen Parlee and I teach at Wheeler Elementary, Cental district.

The legislation will have a profound impact on my life and the lives of my colleagues. I have been teaching for 15 years so I am in the middle of the salary schedule. I am the primary wage earner in our family and it is a hardship to cover a basic standard of living. I would like to stay in the teaching profession, but need a fair wage to continue to support my family. I am an experienced teacher and my services to our Keiko are valuable. A fair wage would convince me to stay for a few more years.

I am an elementary teacher and recommend that you please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Colleen Parlee

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 4:38:26 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Carina Shirota	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Senate Education Committee,

I am writing this letter to advocate for my daughter who has worked in the Hawaii Department of Education for over 24 year and her colleagues. I am in support of Senate Bill 2819 which would address the current salary compensation discrepancy for Teachers. We are all facing tough issues with the Covid Pandemic, but the huge gap in fair pay for our experienced teachers are long overdue. Crisis has hit the classrooms, teachers are leaving, and many of them are sick and dying, while still waiting for their fair pay promised over the years.

As a single parent, my daughter who is a DOE Educator certainly could use the \$12,000 dollars that she has been shorted over **decades**. Yes, she could move out of state to get a better salary, but why should she? She was born and raised here on the island of Maui, her home. She should not be forced to uproot her family when her heart and soul is in the islands and teaching and caring for Hawaii's keiki.

Statistics show that teachers recruited out of the State of Hawaii, don't last and Hawaii keiki continue to suffer with the instability within the classroom. When state funds are used, frivolously on questionable studies or prisons it infuriates me. These money should be spent toward the education of our children. Retaining great, seasoned, effective and deserving teachers should be the first step in that direction. Thank you for reading my testimony to support SB 2819

Sincerely,
Carina A.C. Shirota

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 4:51:13 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Dana Kau	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

CHAIR OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE

RE: SB2819

Friday, January 28, 2022

IN SUPPORT OF SB2819

I am DANA KAU, a public school teacher. I am testifying in favor of SB2819. It is important that this committee passes bill SB2819 to guarantee that teachers' salaries are adjusted based on years of experience like their counterparts around the United States. When SB 2819 is passed, another step toward minimizing teacher shortage would be taken. Passing this bill would benefit all citizens of Hawaii.

Passing bill SB2819 would benefit all of Hawaii's citizens and help to retain and attract qualified and experienced teachers.

Mahalo,

DANA KAU

January 26, 2022

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819. My name is Yvette Rapozo and I teach on the island of Kauai at Kapa'a Elementary School. I have been a teacher for the last 16 years and have been impacted by the salary compression. Although I have worked super hard to move up the class schedule and have moved up some steps, it has been minimal. I have also worked to gain my National Board Certification to also get the bonus that comes with that recognition. With all this work over the last 16 years, the increase in my pay has been quite small. The salary compression has definitely affected me. I have worked two and sometimes three jobs to get by and it is nearly difficult to get ahead. My plans from the beginning were to work for 30 years, possibly more, then retire. With the way things have been going, this year was the first year I have thought of retiring before I hit my 30th year. An increase in salary to match what my counterparts on the mainland is getting would definitely keep me around longer. I would not have to take on extra jobs and I could dedicate more time to my profession.

I have heard from countless teachers that this year or next will be their last. When they retire, their expertise goes with them. That is a loss for the students. In the past, there may have been someone to take their place even though they were inexperienced. That is not the case any longer. It is slim pickings now days. An increase in our salaries will keep more experienced teachers in the field.

I have a daughter who is in her 6th year of teaching who is looking elsewhere for employment. A salary increase could keep her in the profession along with many new to mid level teachers. We cannot afford to lose any more teachers and a salary increase needs to happen.

Again, please help to keep experienced and highly qualified teachers in the classroom by paying them what they are worth. Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819.

Sincerely,

Yvette Rapozo

2nd Grade Teacher

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 5:35:43 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Waylen Armstrong-Kea	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

My name is Waylen Armstrong Kea and I am a graduate of Waianae High Schools class of 2021 . I am writing because I want to support teachers who have been working in the schools to support me . We need to pay our teachers what they deserve. Waianae is a school that have a hard time getting qualified teachers because we are remote . Last year when I was a student we had huge shortages and I struggled to graduate but if it wasn't for my family and some supportive teachers, counselors, and staff I would not have made it . Please support sb2819.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 5:39:34 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Laurie Dela Cruz	Testifying for DOE	Support	No

Comments:

To Chair of Senate Committee

Re: In Support of SB2819

I am Laurie Dela Cruz, a public school teacher. I am testifying in favor of SB2819. It is important that this committee passes bill SB2819 to guarantee that teacher's salaries are adjusted based upon years of experiences like counterparts around the United States. When SB2819 is passed, another step toward minimizing teacher shortage would be taken. Passing this bill would benefit all citizens of Hawaii. Passing SB2819 would benefit all of Hawaii's citizens and help to retain and attract qualified and experienced teachers.

Mahalo,
Laurie Dela Cruz

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 5:44:44 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Angela D Tompkins	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee:

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819. My name is Angela Tompkins and I have been an elementary school teacher since 1995. In that time I have taught hundreds of Maui's keiki. My experiences in the classroom helped me to develop my craft and ensure that I am able each student the best opportunity for a successful future. I love my job as an intervention coordinator and instructor. My job requires me to teach children in kindergarten through fifth grade, as well as coordinate with parents and school staff to make sure that every child is given every opportunity they need to succeed. It is a job that requires a great deal of experience. In addition, I am a mentor to new and probationary teachers focusing on keeping new teachers at our school and in our state.

I've taught for almost 30 years and I am only on step 12. On paper, all of my years of service are only counted as someone who has taught for 12 years. We all work hard and I know, as a teacher, that we don't always get compensated for everything we do and I've always accepted that, but over the past few years I've watched many exceptional master teachers leave the state to teach on the mainland because they just cannot afford to continue to live and thrive here. I also know that for financial reasons I will need to move soon to another state, where I can afford to buy a home and plan more effectively for my retirement. In passing this bill you can compensate master teachers fairly for their years of dedication to the children of this state and in the process keep us here in Hawai'i. We don't want to leave, but at some point, we're given no choice and must provide for ourselves and our families and unfortunately for many of us, that means leaving the state that we've dedicated our lives to.

Please remember that Hawai'i's keiki deserve the best education we can give them and paying teachers fairly creates an equitable education for every child.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Angela Tompkins

Kamali'i Elementary

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 5:49:43 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Dezha George	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee:

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819.

My name is Dezha George and I am a teacher in the Leeward District, specifically in the Campbell/Kapolei district. I have had the privilege serving the students and families of this community since 2010. For ten years, I served at an elementary school level, filling in classrooms of all grades ranging from Kindergarten through Grade 5, in all types of setting including general education and special education (resource and inclusion.) In addition, I had also filled in the role as a resource coach, helping to oversee our special education department, while working to our school and teachers with district and school-wide initiatives. In the 2020-21 school year, I transferred to our new middle school in the complex and have served as both a classroom teacher as well as a department and team lead.

After 12 years of serving in the DOE in these various roles, although at times stressful as many shifts needed to be made, I have gained so much knowledge that only experience could have taught me. They say that experience is the greatest teacher, and having the privilege of teaching all grade levels from Kindergarten to 6th grade, I have been able to see where students start and where they need to be throughout the years, learning standards, curriculum, and strategies from all grade levels to better support them. I have learned to work with different colleagues and departments, as well as lead various colleagues and department. Depending on my role, I have sat in various meetings and conferences at both school and district levels, as well as traveled to conferences representing my school and district on the mainland to learn from others and bring back gems that could be applied to move us forward.

All of these experiences, which has sometimes taught me more than what a professional development course could have, has helped me to grow tremendously as a professional but unfortunately is not reflected in my salary. As I've had to switch gears throughout the years and serve my school community in different capacities, I have had to often choose between actively serving my school community through the positions and responsibilities I've accepted or taking a PD course for an increase in pay. I've watched colleagues who may not have been as involved take PD courses to increase their pay, while others like myself were on the ground learning and growing, often unable to take courses due to the workload that was already on our plates. As a

professional, it is extremely discouraging to know how much sacrifice and growth my experience has taught me without it being reflected in my pay.

Twelve years in, I am at a crossroad in my career. This pandemic has brought so many challenges, and I have found myself working more than ever, trying to fulfill the demanding responsibilities as an educator. With so many things out of our control that are affecting our effectiveness as educators, yet still being held to the same standards and increased demands, I am exhausted. After serving and investing in the lives of other people's children, my husband and I are now expecting our first child. As I enter my third trimester of pregnancy with the commitment to finishing up my time this year with excellence, I am having discussions with my husband on whether or not this career is the best fit for our family. I love teaching, but the reality of where we are in our lives and where we want to be (ex. growing family, new home) I know we will have to make decisions that might require sacrifice. I know that I speak for many educators who also feel the same. I have seen too many passionate and some of the most gifted colleagues make that sacrifice and leave the profession. It is both heartbreaking to witness, and devastating the future of our keiki. We need these teachers who have a deep conviction to make a difference in the lives of our next generation in our classrooms.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 6:02:16 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Diane Sugahara	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am Diane Sugahara, a public school teacher for 30+ years. I am testifying in favor of SB2819. It is important that this committee passes bill SB2819 to guarantee that teachers' salaries are adjusted based on years of experiences like their counterparts around the United States. When SB2819 is passed, another step toward minimizing teacher shortage would be taken. Passing this bill would benefit all citizens of Hawaii. Passing bill SB2819 would benefit all of Hawaii's citizens and help to retain and attract qualified and experienced teachers. Mahalo!

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 6:08:48 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Lisa Barnard	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing in support of Senate Bill 2819 to address salary compression for teachers. I support giving senior teachers additional pay to reward years of service. We want to keep effective experienced teachers in their jobs. More than ever this is an essential job to keep the economy functioning.

Mahalo,

Lisa Barnard

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 6:09:04 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
John Fitzpatrick	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Senate Education Committee,

My name is John Fitzpatrick and I am a fourth year DOE teacher at Maui Waena Intermediate School. I strongly support decompressing the salaries of over 8,000 teachers who have been contributing approximately \$60 million a year to balancing the budget by not being at the step that is in our contract. This happened because the last six governors have chosen to ballance the budget during economic turmoil on the backs of teachers. One of our HSTA retired teachers said she has been fighting for this her entire career, which began in 1979. It took her 33 years to get to the top of the salary schedule and another 3 to get her high three. A teacher I work with and who stood on the picket lines in 2001 said "You would think that after 26 years you would be at the top of the pay scale."

This bill goes a long way to fix perpetual financial injustices done to our teaching work force and would right the wrongs of all the previous governors that chose to ballance the budget on our backs.

In addition to this bill I would like to suggest implementing automatic anual step increases that were in place last century but were taken away. This would insure that these injustices to a largely female dominated workforce never occur again.

Lastly, fixing this issue and making a promise to teachers that our contract will be honored goes a long way to providing a competitive salary. We have an ever growing teacher shortage and this bill would help reatain and atract new teachers with a renewed commitment to a livable wage for our educators. Without this decompression and a commitment to our contract, many teachers like myself will be looking for more financial stability.

Mahalo for your time and please get this done.

E malama pono,
Fitz

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 6:15:50 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Catherine Hurd	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Kidani, Vice chair Kim, and members of the committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of SB2819. I have been a teacher at Kapa'a Middle School teacher for six years and am disappointed at the constant turnover of teachers and the effect that has on the quality of the educational system in Hawaii. It is crucial that legislators recognize the importance of teachers and the significance of a functional educational model for our students, families, communities.

Please vote to support SB2819. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Catherine Hurd

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 6:34:55 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Sara Yamaguchi	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819. As an educator for the past 11 years, I believe teachers in Hawaii have never been compensated enough in comparison to other states with similar living costs. I have witnessed countless teachers relocate to other states, leave the teaching profession all together or work two jobs just to afford rent and living expenses. I have always believed that teachers' salary should be commensurate with the years of service not based on negotiations. Teachers deserve to work without worrying about housing, food, and the future of our own families.

The past two years have been the most challenging and stressful time for teachers. The lack of consistency and support from the HDOE have left teachers feeling even more underappreciated and unsafe during this pandemic. For many, financial worries have added to this unbearable stress which have left many teachers to leave HDOE already. Please help teachers stay and continue to support our keiki by passing this law.

Mahalo,

Sara Yamaguchi

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 7:04:19 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Kelsey Rasmuson	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

As a teacher for our public school system in Hawaii, I am in favor of the retention of differential pay for teachers in public and charter schools.

In an ever evolving economy, our keiki deserve to be educated by highly qualifed teachers. By revoking differential pay, Hawaii would be at risk of losing those high-qualified educators. As an educator myself, I value learning and have obtained my master's degree in order to provide quality instruction to my keiki. As the world changes, so have teaching practices and technology. Without the differential pay, I would be unable to finiancially remain in Hawaii as an educator. I would not be at risk of taking a pay downgrade in any other profession. Other professions reward their highly-qualified staff in order to retain them for the betterment of the company. To make a living wage, I would need to get a second job which would take away from the quality instruction from my keiki. I would be unable to finiancially pay rent in an area where rent averages \$2000 as well as have enough for the high gas prices and marked-up food prices. Hawaii needs to make teachers a top-priority in order to provide for their keiki's futures in an ever-evolving world.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 7:11:03 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Cody Arashiro	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2819. My name is Cody Arashiro and I teach 8th grade English at Chiefess Kamakahelei Middle School on Kauai. I have been teaching for almost 10 years now and even though I have had a lot of mountain top experiences there have been a handful of valley low moments as well. I have done all the Professional Development classes I can to make it to the top of the salary chart. I want to make sure that as I continue teaching that I will be paid in accordance to the years of service I have put in. There are so many other professions that compensate their workers based on their years of service to the company. Happy and vaunted workers mean they contribute more to the company. We have such a shortage of teachers here and with the cost of living rising, local families are being pushed out of Hawaii. We need to keep quality teachers here in Hawaii to inspire and educate the future generation. In conclusion, please vote in support of Senate Bill SB2819.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify,

Cody Arashiro

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 7:19:43 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Dean Alip	Testifying for DOE	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Kakou,

I am totally driven to submit this testimony as this system has already lost my first testimonial.

I have lost faith in our employer as teachers always seem to not receive fair compensation for the work they do. I drive the school van and provide transportation for students to and from school due to parent requests due to no bus transportation. I have worked until 9:00 p.m. at school to complete time sensitive reports to avoid possible litigation. I have taken students to track and field meets on the weekends so they can experience what it is like to compete, succeed and practice sportsmanship. All this without monetary compensation from my employer. I love what I do and don't regret one second that I have given of my time for all my students over my 29 year career. If it wasn't for teachers who go the extra mile our society would be lost. We are the blood that flows through the veins of the school. The compensation we are asking for we have already earned, we want the respect that comes with it. Support us and make compression happen. Take a stand as many teachers do everyday. Give us an emotional boost many of us need in these challenging times. Make compression happen.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 7:24:27 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
John Van Ornum	Testifying for Hawaii Department of Education	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee:

I am submitting this written testimony in support of SB2819. The teaching profession is not longer attracting the best and brightest. Increased pay does matter to those teachers who have to earn a living in the most expensive state in the U.S.

Sincerely,

John Van Ornum EdD

Molokai High School

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 7:27:02 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Alicia Jacobson	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

SB 2819 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

EDU

Jan 28, 2022 3:00 PM

Support of Salary Compression

My name is Alicia Jacobson. I have been a public school educator for almost 20 years. As a veteran teacher, I am testifying in favor of SB2819 as a way to compensate dedicated teachers. Each year, a teacher becomes more of an asset to our community. The state spends copious amounts of money on training and professional development, which enhances performance in the classroom.

Currently, half of educators leave the profession within the first five years. It would be in the best interest of all involved to compensate educators and keep experienced teachers in the profession over decades to instruct keiki with expertise, collaborate, and train new educators.

With the cost of living in Hawaii, it is becoming very difficult to find qualified staff to work in our public schools. We must find funding for our public schools and make them a priority within the budgeting process.

It is my sincere hope that the state will prioritize public school, but budgeting monies for staff and structural improvements before we find ourselves in a situation of extreme staff shortage which will negatively affect our community and keiki.

With regard,

Alicia S. Jacobson

(808)293-2210

re: [Civil Beat Teacher Exiting](#)

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 7:27:21 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Jayne Heinze	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819.

My name is Jayne Niau but, for the past 23, I am better years known as Ms. Heinze at Waimea Elementary School on the Big Island of Hawaii. I am a highly effective who, after 15 years in the classroom and 5 years at the District level, am filling the role of a Non Classroom Teacher. Many are not aware of an NCT job but it is a position that is filled by a teacher that can do just about anything. I am the Response to Intervention Coordinator, Testing Coordinator, WASC Coordinator, New Teacher Mentor, Curriculum and Instruction Specialist and often the fill in for anything else that needs to get done all day and any day. I am the glue that keeps everything running at my school. I recently turned 50 and can see retirement. In 3 years, I could retire with pensions and medical benefits, return to my home state where I can teach for 10 more years and make a minimum of \$25,000 more a year. That is $\$25,000 \times 10 = \$250,000$, a quarter of a million dollars. Why would I stay? Because I love my home and community and because you can close this gap by fixing compression and keeping the Differentials !

I am not the only one in this position. Thousands of teachers are on the verge of retirement and they are going to go ASAP. AND there are thousands of teachers who came from other states that are now in a Teacher Shortage Crisis and are welcoming teachers back. Teachers are going to go home to be with aging parents, siblings and nieces and nephews and friends. Like me, most teachers want to stay. Please make it hard for us to leave! PLEASE, fix the compression and fund the differentials!

Thank you for your time,

Ms. Heinze

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 7:46:57 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Shari Kaneshiro	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

CHAIR OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE

RE: SB2819

IN SUPPORT OF SB2819

I am Shari Kaneshiro and I have been a public school teacher for 28 years. I am testifying in favor of SB2819. It is important that this committee passes bill SB2819 to guarantee that teacher salaries are adjusted based on years of experience like their counterparts around the United States. When SB2819 is passed, another step toward minimizing teacher shortage should be taken. Passing this bill would benefit all citizens of Hawaii. It would show teachers that their hard work and dedication to the children of Hawaii is valued and appreciated. It would also help to encourage more of Hawaii's young adults to consider teaching in their home state of Hawaii. Passing bill SB2819 would help to retain and attract qualified and experienced teachers and it would also encourage the veteran teachers to stay and teach beyond their 30 years.

Mahalo

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 8:03:42 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Chezerae Lurbe	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I always thought I would be a teacher my whole life. As a college student I heard that teachers were underpaid, but I thought I could handle that and would just enjoy life because I would be doing what I love. Ten years later, I am doing what I love, but love isn't enough anymore. After 10 years, I now have a family of my own to take care of, to feed, to shelter, to clothe. My salary has not grown with my years of experience and growing needs (not wants, but needs) of my family. I cry at night scouring the job listings and compensation of other career openings. I try to defend my career choice, but it has not been a two-way street. I don't want to leave teaching, but it's looking more and more like I may be forced to. I am great at my job. I have amazing connections with my students. I know MANY teachers who have left the profession and so many others who are seriously considering it if salaries can't compete. They were truly the best of the best, but have now taken their talents elsewhere. Please help to retain the best brightest. Our keiki of Hawai'i deserve it. Our teachers deserve your support of SB2819.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 8:05:25 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Amy Sachi Kamakaiwi	Testifying for HSTA	Support	No

Comments:

To Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of the Senate Bill SB2819. My name is Amy Kamakaiwi. I have taught at Leihoku, August Ahrens, and Makakilo Elementary schools and I now currently teach at Lanakila Elementary. I have been a teacher in Hawaii for over 20 years and I am tired of teachers taking a back seat to funding whether it's to fund programs or salaries.

Veteran teachers like myself have to sit back, year after year, watching incentives pass us by only for it to be offered to new teachers. Thousands of veteran teachers, who have been committed to Hawaii's Keiki, who know and care deeply about our communities and families of our schools, have been neglected for too long. Thousands of us have taken classes to reclassify our pay and now we lie in wait for our government to give us pay raises because we have nowhere to go on the pay scale.

I can talk to you till I'm blue in the face about the cost of living and my friends leaving the profession to do something else because the salary was too low, but what hurts the most is the **respect we don't receive**. We are **professionals** who go above and beyond the call of duty. We have worked through this pandemic and made virtual learning work when we had absolutely no training. We made sure that even during the lockdown when the pandemic first started, our students still continued to learn. We are the ones that help nurture and guide new teachers on what to do.

We veteran teachers all had to go to college and get a degree and take a test to be able to teach in a classroom and yet we still are not treated as professionals. When will the thousands of veteran teachers have a salary that is comparable to their years of experience and years of service? When will we finally get the respect we deserve? Please vote in favor of Senate Bill SB2819.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 8:05:59 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Alec Shimizu	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee,

My name is Alec Shimizu and I serve as a resource teacher and new teacher mentor in the Honolulu District. I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819.

This year marks 27 years that I have been an educator. I became a teacher because I wanted to spend my life making a positive difference in the lives of every student who came through my classroom. After all these years, I still feel that teaching is a noble profession and I continue to pour my heart and soul into my job. However, for the first time in my career, I have made the decision to leave the profession as soon as I am eligible – in three short years.

I always thought that I would continue to teach past the 30-year (retirement) threshold, but I am tired and fed-up with the way teachers are treated. I understand that we are coming out of a pandemic, but to be underpaid for so many years and then have no increase for the next two years through our latest contract, it was a slap in the face and I have had enough.

I recently helped a teacher with much less experience than me understand our pay scale. She had just earned her Master's degree and we identified her Class and Step on the table in our contract. She asked me what Class and Step I was and, when she realized that she made almost as much as me with many, many years less experience, the look on her face said it all; she was shocked. I explained the issue of salary compression and she said she felt badly for me. Then I told her that if the compression problem isn't fixed, she would soon face the same reality as me - that she would become stagnant in her ability to increase her pay with experience.

I never became a teacher for the money, but I should be compensated for the years of experience and expertise I bring to our beloved profession. The salary compression problem is real and has affected me and other veteran teachers like me tremendously. In the past three years I have seen more of my fellow teachers retire or leave the profession altogether simply because they were underpaid and, more importantly, undervalued.

There has never been a more pivotal and important bill for me than this one. I humbly ask you to vote in support of Senate Bill 2819.

Thank you,

Alec Shimizu

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 8:08:35 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Mary Jane Tominaga	Testifying for HSTA	Support	No

Comments:

To Whom It May Concern,

I have been in education for 22 years, while 19 of those 22 years were dedicated to being a special education teacher. I went into teaching, and now as a school counselor, wanting to make a difference in the lives of children. However, the salary I was earning as a teacher did not help in raising three children, because the funds were not enough, and there were times when my family struggled and almost lost our home during the recession in 2008. Moreover, about 5 years ago, I was ready to give up teaching or being in educator, due to a combination of things. I was ready to seek other employment that paid more than what I was earning as a teacher, because I felt all the time and energy put forth was no longer worth it. Secondly, I was thinking about the future, on whether my husband and I would be able to financially help our three children fund their college education. With the salary my husband and I were receiving as teachers, on top of our bills and everything else, it would not be enough to set aside money for our children's college fund. Finally, if I am given the appropriate salary that I should be receiving, based on my years of service, I would feel respected in my profession. Most importantly, increasing to the salary that I am supposed to be at will enable me to stay in the profession longer and help me support my three children when they eventually move forward in pursuing a higher education in college. Therefore, I would not have to worry with tapping into my retirement fund.

In closing, educators (teacher, counselors, librarians, etc.) are overworked and at times not highly respected, considering the time, energy, and dedication that is put forth to caring for the children of our aina. Growing up I have observed and hear my uncle, being an entrepreneur - payaya grower, always say, "if you take care of your people, they will perform above and beyond to serve you". Personally, I have also observed that in athletics and in my profession. Therefore, I am hoping that legislators will take care of us (as teachers, counselors, etc.), so that we will continue to work above and beyond for the keikis of Hawaii and everyone else that is connected to supporting our students!!

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 8:21:55 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Heidi Randolph Maxie	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819.

My name is Heidi Maxie and I am a high school math teacher at Castle High School. I have been in the classroom almost 25 years. My school has lost some very good teachers because they couldn't afford to stay in the profession. Or they were just too exhausted from working multiple jobs for too long, just to pay the bills. With no relief in sight, many high quality people have left the profession for other jobs that pay a living wage. If they knew there was some hope in sight, maybe they would have stayed.

I had a teacher in the classroom next to me. He loved his job, but there was no way that he could support his family with his salary. He and his wife wanted to have another baby. She wanted to be able to stay at home when the children were young. It wasn't an option as long as he was in his teaching position. So he left. Changed professions. Now, his wife is able to stay at home. They have three children and are able to make it financially. I don't know if he enjoys his job as much, but he is able to provide for his family and that is important. He isn't alone. Many others have left for the same reason. Teachers that would have been really good for our kids. Teachers that were hard working and loved what they did. But they just couldn't make it.

Having our salaries match our years of service would keep more teachers in the classroom and keep them longer. Too many teachers have to work more than just their teaching job in order to make it financially here in Hawaii. They are exhausted, and don't see any relief.

I am widowed. I lost my husband in 2017. My situation would be so much better if my pay reflected my years of service. My husband always wondered why I stayed so long with my pay so much lower than it could be in another job. I have considered leaving teaching, but I really enjoy what I do. So I work more than one job too.

Salary compression would change the face of teaching. Having teachers that don't have to work a second or third job would mean a lot to the teachers. We shouldn't have to work 2 or 3 jobs. We are tired. And we need help. You have the opportunity to help us. We would be better teachers for our students. Having salaries set so that you know that in time you would

earn more, would encourage more teachers to stay. Our students need their teachers to stay. The teachers want to stay. But we need your help.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 8:22:01 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Anjanette Naganuma	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee,

I am Anjanette Naganuma, a teacher at Lahainaluna HS in the Maui District.

At about 15 years in, I am one of many teachers in the state affected by salary compression. Last year's School Status and Improvement Report states that only 41 of the 73 teachers at LHS have been at the school for 5 years or longer.

Why am I still here? I would love to say that it is because I graduated from LHS and I love the school and community, but that is only part of the truth. The other part is my family lives in a multigenerational home on Hawaiian Homelands. I rather doubt we'd be able to afford a regular mortgage in Lahaina. If not for that, I would likely have moved to the continent like so many of my classmates. Even now, this continues to be a consideration.

Hawaii's teacher salary is well known to be the lowest in the nation when adjusted for cost of living. Fixing salary compression is a step toward honoring the hard work of long-term dedicated teachers and hopefully avoiding having them flee for other states.

Mahalo nui.

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION RE: SB 2819, RELATING TO
TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, January 28, 2022

3 P.M.

Chair Kidani and committee members:

My name is Benjamin Duke. I am a High School Math and Writing teacher at West Hawaii Explorations Academy PCS on Hawaii Island. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2819.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been teaching for the past 22 years (the last 15 in Hawaii) and see the value of our public education in the growth and transformation of the students I have worked with. It has been a struggle to make it work in Hawaii, especially now that I have a family with two children. Salary compression in Hawaii has resulted in far less salary growth than I would have seen had I continued teaching in Washington, DC public schools. Now that my children are getting older, I have to begin thinking about the cost of their higher education. It has been nearly impossible for me to put away any money over the years and I think teachers should be fairly compensated for their important role we play. By passing this legislation, this will keep our most qualified public school teachers, librarians, and counselors here in the state working with our most valuable resource- our keiki.

We need your help. Mahalo.

Benjamin Duke

West Hawaii Explorations Academy PCS

Hawaii Island

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 8:30:34 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Cristy Athan	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chair and members of the Senate Committee,

I am writing in favor of SB2819. My name is Cristy Athan and I am a school counselor at Waimea Elementary School on Hawaii Island. I moved from San Diego to Hawaii in 2003. My school district in California was one that allowed movement each year based on years in the district and professional development. Moving to Hawaii reduced my pay by nearly \$10,000. It has been disheartening to work nearly 20 years in this school district and not be fairly compensated. I am stuck at the highest class level and don't know when my pay will increase. Each year I have to reevaluate if I will be able to continue to work here with the rising cost of living, it is hard to survive. Especially now with how hard school employees have selfless worked to keep our community going we should receive a fair salary schedule that honors years of service as well as educational achievements. I encourage you to vote in favor of this bill to finally right the unjust salary schedule now in place.

Mahalo for your support of teachers.

Sincerely,

Cristy Athan

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 8:34:07 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Mike Landes	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819. My name is Mike Landes, and I am a teacher at Lahainaluna High School, the husband of an elementary teacher at Princess Nahienaena Elementary School, and the father of two public school students. I am also the HSTA Maui Chapter President. My wife and I have been teaching at our schools for the past 18 years. During that time, we have been furloughed and DLWOPed, and we have had our pay frozen in place during two separate economic slowdowns. We have colleagues with five years less experience than us who are on the exact same step of our salary schedule, because they did not have to suffer through all of those pay cuts and freezes. And sadly, we have colleagues with ten years more experience than us who are also on the exact same step of our salary schedule, because they had to suffer through even more pay cuts and freezes earlier in their careers. This means that I personally know people who are all on step 11 of the salary schedule whose professional teaching experience in Hawaii varies by 15 years. That is insane! If Hawaii is serious about doing something to address the teacher shortage crisis, this salary schedule compression must be addressed. Too many veteran teachers are willing to take their expertise and walk out the door because it seems they will never reach the top of the pay scale and be able to afford to retire in this place where they have dedicated their lives and sacrificed so much for their students and communities. It's hard to imagine that my wife and I will ever be able to retire, the way things are going. So why should any of us stay? We do it for the love of the job and the love of our students...but love doesn't pay the bills. Much more needs to be done, but this is a crucial step that will benefit the vast majority of Hawaii's teachers. Please, do the right thing and vote in support of Senate Bill 2819.

Mahalo for your time,

Mike Landes

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 8:43:36 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Brian Flatt	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Education Committee,

I am writing in overwhelming support of SB2819, teacher compensation to address compression. I have been a teacher for 12 years. For 5 of those years I received a pay cut. The raises we received over the last 4 years were helpful but I still struggle. During the pandemic I have taken PD classes so that I can move up in class. I have taken so many classes at a cost of \$250 each and spent nearly all of my free time creating portfolios for these classes and when I get my pay increased by \$43 a paycheck. After spending over \$1,000 and a years worth of weekends, literally, I don't even get \$100 more per month.

I love teaching, I am a professional, with a masters degree. I am dedicated to my students, to this noble profession. Please support Hawaii's teachers and keiki.

Mahalo Nui Loa,

Brian Flatt

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 8:48:18 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Kau'i Norton	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Kau'i Norton. I was born and raised in Hawai'i. I have been a teacher since 1996. I, presently, make around \$65,000 - taxes-almost \$1400 in monthly medical, etc. I have never gotten COLA or a bonus or even much of anything after paying thousands for my M Ed. and only getting a step up in pay! I could've just gotten the step increase by doing a bunch of PD credit classes like everyone else. But, you see I wanted to really delve into what education looked like from an "educated" educator. Fast forward to 2022 where I see immersion teachers & SPED teachers getting differentials & teacher recruits getting "extras" to come teach our keiki. NEW teachers getting salaries that are not much less than I do as a veteran teacher! For years our politicians have told the community that education is important and they would make it a priority. LIES. Nothing has changed. I still have to work side jobs. I still work overtime on weekends & get no compensation. I still buy my own supplies & student supplies. You see, I promised to do my very best for my students. And I KEEP my promises.

I have become very jaded with our government. Every election year HSTA recommends who to vote for because those people will make a difference, bring pride back to our profession, and compensate us for all we do. LIES. I no longer listen to those recommendations. Our own union is LIED to every election year.

I have looked into retiring. I may get penalized for it because I don't meet all the qualifications. But, I don't care. I have no respect for our leaders, the Department of Education. They use us and then spit us out. We are replaceable. During my masters education I heard a retired teacher speak on how we should never put more into our jobs than necessary. He shared his experience of being "used up" and forgotten. I didn't believe him. I, seriously, thought "no way" teachers are professionals. Teachers are treated with respect. I was naive. Not anymore. We are of no value except to fill an empty position. People who don't even have an education degree are taking over our schools. Being a teacher in Hawai'i is no longer something I am proud to be. I am tired and like many of my veteran teacher colleagues I am thinking of teaching elsewhere. Somewhere I am appreciated both monetarily and professionally. The grass really is greener on the other side when it comes to teaching in Hawai'i or elsewhere.

You can help to keep great veteran teachers like me stay. Please pass this bill it's been too long in coming.

Me ka ha'aha'a,

Kau'i Norton

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 8:50:00 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Sherry Robello	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee, I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819. My name is Sherry Robello and I am a second grade teacher from the Honolulu District. Teachers are dedicated, selfless, and are definitely not valued enough for everything we do. I have been teaching for 15 years in Hawaii and every year I debate whether or not I should leave teaching. I am Class VII with a Master's Degree in Curriculum Studies and I am a National Board Certified Teacher, yet my salary is not comparable with my years of service. I am earning \$11,000 less since my salary steps do not align with my years of service but instead the negotiations of our contract. By correctly aligning teachers' salary with their years of service, more teachers including myself will be motivated to stay in the profession and in Hawaii. I am a public school alumni and am proud to be a public school teacher in Hawaii. However, I cannot afford to stay much longer if changes are not made to our salary. Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819 and show teachers how much they are valued. Thank you for this opportunity.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 9:18:46 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Laurie Yoshinaga	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

CHAIR OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE

RE: SB2819

Friday, January 28, 2022

IN SUPPORT OF SB2819

I am Laurie Yoshinaga, a public school teacher. I am testifying in favor of SB2819. It is important that this committee passes bill SB2819 to guarantee that teacher's salaries are adjusted based on years of experiences like their counterparts around the United States. When SB 2819 is passed, another step toward minimizing teacher shortage would be taken. Passing this bill would benefit all citizens of Hawaii.

Passing bill SB2819 would benefit all of Hawaii's citizens and help to retain and attract qualified and experienced teachers.

Mahalo,

Laurie Yoshinaga

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 9:22:21 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Cathlyn Momohara-Ho	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

To whom it may concern,

I am writing this testimony in support of SB2819. My husband and I have both been in the DOE for 7 years. We love our jobs and hope to continue working as teachers for many years to come. However, there are times that we both consider what financial opportunities we could have if either of us left the field. We have several college classmates who left teaching are now making twice as much as we are and enjoy more flexible careers. These opportunities sound particularly enticing when we hear stories from colleagues who have been working for over two decades and are stressed sending their children to college or caring for their families. Adjusting the step component of the pay scale would definitely encourage us to stay in the classroom and help us envision a more financially stable future.

Thank you for your time,

Cathlyn Momohara-Ho

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 9:11:35 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Cicily R Bilecki	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Kudani and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Cicily Bilecki. I am a special education at Kalaheo High School in Windward District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of Action Item SB2819. for the Public Hearing, relating to Teacher Compensation.

I want to thank the Legislature for finding ways to revise the state budget and cover COVID-19 revenue losses without including any suggestions of pay cuts or furloughs for our educators in our public schools, including our charter schools, or any other state employees. I would also like to thank the Legislature for creatively advocating for the long-overdue teacher compensation for over 8,000 educators who have been unfairly and negatively impacted by the compensation compression over the past few decades.

I have been teaching in the DOE for 17 years, but have been STUCK at step 11 for quite some time. Yet, newly hired teachers fresh out of college, start at a pay rate that I didn't even get to until after years of teaching. I have a 6-year gap between my step and my actual teaching experience working in the Hawaii DOE. How is this even fair? It is no wonder teachers are retiring because there is no incentive for longevity in our profession. Should I be at the top of step this far into my teaching career? That is over a \$13,000 a year pay loss, not including the decade-long pause in moving steps. This is unheard of in any other professional career field.

Over 17 years ago, I moved from Texas to teach in Hawaii. At that time, I had immediately taken an immediate \$10,000 reduction in base pay because, at that time, the state of Hawaii did not provide a pay differential for special education teachers. It took me nearly a decade and costly graduate school course credits and \$160, 000 in student loan debt for undergraduate and graduate studies to move up in teacher reclassification pay. Finally, after 17 years of teaching special education in Hawaii and recently in the past few years earning a \$10,000 special education differential, I can finally come close to covering my \$2,500 a month rent with just one of my paychecks. However, this does take into account all my other growing expenses to live in Hawaii. In my entire teaching career, I have never been able to do that, and it brought some financial relief to my family. I no longer had to work side hustles (i.e. part-time, babysitting, or tutoring, custodial work at a local gym, etc) to make ends meet as a single working parent. I do not have a family to lean on for support, as they live thousands of miles away. I am the sole

provider of my household and the reality we live paycheck to paycheck in Hawaii. Although I make a decent living, it is not nearly enough to cover our basic necessities, and I have seriously considered leaving Hawaii and the teaching profession as a whole. Over the course of my career, I have watched droves of my colleagues move to the mainland for higher-paying wages and a lower cost of living. I am tempted every day to make that same decision. Just this year, my rent increased another \$500 each month, but I am having a hard time keeping up.

Why do you think there has been this mass exodus of teachers of Hawaii. More than half of the teachers I started off with in my career have all left for greener pastures and higher pay in states who are genuinely sincere in not only their teacher recruitment goals but retaining those teachers for the long term.

I am emotionally, mentally, and physically tired of the apathy DOE has towards its special education programs. Our kids always get slim pickings of resources, now they will have slim pickings for teachers.

I love our students in Hawaii, but as an educational professional, I still need to provide for my family. I do not have a spouse or family to lean on during these difficult times. Our focus should be on how we can prepare our children for a future in Hawaii, but not at the cost of its teachers. If teachers have to pay the price, there will be a mass exodus from the teaching profession and our Keiki will sadly be negatively impacted by the State of Hawaii's decision.

With the good news that we now have a billion-dollar surplus in our budgets, this is the time we act to support our educators and ultimately support our students across our great state of Hawaii. Fortune favors the bold and we must act boldly with our future at stake. We must appropriate funds for various teacher differentials to help address various labor shortages.

Mahalo,

Cicily Bilecki, Windward District, Oahu, Hawaii

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 9:23:16 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Darin Morris	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819.

My name is Darin Morris, and I teach Science grades 7 and 8 at Kohala Middle School. I support this bill, as my intentions are to retire as a teacher. There is no greater work than teaching.

This legislation will afford my senior colleagues' financial wherewithal to continue in their chosen profession. I look to veteran teachers daily for their mentorship and advice. The salary compression however makes a financial burden on those who would otherwise continue teaching, but may not be able to afford to do so. We are losing veteran teachers, who are one of our greatest resources, due to the inequity in the current salary system.

I support this bill to overcome the salary inequities. I urge you, please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819.

I thank the committee for the opportunity to testify.

Darin Morris

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 9:36:37 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
christy lucas	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

We have a lot of friends that put in a lot of time and effort into their profession as a teacher and they should be compensated for all their hard work.

they are helping us build a better future for our Children

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 9:46:49 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Hope McKeen	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please support this. Teachers are in so much need right now!!!

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 9:48:01 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Rochelle Shiraki	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee:

My name is Rochelle Shiraki and I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819 which addresses teacher salary compression. I have been employed by the Department of Education for a total of 22 years: 11 years as a classroom teacher and 11 as a school registrar. During this time, I have seen many contracts which tried to address the bottom end of the teacher salary schedule to attract more people into the teaching profession. I believe additional work needs to be done to retain the more experienced teachers and fixing the compression in the middle area of the salary schedule is essential.

When starting out in this profession, I knew that I would never be “rich” like my other friends who majored in accounting or engineering and went to school far fewer years than I did, yet little did I know how great the disparity would be between my profession and theirs. Soon after starting my career, I realized that I would have to take on a side job to make enough money to pay for my needs. I have had at least one, and sometimes two, part-time jobs during the bulk of my teaching career. I absolutely loved being in the classroom but decided to become a 12-month teacher purely for the added pay, thinking I could give up my part-time work. After receiving my paycheck, I realized that still could not happen. It was only 4 years ago when I finally gave up my part-time work, not because I no longer needed the income, but because I had caregiving duties which required more of my time. If it weren’t for the support of my family, I could not have paid for all of my basic needs just from my salary alone, especially with the increasingly high cost of living in Hawaii.

After 22 years in the profession, I am quite a few steps away from the top and if contracts keep going the way they have, I will never attain the top step before I retire. I also noticed that despite my considerable years of experience, I do not make much more than my colleagues who started way after I did. I know other teachers who decided to retire as soon as they hit the minimum years required, saying “it’s not worth it” to stay in the job. I know at least 4 teachers who are on the cusp of retiring/resigning from the DOE and are looking hard at what the next contract will bring. Fixing the salary compression and recognizing the time they have invested into the craft of teaching would encourage veteran teachers to stay.

In short, I would like to thank you all for this opportunity to share my experiences and views, and I implore you to vote in support of Senate Bill 2819.

Sincerely,

Rochelle Shiraki

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 9:51:22 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Amy Shishido	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee,

My name is Amy Shishido and I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819. I teach Math at Kawananakoa Middle School. I support SB2819 for several reasons. With student's learning loss caused by Covid, you want your most experienced teachers to stay on board as long as possible to "Catch them up." Compression correction would incentivize experienced teachers to stay for a better high 3, as opposed to leaving now with no prospect of gaining a better high 3 than they already have.

To say that teaching during a pandemic has been challenging is quite the understatement. Last year was difficult, but teachers thought it would get better this year. This year we learned that it is not going to get better any time soon. New teachers have a 50% retention rate, so your best chance of retaining teachers this school year is in your veteran teachers. This is the time to invest in retention of veteran teachers because retention has never been such a hard sell before. With hundreds of classrooms going without teachers, even without subs, retention should be the top priority. Data shows that recruitment will only be 50% effective. Put effort into retention instead.

There are teachers who are able to retire who are nearly guaranteed to retire, because their retirement plus social security pays better than their current salary. Compression correction would at least be a closer competition to retirement pay. Therefore higher retention rates, therefore more classrooms with teachers in them, therefore less classrooms being housed in auditoriums being supervised by an Administrator.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB2819.

Amy Shishido

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 9:52:26 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Cori Muraoka	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819.

My name is Cori Muraoka and I am a teacher in the Central District of Oahu. My husband and I are both public school teachers. I am an elementary teacher and he is a secondary teacher. I have been teaching for 24 years, 21 of which have been in Hawaii. My husband has been teaching for 7 years. We both have master's degrees and have taken enough credits to reach the top class of the payscale, class VII. Though I have 3x the amount of years of service as my husband, I am at a step 11 and he is at a step 7 - only a 4 step difference!

If it wasn't for our family helping us, we would not be able to survive solely on our teaching income. Sadly, I've put in many, many years of service and have not had any monetary compensation for it. In fact, it seems like the more years of service I have, the more pay cuts or increases in medical coverages I get. Just as a comparison, if the housing department only looked at incomes, we would qualify for affordable housing based on our 4 person household! I worry everyday about how I'm supposed to afford daily expenses and put my own children through college in a few years since I can't afford to save much for them.

I love working with children but the profession has become quite stressful. I worry about COVID, the workload has taken over my life and not being able to live comfortably because we are not being compensated for our years of service has taken quite a toll on me. The salary compression scale would greatly benefit me and my family. Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 9:54:16 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Mitchell Kimura	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819. I am a resident of Honolulu, HI--have been all my life--and have been teaching in the DOE for about fifteen years--some at Radford High School, and currently at Kalani High School in Honolulu. I am "one of those" teachers that have been hurt by compression. I remember the Furlough Fridays and the principal saying "absolutely no money at all for anything." We were just not able to ask for anything, because--like a kid asking the dad for money when the dad doesn't have any--there was no money during the Lingle (etc) days. Despite all that, as a Science Teacher, I paid for supplies to do interesting labs for the students with my own money. With all due respect, may I ask you: Would you spend money out of your own pocket during a recession just to buy supplies to do your job? Well, I did. I spent a few thousand dollars per year doing that--and would feel appreciated if I got compensated, even now, for doing that. For a long time, my salary has been low and I have been working at a second part-time job for over ten years just so that our family of four can continue to stay here. My wife works two jobs as well, but still, it is not enough. Everyone says teachers are in a "Profession," but, boy, it sure doesn't seem like we're any "Professional" based on our pay. I firmly believe the more you pay teachers, the more you show respect by paying them well, the more they will do their best to provide a quality education for everyone. Even though you may say you are "all for the keiki" when running for office, if you do not adequately pay teachers AT LEAST WHAT THEY DESERVE OR A DESCENT SALARY, please do not say you are "for the keiki." Again, please fix the compression problem by voting in support of Senate Bill 2819. Thank you for your time and this opportunity to testify. Sincerely, Mitchell Kimura

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 10:02:34 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Tanya K.D. Alana	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Our teachers deserve salaries that are higher than the teachers on the continent. They are teaching the future of Hawai'i. They shouldn't have to live paycheck to paycheck. They shouldn't have to spend their own money and time doing what the DOE should be covering. The median in Hawai'i now is \$1.1 Million dollars!! How are teachers going to survive on \$60,000 to \$80,000, before taxes? Our teachers deserve better! If it weren't for teachers, you wouldn't be where you are today. Do what's pono.

Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee:

My name is Maile Yasui. I am a teacher at Momilani Elementary in the Leeward District, on the island of Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819.

Please provide funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I've been teaching for 25 years. In recent years, I've also become a National Board Certified Teacher. I've been fortunate enough to teach at a great school that supports me in being a highly qualified teacher. Our school has been supportive by sending me, as well as other teachers, to workshops that help us "stay on our teaching game" so we can continue to be more innovative and effective in our craft for teaching students. I feel these supports have worked for both my class and our school because our school has been successful on annual State Assessments. I love teaching and I love learning with my students. As much as I love it, it still requires lots of effort on my part to keep my teaching innovative and effective for my students. Keeping up with technology, reading educational journals/articles, practicing new and improved upcoming reading and writing strategies, and planning weekly lesson plans require lots of time outside of school hours.

Is all the extra planning and extra hours required to do a good job at teaching really worth it? My pay hasn't changed much over the many years of teaching. My accountant reminds me every year that my W-2s don't seem to change much -- and I find doing my taxes every year depresses me and makes me feel unappreciated. As I get closer to retiring in 5 years, these are thoughts that run through my head all the time.

Should I continue to teach beyond 30 years? For all the time and the efforts I put into teaching and the lack of payment compensation -- no, I wouldn't teach beyond 30 years.

I'm currently at Class 7 step 12, and have worked as a teacher for 25 years. It's taken me a really long time to reach step 12, and I still have 4 steps to go to reach the top step of 14B. I work with teachers who are in Class 7 Step 11 who have worked for 15 years. The difference between me and the teachers in class 7 step 11, is \$2000 and 10 years experience!

For me, it could take 15-20 years more to reach the benefit of the last pay step when looking to retire. In 15 years I'll be 70 years old, and in 20 years I'll be 75 years old. If I'm not able to teach till 70-75 years old, I need to figure out another way to get a raise - maybe a 12-month teaching position that is not in the classroom, or go into administration?

The sad thing is that I love to teach. Teaching keeps my mind and my heart young. It keeps me innovative and helps me be “up to date” in what is going on in our world. I think teaching is a great career, but still very unappreciated.

ALL teachers will experience salary compression. More importantly, teachers will have to work 40-45 years to attain their highest pay class and step for their retirement years.

We have a shortage of teachers. Teachers that I know of that have retired or left the teaching profession have left because of the following: the workload got too much for them, they are having a hard time financially living in Hawaii, or they are feeling unappreciated for the amount of work that they do. As for getting new teachers, students graduating from college don't want to become teachers because of the work that it entails and the compensation that it lacks.

Although we are in a pandemic, we still need to continue to find ways to fix salary compression for teachers. We must keep our current teachers in the classroom and entice new teachers to **WANT** to be a teacher in our public school system.

If funding is provided to fund the above bill is approved, I would definitely stay on and continue teaching in Hawaii. I am already a highly qualified teacher, and I would continue to work to keep up my highly qualified certifications. I love to teach, and I love working with our children of Hawaii.

We need your help.

Mahalo,

Maile Yasui, Leeward District, Oahu

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 10:05:59 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
laura peterson	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Regarding Salary Compression and Shortage Differentials:

As a:

- **National Board certified Exceptional Needs Specialist,**
- **Molokai representative on the National Board Collective,**
- **Education Specialist (EdS) in Assessment, Evaluation, and Accountability,**
- **State of Hawaii licensed Teacher Leader and Special Education Teacher,**
- **Site Coordinator of 21st Century Community Learning Center's afterschool program,**
- **Student Services Coordinator of Molokai High School,**
- **Curriculum coordinator of the AVID schoolwide Advisory program,**
- **Department Head of the School Support Team,**
- **Point person for the Early College partnership with UH Maui College, Molokai,**
- **Advisor for the Class of 2024,**
- **Member of the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support team, and,**

Most importantly,

- **Advisory Teacher**

My goal is to improve student success through strengthening the profession. That should be your goal as well.

Salary Compression and Shortage Differentials are issues of respect for teachers and equity for students. Now is the time for governing bodies to take decisive strides and invest in the future. Teachers already have.

Sincerely,

Laura R. Peterson

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 10:09:00 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Lisa Yamagata	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee:

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819. My name is Lisa Yamagata and I am a high school teacher in the Kaua'i district. I support this bill because my family as well as many of my fellow colleagues have been personally affected by salary compression. Both my husband and I have been teaching in the HIDOE for 17 years. If we were given step movements based on years of service we would've been 2 whole steps ahead of where we currently are. It may not sound like much but for our family the impact of that is doubled. It is a helpless feeling to know that the only way we can move up in steps is to hope that the government will agree to it in our negotiations. Why is the HIDOE different from so many other teaching districts and other professions, where employees can count on regular pay raises based on satisfactory performance and years of service? Ensuring that step movements happen regularly can be one factor in retaining teachers. The assurance of knowing that your pay will increase with time may be enough to keep a teacher here, rather than the uncertainty of how it is now.

I humbly ask for your support in this bill on salary compression. We had your support on a similar bill prior to the pandemic and although the bill was passed, the pandemic and shutdown prevented us from seeing the results of that bill.

With gratitude,

Lisa Yamagata

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 10:10:14 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Sherene Hong	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill number 2819 relating to teacher compensation. I am a fifth-grade teacher in the Kahuku District and have been teaching for eight years. I have reached taken all my required Professional development credits and unable to increase my salary due to the fact there are only seven class steps available. The seventh class is to obtain a Doctorate degree which I do not have, so I am unable to move further. The teacher salary compression has impacted every teacher in this state negatively. I have been working a second part-time job, as a server, my entire career as a teacher because Hawaii's teaching salary is not enough to pay rent, groceries, and other basic necessities. I know as a restaurant server; I am able to make more money as a full-time server than a full-time teacher. I am only able to survive as a teacher in Hawaii with my part-time job as a restaurant server. Furthermore, I know highly qualified teachers who have left the education system in Hawaii because all the extra hours on the weekend and weekdays exhausts them out and eventually led to resignation. Most people forget that teachers always take work home and have to plan every weekend. We work seven days a week but don't get paid for the extra overtime hours. The teacher shortage crisis in Hawaii is only getting worse, and it is essential to keep all the current teachers in their positions by increase our salary every year and increase opportunities for salary increase. Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819 and support the teachers of Hawaii. The Department of Education cannot afford to lose any more highly qualified teachers. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 10:24:56 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Michael Press	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee.

Name is Michael Press and I am a teacher at Ilima Intermediate on Oahu in Ewa Beach. I am writing you to support SB2819 addressing teacher compensation. The past 2 years has been difficult for all of Hawaii but those that have been hit very hard has been teachers. Bill 2819 would guarantee that teachers in Hawaii, like their counterparts around the United States, have their salaries adjusted based on their years of experience, meaning more than 8,000 of our members would see corrections in their salaries to help keep them in the profession longer. We need to keep teachers in Hawaii.

Mahalo Nui,

Michael Press

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 10:25:09 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Edrian Apo	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

To Whom It May Concern

I, Edrian K. Apo, am a teacher at Kaunakakai School on the island of Molokai. I write in support of Bill SB 2819, Salary Compression and hope for it to be rectified to save the fidelity of Hawaii's teachers, especially teachers with 20 plus years of service like myself.

We want to try our best to retain our Hawaii teachers from either leaving the profession or moving to the mainland in search of a higher pay. We also don't want our 'seasoned' teachers, who hold the most knowledge, to lose recognition of their experience as well.

I have been an educator for 27 years. Fixing compression will boost the salaries of most teachers, myself included. It will really help with the high cost of living here on Molokai, where gas is almost \$6 per gallon and milk is almost \$10 per gallon. It will encourage many of us to remain on the job and stay in Hawaii where our keiki can benefit from our experience and wealth of knowledge. How are we to preserve our Hawaii culture if the people of Hawaii need to move to the mainland where it's more affordable to live?

Sincerely,

Edrian K. Apo, RTI resource teacher

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 10:26:31 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Debra	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee,

Aloha! I am submitting testimony in support of SB2819. My name is Debra Borges and I am a teacher at Pahoa Elementary School on the Big Island. I have been teaching for 30 years and still not at the top step of the salary scale. This is sad. I had fellow colleagues who have retired after 30+ years of teaching and they were not yet at the top step of the salary scale. This is sad. The cost of living has gone up and I'm still paying for my mortgage, as well as taking care of my elderly dad. I realize that times are hard for everyone especially now with COVID-19. Teachers are leaving the profession because they can't afford living in Hawaii. They move to the mainland or find another well paying job. Teacher shortages are seen throughout the State. Just at our school we have teacher positions that have not been filled by certified teachers. Substitutes who change on a daily basis are in those classrooms. It's heartbreaking to see the loss of learning happening right in front of us and we cannot fix it. However, you can fix this. I ask that you take this time to seriously consider passing bill SB2819 for all the educators who have dedicated their life to teaching and servicing their communities. We are considered essential workers working the front lines with our students and our families everyday. I believe teachers will stay if this salary compression happens. Its about time that we get the pay that we deserve and have earned. Thank you for your time.

Aloha mai kakou

Mahalo to everyone for the time arranged and the supporters of our voices for Hawaii's education.

"I ka wa mamua ka wa ma hope" As I look at the past of those teachers/ancestors that came before me, I see the pattern of hoomanawanui, perseverance as educators who believe in the kuleana, the upbringing of school communities. As instinctive professionals we always look into the future to envision a better Hawaii for generations to come.

2021 has ended and as I look back when my colleagues began our teaching careers in the late 1990's. Teacher contract stalled and a strike was on the table. These kupuna teachers worked tirelessly to get the contract that teachers needed because they thought about me, the future teacher. With 30 minutes till strike time a 17% pay raise across the board was made including (5) professional/personal days and doctorate degree differentials, a budget of \$100 million dollars.

On-going changes for Hawaii's economy, decisions made with no thought for our keiki and school communities' future. Our kupuna teachers were retiring and a teacher shortage was on the rise.

In 2001 negotiation was tougher and a strike was imminent. Teachers like myself continued to hoomanawanui, thinking about the future. A 21-day strike, (a huge sacrifice of 3 weeks with no paychecks). Our brand new teachers were spared, step pay equivalent to my 5th year of tenureship. No doctorate differentials, harder for teachers to continue to pursue higher degrees and massive student loans.

This was the first of many setbacks to the same teachers who are now the kupuna teachers who continue to Aloha for **20+ years**.

This is why compression pay and advanced degree differentials are so important to take care of. Teachers will receive what we have patiently waited for, our pay scale to catch up to the years of service and professionalism honored. These Devoted teachers served for the love of education make up **approximately 45% of our teaching workforce**.

The attention of these teachers who carry the 'ike and mana, continue to elevate the next generation of teacher leaders.

Compression pay and advanced degree differentials, will allow us to continue teaching until Hawaii can stabilize our teaching force. Please extend your aloha for them until the torch is ready to be passed.

With great teachers comes great haumana and with great students comes great Kaiaulu and with great communities comes great futures for Hawai'i nei. Mahalo~

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 10:31:35 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
ROBERT LOZANO	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee:

Aloha, I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2819. My name is Robert Lozano. I teach fifth grade and coach the robotics team at Waikoloa Elementary & Middle School. I have been teaching at Waikoloa School for 19 years, and have also found making financial ends meet a challenge during my tenure there. I began teaching at Waikoloa School in 2003 with the equivalent of a Master's Degree in Education and six years of prior teaching experience in Japan and California. At the time, the salary for that level of education and experience was under the threshold to qualify my young family of four for WIC food stamps as well as Quest medical coverage for my dependents. Since that time, I have maxed out my educational credits under the salary schedule, but suffered under the lack of STEP salary increases for my years of experience. Contract negotiations have produced less than half the number of step increases relative to the number of my years of service. Financial strains from the housing crisis of 2007/2008 and the global pandemic of the last two years, combined with skyrocketing inflation have all served to freeze my step increases during contract negotiations, as well as reduce my purchasing power. Oftentimes, a negotiated raise is effectively wiped out due to rising medical premiums and inflationary pressures. Giving teachers step increases relative to their years of service would go a long way in helping to make up the compression that has occurred over the last two decades and beyond. We have lost veteran teachers over the years due to the lack of financial investment in them. In my grade level alone over the last five years, I have welcomed and said goodbye to nearly a dozen teachers who could no longer afford the high cost of living in our Aloha State. It is my sincere hope that in passing Senate Bill SB2819, I will be able to work together with a team of teachers that can stay together over the long haul. Having a team with longevity can create a stronger school community, less teacher shortage, and more consistency for our keiki in school.

Please vote in support for Senate Bill SB2819.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Robert Lozano

5th Grade Teacher

Robotics Coach

Waikoloa Elementary & Middle School

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 10:32:31 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Alana Haitsuka-Fernandez	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2819.

My name is Alana Haitsuka-Fernandez, and I have had the honor and privilege of teaching in the Hawaii Department of Education for the past 27 years. Currently, I work at Honoka`a High and Intermediate School on the Big Island. I love being an educator and value the work that I am able to do. I teach and work with students and fellow educators because it's important and incredibly rewarding to play a positive role and make a difference in young people's lives. More recently, for the last seven years, I've also gotten to work with and mentor new teachers. I've been granted this opportunity due to my years of experience. There really is no substitution for experience. As time passes, your teaching toolbox grows full of strategies: You learn how to anticipate situations, how to face daily challenges, how to reach all kinds of students, how to take lessons a bit further. Experience matters and for many years, our salary schedule has not recognized this. I'm nearly to that 30 year mark, but I realize that my experience, commitment, dedication, and time strengthening my craft are not recognized nor compensated. We need our experienced educators to stay in our system. It's not only so they can continue to serve our students, but it's also because their presence on campus significantly impacts the new and younger teachers in a positive manner- which in turn, also benefits students. All along the way, these past 27 years, I never had extra money, and almost always had a second or third job in order to provide for my own children's tuition or to cover unexpected expenses. At this point in my career, I'd like to feel financially secure, lose the second and third jobs, and be paid according to my years of service. If we want our experienced educators to keep on moving our schools forward, we have to move their salary step as well. It hasn't been fair that we've stalled. The resources are now available and it's time to make things right. Let's compensate fairly those that have given to our keiki for so very many years.

Please vote in support of SB2819.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony and for your consideration of this bill.

Alana Haitsuka-Fernandez

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 12:16:48 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Dana Shishido Kobayashi	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee,

My name is Dana Shishido Kobayashi and I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819. I am a veteran teacher of 32 years and I teach at Wheeler Elementary in the Central District. I have taken many professional development courses to reach the highest Class, though I am not at the highest step within this Class. I still have two more steps to reach the top.

The time is now 11:39 pm. I have just finished looking over student data. I have been contemplating how I will adapt my curriculum plan to address the gaps caused by the pandemic? I still have school work to do, but do I press on or go to sleep; setting my alarm to 3:30 am to pick up then? I usually put in at least 9 - 10 hours at school, take work home with me, and will also work on the weekends, too.

I receive a small budget from the school to purchase materials for my class. However, this is to be spent/ or orders placed in April. If there are changes to curriculum or students who may need extra supplemental material in the following school year, it will come out of my own personal funds. Just as the gifts, holiday treats, and materials for Christmas gifts for the children to give to their families are all personally bought by me.

I give of my time, way beyond what I am compensated for, as well as, giving from my own pocketbook. If I were in a different profession, I would be compensated with overtime pay. If I were in a private school, I would most likely have an endless supply of materials, not have to purchase my own. I have been doing this for over three decades because I want to make a difference in my community; I want to teach.

Recently though, I have begun to feel taken for granted. We were told we would be receiving a bonus, only then to be told that it was not going to happen. We had to place ourselves in a precarious position by being in an enclosed room with 20 bodies of unvaccinated people; even though the state rule was no more than groups of 10 indoors.

Retirement is looking as a strong option for me. Although I would miss working with the keiki. If the salary compression were to occur, it would be looked upon as a statement of: "you are valued." Honestly, it would give me an incentive to stay in this workforce. I would feel as if my sacrifice of time, money, and health were recognized.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819. I thank you for the opportunity to testify. I think I will just sneak in the time to correct the recent writing assessment.

Aloha, Mahalo, and "Goodnight,"

Dana Shishido Kobayashi

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 4:28:15 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Natalie Gaspar	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819.

My name is Natalie Gaspar. I teach in the Windward District at Mokapu Elementary School on Kaneohe Marine Base.

I support the Senate Bill 2819 because it would guarantee that teachers in Hawaii, like other teachers in the country, have their salaries adjusted based on their years of experience.

This legislation will greatly impact teachers' livelihood and in turn our students'. If teachers are paid fairly according to their years of service, teachers could live comfortably in Hawai'i opposed to living paycheck to paycheck. Needless to say, happy teachers make better teachers who are doing what they love, teaching children.

Salary compression has impacted me because teachers are paid according to their Class number and their Step number. We can move up a class by taking 15 credits of professional development courses. Not sure how the step system works any more. We used to increase steps with our years of service, I wish that were still true. I have been a teacher since 1999 for 20 years. (I took some time off for my children.) With the classes that I've taken over the years, I am in Class 5. The highest class is Class 7. As you can see, I am missing out on a lot of money. Young teachers who have taken more classes than me are making way more than I am. So why aren't I in Class 7 you may wonder? I have been a mom since my last year in the UH College of Education program. Being a full time teacher and a full time mom of 3 children is hard. Taking classes on top of it all is rough. I am very grateful for all that my family has, and I do love teaching. But being compensated for my years of service would help so much!

Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 6:00:38 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Jon Fia	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Too many of us veteran teachers have endured through compression. We paid our dues and helped the state balance the budget after the 2008 financial crisis. We enjoy our profession but truth be told many are just holding on until they are vested. Many of us have other jobs (something we were forced to do to survive). Once the opening is there they will leave just as we seen many senior teachers leave during the pandemic since they were vested. However, if properly compensated we will feel appreciated and not feel like we have to hold down two jobs. We would probably go well beyond our minimum time to retire and spend more time educating kids as that is what we love. Isn't that what we all want?

Thank you for your time.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 6:33:02 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Cynthia McAnish	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please pass this bill, supporting veteran teachers who have served the State of Hawaii for so many years, yet have never been compensated for the continuation of our service by way of pay increases, matching our years of service.

I've been a special education teacher for close to 25 years and have only seen my salary increase slightly, and always after I've taken more classes and incurred more debt to do so.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 7:01:04 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Jodi Towata	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

As a veteran teacher, I respectfully ask all members to consider the importance of teacher salary compression. Over the years I have watched teachers leave the profession or work multiple jobs only to be overlooked during contractual talks. Year after year, inflation and cost of living absorb any raise. After 30 years, I am still not at the top of the step movement. How do we expect to attract the best and brightest to continue to educate our keiki. We will attract only what we value. If we have low pay and lack of support, we will see an increase of less than effective teachers. Is this what we want for our students of Hawai'i? Please consider the Teacher salary compression so that we can attract and retain educators that will truly make a difference for all Hawai'i.

Respectfully submitted,

Jodi Towata

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 7:07:13 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Ashley Katamoto	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members if the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819. My name is Ashley Katamoto and I am a secondary visual art teacher at a public charter school. I have been teaching for nine years, and I am currently on step 8 of the salary scale. I have been a licensed teacher for 8 years and have moved up 3 steps during that time. I have a number of colleagues who have been teaching for 5-10 years longer than I have, who remain in this middle area of the salary scale. This is concerning to me because teachers, like any other professional career, should be compensated for their years of experience. Right now it is up to our Union to negotiate step movements for all of our members, but in my mind, this shouldn't be up for debate if you would like to see qualified teachers remain in public schools and in Hawai'i.

These last few years have been incredibly difficult on our community and world, and with that I will also share it has been some of the hardest years for teaching for me personally. There have been numerous times I've feared for my job security, or my ability to keep teaching given the threats of extreme pay cuts throughout the pandemic. By passing SB2819, it would give some sense of security to teachers knowing that they will be fairly compensated based on their years of experience. This, in my opinion, will help to retain highly qualified and experienced teachers. The importance of this for Hawai'i's children cannot be overlooked; we are facing an extreme teacher shortage already and the pandemic has pushed a number of teachers to look for jobs in other careers.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony,

Ashley Katamoto

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 7:08:18 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Stephanie Kuniyoshi	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the CommitteeChair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee:

I am testifying in favor of **SB 2819**. I have worked with the Hawaii Department of Education for over 28 years. After 28+ years of being a dedicated educator, my salary is little more than those who are just beginning to teach in the DOE. This is a pitiful fact.

Please vote in favor of SB2819. Your vote will prove that you support the most dedicated public educators, who have committed their lives to educating the children of Hawaii.

Thank you very much,

Stephanie Kuniyoshi

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 7:09:21 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Miki Kubo	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

Mahalo for your willingness to hear the voices of teachers, like me, who have dedicated decades to our keiki of Hawai'i. I ask that you please consider SB2819 in support of the salary scale compression. It is my generation of teachers who endured the 2001 teacher strike; the Cayatano payroll lag that was never reverted back as promised; and the Lingle work furloughs. Please consider our sacrifices that were overlooked and do what is right, what is pono; not just for us as individual teachers, but for our profession that is suffering high attrition rates. We must make teaching attractive to the next generation. We must also show them that loyalty is honorable and commitment is commendable. Again, I mahalo you for your time & consideration in supporting SB2819.

Aloha,

Miki Kubo

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 7:13:50 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Susan Williams	Testifying for Hokulani Elementary	Support	No

Comments:

SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

RE: SB2820

Thursday, January 27, 2022

IN SUPPORT OF SB2819

I am Susan Williams, a public school teacher. I am testifying in favor of SB2819. It is important that this committee passes bill SB2819 to guarantee that teachers' salaries are adjusted based on years of experience like their counterparts around the United States. When SB 28120 is passed, another step toward minimizing teacher shortage would be taken. Passing this bill would benefit all citizens of Hawaii.

Passing bill SB2819 would benefit all of Hawaii's citizens and help to retain and attract qualified and experienced teachers.

Mahalo,

Susan Williams

3rd Grade Teacher

Hokulani Elementary

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 7:15:17 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Matthew May	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee,

My name is Matthew May, I am a SPED teacher at Stevenson Middle School in my second year.

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819

I have been having active conversations with new hires and other on the job teachers about teacher pay, the step system, and compression throughout the years.

I am surprised to learn from experience within my second year, how prevalent and salient these issues are within our profession, having just been part of a teaching contract year where negotiations were at a near stalemate and future negotiations remain unclear as the state refuses HSTA calls to open negotiations.

This has resulted in my own paycheck being frozen at its entry level position despite having made hard earned gains working throughout one of the hardest teaching years at the start of the pandemic, and now sticking through after many of my more experienced colleagues have opted or saw little choice but to resign.

The fact that teacher pay is already historically under funded, and below the median wage throughout the country is a sad statement to the societal value placed upon us, despite the often used mantra of how teachers are “heroes.” A label which teaching experience quickly betrays as a kind of ongoing lip service.

Teachers need pay that reflects their years of service and dedication. Teachers in other parts of the country have such a system, and we need it in Hawai‘i as well.

I am testifying in support of Senate Bill 2819, as the measure will go along way to take us in the right direction to grow, enhance, and retain our teachers in Hawai‘i.

Please vote in favor of this bill to remedy a long standing issue that will drive us towards more fair and livable conditions for teachers that will retain this vital asset to our communities.

Mahalo nui loa,

Matthew May, Stevenson Middle School, Honolulu

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 7:20:34 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Jill Jacobs	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Good Morning Law Makers,

My name is Jill Jacobs, I am a third grade teacher at Kealahou Elementary School in Kona. This is my ninth year teaching in Hawaii. When I moved to Hawaii in 2013 to teach on paper I was going to be making \$8000 a year more than I was in Arizona. However, due to the higher taxes, paying part of my health insurance, higher retirement contribution and the many other deduction that are taken out of our income I was making \$200 less per month with trippld expenses. For the first time I had to take on part time jobs just to make ends meet. I also went back to school and got two more masters degrees. So that I could get to the class 7. Even with three masters and being a class seven I still had to work part time jobs to meet the cost of living in Hawaii. When we got the Hard to Staff Differentials I could finally quit working my part time job.

In the time since the implamentation of the dfferentials I have had to move due to the house market here in Kona. The condo I had rented for 8 years was sold. I am now living in a house and paying twice as much in rent. If we loss these differentials there is no way that my roommate (who is a Special eduation teacher at my school) and I will be able to afford to stay in Hawaii. I am already struggling to make ends meet again and with the extra money I will never be able to stay.

The data also show that the differentials are working. We have had less turn over, we have had many teacher returning to special education.

If these differentials are lost we will no longer have a teacher shortage crisis we will have a teacher shortage pandemic as there will be a hemirage of veteran teachers leaving Hawaii.

THank you

Jill Jacobs

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 7:22:42 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Dawn Villanueva	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Dawn Villanueva. This is my story, & my testimony is support of SB 2819. My father retired as a teacher from the HI DOE with over 30 years of service. I am a proud product of the Hawaii Public School System. Because my parents could not afford to send us to college, I had to work my way through college.

I graduated from the University of Hawaii in December of 1994 & began my faithful & dedicated teaching career in August of 1995. While teaching, I earned my Professional Diploma & Master's Degree. Inspired by our father, my sister also became a teacher. My husband is a teacher as well. My husband & I are both very dedicated. We spend our own hard-earned money on our classrooms & students, as well as spend long hours in service to our profession. I am at school by 6 am, & my husband stays until about 6 pm. In addition to teaching, we both tutor / teach after school when such programs are available. My husband's after school program, Tech Hui has garnered many state & national awards over the years.

Our children are products of the Hawaii Public School System. Our son graduated in 2018 as Valedictorian, & is majoring in Computer Science in the Weber Honors College at San Diego State University. He earned scholarships, joined the Hawaii Army National Guard, & is a Resident Assistant to help us pay for his college education, room & board. Our daughter graduated in 2020 with many honors, including National Honor Society, Magna Cum Laude, CTE Honors & STEM Honors; & is majoring in Technology & Engineering Education at Utah State. She is following in her father's footsteps & aspires to be a STEM teacher. She earned scholarships, & works part-time to help us pay for her college education, room & board.

Although my husband & I are both at the top Class of the Teacher's Annual Rate Salary Schedule, our steps do reflect the years of dedication to our profession. My husband takes jobs, & I have a second job in order to afford to send our children to college (with their help). This is a shame. The state of Hawaii & Department of Education needs to rectify this situation, & pay teacher comparable to our colleagues in the continental United States. This will help to attract new teachers to the profession, as well as keep teachers in the profession, thereby taking steps to eliminate the teacher shortage in the state.

Thank you for your time & support of SB2819.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 7:25:07 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Gerard Espiritu	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

RE: SB2820 & SB2819

Thursday, January 27, 2022

IN SUPPORT OF SB2820 & SB2819

I am Gerard Espiritu, a public school teacher. I am testifying in favor of SB2820. It is important that this committee passes bill SB2820 to guarantee that teachers' salaries are adjusted based on years of experience like their counterparts around the United States. When SB 28120 is passed, another step toward minimizing teacher shortage would be taken. Passing this bill would benefit all citizens of Hawaii.

Passing bill SB2820 would benefit all of Hawaii's citizens and help to retain and attract qualified and experienced teachers.

Mahalo,

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 7:31:30 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Diane K Mokuau	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee.

I am a teacher at Molokai High School and I write in support of Bill SB 2819, Salary Compression and hope for it to be rectified to save the fidelity of Hawaii's teachers.

We want to try our best to retain our Hawaii teachers from either leaving the profession or moving to the mainland in search of a higher pay. We also don't want our 'seasoned' teachers to lose recognition of their experience as well.

I have been an educator for over 30 years & only reached the top of our salary range last year. I personally know teachers at my school who would stay if the salary compression is finally addressed. Some have already left.

Fixing compression will boost the salaries of most teachers, helping and hoping to persuade many of them to remain on the job and stay in Hawaii where our keiki can benefit from their experience.

Sincerely,

Diane K. Mokuau

Molokai High School

Librarian

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 7:37:11 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Merry K Kiyan	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819. My name is Merry Kiyan and I am a first grade teacher at Mountain View Elementary School on the Big Island. This is my 27th year of teaching and although I have taken enough classes past my Professional Diploma in Elementary Education and am in Class 7, I am still not at the top of my pay potential because of salary compression through the years. I was born and raised in Hawaii and only now, at age 57 have I finally bought a home. I don't know how anyone on Oahu or other islands can afford even "affordable homes" on a teacher salary. I absolutely love the keiki I work with every day, they are the light in our community and I have worked very hard to become the best teacher that I can.

Please help with the long standing issue of salary compression so that teachers like me who have worked in schools our whole lives can finally get the compensation we have worked all these years for.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Aloha,

Merry K Kiyan

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 7:37:15 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Davelyn Lokelani Han	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I, Davelyn Lokelani Han, am a teacher at Kualapu'u Public Conversion Charter School on Moloka'i.

I write in support of Bill SB 2819, Salary Compression and hope for it to be rectified to save the fidelity of Hawaii's teachers.

Retaining our current Hawaii teachers is top priority. We don't want them to either leave the profession or move to the mainland in search of a higher pay. In order to attract qualified local candidates, we need to make this profession as appealing as any on the private sector.

I have been an educator for over 20 years and a certified liscensed teacher for more than 15+ of those years.

Fixing compression will boost the salaries of most teachers,(me included) helping and hoping to persuade many of our teachers to remain on the job and stay in Hawaii where our keiki can benefit from their experience.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819.

'O wau nō me ka 'oia'i'o,

(Davelyn) Lokelani Han

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 7:42:37 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Lois Y Nagamine	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am Lois Nagamine, a public school teacher. I am testifying in favor of SB2819. It is important that this committee passes bill SB2819 to guarantee that teacher's salaries are adjusted based on years of experiences like their counterparts around the United States. When SB2819 is passed, another step toward minimizing teacher shortage would be taken. Passing this bill would benefit all citizens of Hawaii.

Passing bill SB 2819 would benefit all of Hawaii's citizens and help to retain and attract qualified and experienced teachers.

Mahalo,

Lois Nagamine

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 7:44:39 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Samantha Magine	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am Samantha Magine , a public school teacher. I am testifying in favor of SB2819. It is important that this committee passes bill SB2819 to guarantee that teacher's salaries are adjusted based on years of experiences like their counterparts around the United States. When SB2819 is passed, another step toward minimizing teacher shortage would be taken. Passing this bill would benefit all citizens of Hawaii.

Passing bill SB 2819 would benefit all of Hawaii's citizens and help to retain and attract qualified and experienced teachers.

Mahalo

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 7:47:45 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Chyler Imai	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Chyler Imai and I am a public school teacher at Kohala Middle. This is my fifth year as a teacher here at Kohala Middle.

I am a recipient of the geographic hard-to-staff shortage differential, and having this differential has allowed me to stay in this profession I love.

I am the core math teacher for sixth and seventh graders, as well as the teacher for math workshop for seventh and eighth graders to help build basic math foundational skills. Our school is extremely small and we live in a rural area where resources are very difficult to possess. We all must wear many hats at our school due to a lack of adequate funding for rural schools. The hard-to-staff differential is an incentive for me to continue to support our students, families and staff. I bring a lot of expertise and experience to our school, and would like to continue in my roles.

I am the main source of income in my family, and the hard-to-staff differential has helped my finances at home, a mortgage, and college school debt.

Please know that the geographic hard-to staff differential makes a tremendous difference in the living conditions for all teachers, whether new, in the middle of our careers, or continuing to contribute to our communities.

Thank you for taking the time to read my testimony.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 7:48:58 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Cara Fukuda	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

The kids of Hawa'ii deserves a better education. There needs to be a competitive salary for people to want to pursue and stay in the teaching profession. Demands of current teachers are increasing and lack of good pay drives a lot of good teachers out, as it is no longer worth it to "go the extra mile" for our students, while struggling to make ends meet personally. The teacher shortage is so bad that underqualified people are in the classroom teaching our children. This is not acceptable and it is unrealistic for our students to get quality education from underqualified teachers. Higher pay would entice more individuals to study teaching. Higher pay would also encourage teachers to stay in this profession, and are more likely to work hard and "go the extra mile" for our keiki. I personally know many people who started with a passion for teaching. They loved teaching the children of Hawa'ii. However, lack of decent pay, increased demands, and constant pressure forced them to find another career. Although they miss teaching everyday, they had to leave to be able to live comfortably, especially while living in Hawa'ii, where cost of living has increased dramatically recently and is much higher than other parts of the nation. Please consider raising teacher pay for the children.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 7:53:15 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Kathryn Childress	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I love teaching and want to continue this for my carrer, but without the salery apporpriatly compensating us for our jobs I cannot stay in this field.

Every teacher I talk to this year is burnt out, ready to find a new job, and overly frusterated with our situation. This could absoulty help teacher retention.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 8:01:39 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Jacob Tamaye	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha, I am a public school educator and I have been teaching in the State of Hawaii since 2000. Ever since the start of my teaching career over 20 years ago, I have stood by my colleagues in the struggle to improve the pay for Hawaii's teachers. While in my first year of teaching we went on strike, and then some 10 years later I went through the teacher furlough issue, and now here we are again still struggling with fighting for fair compensation for our teachers. I have been around long enough to see many teachers come and go, and the ones that leave are often young teachers who are frustrated, disappointed, or unable to survive here in Hawaii and so they end up leaving for other opportunities elsewhere. This has a significant impact on the learning environment for our keiki. Teachers who have been around for a long time have gained wisdom that only comes through experience and cannot be taught in college. Yet, if we are losing teachers each year after only being in the system for a short amount of time, then we never get to realize their full potential. One way that we can lessen this is through addressing the pay compression problem and recognizing the value that our experienced teachers provide to our keiki and younger teachers. Mahalo.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 8:05:54 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Sharon Weeks	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Thank you so much for introducing SB2819. If this bill is passed, it may give me a reason to stay in Hawai'i. Right now, I am just waiting for my youngest child to graduate and then I am planning on moving to the mainland to finish my teaching career.

My story: I returned to Hawai'i to care for an ailing family member and when I did a phone interview with a HIDOE principal, the first thing he said to me was, "You will be taking a \$25,000.00 pay." In my head, I was thinking, actually I will be taking a \$25,000.00 pay cut, plus losing my family's free 90/10 PPO medical/\$14,440 a year, and an extra \$500 a month/\$6,000 annually retirement contribution match. I am not saying HIDOE has the money to sustain this type of salary, but the fact that we have to wait for a bargaining to go up the pay scale is upsetting.

I love teaching, but it's not easy. I have seen parents struggle handling their one child and here we have to teach several with challenging behaviors at once. Some of the subjects we have to teach are uninteresting to the students.

When teachers are having an off day, we have to put on a game face and are expected to perform. There is no hiding behind a desk when you aren't feeling well. And you can pretty much say goodbye to a duty-free lunch. I spend most of my weekends planning and my breaks improving my lessons.

While it is rewarding to see growth in your students or knowing you are making your student's home life better, it is hard to want to stay in this profession when there are other professions that easily pay more. I have encouraged my own children not to go into teaching in Hawai'i. If anyone had to teach an actual class for the week, they would immediately give us a pay raise. I knew of a parent who used to complain about her children's teachers until she was given a substitute assignment for a day. After that, she praised teachers like there was no tomorrow.

I know this is probably not what you want to read over and over, but thank you for listening to our voices.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 8:19:05 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Leinaala Kealoha	Testifying for Department of Education	Support	No

Comments:

Given the continual issue of recruitment and retention of teachers; undoubtedly, our veteran teachers should be honored with competitive and equitable compensation for their dedication. If that is not enough, the mere fact that Hawai'i teachers are the lowest paid in the nation is a stammering statistic and should be improved.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 8:42:13 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Sara O'Rourke	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819.

My name is Sara O'Rourke and I am a teacher at Kapaa High School on Kauai.

I've been a DOE teacher in Hawaii for 26 years and I have only advanced to Step 12 on the salary schedule. I love my career, but I feel really undervalued because I have not been fairly compensated for my dedicated years of service. I've started looking for jobs on the mainland where the cost of living is lower and my salary would be higher. However, getting paid a fair wage for my years of experience would definitely convince me to stay here.

Salary compression is a "make or break" issue for myself and many teachers at the moment. The passing of Senate Bill 2819 will be the morale boost that teachers need right now, and prevent the teacher shortage crisis from getting worse.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 8:45:50 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Natalia Sandoval	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I am submitting testimony on SB2819 Relating to Teacher Compensation on behalf of myself and my fellow HIDOE teachers who have been impacted by the salary compression. I have been teaching special education in the HIDOE for 16 years and it has not been easy to stay.

Because of the salary compression and step system, I have had to work multiple jobs just to support my family. My husband was also a special education teacher in the HIDOE, but in 2018 he left the profession after 13 years to become a laborer because the job paid more. We are both highly educated (each holding a master's degree in SPED) and highly qualified, yet under-valued, under-appreciated, and under-paid.

Til this day, we are still dealing with the impacts of the Lingle's furloughs in 2008 and 2009. During that time, we had to go into forbearance with our student loans, because we could not afford to pay them and raise our family.

Getting rid of the step system and fixing the compression problem, will help my family be able to stay here in Hawaii. It will help me to continue to stay in the DOE. And maybe it will help those who have left the profession for more pay, to come back.

I want nothing more in my life then to be a special education teacher, but if I continue to get paid at such a low rate, I will have to consider leaving the DOE (or even Hawaii) so that I can make what I deserve.

Sincerely,

Natalia Sandoval, M.A. SPED, NBCT

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 8:49:06 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Una Burns	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please help our school kids by helping our teachers feel valued and properly paid. Many of us who have worked for more than 17 yrs are being paid the exact same as those with much less experience and years worked!! I am extremely glad they are being paid well but firmly believe that you must see the inequity here. Many more teachers will remain in school positions and the constant outflow of teachers leaving would be greatly abated. Hawaii has a billion dollar surplus, we can afford this! Please support this bill

Testimony for SB2819

My name is Joyce Vea and I am a counselor at Waimea Canyon Middle School on Kauai. I am writing in support of SB2819 which would address the teacher compensation (salary compression) issue which has plagued teachers, counselors, and support staff educators for decades. This is not a new issue, in fact, there have been rumblings of teachers not being compensated fairly for their dedication in years of service to the DOE since my hiring back in 2008. It is time to compensate educators fairly - especially now that the state is at a surplus - the legislature may not have the opportunity (and financial capability) to address this concern again in the near future. This is an investment in public schools, in public school students, and in the workforce directly tasked with preparing Hawaii's workforce.

I entered the Department of Education in January of 2008 only 3 weeks after graduation from UH Manoa's last cohort in school counseling. After years of preparation and studying, I was ready to enter the field of education and apply the knowledge and skills I had gained. Not long after that, Governor Lingle put into place "Furlough Fridays" which was my first experience of having my salary "stunted." In fact, I took a 5% pay cut for the 2 years where Furlough Fridays existed. I was hopeful when Governor Abercrombie said he was a supporter of Education and Educators only to see "Directed Leave Without Pay" days - these were essentially the same as Furlough Fridays and had the same impact. Those first 5 years of my career with the state were difficult years financially and set me up in a way where I needed to "catch up" financially.

For people unfamiliar with the teacher pay scale, our pay is determined by two factors: a) "Classes" which reflects our level of education + professional development classes and b) "Steps" which reflect pay raises negotiated through our contracts - NOT years of service as it would be in any other state. I was appalled to hear my colleagues admit that they were nowhere near the "top of the pay scale" even after 25-27 years of service. I was mindblown...I asked myself, "How does the state of Hawaii (our leaders, the legislature) not ensure that our educators are properly taken-care-of financially?" It is a question I struggle with today. At about year 3 in the DOE, I started taking professional development classes pretty aggressively - meaning I would try to take two classes per semester on top of my regular day job and a part-time job to help pay down student loans. It took me maybe 5-6 years (by this time, I'm also a Mother), but I finally made it to CLASS VII - the end of the teacher pay scale in terms of education/professional development. Now, it was a waiting game to go up in "Steps." My hopes dwindled as there have been a few contracts where "steps" were NOT negotiated and agreed to which means my base salary would not improve for 2, 3, and sometimes 4 years. For example, we got a \$1000 bonus one year - that was a slap in the face. Give us our step movements - we've earned them. Given that we are now considered essential in the light of a global pandemic, I'd say it's pretty clear that Educators have earned the right to say we've earned our paychecks.

It is 2022 and I've observed a few things over the years in relation to negotiations for teacher contracts: a) most contracts are 2-3 years long, b) some of the contracts that have been

ratified during my employment didn't include even 1 "step" - like the current contract we're on until SY22-23, c) politicians will correlate our pay to how well the state is doing financially and how other unions get paid, and d) it feels like teachers always come last. And consequently, these are the negative long-term implications of the nature of negotiations and bad contracts over the past two decades: 1) the field of education is not seen as attractive by our local students, 2) our society doesn't value educators/education, 3) teacher recruiting and retention is a chronic problem, and 4) morale in our field is low. If the compression issue is not fixed with the next contract, the problems will not only continue, they will exponentially get worse. Current teachers will retire earlier than they previously planned or hoped for, the stressors related to covid will push teachers out of the field, and more importantly students will suffer. Our students cannot receive quality education when the best and most seasoned educators are leaving the Department of Education. The DOE likes to look at all types of data regarding academic marks, attendance, covid cases, Title I funds...but where is the accountability piece where the state and our legislature looks at how state level decisions impact teacher recruitment and retention and what kind of impact does that have on student learning? Our field will not be able to sustain another round of teacher loss and/or lack of teacher recruitment.

There has never been another time where things have been so aligned to compensate Hawaii's teachers fairly and comparable to that of our mainland counterparts. The passing of this bill would put value in the 14 years that I have already dedicated to the Department of Education and give me 2 more steps which would raise my salary by \$9,000. Yes, that's right...\$9,000 - this is money that I earned but due to a series of bad contracts, I had to just accept where the department said I had to be - because funding was not available. It's time to correct the wrong, it's time to pay teachers & counselor what we are worth. There were times in the past where the burden of the state's financial struggles were squarely put on the backs of state workers. It's our turn to reap the benefits of a funding surplus. There is no time better to tell our students and communities that public education in the state of hawaii is a priority and their future is an investment worth saving. Please pass SB2819 to fairly compensate our Teachers!

To: Committee Chair and Members in which people voted into office to do right for the people of this State.

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2810 (salary compression)

Aloha, my name is Waianela Boiser-Seguna, I am of native Hawaiian descent (Kanaka Maoli), and first in my family to graduate from college. I have worked as a public high school special education teacher for over 23 years.

In regards of pay adjustment, I am in year 24 of teaching and my classification is at level 11 with the highest being at level 14b. Currently, the entry level pay is at \$40,000 and when I entered the profession it was at \$24,000. So hence people entering the profession are nearing my current salary. I have been through a teacher strike for 20 days in 2001, and 17 furlough days in 2009 and still haven't recovered financially. And if you look at teacher pay in Hawaii compared to other states with consideration to the factors of higher cost of living, we are barely making it in Hawaii.

Please take care of the teachers who have served throughout our lifetime to get to a level of compensation that we have earned. Do what is right for the people who have made a difference in the community and support Senate Bill 2819.

Mahalo Nui Loa

Waianela Boiser-Seguna, Ed.D

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 9:15:18 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Jessica Young	Testifying for HSTA	Support	No

Comments:

This is my testimony to bill SB2819. As a BU5 member that is halfway through my career, I would like to see my pay rate equal to the amount of experience I have accrued. How can we attract and keep *Experienced* teachers when our pay does not reflect what other teachers in other states are receiving. With the increase in inflation, medical costs, or gas prices in Hawaii, how can we earn a feasible living? The News headline today lead with "Gas prices at \$6.39/ gallon!!! Another headline stated, "As school staffing shortages continue, parents express concern over the quality of education experience". My answer to this... my colleagues and I have stuck it out. We have stayed with these kids, taught these kids, loved these kids and we continue to do that. We are here and have always been here. We have learned so much over the course of this pandemic and it has given us the experience to adapt and teach these children. The road ahead is long, we have students who are 2-3 years behind. We have students who need social-emotional support. But, we have not given up.

However, if this bill is not passed, many will be questioning what more sacrifices are we willing to take in order to stay at a job we love. Love don't pay the bills... Is it worth it?

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 9:17:53 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Paul McKimmy	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

For decades, legislators have bemoaned the Hawai'i teacher shortage. We have incentivized prospective teachers, offered scholarships, and pointed fingers at our teacher preparation programs claiming that they're not producing enough teachers.

What we have never done is to directly address the fact that teachers in Hawaii aren't paid well enough that teaching remains a competitive paid career over time. I applaud this effort to examine this issue and begin addressing it.

We can produce as many licensed teachers as we wish, but unless their pay and working conditions are attractive, they will choose other employment opportunities.

With appreciation,

Paul McKimmy, Ed.D.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 9:19:00 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Robert Green	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha mai kakou,

My name is Robert Green and I am a teacher at Kaua'i High School. I am writing in support of SB2819. I love my job and it gives me purpose and connects me with my community. This is my forever career. However, as I look to the future, I do not know how long I would financially be able to remain in the career I love so much due to the current salary schedule. As I would continue to teach my students over the years and help to build a better community here in Hawai'i, I would not be compensated appropriately for those years of service and experience as is the norm across the nation and in other profession fields. I ask that you please stand with me, and the rest of the teachers throughout the State and support SB2819.

Mahalo,

-Robert Green

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 9:23:52 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Brent Kiyan	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819. This is Brent Kiyan and I am a second grade teacher at Mountain View Elementary School on the Big Island. This is my 30th year of teaching and although I have taken enough classes past my Masters Degree in Elementary Education and am in Class 7, I am still not at the top of my pay potential because of salary compression through the years. My wife and I are both teachers and have to have part time jobs in order to pay our mortgage and make ends meet. We do not live a lavish life-style by any means.

Please help with the long standing issue of salary compression so that teachers like me who have worked in schools our whole lives can finally get the compensation we have worked all these years for.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Brent Kiyan

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 9:26:30 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Lisa Yee	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

To the State of Hawaii I testify on behalf of the children and educators of this State. It is very expensive and difficult to work and live in Hawaii. Keeping teachers working here and not moving away or changing their livelihood to feel comfort in Hawai'i is a very real situation. I as a parent of two elementary school kids rely heavily on their educators for their success and growth to be contributing patriots of Hawai'i. I am in such favor to use my tax money to go toward the staff of educators that I know are much deserving and important to our children's success. Our school teachers spend much of their personal time trying to navigate through all the pandemic obstacles and it is crucial to keep the teachers motivated and appreciated with a pay raise.

Mahalo,.

Lisa Yee

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 9:33:38 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Michael Lau	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Legislators,

I have been a teacher in Hawaii for 14 years. I was born and raised here. I am raising my three children here. All 3 of my children attend public schools. I believe in our school system. I love our school system. I worked through furlough Fridays. I worked through "Last, best, and final offer." I remember being paid less than the first year I started teaching, struggling to get by and counting pennies. I am a victim of our compression issues.

Every legislator says they support education. Every legislator says that teachers should be fairly compensated. Decades of "later," Decades of "When we have the budget." We will never have the budget. Your job is to make it work. Make education a real priority. Enough excuses already. What you do is way more important than what you say.

I won't leave Hawaii. I won't stop teaching. All I ask is that you take care of my family and me like I take care of our keiki.

Sincerely,

Michael Lau

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 9:34:40 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
christopher castillo	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee,

My name is Christopher Castillo, an EOEL PreKindergarten teacher at Waianae Elementary school. I am writing in support of Senate Bill 2819 relating to teacher compensation in the form of salary compression.

I have taught at my school for eight years and I have to say that no one is rushing to fill the many open slots that we have. These open spots are filled with unqualified individuals or people who have traveled from the continent. Often coming with the mindset, "Oh I get to teach in Hawai'i." Many of these unqualified or out-of-state individuals often don't stay which leads us back to where we started.

This is happening to schools all across the state and although it has been said out loud that there is a retention problem, there hasn't been much done to solve it. We currently have pay differentials for SPED teachers, hard-to-staff schools, and Hawaiian immersion schools. These differentials were created to "entice" teachers to either go to or stay in these positions. Yet these are also on the table to be discussed today. Covid has showcased more flaws in the education field where fewer people are joining the workforce while more people are leaving it.

There is a large portion of the workforce that has put their heart and soul into this profession that is ready to call it quits. During the pandemic, they were asked to pick up more responsibilities, go through ELL courses, as well as deal with covid-regulations that impacted their instruction. Although they have worked hard for many years, their pay does not reflect that. I, as a teacher for eight years, almost make as much as someone with more years of service than I do. If that large population decides to call it quits or retires, that is a large portion of the workforce that we don't have people to take those spots. Like many teachers, this group is feeling overworked and underpaid. But they've had to feel this way and face more challenges longer than a lot of us newer teachers.

We cannot continue to think that students are getting "quality learning" when open slots are filled with unqualified individuals or long-term subs. When there already are professionals in those positions that we could keep by fixing their pay.

I ask you to please support Senate Bill 2819.

Thank you for your time.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 9:58:13 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Lorna Tresler-Basquez	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Teachers with years of experience need to be recognized for it. It will help with experienced teacher retainment.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 10:08:24 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Melanie Pokakaa	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

To Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and member of the Committee,

My name is Melanie Pokakaa, a first grade teacher at Waianae Elementary School. I am writing in support of Senate Bill 2819 relating to teacher compensation in the form of salary compression. I have taught at my school for seven years and I have to say that no one is rushing to fill the many open positions that we have. These open positions are filled with unqualified individuals or people who have traveled from the continent. Often coming to Hawaii with the mindset of a "Hawaii Vacation." Many of these unqualified or out-of-state individuals often do not stay past their contracted 2 years, which leads us back to where we started with teacher shortage.

This is happening to schools all across the state and although it has been said out loud that there is a retention program, there has not been much done to resolve/solve it. We currently have pay differentials for SPED teachers, hard-to-staff schools, and Hawaiian immersion schools. These differentials were created to "attract" teachers to either go to or stay in these positions/schools. Yet these are also on the table to be discussed today. Covid has showcased more flaws in the educational system and fields where fewer people are joining the workforce while more people are leaving it.

There is a large portion of the workforce that has put their heart, soul and years into this profession that is ready to call it quits. During the pandemic, they were asked to pick up responsibilities, go through ELL (English Language Learner) courses, as well as deal with covid-regulations that impacted their instruction. Although they have worked hard for many years, their pay does not reflect that. I, as a seven year teacher, almost make as much as some colleagues that has more years of service. If that large population decides to call it quits or retires, that is a large portion of the educational workforce that we do not have people to take those positions. Like many teachers, this group is feeling overwhelmed, overworked and underpaid. But they have had to feel this way and face more challenges longer than a lot of us newer teachers.

We cannot continue to think that students are getting “quality learning time” when open position are filled with unqualified individuals or long-term subs. When there already are professionals in those positions that we could keep by fixing their pay.

I ask you to please support Senate Bill 2819.

Mahalo to the committee for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Melanie Pokakaa

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Friday, January 28, 2022 at 3:00pm

RE: SB 2819

Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and Members of the Committee,



My name is [Sarah "Mili" Milianta-Laffin](#). I teach at Ilima Intermediate School in the Campbell-Kapolei Complex, Leeward District on O'ahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2819.

I decided not to shower this morning, so I could get to work early to write and submit this testimony. These are the decisions teachers make now. COVID-19 has taken the difficult job of working in public education, and made it almost impossible. Teachers are at our breaking point, and it seems that no help is coming.

Teachers like me confront challenges, do extra work and lose sleep all the time, worrying about other people's children. It's the nature of the job. But do you know what we teachers shouldn't worry about? Being fairly compensated for our work.

I'm a 16 year public school educator who makes about \$50,000 a year. This is the lowest salary of my career. This is less money than I made during my 1st year teaching,

16 years ago, in Houston, Texas. My entire salary doesn't even cover our rent, we have little savings, and even though I desperately want to start a family -- I'm scared that we can't realistically afford to have a baby with the high cost of living in Hawai'i. Without my husband's salary, I could not afford to be a teacher.

SB 2819 would guarantee that teachers in Hawaii, like their counterparts around the United States, have their salaries adjusted based on their years of experience, meaning more than 8,000 public school teachers would see corrections in their salaries to help keep them in the profession longer. While this particular bill does not help my own salary, it helps the salaries of many teachers I care about, and it's just the right thing to do.

I was 1 of 4 teachers recognized nationally by Dr. Jill Biden and Speaker Nancy Pelosi for Women's History Month in March 2021. I'm a Hawaii State Finalist for the National Presidential Award for Excellence in Math & Science Teaching. I was awarded the HSTA 2020 "Pono Award" for my work with social justice in education with menstrual equity, WiFi on Wheels, supporting LGBTQ+ youth and more. I say this not because it should matter, but I hope it illustrates that I love what I do, and I work hard. I'm already vastly underpaid for the work I do. Yet, I do it because I believe in the transformative power of PUBLIC education.

I stay in public education, because I believe in public education. I'd like to bring up the elephant in the room. Did you know, teachers like me get LinkedIn messages all the time from wealthy private schools and enterprising charter schools in our state, asking us to come work for them? These schools have learned to "cherry-pick" the best public school teachers we have by preying on our state's low public school teacher pay. While it breaks my heart each time we lose a teacher to the wealthy privatized schools, I understand why they go. If you believe in public education, you must fix teacher pay by supporting this bill.

Students deserve teachers who can focus all their energy on creating engaging lessons, not worrying about how they can make ends meet. Mahalo for reading, and for supporting the students of Hawai'i by caring for their teachers through your support of SB 2819.

Sarah Milianta-Laffin, Teacher
Ilima Intermediate School
Leeward District

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 10:16:04 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Kelly Sutcliffe	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Kelly Sutcliffe and I have been a teacher with the Hawaii Department of Education since 2005. I have dedicated over 16 years to the teaching profession in Hawaii. During this time, I have taught in grades K, 2,3,4,5 and 6, and have remained faithful to my current elementary school for 15 years. Throughout my years teaching I have earned a Master's Degree from the University of Hawaii plus 24 additional credits for reclassification. I won the 2016 Milken Award which is a national recognition for excellence in teaching, and I am currently in pursuit of my National Board Certification. Upon receiving the Milken Award, I was asked to speak at many events, including a teacher recruitment at Windward Community College. Why do I teach? I love making a difference and having an impact on children. I like making learning fun and engaging and seeing kid's faces light up with pride in their work. I love providing a safe space for kids that they may not have at home. I love opening student's eyes to real-world issues and involving them in projects that have a direct impact on their community.

During this time, I have also started a family of my own and now have a 3 yr. old daughter to support. We cannot even consider having more children if we want to continue living in Hawaii. Our small 800 sq. ft., 1.5 bedroom condo costs more than one of my paychecks. My husband works as a mechanic and makes a comparable salary to me (I sadly make more) I have tried my best to get a head by taking classes, pursuing other certifications, and working summer school for extra income while I would rather be spending time with my family. After 16 years of working extra hours tutoring after school, on weekends, during breaks, I am still barely able to make ends meet. I currently take home just over \$1,500 per paycheck- just over \$3,000 a month, which equates to under \$40,000 per year. It is impossible to save money with the annual increase in rent and cost of living and so we make due paycheck to paycheck. If it weren't for CARES Act money my daughter would not be able to attend preschool. My husband and I contemplate leaving Hawaii every year that it gets harder. Financially we should. We choose to stay because of the time and energy we have put into our careers. I feel as though I have invested a lot into the education system of Hawaii and would love to continue growing in my profession. We have built our lives here, have friends who have become family, and have embraced the culture and lifestyle. We try to figure things out financially from year to year because we've made this place 'home'. I would like to ask that you consider passing Bill SB2819. It would help retain passionate veteran teachers such as myself, and allow us to afford to raise a family here. And while it is true, teachers are selfless and do not choose this career for the high salary, we certainly deserve to be paid for our years of service.

Mahalo for listening to testimony and for allowing me to share my voice. Please consider taking care of our educators.

-Kelly Sutcliffe, Elementary Educator

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 10:16:30 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Patrick Karjala	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

It is essential that we support our teachers and pay them appropriately for their skill level and education that are REQUIRED for the jobs that they are taking on.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 10:22:12 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Eomailani	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please support the appropriate compensation of teachers.

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

RE: SENATE BILL 2819 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

Thursday January 27, 2022

Dear Members of the Senate Education Committee:

My name is Cynthia Broc. I am the Student Services Coordinator at Laie Elementary School in the Windward District on the island of Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819 Relating to Teacher Compensation.

I am a veteran teacher who has been at Laie Elementary School for the past 30 years. I started out as a parent volunteer. Due to the shortage of special education teachers, even back then, I was asked to assist in the pre-school special education classroom in 1998 as a long term substitute special education teacher. I loved it so much I went back to school to get my teaching license. I taught for 12 years as a special education pre-school teacher and then moved into the Student Services Coordinator position where I have been for the past 10 years. I have experienced the Cayetano teacher strike, the Linda Lingle furlough Fridays. I have gone year after year with no pay raise, or an increase in my pay accompanied by an increase in my insurance premiums. I have had to get a second job, sell my jewelry, and borrow money from my parents so my family has food on the table and a roof over our heads. My husband and I have lived pay check to pay check so our children could afford college and we could afford to care for my husband's 97 year old mother in our home.

I am asking you to support compression pay for us veteran teachers. My salary has been stuck at classification Step 11 for years. I would love to stay in my position and assist my special education department for the next 5 years. I have been mentoring new special education teachers and we have continued to experience success in their development. The extra compensation for my years of service will allow me to retire and stay in Hawaii. I plan to continue to give back to our children by volunteering to support the special education department at Laie Elementary School if the compression pay goes through. If not, upon retiring my family and I will have to leave the island because it is just too expensive to stay here.

I urge you to support compression pay for us veteran teachers so we can continue to stay in our positions and support the future educators and children of Hawaii.

Thank you for your time and consideration- Cynthia Broc, Windward District, Island of Oahu

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 10:24:10 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Alisa Hamasaki	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Subject Line: Testimony in Support of SB2819,

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting a testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819.

My name is Alisa. I am an elementary education teacher at Pomaika'i Elementary School on Maui. This is my testimony regarding SB2819.

I relocated to Hawaii from California as an elementary school teacher. When moving, I took a \$10,000 pay cut to be here. In Hawaii, every dollar of compensation counts. The cost of living in Hawaii is tremendous, and has only been exacerbated by COVID and the influx of wealthy families to the islands during the pandemic.

I have been a teacher for 14 years but on paper and the acceptance of years of teaching from CA and Hawaii charter schools, this does not show my years of experience. Teachers do not move up in steps unless through negotiations. Teachers have not moved up in steps and steps should be realigned with years of service. Steps should be given yearly to retain teachers in Hawaii.

It is very hard to make ends meet when living in Hawaii. I will be more likely to return to California should the State of Hawaii and DOE stop supporting teachers with the proper salary. This will also deter teachers from taking professional development courses because there is no monetary incentives.

I saw a quote: "If you want to invest in students then you have to invest in teachers too."
Please start investing in Hawaii's students and their teachers.

Mahalo,
Alisa Hamasaki

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 10:24:00 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Todd Ozawa	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

My name is Todd Ozawa and I am a 7th grade English and Social Studies Teacher at Wheeler Middle School in Central District on O‘ahu. I am hereby submitting testimony in support of SB 2819.

There are so many factors that affect students, and all of them are worthy of attention. Certainly we should address every one of them if our children are our priority. Realistically, however, there are limits in time and money on what can be done at any given time. So what, then, should be the first priority? Class size. Access to technology. Bell Schedules. Nutrition. Where would that time and money be best spent to improve the education of these students who will become our state's future business, cultural, and political leaders? According to Jennifer King Rice of the Department of Education Policy and Leadership at the University of Maryland and a researcher with the Economic Policy Institute, **“Teacher quality... is the most important school-related factor influencing student achievement.”** My own experience in the profession supports this view, and I assert and agree that we need to do more, od all we can, to train, recruit, maintain, and retain only the highest quality teachers for our children.

As teachers we are being authentic, not just politic, when we say that our children are our priority.

I have been teaching, part- or full- time, for almost 20 years. I have taught from Niu Valley to Wahiawa. I have been an ELL Program Coordinator and teacher, a choir director and a club advisor, a new teacher and a mentor to new teachers, and a supporter of and friend to numerous fantastic, dedicated teachers over the years. I have seen so many leave the profession, and have heard from many discouraged potential teachers, and it hurts me deeply to think that so many of our youth are losing the opportunity to be taught and mentored by such caring and capable teachers... and that we, as a state, are losing the future that we might and should have.

We, the teachers, the children, your community, and our future, need your help.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 10:38:03 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Grace Chen-Ellis	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I write to support passage of Senate Bills 2819 and 2820 which I view as critical to the recruitment and retention of high quality educators in Hawaii. I am a high school teacher on Molokai and I know firsthand that some very good teachers here are considering leaving the profession because of low compensation and little opportunity to see their wages grow as they gain experience. We must do all that we can to stop this kind of attrition. Hawaii is behind most states in terms of educator compensation relative to cost of living. It is our responsibility as educators and legislators to ensure that our students are led by a team of educators with exceptional abilities. We cannot fulfill that obligation if our brightest young people choose another career because of relatively low wages for educators, if we cannot compete with other states for the very best teachers, and if we cannot retain teachers. If teachers in Hawaii were guaranteed what most teachers in every other state have -- salary adjustments based on years of experience -- we could increase the number of college students who would choose education as a career, be in a better position to compete with other states for the best teachers, and retain the quality teachers we already have. In addition, we have seen the positive impact shortage differentials have by substantially reducing teacher shortages in the fields and geographic areas to which they apply. We should continue a valuable program that we know works. Senate Bills 2819 and 2820 will help us meet our responsibility to our students to keep their schools fully staffed with the best teachers available. For these reasons, I urge passage of Senate Bills 2819 and 2820. Thank you for your consideration.

Grace C. Chen-Ellis

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 10:40:35 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Iris Kahalelio	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Members of the Education Committee,**My name is Iris Kahalelio and I live in Waialua.****I have been a science teacher at Kahuku High & Intermediate School since 1994. Since then, I have always had to have a second job to supplement my income to be able to live in Hawaii.****SB2819 would guarantee that teachers in Hawaii, like our counterparts around the United States, have their salaries adjusted based on their years of experience, meaning more than 8,000 of our members would see corrections in our salaries to help keep us in the profession longer. Many teachers have been “compressed” on the salary schedule, especially on steps 9, 11, 12, and 13, and that our years of service fall out of alignment with salary steps with more years of service.****SB2820 would make sure funding is secured for the differentials currently in place for special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and geographically hard-to-fill areas. Schools in our Castle-Kahuku Complex have always had a difficult time filling positions so classes are not being taught by highly qualified teachers.****I urge you to support Senate Bill 2819 and 2820 so that more teachers will stay in the profession longer and/or not need to have a second job to live in Hawaii and that funding is secured for geographically hard-to-fill areas.****Mahalo for your consideration.**



SENATE BILL 2819, RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

JANUARY 28, 2022 · SENATE EDUCATION
COMMITTEE · CHAIR SEN. MICHELLE N. KIDANI

POSITION: Support.

RATIONALE: The Democratic Party of Hawai'i Education Caucus supports SB 2819, relating to teacher compensation, which makes an appropriation to fund an experimental modernization project pursuant to section 78-3.5, Hawaii Revised Statutes, to make necessary discretionary salary adjustments.

Teachers are the most important professionals in increasing student achievement. According to numerous studies, however, Hawaii's average teacher salaries are the lowest in the nation when adjusted for cost of living. A 2020 study conducted by APA Consulting on behalf of the Hawaii Department of Education found that when compared with other high-cost geographic locations, Hawaii teachers are paid \$7,700 to \$26,000 less than their peers in school districts with similar costs of living, depending on length of service.

Low teacher pay adversely impacts the State's ability to recruit and retain quality classroom leaders. According to the Hawaii Department of Education's 2021 Strategic Plan Dynamic Report, for the 2021-2022 school year, forty-nine percent of Hawaii's teachers left the profession within their first five years of service. The report further revealed that the State's teacher shortage currently stands at 886 positions overall, 230 of which are in the content area of special education.

During the severe economic recession that began in 2009 and that became known as the “Great Recession,” funding was eliminated for teacher pay raises and step increases. **As a result, compensation for over 6,000 teachers is \$900 to \$17,000 below what it would be if teachers’ salary steps properly corresponded with their years of service.** Failing to pay veteran teachers appropriately is one factor that contributes to increasing numbers of teacher retirements and resignations. According to data from the Hawaii Department of Education, 428 teachers retired during the 2020-2021 school year, a 49 percent increase from the 2019-2020 school year. To ensure that Hawaii’s children are able to benefit from experienced educators, it is important to uplift the financial security of veteran teachers by guaranteeing a step raise for every additional year of public school service that they perform.

The Hawaii Department of Education, in consultation with the Hawaii State Teachers Association, implemented differential pay increases during the 2019-2020 school year to reduce teacher shortages in special education, hard-to-staff, and Hawaiian immersion teaching positions. Instituting differential pay increases led to significant progress in reducing longstanding teacher shortages in high-demand areas. Departmental data show that the percentage of special education teacher vacancies dropped by 45 percent during the 2020-2021 school year, with 43 percent more teachers choosing to move into a special education teaching line than the year before. The number of teachers choosing to work in hard-to-fill positions in rural or remote areas increased by 52 percent over the same time period, while the number of Hawaiian immersion teachers increased by 7 percent. Providing differential pay increases in future years is critical to strengthening the State’s efforts to recruit and retain high quality educators for disadvantaged and high-needs student populations. This further demonstrates that when teachers are paid professional salaries, students—especially our most vulnerable keiki—benefit.

Accordingly, we strongly support this proposal, which will subsidize unfunded step increases for, or “true up,” teachers who are currently being paid far less than their years of service should afford and well below their actual step on the teachers’ salary scale.

Kris Coffield · Chairperson, DPH Education Caucus · (808) 679-7454 · kriscoffield@gmail.com

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 10:59:02 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Linda Furuto	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and Committee Members:

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2819.

My name is Linda Furuto and I am a mathematics education faculty at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa College of Education.

The rationale for my position includes results from an independent teacher compensation study commissioned by the Hawai'i State Department of Education (HIDOE) that shows Hawai'i's cost of living and compression of salaries for experienced educators are the top challenges to recruiting and retaining public school teachers. This news was reported by the HIDOE as well as Governor David Y. Ige's office on February 4, 2020.

<https://www.hawaiipublicschools.org/ConnectWithUs/MediaRoom/PressReleases/Pages/Compensation-Study-2020.aspx>

<https://governor.hawaii.gov/newsroom/latest-news/hidoe-news-release-compensation-study-finds-cost-of-living-salary-compression-top-issues-for-hawaiis-teachers/>

Given the breadth and scope of the aforementioned evidence-based research as well as my professional experiences with HIDOE teachers over the past 14 years, I firmly support SB2819 "to address compensation equity issues and to make the necessary discretionary salary adjustments for approximately eight thousand seven hundred experienced senior teachers by recognizing their professional service to the department of education through discretionary salary adjustments."

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Sincerely,
Linda Furuto

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 10:59:53 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Scott Robinson	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

Please support SB2819 Teacher Compensation addressing salary compression. I work with HIDOE teachers who mentor teacher candidates from UH Manoa. They are hard working and dedicated teachers who pass on their knowledge and skills to help create the next generation of teachers. All teachers, including veteran teachers, need to be fairly compensated for the vital work they do for the children, families, and communities in Hawaii. I would be remiss not to mention that my wife is a HIDOE teacher who has also mentored a couple of teacher candidates.

Teachers' salaries ought to reflect their number of years of effective service to be fair and equitable. Thank you for reading my testimony.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 11:09:55 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Janice Boychuk	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

We need action to show that we value high-qualified teachers instructing our Keiki. Please pay us based on our years of experience. Those of us who have been in the DOE for a long time are worth our years of service.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 11:00:08 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Kori Oros	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

ALoha Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819

I'm Kori and I teach 3rd Grade in Mililani. My husband is also a public school teacher who has been teaching over 15 years. I have been teaching for 13 years and love my job. I've worked weekends taking my students to Lego Competitions, recently organized a beach clean up and have knocked on a student's door to deliver materials during the shutdowns.

When I first started teaching, I was too young to understand what kind of salary I would need to grow a family because I was happy to do something I love, and that would pay my \$600 rent in a room in a house that I shared with roommates.

Fast forward, now I am married and we have a daughter. Our homeownership and even rental dreams are dismal, if not next to impossible. The median house is 1 million dollars, and after taxes and medical I take home about 3 thousand dollars a MONTH.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819 so that our family can at least have a chance at affording our rent, let alone save money for a home.

Thank you for your consideration.

Kori Ann Harvey Oros

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 11:03:57 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Elena Kealoha	Testifying for Kauai High School	Support	No

Comments:

I'm stuck. I have been teaching for 23 years. I have enough credits for a doctorate plus 30 more, and I continue to do more PD and take more classes because it is what is best for my students, my school and my community. Yet, I am not compensated for my years of service and continued dedication to education and to my community. I have, and continue to work a second job to compensate for the pay that lacks in the field of education. I have thought about leaving the field on many occasions, but the promises of better compensation keeps me hoping that I can continue. Those promises are hardly ever kept and I am again stuck. I would love to continue teaching for another 15 years, but if I am not compensated for my work and time committed, I may have to join the many other professionals that have work alongside me in these "trenches" and have chosen another profession where their time and energy is better compensated. I love teaching, but I can't afford to buy a home in Hawaii. How do we expect to keep and attract teachers if we continue this way?

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 11:11:28 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Candace Zamora	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

As a parent, the education the receive is essential for the future of my children. I want to set them up to be as successful as they possibly can be. In order to do that, I feel strongly that the education the receive from Kindergarten to 12th grade needs qualified teachers. In order for Hawaii to attract and maintain qualified teachers is to ensure they are compenstated appropriately for their skills and their time. There is a great differential when it comes to teacher qualifications vs their compensation and it leads to many teachers quitting the profession or relocating to the mainland where they can make more money. In order to stop that from happening, we need to make sure teachers in Hawaii and paid adequately for their contributions to the youth and our future generations.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 2:50:54 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Susan Ing	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Attn: Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and Members of the Committee,

RE; Support of SB 2819

Aloha, as a Special Education Teacher in Central District at Mililani Waena Elementary School, I am in full support of SB 2819.

Over the years, as a University of Northern Colorado graduate and single parent of 4 daughters, I had often wondered why my professional paycheck was often times just barely making ends meet living here in my childhood home in Haleiwa. I recall numerous times when one of my daughters would ask for say, new athletic sneakers to replace her worn out ones, or a dress for an upcoming school event, or even, birthday celebration treats for her classmates; I would send them to get some money out of the ATM machine only for them to come back to the car and say, "There's only \$7 in the account." Bless their hearts, most of the times they would just accept my explanation that their shoes, or dress, or treats, etc., would have to wait. But there were also times as they got older when they would demand why there always wasn't any money in the account. I guess they got use to it, cause after a while, the older ones quit asking why, and the younger ones just resigned themselves to the fact that we were just "poor". My mother would tell me I needed to have a budget and "not spend so much...", to which I would tell her that we do not eat out or buy unnecessary things, and that I hadn't bought new clothes for myself in 3 or 4 years. I could not streamline anymore than what I was doing already. Then I find out that I got caught in this Compression of Salaries fiasco! Here I am, a college graduate, in a professional career, and still NOT ABLE TO MEET BASIC FAMILY NEEDS without sacrificing from somewhere else.

I am fully supportive of the resolution of this Compression of Salaries, and would like to be compensated somehow for all those years of decreased pay. Imagine getting retroactive compensation: I could use it as a down payment on an apartment/townhouse or something suitable. I would feel less about having to go out and work a side job to help off-set that decrease in pay. I feel my family and I have suffered and sacrificed enough, and now, especially now, we need some financial relief and a more compensatory salary. Help us achieve this basic request! Do the right thing.

Mahalo for your time,

Susan M Ing

Special Education Teacher, MWES

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 11:34:54 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Ryan Omine	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Members of the Committee:

My name is Ryan Omine, and I am a teacher at Momilani Elementary in the Leeward District, on the island of Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819. I am not going to sugar coat things and write you a long testimonial letter as I am not even sure how many of you actually read our testimony. I am just going to be as blunt and get my point across.

I have been teaching for almost 20 years, and before I got into this profession, I knew that teachers never got paid much, especially in Hawaii. Despite knowing this fact, and knowing that the cost of living in Hawaii is ridiculously high, I still wanted to become a public school teacher, a public servant for our keiki. Over the years as teacher morale and respect for our profession continually declines, I started to ask myself that philosophical question, “Why? Why did I choose to become a public school teacher?”

My answer has always been to make a positive impact in the lives of all of the students I teach. No amount of money can ever compensate any teacher for what we do. We do it because we love working with our students, we do it because we love the art and craft of teaching, we do it because it enriches our lives and the lives of our students.

I think we are entrusted with one of the most important responsibilities on the face of the earth with educating our children and preparing them for future generations. Yet, we get paid peanuts in comparison to every other profession. As I said earlier, I never cared about the money going into this profession. I get more respect from my students than adults at times, or I should say many times. Why? I think my students know I care about them and their well being, my students know that I am willing to do anything within my power to make them feel special, to make THEM feel EMPOWERED. They know that they can trust me now more than ever to keep them safe and healthy from the COVID. My students know that I will always be here for them when they need me, like any family member.

With all this being said, I have done my part as a teacher for nearly 20 years, and now I hope you will do your part as a politician. I might not even see any compensation in my lifetime, but I am hoping those future educators after me will. With the continual cost of living going up, houses on small parcels of land going for nearly \$1 million and up, please

help our unappreciated profession by passing this bill. Honestly, without the support of my parents/family, there is NO way I would and could ever afford to live here with my own family. I would have left my home, my family, my state a long time ago. Thanks for your time and reading this letter.

Respectfully,

Ryan Omine

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 11:49:30 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Dianne Pang	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2819. I am an educator and take my job seriously. I spend my own time planning lessons, taking professional development courses, correcting work, doing purchase orders, writing emails, planning student activities, and more. I have been teaching in the public school system for over 32 years yet I am still not on the highest step for compensation. I have worked second jobs to supplement my income to be able to support my family. Teachers deserve to be compensated fairly. Please fix the salary compression issue.

Thank you,

Dianne Pang

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 12:07:24 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Doug McDowell	Testifying for DOE - West Hawaii	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819.

My name is Doug McDowell of Honoka`a High and Intermediate School on the Big Island. I have been teaching for 16 years and plan to complete my career serving our community in education. I have been working so hard during these uncertain times to lead our school towards high quality education. I serve as a department head for the Career and Technical Education Department. I am helping my school move toward Academies. In addition to the leadership I provided for the West Hawaii Complex, I have been recognized as teacher of the year through ACTE. My point is that I have been working hard to be the most professional teacher and community member. After 16 years of teaching I am about to complete the required 60 credits required to reach the highest step in the available pay. However, without your support of this bill the upper level of our pay scale will not be available. We, the teachers of our state, need your support. We ask to be paid what we are worth. We are the future for our children, for education, for our islands. Please vote in support of SB 2819 for me and all of our people.

In addition to my personal plea, I see the huge need to retain teachers and lure teachers to our occupation, please make the funding available so that the job is desirable and fair. Your passing of this bill is pono. I thank the committee for the opportunity to testify.

Aloha, Doug McDowell

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 12:04:23 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Derek Govin	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Senate Committee,

My name is Derek Govin. I am a Special Education Teacher at Ewa Makai Middle School (EMMS) for our Community-Based Instruction Program. This program supports students with moderate to severe disabilities who are placed in a fully self-contained classroom setting. These students focus on functional academics, communication, problem solving skills, self-advocacy, and transition to high school. Everything I say in this testimony are my own words, and not to be representative of Ewa Makai Middle School or any of the other teachers of EMMS faculty and staff.

I write testimony today in support of SB 2819 regarding teacher salary compression. It is troubling to see reports that approximately 8,700 teachers, counselors, librarians, and registrars in Hawaii who are not at the top of the salary schedule are underpaid based on years of experience, resulting in pay gaps that range from \$7,700 to \$26,000, depending on the number of years educators have been teaching. Being a special education teacher and knowing that there are so many special educators which make up the 8,700 teachers suffering from salary compression, I find it incredibly frustrating to know that this could be a factor in our exceptional teachers leaving, only to result in the loss of more highly qualified special education teachers in the state.

All thoughts are my own, not representative of anyone else. I support SB2819. I can be contacted at derek.govin@k12.hi.us.

Respectfully,

Derek Govin

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 11:48:38 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Angie Ramey	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

In March 2019, I attended a HDOE Job Fair in Chicago, Illinois. I knew my family would be moving to Oahu in June 2019, and I wanted to learn as much as possible about the hiring process. I was, then, a 23 year veteran educator with two Masters degrees, and was a district level employee. Unfortunately, I was unable to apply for specific positions that valued my specializations, years of experience and education in the DOE as that isn't how the system works. Like everyone else, I was "pooled" and while I secured a classroom teaching position at a wonderful school where I have amazing colleagues, my salary was cut in half simply by moving out of state. My salary says I'm in my 6th year of teaching when I am now in my 26th year. My classification says I have a Bachelors degree and one Masters degree, when in actuality I have two Masters degrees. My experience and education is being utilized at my school. I am valued for these things. I have been placed in a Non-Classroom Teacher role, even as a pre-tenured teacher, because of my skillsets. I'm just not paid for them. The DOE even recognizes a licensure of Teacher Leader on my teaching license, but I'm not paid for the second Masters degree that earned me those qualifications. It's demoralizing, ethically unacceptable, and all teachers in the DOE, whether local or from the mainland, tenured or pre-tenures, should be supported equally when it comes to salary compression. If you fix it for some, you must fix it for all.

Hearing Date: January 28, 2022

Hearing Time: 3:00 PM

RE: SB 2819 & 2820 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee:

My name is Shelby Loo and I am a National Board Certified Mathematics teacher at Waimea Middle Public Conversion Charter School who resides with my husband -a Hawai'i County Police Officer, and our two children in the Hamakua district on the Big Island. I have been a teacher at Waimea Middle School for the past 17 years, serving as the sixth-grade level chairperson and currently the Math Department Head and a member of our School's Leadership Team for the past 14 years. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2819 & 2820.

SB 2819 - Teacher Compensation - Experimental Modernization Project

SB 2820 - Teacher Compensation - Differentials for SPED, Hard-To-Fill & Hawaiian Language Immersion teachers

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers, such as myself, where they should be for their many years of service and the very long arduous hours they dedicate to supporting students. Further, funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important to ensuring the next generation has the essential skills to thrive.

The cost of housing, child care, food, and fuel has exceeded wages earned for a while now, but has become an even bigger issue in light of the pandemic. I have seen friends leave the profession and or move away from our State in order to seek better living conditions on the mainland. If we don't compensate our working class appropriately, I predict we will continue to lose members of our working class who provide essential services and this will be detrimental to our communities.

I am passionate about my job and find value in the day to day work that I do with my 6th grade students. It is my hope to inspire them to become lifelong learners who dream big, work hard, and are always humble and kind community contributors. The job is demanding, even more so in recent years with the challenges that the pandemic has presented, and requires that I serve some of our most neediest students who require extra compassion, care, and encouragement. It is a 12+ hour a day job that often requires that I put time in over the weekend or after tucking my children in at night in order to be effective for my students.

When considering these measures please be sure to include Public Charter Schools along with the HDOE schools, as we are equally as deserving of appropriate compensation.

We need your help to rectify this issue and continue to ensure that we can attract highly qualified teachers for our keiki. Mahalo for your consideration.

Shelby Loo

6th Grade Mathematics Teacher, NBCT

Math Department Head, Waimea Middle PCCS

66-1803 Alaneo Street

Kamuela, HI 96743

(808)989-8125

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 12:09:28 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Liana White	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2819.

I am a public school teacher who has taught in Hawai'i since 2004. I am also a proud product of the Hawaii State DOE system. I feel like I have always been invested personally in public education and I honestly believe that there is no greater responsibility of the state than to provide quality education for our keiki. This quality education will be best realized through supporting the people who make education real, the teachers!

Please vote in support of Senate Bill SB2819.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 11:44:02 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Erin Dunn	Testifying for Hawaii DOE	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Legislators

My name is Erin Dunn and I have been a Special Education Teacher in Hawaii off and on since August 1993. I have left two times in order to further my education and the second time to care for my mom until she passed away. I came back both times because I love teaching here. I have my Master's Degree and over 25 years teaching in Hawaii. I am planning to pursue a PhD. or another Master's Degree in the next year or two but I am not sure it would be worth it based on my years of experience with the current salary compression. My additional degrees might be in Education, but maybe not. I teach Community-Based Instruction / Life Skills to students with severe and/or Multiple Handicaps, which is a HARD TO FILL position across the state and nation. My nephew who just earned his BA and began working in schools in Washington State in the Fall on 2020 earns very close to what I earn here and I have a Master's Degree and over 25 years of experience! I struggle to make ends meet without a second job with my current salary. I know that I probably could get a job in another school system in the nation and be paid more. I hope I don't have to make that move.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 12:28:44 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Sarah Tochiki	Testifying for Hawai'i State Teachers Association	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Hawai'i State Senators,

My name is Sarah Tochiki and I am the band director at Chiefess Kamakahelei Middle School in Lihu'e. I am also the Vice-President of the Kaua'i Chapter of HSTA. I am writing in support of SB2819, related to teacher compensation.

Our educators deserve better. For years now, we have been told there are no funds to pay for salary increases. We have been told, because of one economic crisis or another, that our pay cannot reflect even the increase of inflation and cost of living increases. Everything else goes up but our salaries. The State of Hawai'i is taking advantage of the altruism of educators. You know we care about our students and thus are exploiting our willingness to persevere for them. Treat us like you would expect us to treat our students, with providing the best for us to succeed.

This issue especially affects those educators who have been in our school system for the longest. These educators who have been in our Hawai'i schools for over 10 years, who are invested in our communities, deserve to be fairly compensated. Why are we trying to balance the budget with the wallets of those who are the most important for keeping schools working? If there were no school buildings or textbooks or computers, but just a group of students and their teacher, learning would still happen. Yet we prioritize funding on everything else over the salaries of educators. We need funding for our infrastructure, but we also need funding for the most important resource in our schools, the educators. Those funds go directly back into the community, because we pay our bills and buy our groceries and shop at local businesses.

A few days ago, I drove past the Jack in the Box right across the street from our school. They were advertising \$10,000 hiring bonuses for shift managers. As much as I love my job and students, that is a tempting offer. Everywhere is hiring and we are going to lose good educators because this is a very taxing profession that does not provide enough to pay our bills. Have you seen the median price of a home in Hawai'i lately? At some point, our altruism for our students will not be enough to keep us in the classroom. Then there will be an entire generation of students who will lose out. Please support this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony and for your support of our hardworking educators in our Hawai'i Public Schools.

Sarah Tochiki

sarah.tochiki@gmail.com

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 12:24:11 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Hillary Watt	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I have been teaching in Hawaii for 17 years and started at Level 5 (having a state approved teacher education program and teaching license). I've worked through furloughs and budget constraints. If I had made step increase even just *every other year*, I'd be close to the top of the pay scale. But I'm still in the middle. In the time I've worked for the Hawaii DOE, I've gotten a Master's degree, gotten my National Board certification and recertified, taken tons of PD, and yes, I've moved up on the pay scale for those things. However, what about all the wisdom and professional expertise I've gained from actually being in the classroom? It's made the most impact on my teaching and it isn't justifiably represented by where I am on the pay scale. What if other teachers don't have the time to get a Master's Degree or engage in professional development. Is their classroom experience not worth anything? If we want to keep experienced teachers, we should reward them for their longevity.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 12:39:16 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Julia Peterson	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2819. I have been an educator on Molokai for almost 27 years. I have watched as my fellow educators who have reached the top of the salary scale exit out early due to salary compression. We have lost master teachers due to not compensating their years of service and experience. I am near the top of the salary scale myself and could retire in 3 years. I would like to stay 13 more years if possible, but salary compression will be a factor in that decision. Cost of living is skyrocketing in Hawaii and especially on Molokai. I am a single parent of 2 children who have dreams of college. I hope to support those dreams, but will be falling behind financially as they get closer to their college year. Please seriously consider voting for Senate Bill SB2819. We have already seen the positive impact of the hard-to fill differentials. It will be critical to keep our veteran master teachers in this economy where it is difficult to find teachers to hire.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 12:24:30 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Jenna Bachmann	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony on SB2819. Hawaii already faces a huge shortage of teachers, by fixing the salary compression it will help educators from leaving to pursue other professional and help to keep licensed educators in the classroom. Having years of experience help to create great educators. These educators who have committed to teaching through some of the hardest times deserve to be compensated for years of service. I urge you to vote in support of SB2819. Please consider the already existing teacher shortage and recognize the need for experienced teachers in our classrooms.

Mahalo,

Jenna Bachmann

7th grade special education math and science, Wheeler Middle

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 12:38:16 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
M.Starr Anastasio	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

As a teacher in Hawaii for over 7 years I am strongly considering leaving my profession, a profession that I love and feel is one of the most important jobs in the world. The problem is that I can not afford to live in Hawaii based on my salary and if I change to being a waitress, I can make almost double my salary. I am begging for a salary boost based on years and experience so that we teachers can survive!

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 12:15:06 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Jamie Liggett	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I did not realize salary compression existed until recently. It is only my first year teaching in Hawaii (I have taught in Colorado and Guatemala previously) so I have yet to be impacted by this. However, I truly hope this passes because it will impact my decision as to whether or not I stay. Since moving here in July 2020, I have realized I want my teaching career to be in Hawaii. I adore my students, administration, and colleagues and am at a school I hope to retire from some day. However, after learning this, it truly does not make sense to live in the most expensive state and be unable to increase my pay with years of experience. In fact, the only way to "increase" pay, it seems, is to PAY to take courses I simply do not have the time or money to take. I have a Master's Degree in education yet will only be bringing home (net pay) around \$27,000 over this school year. I made more money as a nanny, which was far less demanding work. We all know \$27,000 is not enough to live on in the state of Hawaii so how does anyone expect me to pay to take other courses? Taking courses also requires time. I already work daily until 6:00 pm and at least one full 8-hour day on the weekend - usually Sunday because I simply need a break once Saturday comes around. The three years of experience I have already had teaching have taught me far more than any college or professional development course I have or will ever taken. In-class experience is the most "real-world" training one could possibly get, so without a doubt we should be paid based on our years of experience. As has been seen for years, you will continue to lose great teachers who really care about their students if this does not pass and you will forever be facing teacher shortages as well as disillusioning teachers who have been in the profession for years. Please make the right choice for your keiki by voting to pass this bill.

Committee on Education
The Hawaii State Senate
415 S Beretania St.
Honolulu, HI 96813

LATE

Re: SB 2819 & 2820 Testimony

January 27, 2022

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and esteemed members of the Education Committee,

I SUPPORT WITH BILLS SB2819 and SB2820, which seek appropriate funds to attract and retain qualified educators for our island public schools.

My name is Erika Molyneux, and I am a mother and community college instructor living in Kaneohe and working in Pearl City. As someone interested in my own children's education, my students' preparation for college, and the professional, educational, civic, and social training of all members of our community, I am extremely invested in our state's education system. I have also taught at the secondary level previously and have training in both my subject matter and as an educator. Additionally, a number of my friends are public teachers in the DOE. As such, I am aware of the rigorous training our public school educators undergo.

As you know, we live in the state with the highest cost of living, making our educators' salaries the lowest of all states in comparison. Quality teachers change the lives of their students. They encourage attendance, attainment, curiosity, and a lifelong pursuit of knowledge. They create a culture of generative, learning communities. Level of education is indicative of financial attainment in later life. Our students today will be our professionals of the future, and we want to ensure their academic success by giving them the instruction and support they need.

Teachers' work is never done, and most are fueled by the love of their craft and students. But this love alone cannot help them care for their own families' needs or encourage them to stay.

For all these reasons and more, I strongly support PASSING BILLS SB2819 and SB2820 and help secure quality of life for our community for years to come. Mahalo nui!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Erika Molyneux', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Erika Molyneux

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 12:30:52 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Julia Kotzian	Testifying for Hawai'i Department of Education	Support	No

Comments:

Senate Bill 2819

RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION.

Jan 28, 2022 3:00 PM via. Videoconference

IN SUPPORT

I am currently a member of the HSTA and I work for the Hawai'i DOE. I am testifying in favor of SB 2819. It is important to count the years of experience educators have, and in turn guarantee salary adjustment. In closing I would like to state that I am in support of this bill.

Sincerely,

Julia Kotzian

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 1:00:32 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Uluhane Waialeale	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I, Uluhane Waialeale, am a teacher at Kualapu'u Elementary School. I write in support of Bill SB 2819, Salary Compression and hope for it to be rectified to save the fidelity of Hawaii's teachers.

Retaining our current Hawaii teachers is top priority. We don't want them to either leave the profession or move to the mainland in search of a higher pay.

I am a graduate of the Kahuawaiola Indigenous Teacher Education Program and since 2004 I have been a licensed Hawaiian Language Immersion Teacher (K-12) in the State of Hawai'i.

Fixing compression will boost the salaries of most teachers, helping and hoping to persuade many of our teachers to remain on the job and stay in Hawaii where our keiki can benefit from their experience.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819.

Sincerely,

Uluhane Waialeale

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 12:49:10 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Shane	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Shane Cunanan. This is my 14th year as a physical education teacher at Lahiana Intermediate School. Passing this bill (SB2819 compression) is extremely crucial to keep teachers like me here teaching in Maui. I have weathered the storm for years of not getting raises and I am now in a position that I can not live here if this bill does not pass. I married with 3 kids in our Hawaii public school system. My wife and I always talk about moving only because of low pay and we are worried about our kids not having a certified quality teacher. I am worried about my kids and all hawaii keiki because of the shortage of teacher and lack of adequate pay for teachers. I absolutely love Hawaii and I want to stay here forever, but I can not afford to live here if I don't get a significant raise. I know for a fact that this bill will keep veteran teachers here and will help the Hawaii keiki get the education they deserve. We can not keep losing teachers, especially good, veteran teachers. Please pass this compression bill! Thank you for considering!

Sincerely,

Shane Cunanan

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 12:56:20 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Laurie Meyer	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

My name is Laurie Meyer and I have been a teacher with the Department of Education - State of Hawaii for the past 27 years. I have my BEd and MEd from the University of Hawaii. I also am a National Board Certified Teacher and have renewed my certificate once now for a total of 10 years having this certification. Throughout my teaching years, I have held many 2nd and even 3rd jobs to make ends meet to continue living and teaching in Hawaii. I am a single mom of 3 children and my youngest graduates this year. I have 2 currently in college.

I am looking to retire within the next 5 years then move to the mainland where the opportunities for pay are far greater than what I make here. My relatives in WA who are beginning teachers make salaries comparable to mine and I am near the end of my teaching career here, where they are just beginning. I would choose to stay here but cannot continue to work for less.

I ask for your vote in support of SB2819 and SB2020 to help retain local teachers, and attract teachers here. This bill will also provide us with salaries that match our education, years of service and commitment to this profession.

Thank you,

Laurie Meyer

January 27, 2022

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and Members of the Senate Education Committee,

My name is Jodi Kunimitsu and I am a math teacher at Maui High School. I am writing in strong support of SB 2819, related to teacher compensation.

This school year is my 18th year as a classroom teacher in the HIDOE. However, I currently stand on the salary schedule at step 11. One might think I earned 10 steps in those 18 years, but actually, I began on step 5 of that salary schedule. This means, I only moved 6 steps in the last 18 years! That's an average of one step every three years. What's even crazier is that other people with different years of service than myself are also on the same step, because our step movements depend on negotiations. Negotiations depend on who is sitting on each side of the table.

Teachers deserve to be compensated fairly for the work that we do. There has been a certified teacher shortage for years. Just because positions can be filled with emergency-hires, it does not mean that the teacher shortage does not exist. Why aren't there enough certified teachers to fill the positions? It's because people can't afford to work for free, "out of the goodness of their heart." People need to make a living wage - and in Hawaii, we know that is far beyond what most people actually make.

Passing this bill could be helpful with the recruitment and retention of certified teachers to fill vacancies in our schools. As a veteran teacher, it is really difficult to encourage future generations to become teachers when we know that they will struggle to make a living on a teacher's salary, given the current salary structure. I cannot with a good conscience ask people to join a profession where you are treated like your own livelihood does not matter, even though I know these people would make excellent teachers and role models for our students.

I urge you to vote in support of SB 2819, as it will impact the quality of teachers that we are able to recruit and retain...and the future of public schools in Hawaii is dependent on its teachers. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Mahalo,
Jodi Kunimitsu

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 1:01:04 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Ryan Link	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I, Ryan Link am a teacher at Kualapu‘u School. I write in support of Bill SB 2819, Salary Compression and hope for it to be rectified to save the fidelity of Hawaii’s teachers.

Retaining our current Hawaii teachers is top priority. We don’t want them to either leave the profession or move to the mainland in search of a higher pay.

I have been an educator for 19 years. I originally moved here out of college from Washington State. I was in my mid 20’s then and on a “three year plan.” I figured I was going to move to Hawai‘i for a few years and move back. Well, that plan didn’t stick and living in Hawai‘i turned into my life. I love it here. I have amazing friends who mostly are coworkers. I’m now 43, married, and have a ten year old son. I barely make more than my co-teacher who has only been here for four years. I live in a small condo that is crowded with the three of us. I’m priced out of the houses I’d like to live in.

I’m at the point in my life where I need to make a decision. I have hopes and dreams just like anybody. I’d like to have a house that I can be proud of. In all reality, yes, I want to make more money. Who doesn’t?

This is where compression comes in. We, as teachers in Hawai‘i, are so underpaid it’s ridiculous. For our cost of living we make pennies. Add the fact that we weren’t getting raises for many years in the early 2000’s. We should be paid like counterparts in other states.

For example, I got my Masters Degree in the spring of 2003. That summer I moved here. Classmates of mine that stayed in Washington, with the same amount of experience, are making \$114,605! That is almost double what I make! This is also in an area that has a way lower cost of living than here.

Yes, I’m at the point in my life where even though I love working at Kualapu‘u School on Molokai, I am considering moving. Why? Pay. It truly is pathetic what we are paid here. A friend of mine teaching on Kauai has a side job working at a grocery store because he isn’t making enough. We are teachers. We have college degrees and take professional development classes. We deserve to be paid like other teachers in other states. Especially with our cost of living.

Again, as of now, my family is very much considering moving away in two years and the reason is pay. My wife is a teacher as well at the same school.

I've taught on Molokai since 2003. Led seven field trips to the east coast of the United States. Been loyal to my school and love it here. If the state wants to keep people like me and / or retain new teachers, the state needs to pay us a fair, competitive wage.

Fixing compression will boost the salaries of most teachers, and hopefully retain us. I'm tired of working with new teachers that leave after a year or two and cite pay as one of the reasons. The students deserve better as well.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819.

Sincerely,

Ryan C. Link

Kualapu'u School

Molokai, HI

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 12:53:00 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Sheila Bierwert	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

Thank you for working to support teacher retention and helping to encourage new teachers to want to stay in Hawaii. Teachers in Hawaii are committed to creating enriching learning environments for our keiki. Knowing that we will be compensated according to our years of service will be a huge boost in teacher retention. Most teachers don't want to leave Hawaii or the teaching profession, but if they aren't compensated fairly, they feel as if they have no choice. I appreciate you working on passing a bill that will not only affect the teaching profession, but also our keiki and a better future for Hawaii.

Mahalo!

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 1:14:40 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Kim Link	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I, Kim Link, am a 5th grade teacher at Kualapuu Public Conversion Charter School. I write in support of Bill SB 2819, Salary Compression and hope for it to be rectified to save Hawaii's teachers. Please!!!

Retaining our current Hawaii teachers is top priority. The current pay for Hawaii teachers is incredibly low and we are losing teachers because of it.

I have been a classroom teacher for almost twenty-three years. I began my teaching career in the Mukilteo School District (Seattle area), which was also the school district I grew up in. I taught there for five years. Life changes, people get married and I found myself on Molokai. One year led to another and I am currently in the middle of my 18th year at Kualapuu School teaching 5th and 6th grade. My husband teaches two doors down and we keep coming back year after year for the kids, community and the families we work with. Relationships have been established, nurtured and we're to the point where we are having the children of former students in our classrooms. We are now teaching the next generation.

We "tolerate" the lower pay because we come to work for the kids. 10 years ago, a one bedroom condo worked great for us. Now we are a family of three, living in the same condo and are priced out of buying a home here on-island. We are at that point in our lives when we need to make a big decision in the next 2-3 years. We are no longer living the simple life in our 20's. We are getting closer to our 50's and need to think even more long-term. We are considering moving back to Washington in order to buy a home and make more money to save for retirement.

Here is one example of compression. I have been teaching 23 years and a coworker has been teaching 5 years. We make almost the same amount of money. I came to Hawaii 18 years ago with a Masters Degree and my coworker just finished her Masters Degree after teaching 4 full years.

In Hawaii, I currently make \$69,911. If I had stayed in Washington, I would currently be making \$115,678. That is a significant difference, especially knowing the high cost of living here in Hawaii and specifically on Molokai.

Fixing compression will boost the salaries of most teachers, helping and hoping to persuade many of our teachers to remain on the job and stay in Hawaii. Our children need consistent teachers who feel valued, so they will come back year after year.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819.

Sincerely and thank you for your time,

Kim Link

Kualapuu Teacher

Molokai, HI

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 1:21:54 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
RYAN MOSSMAN	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I have been a proud public school teacher for 20 years. We never got into this to get rich, but it is certainly disheartening to know that we could make so much more in other fields. Furthermore the way our salary movements have been compressed, with many colleagues with much less experience making the same salary, is frustrating. If you value our keiki, then you need to value the teachers. Passing this bill would go a long way to showing what your priorities are.

Mahalo,**Ryan Mossman**

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 12:35:38 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Alison Awai	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Testimony Presented Before the Senate Committee on Education Friday, January 28, 2022 at 3:00 p.m.

By Alison Awai, National Board Certified Teacher: Literacy, Early and Middle Childhood

SB 2819 – RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

Aloha Senator Michelle Kidani, Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Chair and Vice Chair and Members of the Committee on Education:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 2819 as it relates to teacher compensation. As a 19 year veteran teacher in the CA Bay Area, dual certified in Special Education and Regular Education, I was duly compensated for my education, training, and years of service. As a result, I have been able to focus on the needs of my students and family.

When I moved back home to Hawaii in 2013 to care for an aging parent, I took a 45% pay cut, because my years of service were not factored into my salary schedule. With my low take-home salary, and the limited housing in Hawaii, I lived in a detached studio for several months which leaked every time it rained. On my current salary, I have not been able to contribute financially in support of my mother, her living situation, and daily needs. To make ends meet, I have had to take on a 2nd job in order to save enough money to retire at a reasonable age. At times, I feel so exhausted from working 2 jobs and taking care of my mom, that it's difficult to make it through the week. Even though I want to, I can't spend any money on my students, out of pocket, for their numerous educational needs.

Thank you for acknowledging the need to compensate teachers for their years of service in SB 2819. This bill will enable teachers to: 1. Find decent housing. 2. Provide for the needs of aging parents. 3. Put back monies into the classroom toward student learning. 4. Struggle less to make ends meet; and thus, give their full attention to student learning. 5. Retire at a decent, reasonable age. 6. Continue to afford to live and work in this high cost area.

Thank you for recognizing that teachers need to be compensated for their years of service in addition to their education and training; That their countless hours spent in the classroom, learning by trial and error, applying effective strategies, and relating to and supporting all students should not be discounted; That their countless hours spent outside of the classroom,

planning, learning, reflecting, organizing, and collaborating with others should not be ignored; That their dedication to the profession, commitment to every student being successful, and their love of every child for who they are and what they can become is invaluable.

Mahalo nui loa,

Alison Awai

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 1:27:20 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Brandi Rawlins	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I, Brandi Rawlins, am a teacher at Kualapu‘u Public Conversion Charter School, I write in support of Bill SB 2819, Salary Compression and hope for it to be rectified to save the fidelity of Hawaii’s teachers.

Retaining our current Hawaii teachers is top priority. We don’t want them to either leave the profession or move to the mainland in search of a higher pay.

I have been an educator for 6 years.

Fixing compression will boost the salaries of most teachers, helping and hoping to persuade many of our teachers to remain on the job and stay in Hawaii where our keiki can benefit from their experience.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819.

Sincerely,

Brandi Rawlins

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 1:08:04 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Amelia Thorne	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am writing to express my strong support for SB2819 on behalf of myself and my fellow Hawaii public school teachers, as the current state of salary compression for Hawaii's teachers is actively detrimental in both recruiting and keeping qualified educators. Teachers, and especially fully credentialed and qualified veteran teachers, need to be compensated competitively and fairly for the professional expertise that they bring to their field. Underpaying teachers in the way that the currently compressed system in Hawaii does ensures that schools will continue to see high rates of turnover and have the gaps filled by under-qualified or inexperienced teachers. This serves neither the teachers nor their students, and I hope that the Senate will be motivated to act in the best interest of our educational system in order to show how important our public school teachers and keiki are to Hawaii's future.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 12:16:19 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Teianna Shiota	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Teianna Shiota and I am writing in support of SB2819. Everyone knows that teachers are really the backbone of our future. They are the ones educating, shaping, and watering the seeds that will soon be running our country. For years, it's always been an issue that our teachers here have been so underpaid and swept under the rug. I have family members that was been with the HIDOE for longer than I've been alive that are getting paid over \$40,000 less than their mainland counterparts. Some of those same family members have left the HIDOE to move to the mainland where their efforts are appreciated and adequately compensated. A new teacher in Hawaii is making the same as a person working at Costco. However, those Costco employees are not staying beyond their schedule, taking work home, and paying for supplies out of their own pocket. How can we continue to sit back and watch, year after year, our teachers struggling so much to take care of our children? Stop and think about every single teacher that you have had in your lifetime. Think about your favorite ones-the ones that stayed after school with you, pushed you to succeed, wrote you those letters of recommendation, spent every second of their free time trying to push you to do your best. In some cases, those teachers cried with us, rejoiced with us, and supported us in every extracurricular we participated in-even beyond our time in school with them. Now think about that favorite teacher going home after making just BARELY over a livable wage, to hours and hours of paper work, doing their grocery shopping and grabbing things for their students as they pass by those aisles, not even thinking about themselves and their own financial obligations but somehow always putting their students first. Could you look them in the eye, after all that they've done for you and tell them that they don't deserve to be paid what they were promised? That no matter how many years and how much education they've completed, they're just not going to get compensated for it? And that after telling them that, you're still trusting them with the future of your children and grandchildren? Any person in their sane mind would laugh in your face and walk away. We are seeing such a teacher shortage with their salary being a huge factor as to why they are leaving the HIDOE. There's no need to imagine all of that. It's already happening.

Please pass this bill and give these hard working educators every penny that they deserve, since we can't give them the world.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 12:43:57 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Jo Anne Louis	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819 and Senate Bill 2820 relating to teacher compensation (salary compression).

My name is Jo Anne and I am a Dually Certified Elementary & Special Education teacher on the island of Maui. I was born and raised in Hawai'i and have lived in Hawai'i all my life. I earned my teaching degree in both elementary education and special education at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. Hawai'i is my home and the thought of having to leave Hawai'i due to not being able to afford the cost of living is a decision I do not want to have to make.

I have been teaching for 8 years and have barely moved up the salary schedule. In addition to writing IEPs, analyzing and compiling data, making modifications and accommodations and personalizing learning programs, I have started a family and have two children under 3 years of age. It has been very challenging to enroll and participate in professional development workshops and trainings that will help me reclassify to higher classes in the salary schedule, while also trying to be a mother to my children and a wife to my husband. There are teachers who have been teaching for a shorter period of time than I have and yet are further in the salary schedule than I am. That is very, very discouraging. I have many colleagues and teacher friends who have left the profession because they have been forced to choose between their family and their career. The choice for them was easy due to our salary that is not financially sustainable to raise a family.

I have been contemplating leaving the Department of Education for a couple of years now because my salary is not enough to cover all daycare expenses and it would save us money for me to stay home instead. Thankfully, my husband and other family have been able to care for our children while I am teaching. Preschool enrollment and tuition fees are in my family's near future and still, my salary is not enough to cover that cost in addition to our living expenses. We are still living with parents and have hopes to own our own home one day.

The teacher compensation / differentials (SB2820) have already helped convince me to remain with the State of Hawaii Department of Education for the past few years as it has helped my family financially tremendously. Earning fair wages based on teaching experience and knowing that I would be moving up the salary schedule each year would convince me to remain in the teaching profession with the State of Hawaii Department of Education until I have reached the

top of the salary schedule at the very least. From what I've gathered through discussions with my colleagues and peers, I know that many - if not most of the teachers within my department also feel the same way as I do.

With that, I am a elementary special education teacher with the State of Hawaii Department of Education and I am in support of Senate Bill 2819 and Senate Bill 2820.

Please please please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819 and Senate Bill 2820.

Thank you so much for the opportunity to share my testimony, as well as for your time and consideration.

Mahalo nui loa.

Me ke aloha,

Jo Anne

Elementary & Special Education Teacher

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 12:13:45 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Jeffrey Uyeda	Testifying for HSTA	Support	No

Comments:

To Whom It May Concern,

Please consider funding an increase in salary adjustments for teachers. I have been a teacher for over 20 years here in the state of Hawaii. We have been over-looked for about 3 or 4 contract periods, have had contracts changed due to the "struggling" economy, and we are ALWAYS the first group to be "cut" when government funds/ shortages happen.

The government always states that "Education is a priority." Your past actions have NOT backed that claim up. NOW IS YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO REMEDY THIS ISSUE. In other words, "PLEASE PUT YOUR MONEY WHERE YOUR MOUTH IS... IT IS TIME!!!"

Thank you,

Jeff Uyeda

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 1:44:24 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Stacey Lee Grond	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I have been a teacher in Hawaii for 20 years. In that time, I have lived paycheck to paycheck. It seems like every time we get a raise, health insurance rates go up, so we receive little to no increase in our wages. At this point, honestly, it feels downright degrading. I am a professional who is educated in my profession, yet my pay does not reflect that. While my counterparts in other professions see annual increases, teachers in Hawaii remain with a low wage that does not reflect our experience. It's embarrassing that teachers with just a few years of experience basically make what I do. I feel so undervalued. Like many others, I am considering ending my teaching career. It doesn't seem worth the effort when I could take another job with less stress and hassle and make the same, if not more money. I've stayed in teaching, because that is my passion-I am good at my job, and I love kids. But I am 52 years old. I feel like my years of service should be reflected in my pay--isn't that the case in ANY other profession? Why are teachers always the martyrs? In other countries, they are valued like doctors, and their pay reflects that. I am still paying off my student loans as a result of such low pay. Hawaii has the highest cost of living in the nation, and teachers who are professionals are paid poorly, and that shows. We feel how little we are respected. And yet our job responsibilities and expectations increase each year. At this rate, there will be no teachers. Hawaii needs to do the right thing-pay teachers what they are worth so kids can get the education they deserve- with seasoned, experienced teachers.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 12:53:07 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Alison Hartle	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Senate member of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819. My name is Alison Hartle and I am a full-time high school English teacher at the University Laboratory School in Honolulu. This is my 19th year in the classroom. I started teaching here while finishing my graduate degree at UH Mānoa, but even with my degrees and various certifications, I still have only made it to step 11 in the teacher salary schedule. Class movement is not readily available to me. I am still paying off my student loans from graduate school. After 19 years of teaching, I am still classified as low-income by the state. For each of the last 8 years I have had to think about switching careers and/or leaving Hawai'i because as a teacher I do not earn enough to buy an apartment, save for retirement, or even keep an emergency fund.

Every year I tell myself to keep hanging on, that the most recent teacher contracts have started to improve our situation, or that my turn for adequate compensation is coming, if I can just hold out a little longer. Our last 2-year contract which stripped away our ability to earn guaranteed PD credits came as a direct rebuke to all of my hope. If the salary compression isn't rectified soon, there is no way for me to continue living here and teaching our children. Many of the seasoned teachers I know are in the same position. I'm already beyond optimism, but I'm willing to beg you for a chance to keep me and my fellow teachers afloat and part of the education system. We don't want to be driven out, but that is exactly what is happening. I'm pleading with you to please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819, so that experienced teachers can continue to teach our keiki.

Mahalo,

Alison Hartle

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 1:43:47 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Cathleen Oyama	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819, relating to teacher compensation (salary compression).

I have been working as a DOE school counselor for 28 years (with an additional 3.5 years with the DOH) and am currently on salary step 13. I love my job. I love my coworkers and I love our students. Yet, being a career educator is not easy. The long hours require us to give up family time and skimp on “self-care.” The lack of supplies and on-going purchase order issues (restrictions, rules, and long turn-around periods) require us to use personal funds to provide for the needs of our students. The mediocre pay requires us to seek additional sources of income, despite our already limited time. In addition to this, these past two years have been especially taxing on our time and mental and physical energy. This has brought a number of my highly qualified and experienced colleagues to the breaking point and they chose to retire. Many of them retired mid school year, which is not the norm for educators and speaks to the extreme burnout that is occurring.

I, too, am contemplating retirement and on January 3, 2022, I hand delivered my application to the ERS office with the intention of retiring on June 1, 2022. This was not my original plan. My plan changed when I discovered that working part-time while collecting my pension would bring in more income than if I continue to work full-time with the DOE. Isn't that sad? After devoting 28 years to the DOE, I am still not at the top of my pay scale. And after a total of 31.5 years working for the State of Hawaii, I need to retire from the job I love in order to increase my income. My fear is that many of my veteran colleagues have discovered the same and we will see a mass exodus of retirement-eligible educators walk away from the job, taking with them their invaluable and irreplaceable knowledge and experience.

Will the passing of Senate Bill 2819 entice me to postpone my retirement? I honestly do not know. I do know that it will cause me to take a pause and consider my options. I also know, more importantly, that it will make a difference to my colleagues. Fixing the salary compression issue will not only provide educators with much needed income, it will also be a huge morale boost. I cannot express enough how vital that is right now. It will also give new and potential educators hope that being a career educator is financially beneficial and not a financial liability.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Cathy Oyama

Waialele Elementary School Counselor

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 1:38:01 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Mitzie Higa	Testifying for Democratic Party of Hawaii Labor Caucus	Support	No

Comments:

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 1:24:11 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Donna Shigezawa	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am testifying in favor of SB2819. I am a certified classroom teacher in the librarian IRA position at Salt Lake Elementary. I have been teaching for 37 years and am turning 60 years old this year. I still love teaching and even went back into the classroom last year because our school was short of classroom teachers. Many years ago, I was appalled to learn that others who had significantly less years of service were actually earning more than me, even after working my way up to Class 7. I was debating how much longer I should work before retiring and receiving this compression raise would definitely impact my decision. I know there may not be too many of me left with this amount of years but I really feel it is unfair to prolong compensation given the amount of years we have already worked. I still feel I have something to offer the students in my school and at other schools as well. I just recently taught summer school also. I ask you to pass SB2819 to recognize all the years we have already worked lacking the salary compensation we should have received.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 12:41:50 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Brady Shirota	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Brady Shirota, and I am asking for your support of Bill SB2819. I have so many family members that are teachers, and I see how much effort they put into their jobs every day. They are given scraps and expected to turn it into diamonds. Our teachers are so important for the future of the generations that they teach. We need to make sure we are taking care of them. As fellow parents have seen, it is not easy to homeschool our own children. Day after day we place that responsibility along with 30 other parents onto one teacher. They should at least be compensated fairly for it. Any other job, the more experience that you have, the more you earn. Why is it with a job as important as a teacher, that is not the case? Please vote to pass bill sb2819, and do what is right for our teachers and our keiki.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 1:44:18 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Caroline Freudig	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Senate Education Committee,

My name is Caroline Freudig and I am a first grade teacher at Kalaheo Elementary school on Kaua'i. I am in strong support of Senate Bill 2819 as it will fix the wrongs that have been over the years for our Hawaii Department of Education teachers. Although I won't benefit directly from this compression adjustment, I know many, many colleagues that will and it might make the difference for some of them between retiring or staying on a few more years to continue teaching. By adjusting the salaries of our teachers, it will not only help stabilize the payscale for them, it will also potentially retain them. I urge you to support this bill.

Mahalo,

Caroline Freudig, Kaua'i, Kalaheo Elementary, First Grade

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 1:59:56 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Marija Colic	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Teachers deserve equal pay

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 2:02:04 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Kalena Blakemore	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please support SB2819!

Kalena K. Blakemore

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 2:00:48 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Kyle Kennedy-Pocock	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support this bill due to my experience with a teacher who works countless hours each morning and night, taking time away from her family to dedicate time to her profession of being an educator. To continuously see strategies being implemented to recruit and retain new and less experienced teachers and not see any strategies to properly compensate the back bone of the schools, which is the experienced, senior teachers, seems like a constant disservice to those senior teachers. They have sacrificed for years with constant threats of pay cuts and having to watch the pay differential narrow between them and teachers who haven't even proven themselves yet. What must it feel like to be someone who has dedicated 20 years of their life to their profession to know that there's never proposals to recognize their effort and success. I wholeheartedly support this bill and its intent to properly compensate the senior educators of our state.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 11:40:16 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
andrew beh	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please support this measure to ensure teachers are paid fairly based on years of service. I have been a teacher for 15 years and hold a masters degree. I know teaching is a noble profession and I didn't sign on for the money, but at the same time I'm ashamed at the salary I earn.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 2:03:15 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Chere Costales	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 2:14:07 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Debbie Yamamoto	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee,**I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819.**

Aloha, my name is Debbie Yamamoto and this year is my 25th year teaching in the Leeward District of ‘Oahu. I currently teach 6th grade at Waipahu Elementary School. I have been teaching for the majority of my life as I soon will be turning 47. Like many of my colleagues, I will be retiring as soon as possible.

I’ve given my life to my students, the state and the Department of Education with little to no return/compensation. For 25 years I’ve arrived at school by 6:30am, and spend my nights, weekends, holidays, and vacations; planning, grading, and preparing. I organize trips and volunteer to travel with my students, organize fundraisers, banquets, graduation, attend sporting events, work at fairs, tutor before and after school, all for free because I want my students to create lasting memories and succeed in life as I struggle living paycheck to paycheck, unable to afford a single-family home of my own. As I type this, I cry and realize even more that I’m a fool because I’ve allowed the state to take advantage of me. I, along with my colleagues of 20+ years, have been expected to do all of these things for free.

If this bill passes, I WILL teach longer (well into my 60s), but if it doesn’t, I will retire as soon as possible, within a few years as well as many of my colleagues.

I beg you to support Senate Bill 2819 and I thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 1:21:26 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Joli Johnston	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kidani and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819,

My name is Joli Johnston and I am a Special Education Preschool Teacher in the Windward District. This is my 5th year as a classroom teacher, but my 9th year with the DOE. The requirements of my job in combination of the extra layer of the COVID-19 pandemic has caused me to consider accepting another job offer outside of the school system. While considering, I projected out 10 years to see what my future salary potential was if staying in the DOE. During this process, I spoke to many of my colleagues who took the time to explain how our salary steps actually work. I was surprised to learn that although I have been earning PD credits that periodically move me up to a higher pay grade, I would only move up vertically in the matrix if step increases were negotiated by the union and this could sometimes lead to years of stagnation. I then learned how many of my colleagues who have been teachers for 30+ years are still not at the top because they had so many years of being at the mercy of a political stalemate. It seems like a crime that any of us could spend that long in any profession and be making the same as someone with 10-20 less years of service. It also doesn't help that we are one of the only states that does it this way, instead of years of service, like it ought to be, it is based on an arbitrary and unreliable negotiation schedule. I am sad to say that my colleagues mentioned above are already in the process of retiring early due to pure frustration at being so undervalued for what we do, particularly in such a high-stakes climate. I love the DOE, I love what I do, but the bottom line is that we live in Hawaii, one of the most expensive states. Ultimately, we need to make career choices that keep a roof over our head and food on our table. I am living on a single income and having a hard time affording rent on my own. I would like to have a family one day and am genuinely concerned that my current career path will be unable to support children. I would hate to have to walk away from such a fulfilling career because it just doesn't pay enough to support my cost of living. Please support me and all the educators like me who have dedicated their lives to raising our future generations and pay us what we're worth. I hope that you will vote in support of SB2819, mahalo for your time.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 2:17:12 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
civic k Gomes	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

If the pay per year is raised, it will benefit not only teachers but the community as a whole. If there are a lack of staffing for the island, the students and future generations will suffer and the government itself will take a blow and not be as productive.

We need teachers to teach the next generation on how to run our government.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 2:12:20 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Gene Zarro	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

My written testimony is to support SB2819 with changes as I have submitted in my written testimony

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 2:14:24 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Lori Walsh	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

As an elementary school teacher for the DOE on the Big Island, salary is an issue as I decide whether to continue teaching in the state. I have over a decade of classroom experience, yet I am working four jobs to be able to afford housing and cost of living in the state. I am in my 40's, yet, I am living in the most expensive but least safe apartments I have ever lived in during my career. The cost of housing takes over half of my monthly salary, and combined with a car payment and cost of living, I do not have extra funds leftover for savings or retirement. The housing shortage means that I cannot find a cheaper option closer to work. I am lucky to receive the differential for teaching in a hard to staff area. I drive 40 miles each way to my school, which adds an enormous cost for gas. I took a pay cut from my last job to teach in the state. I love the kids and my school, but salary might be the deciding factor that causes me to switch careers.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 2:28:14 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Lance Nishihara	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee:

My name is Lance Nishihara. I am a Counselor at Momilani Elementary in the Leeward District, on the Island of Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819.

I highly recommend providing funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue. The teachers in the State of Hawaii have been integral members in the community who support, guide, teach, counsel, parent, mentor, and show Aloha to the keiki of our precious Islands of Hawaii we call home.

For the past 32 years, I have been a Counselor here at Momilani Elementary, starting off as a half-time Counselor at August Ahrens Elementary with the largest enrollment in the State and half-time Counselor at Momilani with a dwindling enrollment back in 1989. Traveling from school to school, it was difficult knowing that the children had to hold on to their problems until I returned to that particular campus one to two days later. Issues such as peer relationships, family or divorce issues, attendance/truancy, and other problems had to wait for my assistance for at least a couple days. After listening to the children tell me how difficult it was to wait until my return, it was a “worry” that I took home every day wondering if all the students were socially and emotionally in a good place.

With an excellent Principal who joined me at the same start time of my employment, my Principal was loved by all the families and it quickly spread that Momilani was a great school. Enrollment increased to full capacity, parents lobbied for a full time Counselor, Momilani avoided three threats of school closure, and our Principal and teachers powered through to win three National Blue Ribbon Awards. I bring this up only because it took many years of hard work and dedication of our Principal and all the teachers...even parents to make the school successful. With academic achievement topping the State in all areas, Momilani has always been a school of excellence and a school of choice.

With all the dedication, time, and effort that our teachers put into our school and children, it saddens me to think how long it takes for teachers' pay to actually change. I have personally been on the same pay scale for the last 7 years. With retirement already here, I am unable to take that step forward because of the loss in step movement. My wife, who is a teacher, is in the same predicament. We still have a mortgage and older children, with

one who decided to go back to graduate school. So, we will be working for 5-10 more years. As parents, we highly encourage education but discourage any teaching degree as we cannot say that it would support their lifestyle in this day and age. If teachers were compensated well and if the compression was supported, perhaps my view of a future educator would be paramount. However, with the rising costs of housing and other daily expenses, it would be a difficult way of life as a future educator.

As a Counselor, I experience many different issues from that of a teacher. I hear and know of family issues (divorce/separation), peer relationship problems, social/emotional issues, death/dying issues, abuse issues, academic issues, learning issues, and much more. I've heard many things throughout my career and they seem to be getting much more complicated.

With the Pandemic still looming, that has brought on much more complexity to our schools. The teachers and I are dealing with a brand new monster and it's so difficult. What goes on in school/classroom/on campus is very difficult...trying to keep everyone safe. But the teachers are the forgotten ones and it all goes back to their pay. Actually nothing can be compared to the exposure/dangers they face every single day. I would call them nothing less than...A Hero!

Please support the funding for the bill. With the passing of the bill, you may keep many qualified teachers within the system and you may get new recruits for teacher hires in the future. Without funding to Senate Bill 2819, I'm not sure the teacher profession should be deemed as an "essential worker" because that would categorize teachers as not really all that "extremely important."

Please support us. We need your help.

Thank you.

Lance Nishihara, Leeward District, Oahu

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 2:03:52 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Emmanuel Hobro	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

With the decline on teacher employment, keeping veteran teachers is essential to keep educational institutes from succeeding in these dire times. Increasing the pay of veteran teachers will adhere to loyalty, retention, and a usable living wage.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 2:29:01 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Joni	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Next school year will be my 30th year of teaching. I will be 52 years old. The way I feel right now, on the day I turn 55, I will retire. I will not finish the semester, nor the quarter--not even the week. I have given highly intentional, conscionable service to the haumana of Hawaii. Teaching is rewarding, but being a teacher is not. If all I did was teach students, the benefits of emotional compensation would be enough to supplement the poor pay; however, teaching and being a teacher are separate components of this profession.

29 years ago, I sacrificed summers to take additional classes to climb up the salary schedule. In my naivete, I got wrapped up in the clan mentality. Those classes were expensive. Those classes were irrelevant. Those classes were a pay-to-play sham of credits. I made one move in class, and vowed to use summers to gain practical, purposeful skills like carpentry and plumbing. The skills and knowledge I gained on that route better served my students because I was able to share a competency with students from an angle of real-life experience. It was more beneficial for me to shadow a plumber for free during the summers than it was to take Ed-based classes led by pseudo experts.

I became a teacher because I knew I wanted to teach Kaua'i kids. There was never any doubt that I would live on Kaua'i until the day I die; therefore, I was greatly invested in impacting students who would eventually become peer citizens. My loyalty and longevity to this job is driven by this philosophy to produce good neighbors. With an average of about 200 students per year, the math calculates to 6000 students who I've affected. Crazy that Hawaii paid Todd Graham \$800,000 for one year—a sum that would take me 16 years to accumulate. How much impact did he have to advance the lives of the people of our state?

Now, here I am, submitting testimony for an issue that should not be an issue to start. Do I really have to provide reasons for having my salary adjusted based on my years of experience? In all other professions, years of service are honored. My 30 years should be acknowledged thusly. The legislature continuously uses the statistic that the DOE swallows 20% of the state's budget. This argument often is presented as a reason to deny further budgetary requests; however, the committee needs to embed in its mindset that the DOE may take a fifth of the budget, but it benefits 100% of Hawaii.

Teachers need to be respected. Older, veteran teachers need to be honored. At 55, I will still be young enough to work more years. There are many more who will be in this situation; however, if minimum wage heads toward \$18, I will leave teaching and work in retail.

Making minimum wage will be worth not having to do frivolous data reports, grading, parent/teacher conferences, crisis drills, yard duty, accreditation reports, SBA test administration, grant writing, Ma`i counseling, 504 meetings, IEPs, SEL counseling, teaching with 25+ students during a pandemic while the BOE meets virtually because of it, having the threat of furloughs while the state buys a robot dog for \$130,000—these are the unnecessary stresses of being a teacher. These responsibilities are why I stated that there is a difference between teaching and being a teacher. My job teaching is wonderful, but being a teacher is horrible, and that can be eased slightly by showing teachers that they are respected. If not, be prepared to have our students be educated by non-skilled people.

Mahalo,

Joni Funamura-Sasil

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 2:10:23 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Jonathan Drayton	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Thank you, Senator Kidani and Senator Kim for revisting **SB2819**.

As a citizen of the State of Hawaii, a taxpayer, and professional educator serving our community, I worry about the lack of value for educators and its effects on our state and children.

If our use of the dollar is one of the truest demonstrations of democracy, why do we leave educators at the bottom of the budget? We say we value education and our children, yet our actions vote differently.

I have worked and served the public education system for close to a decade. Sadly, I've watched our school's system fall into a state of almost complete disrepair. We rely heavily upon "vacation teachers" who come from the mainland for a year or two. These teachers briefly keep educators in the classroom and our broken system a float. Now amongst the midst of a pandemic, and an exodus of educators from this broken system, we can not keep teachers (or subs) in the classroom.

If we truly care about our keiki and their education, we must care for those who care for them. How can we ask our children to value their education if we don't treat educators as professionals providing them a livable wage? Most educators dedicate six years or more to advanced degrees and certifications in order to help advance our children. To not advance this bill, will have crippling consequences on the State of Hawaii. We will surely face costly repercussions within the state's social support systems for years to come.

Supporting SB2819 goes beyond a line item in our budget, it protects our state's legacy of being community and family driven. With the closing of schools, we have seen how hard it is to juggle the needs of our children, homeschooling, and tending to our careers. We cannot afford to have our teachers walk out and into careers where they are better valued and appreciated. Also, our children cannot afford to have educators working two-three jobs to survive. With an educator's presence over-extended, the product our students receive is cheapened. We hope this committee will support the value of education in the State of Hawaii. Supporting and passing SB2819 is vital for us all as we move forward.

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819. My name is Marietta Agustin and I am now on my 18th year as a former teacher and now a counselor at Kalakaua Middle School.

The passage of this bill would greatly impact the lives of experienced teachers who are still struggling to make ends meet. I have been employed by the DOE for the past 17 years, yet I am still in the process of paying down all the student loans I had to take on for my education. I love my job but find it quite disheartening that even after so many years, I am still unable to support myself on this salary and have had to take on a part-time job.

During these years in the profession, I have continued to pay and take classes as I understand that lifelong learning is important. Still, I find it quite unfair that despite my years of service and dedication to the profession, my salary isn't much higher than that of other teachers who started ten years or more after I did.

Also, despite my desire to continue being a counselor, I am seriously considering changing professions or at least moving to another state where the cost of living is lower so that I can fully support myself on a teacher's salary with no need for a second job. Fixing the compression that exists in the teacher salary schedule so that my years of experience are recognized and rewarded would allow me to remain in Hawaii with my students and the community that I vowed to serve.

In short, I respectfully ask that you please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819. Thank you very much for this opportunity to share my experiences.

Respectfully,

Marietta Agustin

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 2:35:10 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
T Neuhart	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I have been a teacher for 16 years and have been in the school system for almost 30 years here on Molokai. Teachers continue to spend out-of-pocket expenses year after year to no end. On top of that, we continue to face increasing gas prices, produce/products and utility bills just to name a few. We are one of lowest paid teachers in the nation and are not compensated enough with the high cost of living/teaching in Hawaii. Additionally, it is even more costly living on the island of Molokai. I love teaching my students and wouldn't consider teaching anywhere else in the world. Please consider our cost of teaching and living in Hawaii and compensate us equally and fairly. Mahalo!

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 2:35:55 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
B. Noelani Iokepa-Guerrero	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support SB 2819 relating to teacher compensation.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 2:39:09 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Jacqueline Arcano	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Hello,

My name is Jacqueline Arcano, and I have been teaching in Department of Education for 10 years now. I fully support this bill and would like to continue to be with the Department of Education, but unfortunately when looking at the scale, I see no promise of growth in pay. Within these years, teachers have been willing to push through any adversity and challenges. This has been the same even without the pandemic. Hawaii school teachers work hard; we dedicate so much of our time, personal funds, and efforts for our students (present and former), that I, and so many of my colleagues, treat them as our own. We deserve compensation.

Thank you for reading my brief testimony.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 12:33:30 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Tammy Holt	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

January 27, 2021

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee,

My name is Tammy Holt and I am writing in support of SB 2819.

Salary compression affects our veteran teachers. These are teachers who have a deep knowledge of their school communities, have generational relationships with families and organizations within their communities, and have worked tirelessly for the keiki of these communities. Veteran teachers have years of invaluable experience and innate knowledge that is unreplicated and immeasurable in value.

I am respectfully asking that the Senate Committee acknowledge the fact that salary compression in the teaching field does exist and that it must be fixed before we lose our experienced and veteran teachers.

Through testimony at the Board of Education, Town Hall Meetings and neighborhood board meetings I have heard the frustration of countless veteran teachers proclaiming that they are done with the teaching profession if the issues of salary compensation and compression are not fixed.

If we lose those valuable veteran teachers, we lose invaluable innate knowledge of curriculum. We lose historians of our community, we lose trusted teachers who know and understand the families they serve, and most importantly, our children lose a trusted adult outside of the family nucleus.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of SB 2819

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 2:34:50 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Tracey Jeffers	Testifying for HSTA - Educator	Support	No

Comments:

When I first started teaching, we received pay raises for years of service and then they were frozen and never returned.

Working long hours, many on my own time makes me feel very unappreciated. I start my day at work at 7:30 to set up for the day, then by the time all that is done, the bell is ringing and it's the first class. I teach class, then the bell rings and in 5 minutes a new group is in and class is starting again. It's recess time and I have to set up for my next class, so no bathroom break for me. Recess is over and class is beginning. Lunch time follows, students need help so lunch has to wait. There's the bell again for my last class of the day. Class is over, finally a bathroom break but I need to hurry there is a meeting I need to get to. The day is over but I still have papers to grade for the work students are doing in class or they won't know what their grade for the class is. Whose time am I using? Mine since the day has ended. If I don't do it on my own time, when am I supposed to do it?

I continue to teach because I love my students but my salary doesn't equal to what I do as an educator and trying to retain new and good teachers on the idea of "lots of work but little pay" is an uphill battle. There needs to be some form of compensation that draws the educator in and makes it so they want to stay or can afford to stay.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 2:40:18 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Jenifer Tsuji	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee:

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2891, relating to teacher compensation.

My name is Jenifer Tsuji, and I am currently a music teacher at Keonepoko Elementary on Hawai'i Island, right outside the town of Pāhoa. I have been a public school teacher in the Hawaii State Department of Education for over 26 years. I have worked hard through many tough situations, and have basically given a large piece of my lifetime to serve the children of my community through the DOE.

However, currently I am receiving close to the same salary as teachers with up to 10 years less experience. I am nearing the end of my career, I have adult children in college, and it is frustrating to me that due to varying circumstances (and bad luck with timing re: funding sources), I may never see the top of our payscale in the next few years before I retire. My husband, who works in the private sector (and who started at a similar pay rate) has had regular raises throughout his career. Any bump I get in pay (other than through taking credits) comes sporadically when the state feels they have enough money, instead of regularly for years of service.

Although most teachers do not teach because they hope to get rich, we deserve to be paid according to our years of service, and to be able to depend on a steady pay increase relating to that. We are already losing so many teachers, for a variety of reasons. We need to give our veteran teachers a reason to stay, and our younger teachers a salary and career goal to look forward to. I realize that fixing the compression in pay will not solve all of our problems with retention, but I feel that it will definitely be a huge step in the right direction toward making teachers feel valued for their loyal and hardworking service to the children of our state.

I am asking you to support SB 2819, in order to help fix this compression in pay. Mahalo.

Jenifer Tsuji

Keonepoko Elementary School

Testifying as an individual

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 12:52:31 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Elizabeth Sharrock	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

To Whom it May Concern,

Please approve bill 2819! Although it won't affect me since I am a newer teacher, MANY of my colleagues have been affected by this compression issue. We have been begging for appropriate compensation for years and here we are begging again, simply for a living wage. Those on the outside don't understand the huge amount of stress, responsibility, and extra hours that teaching entails. Those teachers who have been in the ranks for 10+ years have not been able to take advantage of regular raises for their hard work and seniority. It is totally unjust. Especially in this time of COVID, I would hope that people see how invaluable our profession is. We should not have to take on second jobs. Teaching is already like have 3 jobs, in my opinion. And when we aren't even getting paid for the ONE.... it is entirely insulting. Many are going to be leaving this profession if we don't fix the issue that this bill addresses. For the sake of our keiki, PASS THIS BILL!

Mahalo,

Elizabeth Sharrock

6th grade English Teacher at Kea'au Middle School

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 2:25:07 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Randall A Okimoto	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Kakou,

My name is Randall Okimoto and I'm a teacher at Farrington High School. I also was a coach of high school sports for 21 years before I moved on to spend more time raising my family. I've been teaching in the DOE since 1999.

Im submitting testimony in favor of this bill which really makes things right in accordance with what We signed up for. Which is a salary that would honor our work and loyalty to all of the people involved in the educational system. It seems like inow is the time to make up for what we sacrificed over the years in terms of salary increases that should come with years of service.

On behalf of my family would you consider passing this bill. It's the right thing to do.

God bless,

Randall Okimoto

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 2:39:42 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
KaheaFaria	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Thank you for efforts to support our teachers!

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 2:49:21 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Troy Aurio	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee:

My name is Troy Aurio. I am a teacher at Momilani Elementary in the Leeward District, on the island of Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819.

Please provide funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue. We deserve to be treated and compensated respectfully and hope you stand with us by showing us support.

I've been teaching for about 16 years and to tell you the truth, I've barely been able to make ends meet the entire time. I have two young daughters ages 2 and 4 whom I need to provide for and the paycheck I receive allows no breathing room or excess. My wife and I both work full time and that still is not enough. Recently, I've been contemplating and discussing a career change purely due to the lack of income teaching provides for my family. I am the main bread winner of the household and I feel more like I'm providing crumbs rather than a full loaf. Fixing the salary compression issue would help support all teachers stay in the position we absolutely love . . . educating Hawaii's keiki.

My school is high performing and consistently scores well on the yearly SBA Test. I can vouch for our staff that we all put 120% into what we've built and created at Momilani Elementary School. Everyone comes early and everyone stays late. We implement innovative and effective instruction practices to maximize the learning experiences for our students in the best way we can. This staff is loaded with all-stars and nobody is lazy. Yet at the end of the day, we are struggling to make ends meet at our own homes. Don't you see a problem with that? We give all we can and more to educate the children of Hawaii yet I can't afford to provide a modest single family home for my own children.

Please support Hawaii's teachers by supporting Senate Bill 2819. I love what I do but I love my two daughters more. I would like to keep both and this bill will help me do that. I'm sure there are countless other teachers in Hawaii that are in the same boat. Please do what you know is right. We need support and you are the ones who can do that for us.

Sincerely,

Troy Aurio

Grade 4 Teacher

Momilani Elementary School

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 2:46:41 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Nichole Cootey	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

January 27, 2022**Dear Senate Education Committee,**

Aloha! My name is Nichole Cootey. I am a 6th grade teacher at Honoka'a Elementary School on the island of Hawai'i. I have been teaching in the HDOE for about 16 years. I was born and raised on the Hilo side of the Big Island and about 9 years ago, relocated to Waimea. My husband's family is from the Waimea & Honoka'a area. I am writing to ask that you please fully fund SB2819 & SB2820, the bills that would help pay veteran teachers for their years of service as well as continue to fund the shortage differentials. This is critical for many Hawai'i teachers.

Paying teachers for years of service & shortage differentials will help me because I am like many other teachers and I work a second job. The cost of living is so high here. My 2nd job takes time away from spending time with my family and also I am unable to spend enough time focusing on teaching. If we are able to get higher pay, I may be able to quit my 2nd job and be able to spend more time being a better teacher and have time for my family, especially my children who are growing up so very fast. There have been many times that I have chosen to spend my own money on school supplies which then means I am unable to spend those funds on my family just so that I can be a better teacher. I should not have to choose between providing for my own children & my students.

Funding teacher salaries will help students because veteran teachers will stay in the profession longer, spend more time lesson planning and not have to worry about how much they are spending of their own money on school supplies. Students will have stability because there won't be a new teacher or substitute year after year. Veteran teachers would also have the time to mentor new teachers and help them be better at teaching.

Sincerely,**Nichole Cootey****Grade 6****Honoka'a Elementary**

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 2:48:59 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
chris pascual	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

To Kidani, Kim and members of the education committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of bills: SB2819, SB2820, relating to teacher salary compression and teacher differentials respectively.

Correcting the teacher salary compression by awarding teachers the compensation that are past due and using differential pay that acknowledges rural isolation and specialized fields is the first step to addressing the needs of students by retaining and recruiting teachers in the state of Hawai'i. There needs to be more done and I anticipate this committee to do what is right in order set the bar on where lawmakers stand in supporting public education and public school teachers.

Thank you,

-C Pascual

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 2:37:43 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Joanna M. D. Silva	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

To Whom it May Concern,

I was born and raised in Hilo, Hawai'i. I have been a full-time English Language Arts teacher for the past 23 years. I have a bachelor's degree and a master's degree. I am rarely absent, always keep my doors open at recess and lunch, and this year alone, have worked hundreds and hundreds of hours over and beyond my contract. I'M SICK OF IT!

Over the past several years, especially this year, I have considered "jumping ship" even if that means taking up a new profession/job that will afford me less benefits. As an educator in Hawai'i, I am underpaid, undervalued, taken advantage of, disregarded... yadda, yadda, yadda. I am also one of over 2,000 teachers compressed into a step that I deserved to have surpassed many, many years ago. Correcting the pay compression issue will be a positive step in rectifying this pay inequity. And it will really just make me feel a whole lot better about working so darn hard for so darn little.

Please seriously consider passing SB2819. I will absolutely vote for you in the next election if you support SB2819 and Hawai'i's children. By supporting us, you support them.

Sincerely,

Joanna M. D. Silva

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 2:48:39 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Laura Ginoza	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee I am submitting testimony is support of SB2819. I thank you for your ever-present support of educators. As you know COVID has taken a toll on us all. I have been with the Department of Education for over 25 years and I have never seen so many teachers anxious, worried and discouraged. Many of my colleagues are leaving the profession. Please help to encourage teachers to stay by supporting SB 2819. Our veteran teachers have put in many years to our schools and our keiki. Unlike other states we do not recognize years of service in determining salary. Please help our veteran teachers and reward their dedication and years of service. Support SB2819 and show our teachers that they are valued and that they can and do make a difference. Thank you for your consideration and for providing me with this opportunity to share my thoughts.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 2:46:03 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Linda Spinola	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I am a teacher with 27 years experience. My family and I moved to Hawaii in June 2020. I enjoy working for the Department of Education, yet am frustrated that my 25 years of experience in California seems to count for nothing with the DOE. Not only do I have 25 years experience, but I also have a Master's Degree. I encourage the Senate to pass SB2819 to allow our teachers in Hawaii to be compensated at a fair amount. This will encourage educators to stay in the profession, save the DOE money for additional training, and most importantly provide experienced teachers for our students when they need it most.

Mahalo

Linda Spinola



STATE OF HAWAII
Executive Office on Early Learning
2759 South King Street
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96826

January 26, 2022

TO: Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Chair
Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Education

FROM: Coleen Momohara, Interim Director
Executive Office on Early Learning

SUBJECT: **Measure:** S.B. No. 2819 – RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION
Hearing Date: Friday January 28, 2022
Time: 3:00 p.m.
Location: Videoconference

Bill Description: Makes an appropriation to fund an experimental modernization project pursuant to section 78-3.5, Hawaii Revised Statutes, to make necessary discretionary salary adjustments.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON EARLY LEARNING'S POSITION: Support the Intent

Aloha. I am Coleen Momohara, Interim Director of the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL). EOEL supports the intent of S.B. No. 2819 and defers to HIDOE as it relates to teacher compensation and provisions set forth in this bill.

EOEL is statutorily responsible for the development of the State's early childhood system that shall ensure a spectrum of high-quality development and learning opportunities for children throughout the State, from prenatal care until the time they enter kindergarten, with priority given to underserved or at-risk children. EOEL also administers the EOEL Public Pre-Kindergarten program in partnership with the HIDOE.

As an attached agency to the HIDOE, EOEL staff are employees of the HIDOE and EOEL Public Pre-Kindergarten Teachers and State Office Teachers may benefit from this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

To Whom it may concern:

I am submitting this testimony today in my fifteenth year and eighth month of contracted HDOE teacher service (BU 05). Prior to my contracted service in Hawaii I was a part time teacher for two years in HDOE, and a contracted teacher in California and Arizona for three years.

I am in support of Senate Bill 2819 which would guarantee that teachers in Hawaii have their salaries adjusted based on their years of experience. I am in support of Senate Bill 2820 which would make sure funding is secured for the differentials currently in place for special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and geographically hard-to-fill areas.

Moving up the pay scale ladder in HDOE is not easy. Even getting a hold of a salary step ladder was challenging for me at the beginning of my career. Understanding it is still a challenge.

I do not wish to focus on the negative experiences but there are many. I had two separate denials for reclassifications. The first denial was due to a misunderstanding in which I did not receive any PD credits for my participation in an intense and expensive yearlong course of study with the Leading School's Program at High Tech High's Graduate School of Education. The other denial for reclassification was because I failed to mail the paperwork on time. I mailed the thorough and precise paperwork the Monday after Good Friday, a school holiday, but was denied because it was to have been postmarked by Friday. Reclassification and becoming a national board certified teacher are the only means in my control to increase my salary. The passing of Senate Bills 2819 and 2820 will ensure higher take home pay for me. I am grateful for the current differential which has helped me tremendously.

Other reclassification struggles involved convoluted course numbers and descriptions that resulted in a course being considered duplicate and thus not available for credit, lack of courses offered for advancement, cost of courses being offered a deterrent (\$500 is the money I have paid out of pocket to advance one class on the scale), maxed out courses being offered - meaning when you do find a course the course is already full, and course end dates being postponed and pushed back into the next semester by the instructor, after beginning the course which makes reclassification for that semester voided.

I am very grateful for advancements made in the last two years to abate these struggles. In particular, there are more courses being offered and there are many free courses too. I strongly support the passage of Senate Bills 2819 and 2820 to continue to improve teacher pay.

All said and done, due to the above mentioned experiences, plus Covid, my reclassification is now two years behind the timeline I meticulously created during those first few days of summer in 2019 (it took a full two days of plotting courses and reading details about the process). Still I am not reclassified into Class 07. In fact, my most recent delay will be that three of the Summer courses I took in 2021 now have course end dates after January 3, 2022 which will postpone my reclassification yet another semester. Each semester that my reclassification is postponed costs me money. When I appealed and was denied the reclassification from 03-04 in October of 2016

I lost out on a \$2,344 annual raise. Each semester delay in reclassification ends in less take home money. This most recent delay will cost me a \$4,362 raise as I had anticipated moving from 06-07. I will not be earning more money until the 2022-2023 school year.

Step increases are out of my control. It relies solely on negotiation and has something to do with years of continued work service but I am unclear how. I believe this is a big difference from other districts nationwide that have annual increases perhaps to keep up with inflation. The only other way to guarantee an increase in salary is to go into administration which is not an interest of mine at this point in my career, or to become a national board certified teacher.

Now that I have maxed out in steps available for reclassification I will look into national board certification to continue to advance in pay. An increase in the number of reclassification steps would be an incentive for greater teacher pay. Additionally, I heard a colleague say since she is already class 07 she has no incentive to get her doctorate. This seems to me something that should be addressed as well.

The learning and sharing that transpires in these courses is tremendous and directly affects student instruction for the better. I am grateful indeed for what I learned in these courses and for the reclassification opportunities. However, reclassification postponement due to strict and stringently upheld technicalities is disheartening and not what I wanted to focus on. I shared such details because someone may want to hear how hard I worked for pay increases available to me. My heart is with the kids in my classroom at Holualoa Elementary where I am now in my fourteenth year teaching. Without pay increases I begin to look at the private and non-profit sector for competitive employment.

The passing of Senate Bills 2819 and 2820 will ensure higher take home pay for me. I am grateful for the current differential which has helped me tremendously. I am thankful for all the improvements in the system which make more courses available and less costly. I am in support of adding additional class steps for teachers, BU 05 employees, and I am in support of improving the system which supports teacher reclassification. I am also in support of annual vertical step increases for teachers, BU 05 employees, regardless of contract negotiations.

Thank you so much for your time and consideration.

Carrie Miller
Holualoa Elementary School
STEAM + Reading
Educational Coach and Teacher

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 2:51:39 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
nolan uyeda	Testifying for HIDOE	Support	No

Comments:

Please ocnsider this bill to support the teachers who are in this situation. I have been in the DOE for about 26 years and every year that I have been teaching i have had another job to supplement my income. I believe the future comes from todays students and we need to prepare them for their future. It is very sad when teachers are not appreciated for what we do, but passing this bill will greatly change the outlook for staying in the teaching profession.

thank you for you time

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 2:56:33 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Sherelyn Tagle	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Sherelyn and I support this bill.

Mahalo!

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 2:55:01 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Chris Neppl	Testifying for DOE	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819. My name is Chris Neppl, and I have been a part of Honolulu District, Kaimuki-McKinley-Roosevelt Complex Area for 20 years to this month. I currently teach 4th grade at Jefferson Elementary School.

The impact this legislation will have for me personally will be life changing. If the bill is passed, I will be able to say with certainty that I can continue and finish my teaching career here in Hawaii. I started my career in January 2002, the school year directly after the teachers' strike. I was here for the pay cut in 2009, where we had furlough Fridays that forced me to work a second job on those Fridays in an effort to make up for the decrease in salary. I had a friend who started their teaching career alongside me 20 years ago, yet disappointingly had to leave after about ten years because of the pay cuts during those furlough Friday years. I don't want to have to do the same. I chose to stick it out here in Hawaii, hoping for improvements in pay. I've been around for the tiny pay increases that have only been limiting, not prospering. I've been stuck in the middle of the salary schedule, which has restricted me from being able to keep up with the cost of living, to meet basic living needs like a place of my own and properly save money for my family's future. Two years ago I submitted my testimony for this bill and covid killed it, resulting in another decrease in salary, and a new contract cementing me again in a pay that isn't even keeping up with the cost of living from years ago. I've committed to teaching here in Hawaii 20 years ago, and would very much like to continue teaching here, and finish my career here, and retire. I can't continue this career path that has me stuck on the same step of the salary schedule, only to have to wait for negotiations to decide if and how many step movements I will get for each contract, when my years of service should be the deciding factor securing me at the top of the salary schedule. This bill will resolve these issues. This bill will allow me to continue teaching here and finish my career here.

This bill will allow me to be able to afford my own place to rent, and provide the chance to buy my own home in the near future. This bill will secure my life here in Hawaii where I can put roots down and say with confidence that I can raise a family here, and have my kids attend a school within a system I've worked in for so long. Salary compression has restricted me from buying a home, or even renting a place of my own, forcing me to bounce around for the past 20 years to over 10 different shared rental properties, a live in boat situation, and even homelessness, all in attempts at surviving here, not prospering. The

passing of this bill will allow me to afford a living situation where I don't have to rent a room in someone else's house, but instead provide me the opportunity to rent my own place and in the near future purchase my own property that either way, would give me a place I can call my home.

This bill will allow me to focus on what is most important, my students, and their learning, by using the necessary time outside of the classroom to grade papers and plan, rather than a second job. Salary compression has forced me to consider and take on additional jobs and non educational training to provide a second income in attempts at making up for the shortage in my teaching salary. I've worked as a cook in kitchens, taught yoga classes, tutored, acted, worked for my friends' businesses including Hawaii International Conferences, attended broker's opens for Revoluton, and worked as an educational consultant, all in so many attempts at just keeping up with the cost of living that my salary does not provide. This legislation will provide the opportunity for me to have a choice, and not a required second job so that I can focus solely on my job as a teacher and the needs of my students.

Personally, this bill will make what has been wrong for too long, right. Hawaii is the only state in the country that does not pay teachers based on years of service. I have felt disrespected, restricted, and demoralized. Over the years I've spoken with people in public who have said to me the following: "I have so much respect for what you do." "I love teachers, I wish they paid you guys more." It's bittersweet to hear such words from strangers. After hearing these words it's just disheartening and upsetting. We all know veteran teachers like myself are more effective in the classroom having a greater impact on students' lives and their education because of the years of education and experience they've put in. This bill will make what has been disrespectful, just and right. What has been restrictive, prosperous. What has been demoralizing, uplifting.

Salary compression has impacted my personal health and well being. Twenty years of teaching, working nights and weekends, and still unable to provide the basic needs of a decent home and savings are a heavy burden on one's self worth. The choice of a teaching career is one of great sacrifice with little reward. The knowledge that we are so underpaid in comparison with the rest of the nation is very disheartening. It is not right. I go to work everyday, focusing on taking care of my students to the best of my ability, but who is taking care of me? Salary compression certainly has not. I've been teaching for 20 years, yet remain stuck in the middle of the salary schedule at step 11. I've earned my masters degree in education. I've taken all the professional development classes and earned my way to the highest class on the pay scale (class 7). It's time for our state to catch up with the rest of the country and pay us based on our years of service because that is the right thing to do for our teachers, our students, and the future of public education in the state of Hawaii.

Passing this legislation will be life changing for so many reasons. One, I will be able to do what I had planned to do without question, stay in Hawaii to continue to teach and retire. Two, I will be able to afford my own place to rent, and provide the chance to buy my own home in the near future. Three, I can focus on what is most important, my students, and their learning, by using the necessary time outside of the classroom to grade papers and

plan, rather than a second job. Four, I will feel respected knowing that I am receiving a salary that is equitable to my peers in other states because I am getting paid for my years of service.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819. Thank you so much for the opportunity to testify.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 2:59:07 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
LORELEI L KUHEANA	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Sirs,

I am a 25 year, veteran middle school teacher in Pearl City. I strongly ask for your support on Bill SB 2819 regarding teacher compensation realated to years of service and expertise. I, myself, am considering leaving the profession at the end of this school year in search of higher pay to survive here in Hawaii and our exorbent cost of living. Passing this bill in favor of teachers will help teachers to stay in the classroom.

Thank you for your consideration. Teaching in this pandemic has been extremely challenging to say the least.

Aloha,

Lorelei Kuheana

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 2:50:14 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Mapuana Dudoit	Testifying for HSTA	Support	No

Comments:

With the cost of living rising and living on the island of Molokai. I find it very hard to live on my current salary without templating whether or not I need to get a second job.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 3:00:28 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Pauline W. U. Chinn	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

As a longtime public school teacher in science, a hard to fill field I left due to limited opportunities.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 2:34:45 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Kaakapua Swain	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Ka‘akapua Swain. I have been a classroom teacher for the past 7 years as a Hawaiian Immersion Kumu. I support this bill. Kumu should be compensated for their years of service.

Mahalo,

Ka‘akapua Swain

Jeenna Canché
Spanish Teacher, Maui High School
12 Hoonani Street
Kihei, Hawaii 96753
(808) 280-4720
jeennacanche@gmail.com

January 27, 2022

Chari Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and Members of the Committee,

Please accept my testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819 relating to teacher compensation (salary compression). I have been an educator in the state of Hawaii for 16 years, and I firmly believe that all educators should continually update their practice through content focused professional development and be adequately compensated for their expertise. From 2006 until 2015 I worked very hard to continually improve my practice by completing professional development credit courses, and simultaneously moved up the salary steps until I reached the top level in 2015. Since I have reached the top level, two things have happened. First, I am no longer incentivized to pursue professional development because nothing I do “counts” toward my steps, and second, my pay has stagnated due to salary compression. Unlike professionals in other fields with a masters degree, I no longer have any opportunities to increase my earnings as my experience and expertise continues to grow over time.

Because I am a dedicated educator and I am intrinsically motivated, I have continued to pursue professional learning opportunities on my own, but no longer receive monetary compensation for my efforts and I have to use my hard earned money to pay for it myself. However, I find it troublesome that many educators who reach the top levels of Professional Development, simply stop pursuing professional learning altogether. This can have a very negative impact on students. I have seen in my own content area (World Languages) that pedagogical research is constantly evolving and educators who do not keep up with current trends and changes may not be as effective in the classroom. If Professional Development were to continue to provide monetary incentives for all educators throughout their careers, the profession would be more likely to be up-to-date on contemporary research and teaching and learning trends, resulting in more effective teaching and higher levels of learning.

There is also a lot to be said for years of service. As my years of service have grown, I have found myself becoming a leader in my content area and amongst my fellow educators. I am often asked to go above and beyond in my school serving as a lead on

committees and just helping out in many ways. It sometimes feels overwhelming, and I often feel that my compensation does not reflect the actual amount of work I am putting into my career. Although I cannot ever imagine leaving teaching, I do see how a more lucrative offer elsewhere could be very tempting. Just recently, a teacher that I mentored just left the profession for this very reason. She had only been teaching for six years, but could see that she had better opportunities elsewhere.

One final thing I want to share is that I just heard about an affordable housing lottery on Maui and I was looking into the details. I was absolutely disheartened when I saw that as a single earner in Hawaii, earning the highest pay that I possibly can after working for 16 years, I could not even qualify for the lowest income bracket in the lottery since I only make about \$63,000 per year:

For Hale Kaiola, the income limits shall be:

CATEGORY	HOUSEHOLD INCOME	HOME PRICES	TOTAL NUMBER OF HOMES
Below Moderate 81% - 100%	\$76,721 to \$95,900	\$390,000 - \$399,000	12
Moderate 101% - 120%	\$95,901 to \$115,080	\$520,000 - \$560,000	20
Above Moderate 121% - 140%	\$115,081 to 134,260	\$599,000	8

<https://alaula.org/faqs>

According to this chart, I am BELOW, the “below moderate” range, even with a Master’s Degree plus 16 years of experience and all the Professional Development I can possibly have to be at the top of the payscale. I do not even qualify for affordable housing in Maui because I don’t make enough money.

I hope this testimony helps you understand how Hawaii’s educators are impacted by the current salary steps, and I urge you to take action to correct this, thus improving public education and encouraging more professionals to pursue teaching and stay in the field once they have entered.

Mahalo,
Jeenna Canche
808-280-4720

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 2:15:30 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Mae Masuda-Kop	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am a music teacher at Salt Lake Elementary School and have been working for the Hawaii Department of Education for 30 years. I am testifying in favor of SB2819 relating to teacher compensation and salary compression.

As an experienced senior teacher, I would like to see equitable pay scales to encourage my peers and myself to continue to excel as master teachers, rather than retire as soon as retirement age is reached. Please support this bill so that my colleagues and I can get the fair compensation that is deserved for our many years of dedicated service to teach the keiki in Hawaii.

Please support your teachers and vote in favor of passing SB2819. Thank you.

Mae Masuda-Kop

Salt Lake Elementary School

(808) 351-0644

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 1:50:34 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Patricia Contee	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am a teacher at Salt Lake Elementary School and have been working for the Hawaii Department of Education for 14 years. I am testifying in favor of SB2819 relating to teacher compensation and salary compression.

Many educators have not received raises, due to years of recession. When I first started in the DOE, I was stuck on the same salary step with no increases for my years of service. I am currently on step 8 and will move up to step 12 if the salary compression bill is approved would result in approximately a \$9,000 raise. I am not the only teacher that has experienced this problem. Over 8,000 other teachers, counselors, librarians, and registrars are underpaid. With inflation rising and with our current contract not including any step movement or pay raises, this compression could increase teacher salary by \$7,700 to \$26,000.

Please support your teachers and vote in favor of passing SB2819. Thank you.

Patricia Contee

Salt Lake Elementary School

(808) 497-1657

LATE

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 3:00:33 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Kelli Uyeda	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

My name is Kelli Uyeda, a teacher in the Department of Education for 20+ years. I am writing in support of SB2819 in regards to teacher compensation (salary compression). I am hoping that this is finally the year that salary compression will be addressed and that teachers, like myself, with many years of experience in the Department of Education will get compensated for the many years that we have been passed over. I am going to make this short and sweet. Experienced teachers who have dedicated their careers to working with Hawaii's youth, need financial compensation to acknowledge the knowledge and expertise that they bring to the classrooms to work directly with children. I have personally experienced having a student teacher in my classroom, doing observation and participation to learn strategies and tips on how to teach and manage a classroom, as well as had my class taken over by a student teacher to "practice" what they have learned, only to find that our pay was often comparable when they started teaching. This is an injustice that needs to be rectified to prove that our state believes that education is important and that retaining the teachers with the most years under their belts is a priority. Thank you for your consideration.

I apologize that this testimony is hastily written, but after teaching a long day/week, I am trying to submit this in time for the deadline.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 8:04:19 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Teresa McAveney	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Ms. Teresa M. McAveney - educator**2029 Nu'uanu Avenue 1103****Honolulu, HI 96817****(808) 349-7505****teresamcaveney@yahoo.com****19th January 2022 TEACHER TESTIMONY****Board of Education****State of Hawai'i****1390 Miller Street****Honolulu, HI 96813****Dear Hawaii State Legislature Members and Governor David Ige,**

My name is Teresa McAveney, and I am an unmarried educator who has been a devoted teacher and public servant to the State of Hawai'i since 2004. I am a master teacher, school leader, and have 22 years of total teaching experience. I write to you all to address salary compression for your veteran teachers who have been overly patient waiting for pay that truly reflects their years of service. With Hawai'i experiencing an improved economic outlook, there is NO reason this should not be addressed NOW.

When hired, I committed to a hard-to-fill school on Oahu for seven years of my career. During my first six years of teaching, I received NO increase in pay due to a contract reached during the teacher strike in 2001. Imagine, working for six years, experiencing the already high cost of living increase, watching your bills grow, but not your yearly salary.

But, I stuck it out, did the best I could, thinking it WILL get better for the teachers of Hawai'i in the future. I am a born teacher, and my students are worth it.

Then, came 2010 and Governor Lingle's furloughs. Salary-wise, I and thousands of teachers never recovered financially. Those furloughs created a wage disparity for teachers where teachers, hired 7 years after me, are currently making the same salary. It also altered my abilities to gain a higher "HIGH 3" for my state pension for retirement. But, again, I stuck it out. In my mind, I thought it would get better, and Hawai'i teachers will get what they deserve. Give it time. Teachers won't be forgotten in Hawai'i.

Come 2011, Governor Abercrombie announced his 5% pay cut for state workers. Although short-lived, it proved the State of Hawai'i might not have teachers' best interests at heart after all. But again, I refused the temptation to move to the mainland, where teacher salaries are exponentially better and the cost of living is lower. Being a professional with degrees, years of experience, a school leadership role, I DID think my quality of life would allow me to cover my living costs and be able to plan for a comfortable future retirement. I am scared. I am being forced to face the reality that I might not be able to continue my path as a teacher in Hawai'i. It is becoming impossible to sustain a decent living and quality of life for myself here as an educator.

I have given the State of Hawai'i and its keiki and families all I have to give. I have met every role demanded of teachers - educator, mentor, counselor, nurse, stand-in mom, tutor, volunteer, curriculum builder, software developer, teacher of social-emotional needs, tech support, protector, data collector and analyzer, student cheerleader, communicator, custodian, and the list can go on. Here we are, 2022, two-plus years into COVID. I have never worked so hard, with so few resources and basic safety necessities in place. Add unsafe pandemic teaching to my ongoing list of duties. But, I am proud and happy to do it all. I am a teacher. I just wish it was recognized and rewarded accordingly with salary and benefits that reflect this.

I've been holding on to make my 30 years of service as an educator for the State of Hawai'i. I am broken and facing the unknown; my morale is gone. I am looking at other possible options, including selling my home and moving. State of Hawai'i - wake up. You are about to lose one of your best and brightest educators here. And, I know for a fact, I won't be the only one.

I urge any who are listening, to find a way to address teacher salary compression NOW. And please, think of all teachers, like me, when the legislative session begins, these bills are introduced, and any negotiation talks begin.

Sincerely,

Teresa M. McAveney

Aurene Padilla
94-406 Makapipipi Street
Mililani, Hawaii 96789
Email: aurenecp@gmail.com
January 26, 2022

Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819. My name is Aurene Padilla and I am a twenty-six year veteran of the Department of Education. I am a second-generation Hawaii public school teacher, the daughter of a retired principal and a teacher. I currently serve as the Induction and Mentoring Program coordinator for North Central District serving Leilehua, Mililani, and Waialua Complex Areas.

Senate Bill 2819 has the opportunity to change the lives of 8,000 of our public school teachers whose salaries are compressed. As a teacher working in multiple schools with beginning teachers who are emergency hires, I know first hand how important it is to retain our veteran teachers on our campuses. Due to salary compression many of my colleagues are not earning a salary commensurate with the years of experience that they have dedicated to Hawaii's keiki, and faced with a current contract that does not afford for a pay increase are thinking about leaving the profession.

For me personally, salary compression has had a negative impact on my ability to raise my family as a single mother in Hawaii. Although I have dedicated 26 years to teaching in Hawaii I only reached step 12 last school year. With our latest contract not offering and step increases through 2023 it is unlikely that I will reach the top of the salary class by my 30th year of teaching. In what other profession can an employee who has excellent evaluations every year, serve in leadership roles every year, earns a Master's Degree in their teaching field, not reach the top of the pay scale after serving 30 years? To add insult to the injury I've only recently learned that I am actually on the same pay step as teachers I mentored who have only been teaching 13 years. It is a travesty to know that our state pays a 26 year veteran and a 13 year teacher in the middle of their career the same salary.

I have devoted my life to being a public school teacher and after 26 years I still do not own a home, I have large loans that are unpaid, and drive an 8 year old car. I am unable to take my children on family trips, and I continue to work part-time jobs to make ends meet. Throughout my career I have had to go on strike, take furlough Fridays, and see my annual take home pay decrease as medical costs increased. As my children

near college age I wonder how I can possibly afford to remain a poorly paid public school teacher. Surely I can find a job that would pay me what I am worth!

Today I submit testimony humbly asking you all to vote in favor of Senate Bill 2819. Let's show our teaching force that we appreciate and honor their years of service by ensuring that teachers are paid a salary that reflects their years of service.

Sincerely yours,

Aurene Padilla

Induction and Mentoring Resource Teacher.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 3:24:17 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Francine J Scheer Snell	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

To Whom It May Concern: My husband and I are retired teachers who taught in Oregon, Hawaii and Japan. We come from a family of teachers and we are very concerned about the state of education today. Hawaii has not given acknowledgement to the hard work that teachers have been putting in year after year. This has been demoralizing and now with Covid more teachers than ever are thinking of quitting the profession. Everything should be done to adjust salaries based on years of experience. Teachers have been paid the same each year no matter how much experience they have. This is wrong and is going to cause Hawaii to lose even more teachers. We want the passage of SB2819 to ensure that the future of the children of Hawaii (including our grandchildren) are assured a quality education. We want experienced and dedicated teachers who are acknowledged and compensated for the important work that they are doing. The future of the children of Hawaii is riding on the passage of this bill. Fran and Richard Snell

160 S. Lanikai Place Haiku Hawaii 96708

Patti Cook

Box 6960, Kamuela, HI 96743
(808) 937-2833 – cookshi@aol.com

TESTIMONY TO SUPPORT SB 2819 & 2820 – 2022 Hawai'i State Legislature

Aloha Chair Kidani and Members of the Senate Committee on Education:

*** SB 2819 - Teacher Compensation - Experimental Modernization Project**

A warm mahalo for keeping the urgent educational needs of our public school students on the 2022 Legislative priority list – more so in light of the extremely harmful impacts that extended distance and hybrid learning have had on our children's academic and social-emotional growth. We also appreciate the focus being given to what it takes to attract and retain well-trained certificated teachers for in-person instruction, and the painful health, social-emotional and economic impact the pandemic has had on teachers and staff as well as our families and community.

As you may know, I'm deeply involved in Waimea Middle Public Conversation Charter School and support SB 2819's proposed experimental modernization project. I am especially grateful that the bill includes public charter schools in the funding plan. We are very proud of and grateful to our teacher team for their resilient commitment to doing what it has taken to provide our middle school adolescents with meaningful lessons and learning experiences despite the pandemic, but they too are experiencing the same challenges that regular DOE teachers are encountering and this includes serious economic hardship due to a shocking rise here in the cost of living – especially housing, food and gas.

*** SB 2820 - Teacher Compensation - Differentials for SPED, Hard-To-Fill & Hawaiian Language Immersion teachers**

Much of what I've said previously applies here. Our public charter school teachers deserve these differentials as applicable.

In closing, we are available to discuss your plan in depth should this be helpful, especially since the funding mechanism for public charter schools is so different from that for regular DOE schools.

I would also quickly add that Waimea Middle has consistently received "clean" audits annually for virtually all of the nearly 20 years since we converted, and recently received renewed 6-year Accreditation from the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) and a renewed Charter from the Commission. Together, these require Action Plans that are monitored to continuously improve academically, operationally and fiscally.

I share these details to make the point that we are very committed to being academically and fiscally accountable and transparent while striving to fulfill our mission of "empowering all students with the skills, values and cultural understanding to successfully navigate high school and beyond."

Mahalo for your time and concern for our children –

Patti Cook

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 8:22:23 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Heather Ramiro	Testifying for DOE	Support	No

Comments:

SENATE COMMITTEE**3:00 pm 1/28/22 Video Conference****SB2819 - Relating to Teacher Compensation****IN SUPPORT**

My name is Heather Ramiro, I am a teacher for the Central district. This is my 15th year teaching in a DOE school in the state of Hawaii.

I am testifying in favor of SB2819 relating to teacher compensation to fix salary compression. I believe that the passing of this bill will help many teachers to better survive and thrive living in Hawai'i. I was born and raised on O'ahu and would love to retire as a teacher in my home state. I have struggled to pay rent and have had to move my family back home to live with my parents. If I did not do this my children would not be able to play sports or music because we would not be able to afford anything extra other than food and rent. I have had many friends, who are teachers, move out of state and they have been able to afford a home, extra curricular activities for their children and basic necessities without having to worry about not having enough money to cover it all. I have worked tirelessly over my teaching career to increase my pay by taking professional development classes on the weekends and during the summer. I have paid out of pocket to take these courses to increase my pay. These courses have been beneficial and have helped me to be a better teacher, but I am already at the highest level of the payscale and cannot do anything else to increase my pay level, besides getting a second job.

This is why I encourage you to vote YES on bill SB2819 to help teachers like me to be able to stay in Hawai'i and provide the best we can for our families.

Thank you for your time and support,

Heather Ramiro

Central District Teacher

hegramiro@gmail.com

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 9:42:27 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Max Kaneshiro	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Senate Education Committee

Senate Bill 2819

I Support Bill 2819

I am an elementary school teacher testifying in favor of Senate Bill 2819. The 3 main reasons why I support this bill is because it will help retain teachers, it will allow me to have 1 job instead of 2, and it will take some financial burden off of the very people who have been loyal to the children of Hawaii.

There is a shortage because it is very hard to climb the pay scale. Attempting to make a living, while setting up for retirement off of 58K (average) per year, is very hard to do in Hawaii. I know that if teachers are rewarded for their loyalty and years of service, the retention rate will go up. I have been an educator for over 10 years and have climbed 1 level in the pay scale. I am very short on time and do not have the extra money to pay for most of the PDs that cost hundreds of dollars.

I currently have 2 jobs. I teach during the day and have another job at night, so I can make ends meet. This schedule is difficult to navigate because it takes time away from me which I could spend with my 2 sons and wife. Being rewarded with a higher salary based on years of service would change my life. I hope to remain an educator for the rest of my life, but I am scared that I may have to leave for a higher paying, less gratifying career path.

Many teachers I know have students loans, families, car payments, and pay rent. When all of these bills are taken care of, there is not much to save for retirement. If we are allowed to receive pay increases based on our loyalty, it would help teachers feel appreciated, which in turn would make them stay in the DOE.

I would like to thank you very much for taking the time to allow me to express my testimony. I SUPPORT Senate Bill 2819 because it will help our state to retain teachers, allow me to focus on my family and 1 job, and help the teachers who are struggling with their finances. If the state would like to see a change in teacher retention, it would be wise to try a different path. Thank you very much.

Max Kaneshiro

5th Grade Teacher, Wilson Elementary School

808-391-6295

max.kaneshiro@wilsonschoolhawaii.org

LATE

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 3:01:51 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Robert Widhalm	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee,

I am writing in SUPPORT of SB2819.

I have been a teacher in Hawaii for over twenty-one (21) years and am currently a twelve-month state office teacher at the Professional Development and Educational Research Institute in the Office of Talent Management for the Hawaii State Department of Education.

One of the main reasons I am still an educator is because of the compensation of my current twelve-month position. Prior to being in this position, which I actively sought and applied for, I was seeking employment in other fields and would have had a reasonably good chance of being hired as an apprentice for the Naval Shipyard program at Pearl Harbor as I made it to the interview rounds. By the time I was interviewed, I had been offered and accepted my current position and thus informed the interview committee. While I am not a current school-level teacher, I have considered returning to school-level and the classroom if I wouldn't have to worry about covering my expenses.

Prior to becoming a twelve-month teacher, I worked a second job and/or summer school for almost half of my career as a ten-month teacher just to make ends meet. While teachers technically had a couple months off in the summer, I rarely felt "off" the job. I would often spend several weeks during the summer either improving my own abilities and skills as a teacher (conferences, PD courses, professional readings) or improving my units and lessons and planning for the next year. During my last six years at the school, I gave up almost my entire summer for our robotics program because students were that interested and willing to come and learn, build robots, and grow as individuals.

While my experience is my own, I know many teachers with this level of commitment and dedication to their students and the profession. The classroom teacher is one of the most demanding and strenuous jobs and deserves the compensation commensurate with the demands of the job. With the pandemic, I can honestly say I cannot imagine the extreme challenge it has been for teachers as I did not have to do what they did—every day. For anyone who has not taught an entire semester, they really cannot say what it is like to be a teacher. As such, I cannot say what it would be like to teach in school during the pandemic.

Therefore, I urge the committee to recognize the need to adequately compensate experienced teachers through this bill in order to retain (and possibly attract) the large number of experienced educators, especially with the current job market. Please pass this legislation and appropriate funds to retain (and hopefully attract) experienced teachers.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Robert (Bobby) Widhalm

LATE

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 3:03:05 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Kristina McCracken	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I would like to express my strong support in the passing of this bill in order to rectify the issue regarding salary compression for educators in the state of Hawai'i. Retention of faculty is already challenging given the high-stress and mentally exhausting nature of our job and the loss of our veteran teachers comes at the cost of quality instruction for our keiki. Having a strong community of experienced educators on a campus means not only availability of their expertise to our students but also to our new teachers. I have been teaching for nearing 10 years now and have quite a few to go before I would consider retiring as long as I am able to continue doing so financially. However, the challenges presented by staying in this career for the duration of my time as a working citizen need to be at least equalled in the compensation in order for it to make sense to stay in it and not pursue other ventures that may offer greater income. I ask that the benefit of retaining long time teachers be considered as this bill is debated.

LATE

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 3:09:02 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Pauline K Stamosos-Correa	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please help veteran teachers earn what they deserve. I spend my days inspiring students to continue their education after high school. Yet, I go home to my own children and realize I won't be able to afford to help them pursuit their dreams of going to college. Help us change this situation! Mahalo for your time and support :)

LATE

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 4:58:33 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Lori	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee:

My name is Lori Sasaki. I am a teacher at Momilani Elementary School in the Leeward District on the island of Oahu. I am writing to ask and strongly encourage you to support Senate Bill 2819.

Being an educator of young children has been a joy for me for 35 years and now, I have been seriously considering retiring very soon. However, if this Bill is approved and funding provided, I will definitely be able to continue to do what I love - educate and empower our young students.

We need your help.

Thank you very much.

Lori Sasaki, Leeward District, Oahu

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 5:02:56 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Andrea Medrano	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

This Bill will support myself and my fellow teachers to want to stay in the profession instead of retiring or leaving the education field to gain more lucrative employment elsewhere. As a teacher I work an additional 3 hours after I teach all day to have enough to support my family. By the time I am done working I am exhausted and then have to take care of my family and household.

One significant change would be that the teacher compression will solve the second job issue for me. And that will allow me to remain happier about teaching all day. I have been in education here in Hawaii since 2006. I have reached the top step of continuing hours and there seems to be little hope of more opportunity to grow. Please allow this bill to pass and support the educators and myself working our hearts out for the children here in Hawaii.

Mrs. Medrano

Teacher and life long learner

LATE

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 5:59:16 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Kalelani Ogata	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am a 20 plus year teacher. I am a veteran teacher. I am a teacher who is part of the salary compression. I saw it happening and felt it happening (and still do in my pocket) but I could do nothing about it. New teachers were making the same pay as me when I was already in my 10th year of teaching. So much time has passed with this issue not being addressed. This is not only ridiculous but disheartening. To see that my worth as a professional was not valued hurt. Nothing has been done to rectify this problem. Our step increases should never have been bargained away but they were. It's time to restore what was suppose to be ours. A teacher's salary is ridiculous to live off of already. Keep your veteran teachers and address the salary compression. Thank you!

LATE

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 3:02:13 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Kini Tokailagi	Testifying for KAUNAKAKAI ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	Support	No

Comments:

ALOHA! I am an educator in the State of Hawaii for 20 plus years. I enjoy teaching indigenous children in this State. I am told that teachers are the lowest paid professionals in this nation. WOW! We educate, malama the children who seek other professions through our leadership, guidance, love and support. In this State of Hawaii, housing, food, vehicles to name a few are quite expensive. We responsibly guide our students to work hard, be respectful, be responsible and respect others. All those Hawaiian values boost their morale and lead them to work extensively hard to gain degrees to earn their living for their future.

As an educator, a single mother of a university student, I work to SERVE my students, fellow educators, my community and my nation. Please help us to live comfortably in this expensive State of Hawaii and provide us with the income we DESERVE to help us stay on this State. We LOVE our students and colleagues and we fight for our birthright to live, learn, and SERVE others. The prices of things such as housing, gas, education, food are ridiculously inflated almost every 3 months on our island of Molokai. Please KOKUA!

Please consider our plea and compensate Hawaii teachers for what they rightfully deserve.

LATE

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 4:41:45 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Cindy Deuz	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee,

On behalf of the teachers in the Hawaii Department of Education, we would be extremely grateful for your support of this bill. Hawaii is one of the most expensive places to live and we need pay that will allow us to continue to do what we love, which is to teach our keikis who deserve highly qualified teachers. We often do this out of love and spend hours beyond the contract hours in order to make that happen. My daughter is going into education even though she knows that it is not going to pay well, comes with a lot of stress, and expectations that are at times crazy. I want her to be able to sustain herself without having to work a second job like myself. We need to keep the teachers that we have and entice new ones. Please continue to support this bill and put our keiki and teachers first.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Cindy Deuz

LATE

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 7:03:50 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Donna Soriano	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2819.

I have been serving our students within the Leeward District Nanakuli-Waianae Complex hard-to-staff area for 8 years. I truly love what I do. Anyone that steps foot inside of my classroom will see that. Our students are resilient and amazing, and I enjoy seeing them grow each year. I do not think there is another job out there that offers as many highs, as many lows, as much connection, and as much challenge as there is in teaching.

I think of myself as a professional. I have a Master's degree. I am a highly qualified teacher and a "highly distinguished" teacher by our state's Educator Effectiveness System. Throughout these past 8 years, I have pioneered my school's STEM program as well as numerous other programs that amplify students' voices and creative minds. I have attained thousands of dollars every year in grant funding to provide our underserved students with 21st-century tools and experiences to enrich their learning. I have worked incredibly hard to provide stimulating learning opportunities for our students throughout my years as a teacher.

Unfortunately, my salary does not reflect that. My pay does not equate to my teaching experience. Over the last 8 years, my pay hasn't caught up to what it should be if I had received consistent raises and step movements from the beginning of my career. I earned more than the needed professional development course credits to move my salary up to the highest class, yet I still am not making a wage that can sustain the high cost of living. More recently, teachers' salaries decreased due to the loss in our 21-hours of job-embedded professional development pay.

All of these circumstances have forced me to look for other sources of income to help make ends meet. On top of teaching 24 classrooms and over 400 students every week, I have to take on extra jobs, working after school, tutoring students to help make extra money. It is not surprising that only 51% of teachers in our state remain after 5 years. These financial burdens have driven me to consider leaving the teaching profession after 8 years. If things in our education system do not get better then we are ultimately left with no choice but to leave.

We cannot keep underpaying our highly qualified educators without putting the future of our students at risk. It breaks my heart having to think about leaving my students behind, especially in a community where there is a severe shortage of teachers and the teacher turnover rate is much higher than the state's average. Retaining qualified and effective teachers for the long term is critical. A steady movement up in the teacher salary schedule will help encourage us to remain in the classroom. The solution is straightforward. Please vote in support of Senate Bill SB2819.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill SB2819.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/28/2022 1:24:28 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Steven Le	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Steven Le, and I am a student from McKinley High School. I am submitting this testimony in **SUPPORT OF** bill SB2819.

As someone who has been apart of the public school system their entire life, I recognize the impact that qualified educators can have. In an effort to improve the state-wide quality of education and increase teacher retention, I find it important this is bill is passed.

Thank you.

LATE

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 5:35:01 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Kevin Hoag	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am a teacher of 22 plus years. The value of experience in the teaching profession cannot be overstated. My salary is the same as teachers with far less experience. I believe I should be fairly compensated for my experience, dedication and commitment to the students of Hawaii. Throughout the years, teachers have lost out on step increases and now is the time to correct that mistake. Mahalo, Kevin Hoag

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 4:48:29 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Thomas Schemel	Testifying for HSTA	Support	No

Comments:

Without going into detail, I am one of the thousands of educators impacted by decades of economic swings in Hawaii that have prevented teachers from moving up on the pay scale. My situation is unfair with 32 years of service and two steps removed from the top of the scale, but the teachers behind me are far more impacted. On their behalf, I ask that do what is fair, and help recognize experienced teachers with fair compensation that recognizes years of services. Please support this bill!

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 4:42:27 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
christine chow	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I am Christine Noelani Chow, a current parent of 1 Kaiapuni Hawaiian Immersion student and 2 former Kaiapuni students. I am in support of SB2819. I have been a part of Hawaiian Immersions schools as a parent, a part time teacher, substitute teacher and volunteer for 10 years. I have seen how difficult it is to find quality kumu that will stay in the profession. I have had to step up without a teaching degree and without complete 'ōlelo Hawai'i capabilities to fill in vacancies at my childrens' schools. The DOE has shortages of teachers. Finding teachers for Immersion Schools are 5 times harder! At my child's current school, Ke Kula Kaiapuni o Waimānalo, there has been teacher vacancies in each grade level since opening in 2019. We currently have 2 kumu teaching 4 grade levels and both those kumu came from other Kaiapuni schools, leaving vacancies that needed to be filled there. We need more incentive to attract more quality kumu to our schools and to keep them there. Additional pay for our kumu will make it more attractive and feasible for our kumu to stay in the face of the difficult times they face in general in the classrooms and on top of that the hardships of lack of curriculum, resources and the additional responsibilities that Kaiapuni kumu have in teaching content through Hawaiian as a second language. Please mālama our kumu. Our children deserve it. Our language and the education of our children depend on it.

Mahalo,

Christine Noelani Chow

46-229 Kahuhipa St. #F403

Kāne'ohe, HI 96744

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 6:09:37 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Raylene Peters	Testifying for HSTA	Support	No

Comments:

January 27,2022

My name is Raylene Peters. I am a teacher at Kailua High School in the Windward District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB2819.

I have been an educator with the Department of Education for over twenty-four years. As with many other educators, I went into the profession because I wanted to give back and make a difference in my community. I knew that at times it would be a thankless job that didn't pay much, however, I also knew that this is where I belonged. Still, I didn't expect to have to sit back and take the crushing financial blows that the state threw at us because of financial instability.

Throughout those twenty-four years I have spent thousands of dollars of my own money to equip my class and students with the necessary supplies to create the needed learning environment for my students to succeed. This was through the thick and thin years of the State's budget crisis when I was struggling to make ends meet for my family. During those years, many teachers questioned whether or not to remain in the Department of Education or move on. I stuck it out because I knew our students needed teachers who cared about them and their futures. This was in spite of the pay cuts and lack of raises that we endured. In fact, to make ends meet, I took out loans, worked other jobs, and succeeded in becoming Nationally Board certified.

Now that I am nearing retirement age, I have become very aware of the fact that I cannot retire in spite of my years of service because of those lean years, where we teachers accepted what the state dealt us, for the sake of the students. However, it becomes very disheartening and morale crushing when the state hems and haws to do the right thing when it has the ability to do so. It is also disheartening and morale crushing that I have mentored numerous student teachers over the years and I only end up earning slightly more than they do despite my many more years and experience. I have also continued to further my education and professional knowledge in order to be the best educator I can, but that has meant nothing in terms of earning a higher wage. We have waited long enough to be treated fairly and I know many of you also feel this way. Please do the right thing to address this long awaited issue facing our educators so that we can feel that we are seen, heard and most importantly, appreciated for our years of service.

Raylene Peters

Windward District

Kailua, Oahu

LATE

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 8:34:25 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Chrystie Isaacs	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819. I am a teacher and this year will make nineteen years that I have served the keiki of Hawaii. I fully support this Senate Bill. Personally, I have struggled financially over these nineteen years. During these nineteen years, I lived with my parents for ten years, paid fourteen years of student loan debt, purchased many items for my classroom out of my own pocket, lived with credit card debt, and currently continue to live from paycheck to paycheck due to the high cost of living here. I have thought about leaving this wonderful career to pursue a different one, but I choose to stay in this profession to help educate our keiki. This bill is long over due and its time to give back to the teachers that stayed in this profession with no raise in pay for so many years, making it through furlough Fridays, and for providing distance learning through this pandemic. In closing, I am in full support of Senate Bill 2819. Earning a fair wage will definitely keep me employed longer as a teacher and prevent the teacher shortage crisis from getting worse. Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819.

Thank you for providing me the opportunity to testify.

"To Teach.... is to touch a life forever".

LATE

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/28/2022 7:42:09 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Gayle Lee	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am a Student Services Coordinator in Ewa Beach on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819 regarding teacher compression salary.

I have been teaching for 26 years in Hawaii and I am one of those teachers who got “stuck”. I am on Step 13 and I know that there are some teachers who have been teaching for a shorter period of time that have surpassed me in steps. It is a struggle to know this and not feel valued for the years of solid service that I have put into this profession. My colleagues and I have worked diligently to support our students in Hawaii’s public school and keeping experienced veteran teachers in this profession has been tough due to the salary compression issue. By working together to balance the interests of all the stakeholder groups and reflecting on how we will use the money received to best meet the needs of our students, our schools and our communities, I am confident we will allow for a greater number of students to achieve excellence.

Thank you.

LATE

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 3:50:14 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Bianca Paishon	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support this bill as a former student and mother. I hope that our state can do right by them as they really are raising our future.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 4:05:40 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Cody Fisichelli	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee,

My name is Cody Fisichelli, and I have been working in Hawaii as a teacher for 4 years now. Currently, I work at the University Laboratory School as a Math Teacher.

I am submitting testimony in support of of Senate Bill SB2819.

I have two personal stories that make this bill important to me. First, I know teachers that are financially stressed, let down, and are upset that they can't live the life they thought would be possible in Hawaii as a teacher, where you can in other states. In other states, salaries increase as years of experience increase. Also, other jobs do this whether it be small or large income raises annually. Second, I have had to work two jobs my whole career to keep up with bills, and make a living in Hawaii.

Please vote in favor. Thanks for your time.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/28/2022 8:03:23 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Ellen Farnsworth	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

As a teacher here in Hawaii for the last 6 years, I have seen many teachers come and go and mainly due to low pay. Bill SB2819 would help to maintain good teachers that our keikei truly need. Please pass this bill, it would so help our education in Hawaii.

January 28, 2022

LATE

Corinne Kalani
P.O. Box 511
Kurtistown, Hawaii. 96760
Phone: (808)896-2830

To Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819 relating to teacher compensation (salary compression.)

My name is Corinne Kalani and I am a complex area teacher in the Hilo Waiakea complex. I have been an educator in the Hawaii Department of Education for over 28 years and have more than enough professional development credits to reach our highest level class 7. Despite this, I have no hope of ever reaching the highest payscale we have due to our lag in salary compensation. I know of no other profession where an employee has incurred the maximum of years of service and professional development yet unable to reach the highest level. Veteran teachers will leave the profession...their passion for teaching is evident, but the lack of compensation for their years of service without step increases is demoralizing. Prospective teachers will see that it's not worth finding employment in Hawaii. Our children should be our first priority. Please correct this and support Senate Bill 2819.

Mahalo for allowing me to submit my testimony.

Aloha,
Corinne Kalani

LATE

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 3:15:14 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Shannon Kaaa	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee,

I am writing in support of senate bill 2819.

I am a special educatiin teacher at Fern Elementary in Honolulu and am a resident of Aiea.

I have taught for 22 years and plan to quit teachibg in 3 years. However, if this bill passes and the funding is successfully negotiated, I would reconsider leaving the profession.

Please make these long overdue wage adjustments now. The state has withheld compensation and pay increase to teachers many times during my 22 years.

It is time to compensate teachers for their years of aervice.

LATE

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 3:07:44 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Elizabeth Baclayon	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

With all due respect, I've taught for 29 years enduring pay lags, pay cuts, step freezes, and unpaid furloughs because I love teaching keiki and am passionate about my subject (8th grade Social Studies). However, unless salary compression is resolved I will have no other recourse but to relocate to the Mainland where the cost of living is less expensive and years of experience in teaching are fairly compensated.

I have impacted thousands of lives in nearly 3 decades of teaching, influencing students to become advocates of social justice and equity. Yet there is nothing equitable about a teacher who has taught for almost 30 years making the same salary as a new teacher who has taught less than one year and who teaches poorly. I am a nationally recognized Constitutional Scholar and 2011 recipient of the prestigious James Madison Fellowship awarded by the federal government. As such I have received letters of commendation for excellence in teaching from Senator Mazie Hirono, former Senator the late Daniel Inouye, and former Secretary of Education Arne Duncan. I've also spent thousands of dollars of my own money earning a Master's degree in American History and yet I'm making less now than a decade ago! Hawaii found the money to pay a football coach \$800,000 and buy a 130,000 robotic dog, and also deprived teachers of the federal Cares money - \$2200 - earmarked for teachers last year, and admits to a surplus of funds this year, so there is no logical reason to continue to ignore the salary compression issue.

Every day teachers imperil their lives in an era of school shootings and global pandemic-- why should we continue to risk our lives when our pay is continually decreased?

Teaching in Hawaii is the only profession I've ever experienced where the longer you are working the more impoverished you become!

Please pass SB 2819 and compensate teachers fairly; teachers should not be one financial emergency away from being homeless!

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/28/2022 9:16:14 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Christy Werner	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

My name is Christy Werner and I am testifying in support of SB2819. The following excerpt in the opening statements of the proposed Bill highlights an issue that I believe needs to be addressed:

“The legislature finds that the recruitment and retention of qualified teachers is essential to the success of Hawaii's public education system. The State continues to face a chronic teacher shortage, which undermines student learning and achievement.”

The school district is unable to provide money for additional education and training. Any additional education received and required by a teacher is provided at the cost of the teacher. Many teachers I know have personally spent thousands of dollars acquiring education and training to excel at their professions. Many teachers salaries do not reflect all of the professional development and education that they have acquired. There is no built in incentive for excellence, as credits earned and additional education do not apply to any increase in one's salary if they are a teacher. New teachers now make almost the same as veteran teachers. How is that possible or fair? It would be the same as a first year Fire- Fighter making a similar salary to the Fire Chief.

Many teachers that I know have left the profession due to the lack of salary. Many have changed professions entirely, or moved out of state in order to better provide for their families. Most teachers I know personally love the profession, but have always needed to work multiple part time jobs to supplement their income. Hawaii continues to be ranked among the lowest in the nation for teachers salaries and cost of living.

Education is vital. I believe in the empowerment that it provides to Hawaii's students and their families. The only way to build up our communities is through education. Currently, many teachers who are close to retirement are just hanging on, waiting for the opportunity to retire. There is no incentive for them to stay any longer than they have to in our current system. Many teachers who love their job are still constantly finding a need to look for better opportunities that will offer a better salaries out of sheer survival in these current economic times. Teachers are doing themselves an injustice for staying in a system that doesn't recognize their worth. We can do better. Let's please make the right choice and DO BETTER. Please vote

for Bill number SB2819, it would make a world of difference for our students to keep highly qualified teachers in the classroom.

Sincerely,

Christy Werner, LCSW

Resident of Palolo, born and raised in Hawaii, product of Hawaii's public education.

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 3:04:48 PM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Lourena Yco	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

To whom it may concern,

I am a public school teacher for 6 years in Hawaii. I am writing to ask for your support on SB2819, which advocates for teacher compensation based on years of service and experience. The past two years have been exponentially difficult on teachers, more so than my first years teaching. While I love my job and am processing of becoming Nationally Certified, I am considering leaving the profession because of my salary. Passing this bill will help teachers like me, who are passionate and driven, to stay in our professions and to be able to survive in Hawaii.

Thank you for your time.

Lourena Yco

SB-2819

Submitted on: 1/28/2022 11:11:20 AM

Testimony for EDU on 1/28/2022 3:00:00 PM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Ken Capes	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Hi,

Passing this bill would mean alot to me. I have taught in the Hawai'i DOE as a Special Education Teacher for the past 18 years. I have 2 Masters degrees, both relevant to education and am currently working on a second Bachelor's degree (Early Childhood Education). It is through academic credits or professional credits that is the only way I can acheive a raise, aside from a bargaining agreement or change in legislation. Even with 18 years of experience working in the HIDOE and 2 Master's degrees and 2 Bachelor's degrees, I am still not at the top of the payscale (currently class V step 11). My sister in California (San Bernardino) has one Master's in education and has been teaching for 12 years in her district and is at the top of her payscale with an annual gross of ~\$90,000. I have always had to have a 2nd job to support the basic living expenses (rent, car insurance, groceries, etc....nothing extravagant and no car payment), but yet still can't afford a simple vacation off-island (for example: to neighbor islands, California).

I love my job and didn't get into it for the pay, but it would be nice to not have to hussle so hard for more education degrees and second jobs. Please support this bill for teachers in Hawai'i.