



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Friday, February 18, 2022 at 10:10 a.m.

By

Nathan Murata, Dean
College of Education

And

Michael Bruno, PhD
Provost

University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

SB 2820 SD1 – RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on SB 2820 SD1, Relating to Teacher Compensation.

The University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, College of Education supports the intent of SB 2820 SD1, which provides a pay differential to help address various labor shortages in schools. The teacher pay differentials will positively affect the following labor shortage areas: special education, hard-to-staff geographic locations, and Hawaiian language immersion programs. We have witnessed that some form of differential has had a positive effect on retaining teachers particularly in hard-to-staff areas as those mentioned above.



**STATE OF HAWAII
OFFICE OF COLLECTIVE BARGAINING
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR**
235 S. BERETANIA STREET, SUITE 1201
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-2437

**TESTIMONY TO THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS**

For Hearing on Friday, February 18, 2022 at 10:10 a.m.
Conference Room 211 and Via Video Conference

By

RYKER WADA
CHIEF NEGOTIATOR

**Senate Bill No. 2820 SD1
Relating to Teacher Compensation**

CHAIRPERSON DELA CRUZ, VICE-CHAIR KEITH-AGARAN, AND MEMBERS OF THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS:

The purpose of Senate Bill No. 2820 SD1 is to appropriate funds for various teacher differentials to help address various labor shortages.

The Office of Collective Bargaining (OCB) **opposes** S.B. 2820 SD1 based on the following:

- 1) OCB believes this measure does not embrace the spirit of collective bargaining. As cited within "Attorney General Opinions" under 89-10, HRS, the "Legislature has power to pass law increasing salaries of one unit of state employees, but it would be inconsistent with the collective bargaining law to do so. Att. Gen Op. 74-6."
- 2) The definition of Employer does not include "Legislature". Att. Gen. Op. 74-6 states **"Noticeable by its absence from the definition of "public employer" is the Legislature.** Its role in the collective bargaining process appears to be limited to reviewing "all cost items," including wages, the implementation of which requires an additional appropriation by the Legislature...It is apparent from the foregoing that the Legislature intended the parties closest to the employment relationship, that is, the public employer and the public employees, independently or through an exclusive representative, to negotiate in good faith a written collective bargaining agreement

with respect to wages, hours and other terms and conditions of employment.

Thereafter, **upon reaching agreement and upon ratification thereof by the employees concerned, all cost items, the implementation of which requires an additional appropriation by the Legislature, are to be submitted to the Legislature for approval or rejection.** Even then, however, the Legislature appears to have limited its role to approving or rejecting the cost items, "as a whole."

- 3) The OCB also believes this measure is premature. Enacting legislation to appropriate funds for a single bargaining unit for various teacher differentials yet to be negotiated significantly diminishes the Employer's ability to collectively bargain on the compensation of not only teachers, but all public sector employees. The OCB notes that historically, and in accordance with 89-10 HRS, cost items including wages, are submitted to the Legislature after agreement between the Employer and Union is reached and ratification by the concerned employees is complete. The OCB is extremely concerned about the unintended consequences this legislation may have on current and future negotiations affecting all 15 bargaining units.
- 4) As currently drafted, the measure requires that a memorandum of understanding be negotiated between the exclusive representative of bargaining unit 5 and the superintendent. The OCB comments that the governor and the Board of Education should also be included as parties to the negotiation in accordance with 89-6, HRS.

Based on the above, the OCB respectfully requests that this measure be **held**. Thank you for considering our concerns and for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



STATE OF HAWAII
Executive Office on Early Learning
2759 South King Street
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96826

February 16, 2022

TO: Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Algaran, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

FROM: Coleen Momohara, Interim Director
Executive Office on Early Learning

SUBJECT: **Measure:** S.B. No. 2820 SD 1 – RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION
Hearing Date: Friday, February 18, 2022
Time: 10:10 a.m.
Location: Videoconference

Bill Description: Appropriates funds for various teacher differentials to help address various labor shortages. (SD1).

EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON EARLY LEARNING'S POSITION: Support

Aloha. I am Coleen Momohara, Interim Director of the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL). EOEL supports the intent of S.B. No. 2820 S.D. 1 and defers to HIDOE as it relates to teacher differentials 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.

The State's teacher shortage also impacts EOEL's Public Pre-Kindergarten programs, particularly in rural and remote areas. Recruitment and retention of qualified teachers is critical to the success of implementing high quality prekindergarten programs. This bill would provide an incentive for individuals to reach in the vital areas of special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian Language Immersion programs. We appreciate the Legislature's commitment to support teacher recruitment and retention efforts.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this bill.

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 WAYS AND MEANS
ON
SENATE BILL NO. 2820, S.D. 1

February 18, 2022
10:10 a.m.
Room 211 and Videoconference

RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

The Department of Budget and Finance (B&F) offers comments for this measure.

This measure appropriates unspecified amounts for FY 23 for the Department of Education and Charter Schools to fund increased teacher shortage differentials as negotiated and executed in separate memoranda of understanding between the Superintendent of Education/governing board of each State Public Charter School and the Hawai'i State Teachers Association, Bargaining Unit 5, to help address various labor shortages.

B&F is concerned that appropriating funding for cost items before negotiations are complete and agreements are reached could adversely impact the collective bargaining process.

B&F also notes that, with respect to the general fund appropriations in this bill, 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



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 2820 SD1 Relating to Teacher Compensation
DATE: February 18, 2022, 10:10 AM
COMMITTEE: Committee on Ways and Means
ROOM: Conference Room 211 & Videoconference
FROM: Yvonne Lau, Interim Executive Director
State Public Charter School Commission

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran and members of the Committee:

The State Public Charter School Commission (“Commission”) appreciates the opportunity to submit this testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT OF SB 2820**. This measure appropriates funding for Appropriates funds for various teacher differentials to help address various labor shortages. (SD1)

The Commission deeply 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 shortages.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.



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

Date: 02/18/2022

Time: 10:10 AM

Location: CR 211 & Videoconference

Committee: Senate Ways and Means

Department: Education

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

Title of Bill: SB 2820, SD1 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION.

Purpose of Bill: Appropriates funds for various teacher differentials to help address various labor shortages. (SD1)

Department's Position:

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) supports SB 2820, SD1 which provides funding for various teacher differentials to help address labor shortages.

The Department utilizes a myriad of compensation methods and strategies to improve the recruitment and retention of qualified teachers. The implementation of the teacher shortage differentials for special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian Language Immersion programs have proven to be an attractive incentive for individuals to teach in these vital areas as well as an encouraging acknowledgment for those who are already situated there. The data reveals that this is especially true in the area of special education.

Ensuring the continuous retention of qualified teachers for these critical teaching positions will positively impact students, schools, and their communities. The Legislature's commitment of a dedicated and recurring appropriation to the Department will help to sustain and affirm differentials as a reliable tool in its recruitment and retention efforts.

Thank you for your continued support during these unprecedented times. The

Department is committed to working collaboratively with the Legislature to ensure the hiring and retention of qualified individuals to provide all of our students with a robust educational experience.



‘AHA KAULEO

STATEWIDE COUNCIL FOR KA PAPAHANA KAIAPUNI

Date: February 16, 2022

To: Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Senator Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair, and Members

From: Kahele Dukelow, Luna Ho‘omalulu (President)
‘Aha Kauleo Statewide Council for Ka Papahana Kaiapuni
Advisory to the Office of Hawaiian Education

Aloha mai e na lala o ka Aha Olelo - Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members,

The Aha Kauleo (AKL) is a council of parents, teachers and administrators of Kaiapuni or Hawaiian language immersion schools across the state. We advocate for increased and improved support of Kaiapuni schools and work closely with our school communities, the State Department of Education through the Office of Hawaiian Education, the Board of Education and the University of Hawaii through its Hawaiian language, Hawaiian studies and education programs.

The AKL **strongly supports** SB2820 SD1, pay differentials for Hard-to-Staff, Special Education, and Hawaiian Language Immersion classroom teachers. The differential pay for Hawaiian Language Immersion (HLI) teachers will provide an equitable balance to the high demands of teaching in a HLI setting, as their work is a clear example of the type of educational experiences that directly addresses the intent of Article X, Section 4 of the Hawaii State Constitution.

Hawaiian education continues to lack a basic K-12 curriculum that achieves language and cultural competencies while also addressing HDOE educational outcomes. This is understandable due to the systemic policies and norms that have removed Hawaiian language, culture and history for over 100 years.

If Hawaii is truly to achieve equity and excellence in our schools it must begin with the constitutional commitment to Hawaiian language, culture and history, and the full support of our Hawaiian Language Immersion Program as a means to that end. For Hawaii will never respect diversity if it fails to prioritize its initial commitment to the aboriginal people, language and culture of this land, Hawaii. And, a failure to respect diversity erodes the moral tenets of a democratic society.

Me ka oiaio,
Kahele Dukelow, Luna Ho‘omalulu
‘Aha Kauleo

Membership: Alo Kehau o ka Aina Mauna (Honokaa High, 9-10), Ke Kula o Ehunuiakaimalino (K-6), Ke Kula o Ehunuiakaimalino (7-12), Ka Umeke Kaao HI PCS (K-6), Ka Umeke Kaao HI PCS (7-12), Ke Kula o Nawahikalaniopuu Iki PCS (K-8), Ke Kula o Nawahikalaniopuu (Hilo High, 9-12), Ke Kula Kaiapuni o Hana (K-5), Ke Kula Kaiapuni o Lahaina (6-8), Ke Kula Kaiapuni o Lahainaluna (9-12), Ke Kula Kaiapuni o Maui ma Kalama (6-8), Ke Kula Kaiapuni o Maui ma Kekaulike (9-12), Ke Kula Kaiapuni o Maui ma Paia (K-5), Ke Kula Kaiapuni o Nahiienaena (K-5), Ke Kula Kaiapuni o Lanai (K-1), Kualapuu PCS (K-6), O Hina i ka Malama (Molokai Middle, 7-8), O Hina i ka Malama (Molokai High, 9-12), Ke Kula Kaiapuni o Anuenue (K-6), Ke Kula Kaiapuni Anuenue (7-12), Ke Kula Kaiapuni o Hauula (K-6), Ke Kula Kaiapuni Hawaii o Kahuku Academy (7-12), Ke Kula Kaiapuni o Kailua (9-10), Ke Kula Kaiapuni o Nanakuli (K-6), Ke Kula Kaiapuni o Puohala (K-8), Ke Kula o Samuel M. Kamakau PCS (K-6), Ke Kula o Samuel M. Kamakau (7-12), Ke Kula Kaiapuni o Waiau (K-6), Ke Kula Kaiapuni o Waimanalo ma Blanche Pope (K-2), Kawaikini PCS (K-6), Kawaikini PCS (7-12), Ke Kula Niihau o Kekaha PCS (K-6), Ke Kula Niihau o Kekaha PCS (7-12), UH Hilo-Hale Kuamoo, UH-Hilo-Ka Haka Ula o Keelikolani, UH-Hilo Kahuawaiola, Brigham Young University, Aha Punana Leo, Kamehameha Schools Bishop Estate, UH-Manoa COE, UH-Manoa Kamakakuokalani, UH-Manoa Kawaihuelani, & UH-Maui E Hooulu Lahui.



2/16/2022
Hawai'i State Capitol
415 S Beretania St.
Honolulu, HI 96813

SB 2820, Relating to Teacher Compensation

Aloha Chair and presiding members,

The Hawai'i Association of School Psychologists (HASP) supports SB 2820 relating to teacher compensation. Educator shortages have remained high or increased across the State. Shortage differentials for educators of keiki with unique needs (such as special education teachers), educators employed in hard-to-staff geographic locations, and 'Ōlelo Hawai'i immersion program educators are needed now more than ever.

Recent shows differentials are an effective means of incentivising educators to fill these roles, as well as an effective way to retain educators within these roles. Thus, we urge the legislature to take immediate action to continue to address the ongoing teacher shortage crisis in these critical areas perpetuated by the pandemic, which in turn will support Hawai'i's public school teachers.

Respectfully Submitted,

Alec Marentic, **Nationally Certified School Psychologist**
President-elect & Legislative Chair, Hawai'i Association of School Psychologists (HASP)
Association Email: hasp808@gmail.com



1200 Ala Kapuna Street ♦ Honolulu, Hawaii 96819
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Osa Tui, Jr.
President

Logan Okita.
Vice President

Lisa Morrison
Secretary-Treasurer

Wilbert Holck
Executive Director

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

RE: SB 2820, SD1 – RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2022

OSA TUI, JR., PRESIDENT
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Chair Dela Cruz, and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association **strongly supports SB 2820, SD1**, relating to teacher compensation. This bill appropriates funds for various teacher differentials to help address various labor shortages. These shortages are in the areas of special education, hard-to-staff geographic locations, and Hawaiian language immersion programs.

We suggest one amendment for consideration, regarding the allocation of funds for those affected at charter schools to be appropriated to EDN612 as a separate line item, instead of EDN 600 which is for WSF funds for per pupil allocations, to avoid confusion and to ensure these funds are distributed, after negotiations, to those who are affected by salary compression at our public charter schools

We calculate these amounts, based on Gov. Ige's supplemental budget, would be about \$32.5 million for BU 5 members at the DOE and, by our estimates, \$2 million for BU 5 members at our public charter schools.

Recent data has shown how these differentials were effective; **these differentials worked as planned! According to the department's own data**, the number of teachers transferring into special education positions for the upcoming 2020–21 school year actually increased by 29 percent over the previous school year, while the number of teachers who left SpEd positions decreased by 57 percent. Nearly twice as many educators transferred into hard-to-staff schools for next school year compared to last, while the differentials led to a 41 percent decrease in those leaving hard-to-staff locations.

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



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Osa Tui, Jr.
President

Logan Okita.
Vice President

Lisa Morrison
Secretary-Treasurer

Wilbert Holck
Executive Director

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!

The 5-year teacher retention drop in 2020-2021 may be indicative of the effects of COVID-19 with teachers not wanting to return to teach in our public schools in Hawai'i after the 2019-2020 school year. We continue to worry that a more difficult 2021-22 school year for all school staff will result in an even larger drop once the 2021-22 data becomes available. Coupled with a likely increase in retirements and other separations from the Department, it would go a long way towards retaining educators to fund these differentials to retain our licensed teachers.

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.

We need the legislature's help to end the teacher shortage crisis by funding these differentials for our hardest-to-staff positions, in special education, and in Hawaiian immersion.

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.

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2022 8:07:40 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Logan Okita	Testifying for Hawaii State Teachers Association	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2820.

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. Although I do not qualify for any of the shortage differentials provided in this bill, I believe that they help to ensure that our keiki who need qualified teachers have them in their classrooms. The data from the Department of Education shows that the shortage differentials have been effective at keeping teachers in these positions.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill SB2820. Thank you for the opportunity to testify!

Sincerely,

Logan Okita, NBCT



Committee ON Ways and Means
Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Gilbert Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

February 18, 2022

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee,

We support SB 2820 SD1, which appropriates funds for various teacher differentials to help address various labor shortages.

We support any mechanism that supports teacher recruitment, retention, and teacher satisfaction, which will ultimately benefit our students. The data from the teacher differential program shows that it has been effective in retaining teachers, especially, the special education teachers. We are pleased to see that this initiative has been effective to date.

However, we know that we have teacher shortages in many areas. Perhaps we can think about building on this strategy to address other shortage areas in the future.

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	Kamehameha Schools
American Civil Liberties Union	Kanu Hawai'i
Alliance for Place Based Learning	Kaua'i Ho'okele Council
*Castle Complex Community Council	Keiki to Career Kaua'i
Coalition for Children with Special Needs	Kupu A'e
Education Institute of Hawai'i	*Leaders for the Next Generation
*Faith Action for Community Equity	Learning First
Fresh Leadership LLC	McREL's Pacific Center for Changing the Odds
Girl Scouts Hawaii	Native Hawaiian Education Council
Harold K.L. Castle Foundation	Our Public School
*HawaiiKidsCAN	*Pacific Resources for Education and Learning
*Hawai'i Afterschool Alliance	*Parents and Children Together
*Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice	*Parents for Public Schools Hawai'i
*Hawai'i Association of School Psychologists	Special Education Provider Alliance
Hawai'i Athletic League of Scholars	*Teach for America
*Hawai'i Children's Action Network	The Learning Coalition
Hawai'i Nutrition and Physical Activity Coalition	US PACOM
Hawai'i Scholars for Education and Social Justice	University of Hawai'i College of Education
* Hawai'i State PTSA	<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 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	



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Kashmira Reid

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February 16, 2022

Senate Ways and Means Committee
Sen. Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Sen. Gilbert S. C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

Re: SB 2820 Hearing: February 18, 2022, 10:10 am

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Committee members:

This testimony is in strong support for SB 2820 relating to teacher compensation. I am writing on behalf of the Parents for Public Schools of Hawai'i, a non-profit organization focused on supporting and improving Hawaii's public schools through family engagement. Our group emerged from the Furlough Friday crisis, and we have over 1,300 members statewide.

Research shows that the most important school-based variable related to children's learning and achievement is their teacher. The COVID-19 pandemic made it clear that when our children did not have access to their teachers, they did not learn as much as they could have and did not experience the love and care that teachers bring to their work. We know that teachers in our State are not adequately compensated, and this has led to a shortage of educators. These shortages are particularly striking in geographically hard-to-staff areas, special education, and Hawaiian language immersion education. We urge your support of SB 2820, which will provide salary differentials for these important areas.

When we surveyed families in public education across the State about what they liked most about their children's education, their answer was clear—they love their teachers. Our members want teachers to be adequately compensated so that we can recruit and retain the best teachers for their children. Please support SB 2820 to assure that all children have the opportunity to have a knowledgeable and loving teacher.

Aloha,

Wendy Nakasone-Kalani
President, Parents for Public Schools of Hawai'i

Parents for Public Schools Hawaii (PPSHI) is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) volunteer organization of parents, community members, and educators working to improve and support public education through family engagement. We are committed to ensuring all children in Hawai'i have access to a quality public education.



SENATE BILL 2820, SD 1, RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FEBRUARY 18, 2022 · SENATE WAYS AND MEANS
COMMITTEE · CHAIR SEN. DONOVAN DELA CRUZ

POSITION: Support.

RATIONALE: The Democratic Party of Hawai'i Education Caucus **supports** SB 2820, SD 1, relating to teacher compensation, which appropriates funds for various teacher differentials to help address various labor shortages.

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.

Kris Coffield · Chairperson, DPH Education Caucus · (808) 679-7454 · kriscoffield@gmail.com



To: Senator Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Re: **SB 2820 SD1, Relating to teacher compensation**
10:10 AM, February, 18 2022

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and committee members,

On behalf of HCAN Speaks!, thank you for the opportunity to **testify in support of Senate Bill 2820 SD1, relating to teacher compensation.**

Hawai'i has been in a perpetual teacher shortage. Across the entire spectrum of a child's education, we are understaffed. Hawai'i needs an additional 5,000 educator for children ages 0-18.¹ While we have made improvements in recruiting and retention efforts, we have not seen the improvements we need.

We believe that all educators should be compensated fairly for their education, experience, and skill set. The pay differentials proposed in the bill will help us close the gap in the teaching professionals we need and our children deserve. A report commissioned by the Department of Education found that for both retention and recruitment, salaries were considered a negative impact.² These are similar findings from the early care and learning workforce that also attributed compensation as the leading factor in people leaving or joining the workforce.³ We need to invest in the people educating, caring, and supporting for our children.

Additionally, the legislation also seeks to address the shortage in special education and Hawaiian immersion language programs. The funding would correct inequalities in access and availability of programs for our state public education system.

For these reasons, HCAN Speaks! respectfully requests the Committee to support this measure.

Thank you,
Kathleen Algire
Director of Early Learning and Health Policy

¹ Combining DOE teacher shortage and 4,000 early care and educator shortage

² Augenblick, Palaich and Associates, 2020, *Hawaii Teacher Compensation Study and Recommendations*,

<https://www.hawaiipublicschools.org/DOE%20Forms/OTM/Hawaii%20Teacher%20Compensation%20Study%20and%20Recommendations,%20Final%20Report%201.20.2020.pdf>

³ Good Beginnings Alliance. 2004. *Who Cares for Hawai'i's Keiki in Centers? The Hawai'i Early Childhood Workforce Study*. Honolulu, HI Executive Office of Early Learning, 2019, *Quality Workforce Development and Supports: PDG B-5 Needs Assessment*. <https://earlylearning.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Pre-2019-Needs-Assessment-Summary-for-Quality-Workforce-Supports-and-Development-SIP.pdf>

DeBaryshe, B.D., Bird, O., Stern, I., & Zysman, D. (2017). *Hawai'i early learning needs assessment*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Center on the Family. https://uhfamily.hawaii.edu/sites/uhfamily.hawaii.edu/files/publications/HIEarlyLearningNeeds_Sum_2017.pdf

RE: SB 2820, SD1 - RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2022

MITZIE HIGA, LEGISLATIVE CHAIR
DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF HAWAII LABOR CAUCUS

Chair Dela Cruz, and Members of the Committee:

The Democratic Party of Hawaii Labor Caucus **supports SB 2820, SD1**, relating to teacher compensation. This bill appropriates funds for various teacher differentials to help address various labor shortages. These shortages are in the areas of special education, hard-to-staff geographic locations, and Hawaiian language immersion programs.

Recent data has shown how these differentials were effective; these differentials worked as planned!

We are even more concerned with the 5-year teacher retention drop that has only grown worse due to the additional stress due to COVID-19 with teachers not wanting to return to teach in our public schools in Hawai'i.

We need the legislature's help to end the teacher shortage crisis by funding these differentials for the hardest-to-staff positions, in special education, and in Hawaiian Immersion in our public schools, including public charter schools in Hawai'i.

To support our teachers in Hawai'i in the public school system, including charter schools, the Labor Caucus asks your committee to **support** this bill, with any suggested amendments from HSTA that regard their process for negotiations.

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2022 11:28:57 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Mahina Poepoe	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing in support of SB2820. We need to be taking steps to pay our teachers what they deserve. This is a step in the right direction to improve retention of qualified educators and improve quality of education for our children and youth.

Mahalo, Mahina Poepoe

Molokai Resident

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2022 12:01:43 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Erin Mendelson	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear State Legislators,

I made the decision to return to a classroom teaching position and left my 12 month district teaching position because of the teacher compensations for special education teachers. I still took a \$6000 pay cut. However, the call to get all certified teachers back in classroom positions resonated with my original call to become a teacher, 18 years ago. I enjoy the day to day of my 5th grade position. Yet, I feel frustrated by the fact that in returning to the most impactful role meant a pay reduction. The most effective teachers must find roles outside of the classroom in order to move up the pay scale. It is unfortunate.

Hawaii teachers make significantly less than other professionals with the same educational levels and experiences.

Please continue to provide the teacher compensations. Our Hawaii students deserve the best of the best.

Thank you,

Erin Mendelson

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2022 1:40:47 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Jennifer Jo	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Honorable Members of the Hawaii State Senate,

I am writing in support of SB2820 which continues the Shortage Differentials for Special Education and hard to staff teachers. These differentials have made such a positive impact for our most vulnerable students. As a special education teacher, I have benefited from being able to work with highly qualified special education teachers instead of substitute teachers and emergency hires who are wonderful, but have been a band-aid for the extreme shortage of qualified special education teachers.

These differentials are critical in order to support our students who deserve to have a qualified and licensed teachers providing services to them, especially after the tremendous loss in learning that the pandemic caused our most vulnerable learners.

I ask that you please continue the shortage differentials in the next school year and also for subsequent school years. They really have made such a positive impact on our most vulnerable student population.

Thank you,

Jennifer Jo

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2022 1:41:17 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Jesse P Neumann	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support this bill.

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2022 1:52:16 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
James Younger	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

This state does not compensate teachers fairly. Differentials barely begin to remunerate teachers for the time we spend on our work. Our pay has not kept up with inflation. Our pay NEVER reflected the cost of living in Hawaii. Lawmakers should be disgusted with how rich this state is in light of how we compensate teachers. Shame.

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2022 2:20:09 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Tina Marie Myers	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2820 to fund teacher shortage differentials.

I have been teaching special education in Hawaii for 12 years. Our special needs students need to have quality, certified teachers. The pay differentials help attract and keep teachers in special education positions.

Thank you for your consideration.

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2022 2:28:45 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Cynthia Rothdeutsch	Testifying for HSTA	Support	No

Comments:

I am in favor of SB2820. We need to compensate teachers for the work they do for our children. We are already in a major teacher shortage. Compensating teachers appropriately will help retain teachers as well as recruit new teachers. If our pay stays the way it is, we will not get a new generation of aspiring teachers. This is for the keiki of Hawaii and it is essential for the future of education.

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2022 2:51:25 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Tracy Kaichi	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Exceptional students need exceptional teachers!!! SPED teachers can easily adapt lesson plans for the specific needs of each student, adapt to schedule changes, makeshift classrooms and other unexpected situations that are common in schools, SPED teachers always keeping student learning at the forefront.

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2022 2:51:50 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Rock Bounos	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am a special education teacher and I work with moderate to severe special education students. I am in favor of continuing paying special education teachers a differential because it compensates special education teachers for the additional duties and time spent on case management. Being a special education teacher is much different than being a regular/general education teacher. Sped teachers are required to hold annual meetings with families and agree on law binding documents/contracts, which can put a lot of pressure on teachers to know their job well. If there are unqualified special education teachers in these meetings, the chances of making mistakes is much higher. In turn, those mistakes turn into financial settlements for families seeking compensatory services.

As a sped teacher, the shortage differential helps to ease the economic burden of living in the islands. I am a returning Hawaiian, raised by a local Hawaiian parents in the mainland, and would like to continue living here. The differential provides for me the extra income needed to pay rent, buy groceries, and pay my bills. Please continue funding the shortage differentials. Without them, I don't have a car payment or that extra few dollars for a somewhat feasible retirement.

Mahalo,

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2022 3:00:15 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Kristina Shimokawa	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am in support of this bill.

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2022 3:07:54 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

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 SB2820.

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 SB2820.

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2022 3:17:36 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Kealakai P Lindsey Meyer	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith Agaran, and members of the Committee,

I am testifying in SUPPORT of SB2820, which will provide funding for various teacher differentials to help address labor shortages.

My name is Kealakai Lindsey-Meyer, I am a special education teacher at Waimea High School on the island of Kauai, Hawaii. Passing SB2820 will allow the Hawaii Department of Education to appropriate funds to improve the recruitment and retention of qualified teachers. This will not only positively impact both teacher recruitment and retention but also prevent the teacher shortage crisis from getting worse. The implementation of the teacher shortage differentials for special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian Language Immersion programs have proven to be an attractive incentive for individuals including myself to continue teaching in these vital areas especially in the area of special education.

I am very grateful and understand the responsibility I share in receiving these funds. It not only has helped me financially but I have a sense of appreciation for the hard work I put into the overwhelming amount of paperwork and caseloads that go unnoticed by leaders and government officials. I know that my fellow special education colleagues feel the same way. Ensuring the continuous retention of qualified teachers for these critical teaching positions will positively impact students, schools, and their communities. Sustaining and affirming differentials as a reliable tool in its recruitment and retention efforts will in my opinion provide all of our students in Hawaii with a robust educational experience.

Please vote in support of all teachers in Hawaii by passing SB2820.

Mahalo for your time and the opportunity to testify.

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2022 3:34:07 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Una Burns	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the Committee.

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2820 SD.

My name is Una Burns and I have been a teacher in Hawai'i for nearly 18 years. I love my job and feel very blessed to work in this amazing state and want to continue to work for as long as I can!

I do my best every day (and many nights) to be a good educator, I certainly did not take on this job thinking about how much money I could make but teachers are vastly underpaid here compared to our peers across the nation. Hawai'i is also one of the most expensive states to live in and try to raise children.

Giving a fairer wage across the board with the continuation of the shortage differentials would also go a long way to retain teachers, instead of losing them and then continually have to recruit and train new teachers- which is not an easy task. **I work at a charter school which is not even included in the discussion; we are, however, currently in talks/hopes with our board to get some of last year's differential!! But even if we dont get it I still feel very strongly and want to support all my colleagues across our state so they can get a better wage.**

Please help out the teachers-vote in support of Senate Bill 2820 especially for all of our younger teachers, some of whom have to take on second jobs to make ends meet. The chances of them ever having enough money to get on the ladder to own a home here in Hawai'i are extremely unlikely.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to testify and I look forward to continuing teaching your children, grandchildren and younger relatives for years to come but hopefully with a better fair wage.

Una Burns

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2022 3:56:36 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Natanya Friedheim	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Hawaii lawmakers ,

I am a special education teacher at Kalani High School. I have a masters of education and I am dual certified to teach special education and English. I have done extensive research on effective methods to teach writing and reading to students with disabilities. In the last year I have orgaized a field trip for my students, and brought in more than \$2,000 to the school through grant funding. I care deeply about the students and the high school community I work for.

Not only am I highly qualified for my position, I also love my job. However, if the SPED stipened is removed, I will start looking for other positions, potentially at private schools or in another career field. Altruism and public servitude drives many public scool teachers, but I also need to pay my rent and not be overly stressed about money. I know what my labor is worth, and if the DOE doesn't recognize that, I will go work for an institution that appropriately compensates me for my dedication and expertise.

Thank you for considering my testimony in support of SB2820 SD1.

Mahalo,

Natanya

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2022 4:25:41 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Gerard Silva	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

No more Money Landering!!

Hearing Date: February 18, 2022

Hearing Time: 10:00 AM

RE: SB 2819 & 2820 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, 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 HIDOE 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.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819 and 2820.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Shelby Loo

6th Grade Mathematics Teacher, NBCT

Math Department Head, Waimea Middle PCCS

Kamuela, HI 96743

(808)887-6090

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2022 4:42:55 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Joli Johnston	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2820,

My name is Joli Johnston and I am a Special Education Preschool Teacher in the Windward District. I was one of the first teachers to come back to full in-person teaching in the very beginning of the COVID 19 pandemic while the rest of our school remained in the distance-learning format. I run a fully self-contained classroom (FSC) and have students in a range of disabilities from speech-delays and behaviors to severely medically fragile. To say that my job can be stressful is an understatement, I once had a student who was at risk of passing away at any given moment due to the nature of her condition. Adding the extra layer of the pandemic brought the requirements of my position to new heights and I have been considering resigning for over a year now. I was recently offered a job at another organization and I very nearly accepted it, but it was the presence of the SPED differential that caused me to stay in the DOE. I live on a single income on the North Shore of Oahu and I can barely make ends meet as it is, I couldn't possibly imagine making less than I currently am. I took a gamble staying in the DOE, relying on the differential, knowing that it could be revoked at any time. I'm happy to be given this opportunity to share my story and I'm hoping that it continues to be available for years to come as it has truly made the difference in keeping me in this line of work. Mahalo for your time, please vote in support of SB2820.

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the Committee

I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2820 SD1: Relating to teacher compensation (teacher differentials). My name is Anne Alves and I am a sixth year HIDOE teacher. This is my second year teaching at a hard to staff school on the Leeward Coast of Oahu. Prior to taking this position, I taught in the Central district. I earned a Master's of Education in Teaching degree from UH Manoa in the spring of 2016. Out of my cohort of fifteen, only eight of us are still HIDOE teachers.

Each year of my life as an educator has been more challenging than the previous, on a professional level and on a personal level. Our work *is* personal. We are expected and required to go above and beyond on a daily basis in order to help our students achieve academic and personal success. The pandemic has intensified this, but did not begin this trend. Every single year I have seriously considered leaving the profession and have actively searched for options; every year except last year, that is.

There's no denying the fact that the additional income from shortage differentials was one of the deciding factors in my choosing to work at Waianae Intermediate. Yes, there were other reasons besides money. No one decides to become a teacher because it seems like a lucrative career path. But we deserve to be compensated fairly for the work we do. I decided that taking on the additional challenges of a hard to staff position was worth the additional effort *because of the additional compensation*.

I also knew that a sizable percentage of that additional compensation would be going right back into the classroom to help fund necessary supplies for my students. For example, last year we were informed that this year, due to budget cuts, there would not be any money for classroom supplies. So, I dug into my own pockets to purchase enough composition books, folders, pencils, color pencils, pens, erasers, glue sticks, and scissors for each student, as well as the standard, communal packs of folder paper, construction paper, cardstock, and chart paper. Why so many materials? Because of COVID, we are not permitted to allow students to share materials. So, if we wanted them to do anything beyond sit behind a school-issued screen to complete every assignment, we needed to fund it ourselves.

I also stocked up on healthy non-perishable snacks to feed those who walked in my room hungry. Maxi pads have also been purchased and made available so that when a student is in need, it's there for them to discreetly resolve their "problem". These basic supplies may not be available to all children, putting them at a further disadvantage. Without fulfilling a child's most basic needs first, teaching them to write an essay is next to impossible. Without the shortage differentials, I will not be able to supply these necessities.

Like I have mentioned, teaching *is personal*. We are constantly told not to take things personally whilst being told to "do it for the kids". We are forced into participating in "professional development" sessions centered around the idea of "self-care" whilst being given additional responsibilities on top of a workload with unrealistic expectations. In a time of astronomical inflation, one of the few securities I have is that I will be able to make ends meet. And being able to make ends meet is also personal. Without the shortage differentials (the additional compensation that we were enticed into these hard to staff positions with), I'm uncertain that I will remain in my current position. Without this added financial incentive, the position I'm in is not worth the added responsibilities. Before accepting my current position, I was offered other positions at schools that present far less complicated challenges than WIS. I chose this school in particular because I wanted to have a long-term positive effect on a community in dire need.

If you truly value education for our island ohana, you would value those who step up to this extreme challenge. These differentials were dangled in front of us to lure us to positions where we would be mandated to improve the quality of education for our most at-risk and challenged youth. We've stepped up! And we're still here. It's been proven that these differentials have made a positive impact on teacher retention. On a positive note, this is the first year since I started in the HIDOE that I am working with the same team two years in a row. Now it's your turn to step up. Please approve SB2820 to fulfill your end of the bargain.

As teachers, we keep being pushed into these fight or flight situations. There's only so much fight left in us before we have to fly.

Thank you for your time and consideration,
Anne Alves

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2022 5:10:26 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

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

Comments:

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2820 SD1. 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. As a teacher in a geographically hard-to-staff location, I can personally attest to the effectiveness of the shortage differentials, and the importance of continuing them. After many years of living in the community where we teach, my family had to move to the other side of the island because of the exceedingly high cost of living in West Maui. My wife and I love the schools where we teach, but we had to seriously consider transfers to other schools closer to where we live because of the costs associated with our daily commute to the other side of the island...and then the differentials kicked in and changed everything. We were able to continue to serve the schools, students, families, and community we love. Our colleagues no longer had to debate whether or not to leave West Maui so they could simply survive. Veteran colleagues have chosen to delay retirement and are continuing to use their experience and expertise to help guide their students and our school. And excellent teachers have been incentivized to transfer to Lahaina schools, fulfilling a dire need and helping to support our amazing students. This is just what I see on a personal level as a teacher at a school directly impacted by the shortage differentials, but as HSTA Maui Chapter President I have received countless stories from other teachers across Maui who have been similarly affected, and I have seen the statistics that have been presented to the BOE showing the effectiveness of these differentials at helping to reduce the teacher shortage crisis. While more most certainly needs to be done, especially fixing the salary schedule compression, ensuring the continued funding of the differentials is sorely needed. Please, do the right thing and vote in support of Senate Bill 2820 SD1.

Mahalo for your time,

Mike Landes

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2022 5:16:37 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Dee	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

To Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2820 SD1. I have been a special education teacher in Hawaii since 2006. It's a tough job. I love helping my students, but I got really exhausted after many years for always spending many after-school hours prepping lessons, instructional materials, IEP related paperwork and the high stress from my work environment. I was ready to change my teaching field until they announced the teacher differentials for sped teachers. As a dual certified teacher, I have a choice to leave special education. However, I chose to stay in sped due to the differentials. I hope sped teacher differentials compensation will continue as it really motivates me (and I believe my other sped teacher friends) to stay in the field.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill SB2820 SD1. Mahalo!

Dee W

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2022 5:16:44 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Committee Members,

Careful consideration and following the law in everything we do and say as special education teachers and care coordinators makes sure that the State is not embroiled in lawsuits. I am a special education teacher with 17 years experience. Please continue the differential payments. Ideally ALL teachers would get more money. I do not know much about the other positions currently getting differential payments but as a special education teacher I have typically spent 10 hours a week in addition to my usual teaching and paperwork load, working on Individual Education Plans and analyzing data. This is usually a weekend day and ensures that the Federal Laws and State procedures are followed. Please support the continuation of differential payments for difficult to fill teaching positions. Mahalo.

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2022 5:29:34 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Kehau Camara	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith Agaran and the members of the committee,

My name is Kēhau Camara and I am a school teacher from the Honolulu district. I have been a teacher for 24 years at Kula Kaiapuni ‘o Ānuenue in Pālolo. Please vote in support of Bill SB2820 SD1.

Although I have chosen a career in education and I trully love my job, I continuously struggle to make ends meet raising 2 children as a single parent. As a result, my children and I have lived with my parent because the cost of living does not coincide with my pay. Please know that my parents have raised me to work hard and I strongly believe in this value. I continuously work hard for my students but have been contemplating finding another profession so that I am able to make ends meet. I do not wish for materialistic and expensive clothes or personal belongings but just to live comfortable and not pay check to pay check.

I once again humbly ask you to Please support bill SB2820 SD1 as this bill could help me to stay in the profession that I have worked hard at and have enjoyed doing.

Thank you for your time and the opportunity to submit my written testimony

Mahalo nui,

Kēhau Camara

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2022 5:42:58 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Michelle Ige	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support.

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2022 5:43:12 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Sarah Starr	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

To Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and the members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony regarding my support of senate bill SB 2820 SD1. I am a Special Education preschool teacher in the Honolulu District. I have direct experience with the difficulties and general lack of support our Special Education teachers have. We have the legal responsibility of implementing the federal requirements of IDEA, which includes many meetings and legal paperwork. But even more importantly, we teach Hawaii's most vulnerable population of students, which can be very challenging. This work is very demanding, and children with disabilities need highly qualified teachers! Yet we as a state have great difficulty retaining qualified SPED teachers. I myself may not consider changing to a general education position because of my deeply rooted belief that my students need me. But I have seen many highly qualified SPED teachers become burnt out with the extra workload and pressure and leave Special Education for general education. This differential makes an enormous difference to myself and my family. It retains highly qualified teachers for our most vulnerable keiki. We are already so short of qualified teachers in the State, and we continue to lose our most highly qualified teachers due to lack of fair and appropriate compensation relative to cost of living and highly demanding workloads here in Hawaii. Please retain our highly qualified Special Education teachers by providing them with fair compensation for the extra duties and difficulties that come with teaching SPED! Also please support differentials for hard to staff and Hawaiian immersion schools!

Please support SB2820 SD1. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Sarah Starr

SPED Pre-K teacher

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2022 6:05:48 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Annie Queirolo	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I have my Masters in Special Ed and am certified to teach it. I left SPED in 2001, even though I loved it. I'm most likely going back to it next year to get the differential to help put my kids through college. I am also a compressed teacher who has over 48 credits above class 7.

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2022 6:20:41 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Leimomi Kaaihili Leong	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Keep teachers in these hard to fill positions by supporting the differentials for both DOE and Charter schools.

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2022 6:29:19 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

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

Comments:

I am Anjanette Naganuma of Lahainaluna HS, Maui District. I am writing in support of continuing the hard-to-staff salary differentials.

I will freely admit that in the face of wage stagnation for the last 2 years and with the increased pace of inflation, the hard-to-staff salary differential made it bearable to weather the economic hardship.

However, these differentials have been the finger-in-the-dam of massive teacher exodus. News article after article blares to the nation that Hawaii teachers are at the bottom of the barrel when it comes to our pay vs. our cost of living. Remove the differentials, and I will not be surprised to see the HDOE hemorrhage teachers, especially in hard-to-staff schools like mine. Way too many West Maui teachers live in Kihei, Kahului, Wailuku, and even Upcountry. Without the financial incentive to look past the commute time and gas cost, staffing West Maui schools would become prohibitively difficult.

Continuing the differentials, along with raising the pay for all teachers, will make a huge difference in retaining quality teachers.

Mahalo for your time.

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2022 6:30:22 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

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

Comments:

Name is Michael Press and I am a teacher at Ilima Intermediate on Oahu in Ewa Beach. I am writing you to support SB2820 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 2820 would make sure funding is secured for the differentials currently in place for special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and geographically hard-to-fill areas. We need these positions in Hawaii. We need to keep these teachers for our future.

Mahalo Nui,

Michael Press

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2022 6:33:18 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

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

Comments:

I wholly support SB2820 SD1.

Thank you,

Sara A. Uyeno

Secondary Teacher

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2022 6:34:07 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
liberty furchgott	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Distinguished Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2820.

My name is Liberty Furchgott and I have been a special education teacher for about 15 years now. I currently teach at Honoka'a High and Intermediate school which has been deemed hard to staff because of the continuous turnover of teachers there.

Over the years, as a special education teacher, my responsibilities have far outweighed my general education colleagues, yet there was no compensation provided for all of the extras

In addition to the basic teacher tasks that we, as educators, are expected to do I also had to be a case manager for groups of students (*14 per year is average*), write their Individual Education Plans (IEPs), set up and facilitate meetings for the students I case manage as well as participate in IEP meetings for students that I teach but don't case manage (*meetings are almost always held outside of my contractual working hours*), communicate consistently with families and related service providers and school level IEP team members, work with multiple co-teachers to plan coherent instruction, administer specific assessments and use data and student performance to differentiate lessons for students with varying disabilities and ability levels all while ensuring that everyone is following a student's IEP and working on their specific objectives and providing the specified accommodations.

Despite the lack of compensation I continued on as a special education teacher although many of my special education colleagues did not. They could not deal with the stress caused by dutifully fulfilling a special education teacher's responsibilities, which are required by law (IEPs are legal documents).

So when the differentials began I was beyond elated. I felt like I was finally being recognized for the job that I was performing, and although I believe there are way too many responsibilities placed upon teachers and especially special education teachers, I think that these differentials have helped us maintain our sanity and retain teachers who would have otherwise left.

I know personally that I had often thought about leaving and finding a less demanding job but now with the differentials in place I feel like the compensation is working to keep the experienced, qualified, and dedicated teachers from leaving the profession. Without the

differentials I, like many, would leave and pursue a career where my time and efforts are adequately compensated.

I hope that the committee understands the positive impact that these differentials have had on many educators who have felt unappreciated, undervalued and unheard. And I do hope the committee sees fit to continue with the compensation by voting yes on SB2820.

Many thanks for your consideration on this matter,

Ms. Liberty Furchgott

Special Education Teacher @ Honoka'a High & Intermediate School

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2022 6:46:27 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Wendy Nickl	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair DelaCruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2820. My name is Wendy Nickl, and I have worked as a public school teacher for 34 years in the State of Hawaii. I am currently a teacher at Kohala Middle School, in the West Hawaii district of the island of Hawai'i.

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 registrar, curriculum coordinator, and testing coordinator at Kohala Middle School. At my small school, I also serve as the Title 1, AVID, GEAR UP, CFES, and Advisory coordinator, and sit on many school and community committees. 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 instead of retiring. 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, with a retired disabled spouse, a mortgage, and a child attending college.

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 as veteran teachers.

Thank you for reading my testimony. Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2820.

Wendy Nickl**Kohala Middle School****Proud public school teacher**

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2022 7:26:18 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Lori Nelson	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am my school's grievance rep, and as such, I field many questions related to the work of teaching for the HDOE. One question that comes up repeatedly is that of whether differentials will be continued next school year. Examples: A newer teacher has a one-hour commute (we are way out on the Waianae Coast) and will not be able to afford the commute without the hard-to-staff differential. A special education teacher is considering leaving the profession because of the workload. She will stay for the differential. Another is past retirement age and sees no point in continuing to work if the differential is not in place to add to her "average of the high three." Differential pay will be the make it or break it issue for these and others at my school, and I suspect at many others. Not only do the differentials need to continue, it needs to be known that they will continue, very soon. Teachers have expressed to me that they will go ahead and transfer to less challenging settings (in Hawaii or on the mainland) if they don't learn soon that the differentials will stay. The students who need highly qualified teachers the most are the ones most likely to lose them, if we--if YOU--can't guarantee the continuance of these economic incentives.

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2022 7:56:24 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Irene Barber	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair DelaCruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran and members of the committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2820.

I have been a dedicated public school teacher on Hawaii Island for 30 years, currently in the Kea'au-Ka'u-Pahoa district. I am asking your support for SB 2820 to fund the differentials for hard to fill districts such as this one. As you know, attracting and maintaining highly qualified, experienced teachers for classrooms in rural and poverty stricken areas is essential to give our keiki the education they deserve.

Please vote in support of SB 2820 to attract and keep qualified and experienced teachers in our schools, and to uphold our commitment to educate the children of Hawaii.

Thank you,

Irene Barber

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2022 8:01:22 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Sheri Preston	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2820 SD1.

My name is Sheri Preston and I have been a Special Education teacher at Kohala Middle School for the past 8 years. I love teaching in our small rural community but there are drawbacks. In our small community basic necessities cost more. There is a lack of affordable housing here and a very limited inventory. This contributes to the problem of being able to attract teachers and keep the good teachers we already have. The hard-to-staff differential helps to counter some of the expenses of living and working in rural Kohala.

As a Special Education teacher I love working with my students who all have a unique set of needs. To do my job well requires more meetings and paperwork to file, more involvement with students and communication with their parents, and more coordination with other teachers and administrators. My job also requires flexibility with subject matter and more legal liability. The Special Education differential helps to support the extra time and work my fellow Special Educators and I put into our profession.

Please help support our teachers in rural Kohala who need the differentials to stay in the profession and educate and serve our keiki.

Mahalo for your time,

Sheri Preston

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2022 8:02:55 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Rebecca Kapolei Kiili	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha kākou,

I am writing in **strong support** of SB 2820 D1 in favor of continuing to fund teacher differentials. As an immersion teacher for my entire public school teaching career of 17 years, the differential pay has helped me tremendously. In previous testimony, I shared the added financial burdens that immersion teachers have because of the conflicting nature of DOE and HTSB policies. Specifically, my teaching licenses are in three areas 1) Hawaiian Immersion K-12, 2) Hawaiian Language 6-12, and 3) Hawaiian Studies 6-12. However, the master schedule which determines teaching lines in high schools do not always align with the licensed subject areas. I have had to pay for more tests like the Praxis, college classes, and other professional development courses because the master schedule included social studies and science courses at the school I currently teach at. As my degrees and licenses are not in these subject areas, USDOE and HIDOE policies required me to further prove my qualifications. Mainstream teachers do not have to pay for extra credentials after graduating with their undergraduate degree and teaching credentials. So, I feel that the differential pay has helped to pay me back for all the added out of pocket costs to meet the HQT designation. Immersion teachers also work without curriculum support often having to create our own year after year which takes more resources from our already low teacher pay. Please keep these differentials so that we can attract and retain more teacher for immersion school statewide. They are one small yet impactful way that the state of Hawaii BOE/DOE can continue to fulfill their legal obligation to provide equitable access of immersion education to our entire state and the families who choose this public education pathway.

Mahalo for your time and acknowledgement in the value of immersion teachers as well as other teachers who benefit from differential pay.

Rebecca Kapolei Kiili

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2022 8:29:25 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Sarah Milianta-Laffin	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

February 18, 2022

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair

Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, 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 Oahu. I am submitting testimony in strong support of SB 2820 SD1.

SB2820 SD 1 would make sure funding is secured for the differentials currently in place for special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and geographically hard-to-fill areas. We've seen this program be successful in filling vacancies in these critical areas; it works! The smart choice for the students of our state is to support SB 2820 SD 1.

Sarah Milianta-Laffin, Teacher

Ilima Intermediate School

Leeward District

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2022 8:29:37 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
ROBERT LOZANO	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the Committee:

Aloha, I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2820 SD1. 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 negotiated salary increases. Contract negotiations have often produced little to no increase in salary to offset the rising cost of living. 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 salary 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 shortage differentials in hard to staff locations can give teachers more incentive to stay on the job. 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 SB2820 SD1, 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 SB2820 SD1.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Robert Lozano

5th Grade Teacher

Robotics Coach

Waikoloa Elementary & Middle School

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2022 8:37:41 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Kari A Handley	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

My name is Kari Handley, and I am a Teacher of the Deaf/Hard of Hearing at Lehua Elementary School in Leeward district on Oahu.

I was over the moon when the state passed the special education differentials in December of 2019. You see, I am a teacher of the Deaf/Hard of Hearing. There is ALWAYS a shortage of us, so much so that the DOE has partnered with UH to provide a stipend for any teacher who wants to go into this special field. They are offering to pay the cost of tuition for a graduate level program at the University of Northern Colorado to achieve a Masters in Special Education with an emphasis on the Deaf/Hard of Hearing. Fantastic! The problem? Well, since I am already a teacher of the Deaf/Hard of Hearing, I don't qualify for the stipend. So, if I want to pursue higher education and better myself as an educator through this program, I have to pay for it myself. The answer to this, and not having to go into further debt, was the differential. The special education differential is helping to pay the cost of my tuition for this program.

If this differential is discontinued, I will not be able to finish this graduate program that I have started, that I am being forced to pay for out of pocket, and also may not be able to stay in Hawaii, meaning my position will be vacant, with not many able to fill it. Who will work with my students of this unique specialty? Who understands their diverse needs? Clearly the DOE sees this as a need, as they have created this opportunity. Please continue to fund the differentials so that the need for special education teachers, especially teachers of the Deaf/Hard of Hearing, doesn't become greater!

Thank you,

Kari Handley

Lehua Elementary School

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2022 8:41:29 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the Committee,

My name is Katrina Karl and I am a teacher at Waipahu High School. I am submitting testimony in support of SB2820 SD1. The pay differentials outlined in this bill not only help to compensate for the additional challenges of our roles, but would also help affected teachers' financial situations in innumerable ways and aid with teacher retention. In my own experience, the pay differential I earned as a special education teacher ultimately helped me to become a first-time homeowner. Please vote in support of SB2820 SD1. I appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this bill.

Katrina Karl

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2022 9:05:25 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Jay Bumanglag	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2820.

Mahalo,

Jay Bumanglag

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2022 9:05:51 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Victoria Zupancic	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am writing in support of SB 2820.

My name is Victoria Zupancic, and I receive a Hard to Staff Differential. This addition to my salary has honestly changed my economic well being. I remember first getting the differential and feeling like, wow, I can take a deep breath. Though it is not significant for many, receiving an extra \$100 a month makes a difference in my world. Each little bit support has allowed me to stay in my position longer and serve my students better.

With the differential coming in at almost \$400 per month, I was able to stop working a third job. I only have to dedicate a few hours a week for work outside school. My lessons improved. My excitement and passion in the classroom grew. I have Multiple Sclerosis, and working multiple jobs was extremely tough on my health. Since have that financial support, my feedback from students from State Surveys also improved. It has been shown in studies and I am living the experiment: supporting teachers with a living wage will improve classroom outcomes.

I live in West Maui. Our Legislators understand living here is not getting easier for any resident. There are stories yearly about qualified candidates being offered positions but not coming because they simply can't afford to make it on the salaries offered by the DOE. The problem will be getting worse, and we will need our schools to have qualified staff stick around to support our students.

We are about to face some harrowing and critical years in schools. Please show teachers you want them to be a part of the solution and need them to keep moving forward.

Victoria Zupancic

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2022 9:22:39 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Karina Koda	Testifying for Department of Education	Support	No

Comments:

I am in full support of teacher compensation for hard to fill positions. I am currently a District Resource Teacher in Special Education. A few of my duties are to train new special educators in our complex area, assist with compliance and procedures, and to assist with any high needs cases at our 18 schools. I have been working at this job going on six years now and each year we train teachers and watch them leave in a couple years. They leave the profession, quit their program, move to another state, or move to a general education teaching line. These special education teachers not only work with our most vulnerable populations, but they spend hours on end sending emails/text messages, calling parents, sitting in IEP meetings, sitting in consultation meetings with related service providers, and completing paperwork (IEPs, data sheets, plans for EAs). All of these things occur after hours because they are teaching during the day. They miss their children's games, they spend their nights and weekends doing paperwork, they are the first ones to school, they are the last to leave. I have personally received countless text messages, phone calls, and emails before hours, after hours, weekends, and even at times receiving emails that are marked at 10 pm or 4 am. If you could see how much work goes in to being a special education teacher for a day, you'd wonder why anyone does it. I will be totally honest when I say that all of those duties does not pale in comparison to the emotional and physical toll that dealing with challenging parents takes. I have coworkers who have left the profession, retired, left our schools/complex area, begged their supervisors to change school assignments, and shifted caseloads due the the sheer exhaustion of working with difficult parents. We always remind ourselves to keep the student's education in mind but that alone is not enough to keep us afloat. While a monetary amount cannot ever compensate special education teachers for what they do, at least it can help them alleviate other stressors in their lives. I think compensation for hard to fill special education positions is a start, but I also beg you to consider providing compensation to others who may not work directly with students but help provide valuable services to the same population (e.g., itinerant teachers, relate service providers (HGEA), special education department heads, grade level chairs (special education), transition coordinators, student services coordinators).

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2022 9:25:10 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Emiri Iwasaki	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the Committee,**I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2820 SD1.****I am a Special Education teacher teaching in the Leeward District and have been teaching in the State of Hawaii for 21 years.**

Special Education has long seen a shortage of qualified teachers for many years. We work with students that require specialized instruction, which may include not only academic support, but mental, physical, and emotional services as well. Being a special education teacher is not an easy task. It involves not only working with the students and their families, but consultations and working together with a whole network of special education support services. It involves never ending paperwork, data keeping, long hours of meetings, in addition to the regular tasks of just being a teacher. It can take a toll on the emotional, psychological, as well as physical well being of individuals. It has been especially difficult during the past 2 years, with the pandemic, and a part of what kept me going during this time was the shortage differentials. It made me at least feel appreciated and acknowledged for the tremendous amount of work I put in. I believe it has kept many special educators, like myself, from leaving the profession or switching to General education positions, and has allowed the most vulnerable student population to have highly qualified teachers, rather than emergency hires or substitute teachers.

Please continue supporting the shortage differentials for Special Education, hard to staff areas, and Hawaiian language immersion so that we can keep our qualified Special Education teachers in schools and classrooms for the benefit of our most vulnerable students.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill number SB2820 SD1.**Thank you for the opportunity to testify.**

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2022 9:29:56 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Russ Josephson	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Thank you for considering my testimony.

The legislature in its wisdom put pay differentials in place for special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and geographically hard-to-fill areas. The reasons are well known and don't need to be repeated here.

It is extremely difficult for Hawaii to attract and retain regular teachers. In the case of the teachers in these special positions and challenging locations, Hawaii has to go the extra mile.

Funding for the pay differentials is not just the fair thing to do; it's the right thing to do for education.

Thank you in advance for doing the right thing.

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2022 9:37:04 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

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

Comments:

E kāko‘o nō i nā kumu kula e mālama nei i kā kākou po‘e keiki.

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2022 9:38:26 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Karen Veriato	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I strongly support SB-2820.

I work at Na'alehu Elementary School, a hard-to-fill, rural school in the Ka'u District of Hawai'i Island. The differential encouraged one SPED teacher to work one more year prior to retirement. The differential has also helped maintain a solid teaching staff. We normally have a high turnover rate.

Please continue funding the differentials by supporting the passage of SB-2820.

Mahalo,

Karen Veriato

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2022 9:39:51 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Lori Ann Koyama	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am in support of this Bill. I work in a hard to staff area. We have 13 positions that we have to fill next school year. How is that even going to happen? Teachers need that money because they need to be able to find housing and be able to buy basic things. So far we have had 6 teachers decline positions because they could not afford a place to live near the school. As it stands right now over 50% of our staff have not taught a full regular school year at our school. 50%! Can you imagine having that high of a turn over rate? So again I support this Bill.

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2022 9:56:47 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Caitlin Chong	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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

My name is Caitlin Chong and I am respectfully writing in support of SB 2820.

I am currently a first year elementary special education teacher. I love to work with kids and give them the extra support they need, but my first year was a big wake up call to the extra responsibilities and time-commitments that come with being in special education. I am thankful for the extra compensation that I am receiving this year due to the salary differentials. I am also thankful that my experienced and veteran colleagues are receiving the differentials that make it possible for them to remain in the DOE to mentor me and help me learn to support our students in the best way possible. Please continue to support SB 2820.

Thank you for your consideration.

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2022 10:04:10 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Karen Kramer	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the Committee,

My name is Karen and I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2820 SD1. I have been a special education teacher in Hawaii for over 16 years. The differential pay we receive is essential. I want to thank you considering this differential in the first place. Special Educators have more paperwork, late after school meetings, and work more closely with families on a regular basis. I can't see how discontinuing our differential pay is warranted. I have IEP meetings and staffings weekly, many times after the 3:00 "work day". Not to mention, many of my IEP meetings go past 4:00. Why? Because our families and students have needs that demand our attention and care. At one time I had 17 students on my caseload. That is almost the size of a regular classroom!

Not only has our regular salary been under threat since covid, now we are once again asking for our differential pay. How do you expect teachers, let alone special education teachers and hard to fill positions to make it here in Hawaii??? I already work a 2nd job and have had to work that second job since I started teaching here. If we aren't given this differential pay, I'm not sure I can afford to live and teach here anymore. Please continue to help us and support us by continuing to provide the differential pay.

Please continue to support this bill. Thanks for your time and consideration,

Karen

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2022 10:10:15 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Tes Kaulia	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith Agaran, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting my written testimony in support of Senate Bill 2820 SD1. I am a teacher at Maunaloa Elementary School on the island of Moloka'i. All six schools on the island of Moloka'i receive the shortage differential because they are considered geographically hard-to-fill areas.

Many teachers have expressed to me how much it has helped them. I, too have been blessed with the differentials. I am very fortunate to be raised on the island of Moloka'i where there is no traffic lights, no shopping malls, or tall buildings that would block the beauty of the environment that surrounds us. It is my island home where I want to be. I humbly ask that you vote in support of Senate Bill 2820 SD1 so my four children, three grandsons and I will remain here and upkeep the legacy my grandparents left behind.

I aloha and mahalo all of you for taking the time to read my heartfelt testimony. Mahalo.

Tes Kaulia

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2022 10:19:54 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
melvin prasad	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2820. I am a special education teacher in the West Hawaii District. The starting salary for my position in parts of California, and in several other states, is about \$25k more for special education teachers. I decided to come here because I wanted to move back to an island setting and help in teaching academics/life lessons to the youth here. The differentials contributed to that decision.

The sped and hard-to-staff differentials are probably one of the top reasons I felt confident that the pay would suffice in this expensive state, but I quickly realized that with the cost of living in a tourists driven state and with inflation, my current salary was just enough to make my living situation mildly comfortable. If the differentials were to be eliminated, I, along with some fellow sped teachers, would find it extremely difficult to continue teaching here, even more so since we are looked at as the first line of support in filling in for fellow teachers when they are absent. And as we know, absence has been severely high this year due to covid. So far this 2nd semester, I have been covering at least one extra class everyday. I know that I can say no, but then what's going to happen? We didn't have many substitutes coming in prior to covid anyways and we are already stretched thin in staff to put in classes.

With no overage pay for filling in for absent/departed teachers (taken over resource class and caseload for a temporarily departed teacher) and the high cost of living, these differentials make it just enough so to tolerate the mess we're in. The students are extremely important and it would break my heart to leave these kids behind, but how can you expect us to take care of these young minds if we're unable to take care of ourselves (financially and mentally)?

Again, my position is in favor of Senate Bill SB2820,

Mahalo for allowing me to testify.

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2022 10:31:24 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Jeffrey Uyeda	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Honorable Legislators and Government Officials,

Please consider funding an increase in salary adjustments/ differentials for teachers. I have been a special education teacher for over 20 years here in the state of Hawaii and we have been struggling to fill teacher positions in- Special Education, Hard to Fill Areas, and Hawaiian Immersion Schools, for MANY YEARS. To put it simply, hundreds of incapable people have been hired to fill these lines. These individuals have no idea about our unique and special culture here in Hawaii; they have little to NO teaching experience; AND A LOT of them do NOT have an educational degree. WHY?? The answer is simple... not enough money to (a) keep good teachers - often leaving the profession - and (b) not enough money to recruit new, qualified and educated teachers, ESPECIALLY IN THE AFOREMENTIONED TEACHING LINES.

Every government official states that "Education is a priority!" However past actions have NOT backed that claim up!! NOW IS YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO REMEDY THIS ISSUE. In other words, "PLEASE vote in support of bill SB2820 and show the keiki and educators of Hawaii that we ARE INDEED A PRIORITY... IT IS TIME!!!"

Thank you for taking the time to read my testimony,

Jeff Uyeda

P.S. THANK YOU for the differentials for the last couple of years!! It has helped with the retainment and the recruitment of good teachers (and it can be clearly seen in the special education field).

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2022 10:38:11 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Justin Hughey	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Date: Thursday, February 18th, 2022

Time: 10:10 AM

Place: Conference Room 211 & Videoconference

Timeslot: WAM

Aloha Senator Gilbert S. C. Keith-Agaran and members of the committee,

I am testifying in strong support of SB2820

Thank you for hearing this bill. My name is Justin Hughey and I am a third grade Special Education teacher at King Kamehameha III Elementary school in Lahaina Maui.

I was hired in November of 2005 because a Special Education Teacher quit. Since then I have seen a lot of teacher quit almost annually. This provided a real stress on the rest of the Special Education Department because we would all have to take on the responsibility of completing the IEPs of the teacher who quit.

Since the differentials were provided I have not seen a teacher quit or a Special Education teaching position go unfilled at the school I work at. It's obvious all teachers are under paid and the opportunity for more income has filled some of the hardest positions that always go unfilled.

The lesson here today is not only are the differentials working, but if you just fund the public educational system to a comparable rate as other districts with the same cost of living, you will finally fill all teaching positions that have gone unfilled since 1911. Yes the legislature should fill the differentials but don't stop there....

Mahalo,

Justin Hughey

37 Poniu Circle

Wailuku, HI 96793

Democratic Party State Central Committee, Education Caucus Rep.

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2022 10:50:20 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Jeffrey Temple Stabile, Jr.	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

As a longtime teacher of Special Education at Ewa Beach Elementary, Waimalu Elementary, and the Hawaii School for the Deaf and the Blind for over two decades, I have put in a great deal of "above and beyond" work that cannot be done during the work day.

I have prepared Individualized Educational Programs and run IEP meetings, attended tri-ennial re-evaluation meetings for my students to evaluate whether they continue to be eligible for special education and related services; added present levels of educational performance information to and written goals/objectives for IEPs when I am involved with a student but am not the assigned IEP care coordinator; spent time contacting and explaining IEPs to parents and guardians; taken data to document the need for additional specialized services for the many students I have worked with who have multiple disabilities; documented nursing hours in our Student Information System; crafted, implemented, and provided progress monitoring for Behavioral Support Plans for students whose social and emotional functioning at school manifested in problematic behavior; adapted - even created - curricula to meet the needs of deaf students who often do not have ease of access to curriculum in their first, natural language (these efforts include making deaf-reader-friendly versions of existing curricula, making ASL interpreted versions of existing curricula, and devising hands-on curricular materials to help make abstract concepts more accessible for deaf students); and taught an incredibly diverse number of electives, ranging from Yearbook to Dance to PE to Health to HTML programming to Study Skills to Academic Decathlon to Drama to Personal Finance to Expository Writing to Swimming and Diving Lessons - most of which required extra preparation and planning, as they are not in my area of expertise and I needed to learn them from scratch prior to teaching them - in service of providing opportunities for students to earn needed graduation credits and, more importantly, providing students with opportunities to enjoy learning things they are interested in and might not otherwise get a chance to experience, given the small population of our school and concomitant small staff.

A great deal of this extra work has been/is done after hours, as regular work hours are taken up with the business of teaching classes, grading assignments, prepping for core classes, and fulfilling administrative initiatives through departmental collaboration meetings. The differential pay that has been in place over the last two years has not only been a great incentive to continue with the above-and-beyond nature of my work as a teacher at HSDB, but also has afforded me a certain sense of ease regarding my financial situation, and allowed me to be more emotionally

and psychologically prepared to meet the ongoing challenges of teaching an all-Special Education population twenty-plus years into my tenure with the Hawaii DOE.

I strongly urge the Senate to pass SB2820 SD1 to continue pay differentials to Special Education teachers, differentials which fairly compensate them for all the additional work they do in educating Hawaii's students with disabilities.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2022 11:31:50 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Brandon Cha	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2820.

I am a high school teacher from a school in the Leeward District of Oahu.

I started my career as a licensed teacher who was teaching outside of my licensure area, in SPED Inclusion and SPED Resource classes. I am now assigned to a general education class that I am licensed to teach, but I can tell you that those years in SPED were a large learning curve to adapt to the special circumstances and needs of my students.

I know that despite my best efforts, as any other teacher in my position would have put forth, there is no substitute for specialized experience, and I know my students and my school would have benefitted from the difference that a qualified, SPED-licensed teacher could have brought to the classroom. Such staffing shortages in other hard-to-staff areas similarly deserve our attention.

Such expertise and experience takes years to accumulate for a non-SPED licensed teacher like myself, and frankly our students don't have time to wait while non-SPED teachers get brought up to speed. The differentials made a noticeable impact on how hard-to-staff positions are filled, and recent personnel statistics from when these differentials were implemented show their positive impact.

All students should have the QUALIFIED personnel and support to help them succeed and achieve their highest potential. Passing this bill will help invest in our keiki by providing funds to attract qualified SPED teachers, as well as other hard to staff positions.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2820. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2022 12:10:17 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha Senate Committee on Ways and Means,

My name is Dawn Shiota and I have worked for the Hawaii Department of Education for over 24 years. I am not in a Hawaiian Immersion, Special Education , or Hard to Fill Teaching Position but I am writing to you to support my dedicated colleagues that are. Numerous studies have shown that Hawaii's teacher salaries are the lowest in the nation when adjusted for the State's high cost of living. I am writing to you to urge you to support SB2820 SD1 so that we can continue to compensate our Hawaiian Immersion Kumu's, Special Education Teachers and Teachers working in Hard to Fill areas, where our keiki need highly qualified teachers. I urge you to take care of the dedicated and effective teachers that we have in these specialized positions before they leave at the end of this school year which is only a few months away. Our School System cannot lose any more qualified teachers this school year. Many of our Native Hawaiian children are the students who are affected by these positions. When they do not receive an appropriate education from our Public Schools the often times end up in our Prison system. Our children deserve to be a priority and money needs to be invested in Education. Mahalo for your time and please continue to invest in Education.

With Aloha,
Dawn Shiota

Bill: SB2820 SD1
Title: RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION
Position: SUPPORT
Committee: Ways and Means Committee
Date: February 18, 2022 10:10 am

Aloha Honorable Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Committee Members,
My name is Vickie Parker Kam, employed by the DOE since 1992, at Ilima Intermediate since 2004. Through those years I have been an English, Social Studies and Financial Literacy educator and an Academic Growth Coach, Testing Coordinator, Curriculum Coordinator, RTI Lead and Mentoring Site Lead.

As a seasoned educator I come here in SUPPORT for bill SB2820 Relating to Teacher Compensation. This bill will allow for funds for various teacher differentials to help address various labor shortages in the areas of Special Education and hard to staff positions.

Hundreds of positions are currently filled by unqualified substitutes, thousands of students are impacted every year.

Experienced, highly qualified teachers are what our students deserve.

Fair compensation for our labor is what we deserve...

I respectfully request your support in funding SB2820 needed to fully fund the schools our keiki deserve.

Mahalo Nui Loa,

Vickie Parker Kam
HIDOE Educator
HSTA Board of Director

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2022 5:22:19 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
eric iwasaki	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

good morning,

Please pass this bill because everywhere in the state need teachers in these hard-to-fill positions.

Money talks, and people walk when it's time to pay the bills and their current paycheck isn't keeping them in the black.

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2022 5:45:47 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

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

Comments:

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the Committee:

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2820 SD1. My name is Michael Kline and I am a National Board Certified Teacher at Kilauea School in the Kapa'a District on Kaua'i. I have been teaching 23 years as a Special Education teacher.

I am committed to my students and love teaching. It is not a job for me but a vocation that enriches my life. I know I have made a big impact on all of my students with disabilities. I turned 60 this year and with the challenges of Covid 19, with the challenges of teaching in Special Education, I am thinking more and more of retirement. However, if the differentials for Special Education teachers would continue, I would definitely continue teaching for years to come. The differential pay has really helped me financially to be able to afford to live here with my mortgage and car payments. It also has motivated me to continue doing what I love -- teaching. Without this pay, I am not sure if I could afford to continue living here and would possibly have to move to the mainland to live with one of my brothers. I know this differential pay has motivated a number of other Special Education teachers across the state to remain in Special Education. I also think this pay is warranted due to the amount of work we have to do. For example, as a Special Education preschool teacher, I have to provide 3 pieces of documentation and data three times a year for 50+ objectives for each of my students for Teaching Strategies Gold, a state mandated data system that provides current information on how Special Education preschool students do during their years in preschool for the federal government. Last year, I had 14 students. So, I had to enter over 6300+ pieces of documentation last year. This is so time consuming and difficult. And this is on top of all the IEP meetings, paperwork, and the many other responsibilities I have as a Special Education teacher. The differential pay actually helps pay me for what I actually do above the 7 hours per day I am required to work.

I also think this bill would benefit you as well. It would show your support of Public Education, our students, our schools and our teachers. When you do run for re-election, you would be seen as pro-Public Education, pro-teachers and you would have the support of teachers and parents in the communities you work for. It would also give you pride in problem solving the shortage of Special Education teachers in the state.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2820 SD1. Thank you so much for considering my testimony.

Michael Kline

Special Education Teacher

Kilauea School

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2022 6:25:22 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Joanie Tanabe	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha. My name is Joanie Tanabe and I am a 4th grade teacher on Molokai. Because of our rural location and very high cost of living, we continuously have high teacher turnover rates and it is difficult to retain teachers at our schools. The teachers that remain are left to pick up more "extra" duties with a smaller staff and we are expected to produce the same as other schools. We need to be more creative in our resources, as our communities do not provide as much as more populated areas. The hard-to-staff differentials are necessary to keep teachers in our schools and attract more teachers to join us. We need to have confidence that our sacrifice and dedication to working at rural schools and in rural communities will be permanently compensated, so that we can ensure our children in these areas are served by highly qualified teachers.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this measure. I look forward to education/teacher improvement conditions.

Mahalo.

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2022 7:11:01 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Hung Tram	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am in support of this bill.

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2022 7:18:30 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Mason Valenzuela	Testifying for Department of Education	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Mason Valenzuela, and I am a first year special education teacher at a public school on O'ahu, and I support SB2820 and the continuation of teacher differentials. In 2018, I decided to pursue a career in special education while I was finishing my college degree. When I charted my career path, there was no such thing as a teacher differential as an incentive to recruit much needed special ed teachers - some of us just answer the calling. However, many educators and prospective educators do not want to become or even consider becoming special education teachers because it is demanding and difficult work. I believe teacher differentials for special education teachers is helping to lift that doubt that many prospective teachers may have. Special education students are our community's most at-risk and vulnerable, and they deserve well-qualified educators to serve them.

Also, this differential is helping me to become much more financially sound and stable in a state where it is difficult, even for a young professional such as myself, to get by. It would be devastating to be blessed with this differential only to have it swept from right under my feet. Teacher differentials need to continue not just to serve the selfless educators that go into fields that no one else wants, but to serve the students that are most often overlooked.

Mahalo.

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2022 7:41:38 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Thomas Graham	Testifying for Hawaii DOE Teacher	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2820 SD1.

My name is Thomas Graham. I am a High School Social Studies Teacher at the Hawaii School for the Deaf and the Blind (HSDB), where I have served for over 25 years of my 28 years for Hawaii's DOE. At HSDB, I've served as an Elementary Teacher, a Middle School Teacher, a High School Teacher, a Special Needs Teacher, a Technology Coordinator, a School Registrar and even for year as a TA Vice Principal.

I grew up in Hawaii (having grad from Kalani High School) and am a 3rd generation kamaaina resident. I went to UH Manoa, to BYU-Hawaii, and then to Utah State University to get a masters in Deaf Education. My college education has served me well and allowed me to climb through the DOE Salary Classes quickly. Within 10 years of teaching, I proudly arrived at Class 7 of the salary scale.

Unfortunately, once I was there, there was no further movement or pay increases unless a new contract gave us an increase or step up. So, for at least 15 years, I've sadly been stuck in the same salary step. Even if I returned to college for a 2nd Masters degree or a PhD, I would still be in the same Salary Class and the same Step. Obviously, there's something wrong with this "picture."

My wife also serves at HSDB, but as an Educational Assistant (and for nearly 25 years). She too is a 3rd generation kamaaina resident. More importantly, we have 2 generations in front of us.

Yet, between our two salaries, we have never been able to afford to purchase a decent home and we are now looking at retiring on the mainland - with 5 generations that have called Hawai'i home and after we will have served our keiki for a combined 60 years.

Since 2020, we have had a increased financial blessing of receiving two differentials for being a Special Education Teacher (this is my 29th year) and for being at a Hard To Fill School (my 26th year at HSDB). These teacher differentials and increases in pay have definitely kept me here in Hawai'i and at HSDB. They have kept many of my colleagues at HSDB. The differentials even brought one teacher who left for another career to return to our school last year! Maintaining

these differentials is critical for HSDB, for Special Education and for the many hard-to-fill positions and schools in Hawai'i. It will help the current and next generation of teachers for Hawai'i's keiki and will attract our highly qualified teachers to stay - or for those that left, to return to islands we call home and to the keiki we love to serve and teach.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill SB2820 SD1.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my testimony and listening. Mahalo for your kokua in serving our citizens and keiki.

Mahalo, Thomas Graham - HSDB Teacher

My Testimony

Esteemed Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the Committee.

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill **SB2820 SD1** but I guess what I have to say can be applied to all education bills concerning teachers. I also support **Senate Bill 2819 SD1**.

My name is Brett McCardle. I am a special education teacher. I am teaching in the Kealakehe complex on the Kona side of Big Island.

I am providing testimony because the shortage differentials are the reason I am able to afford to live in the area I live. They are the reason I am able to continue teaching. They are the only way I can afford my rent. I have written testimony for this topic many times. I have provided personal stories about my hardships moving here and how the culture is slow to warm to new teachers at some schools. I have provided testimony about how I have had to live in communal housing with too many tenants because it was all I could afford. I am sure that I do not need to provide any stories about how it will almost certainly be impossible for me to ever afford my own home here regardless of if you decide to provide shortage differentials or not.

Instead, I will provide testimony simply stating that I am tired. Teachers are tired. My testimony is going to touch on self-worth and job satisfaction.

We have been working the entirety of the pandemic. We completely revolutionized and built a new education system from the ground up during the pandemic. We all know that distance learning was not ideal and had less of an effect than we all wanted. But we should also remember that it had never existed before we teachers built it. Often times, based off of little to no guidance from the state as to how to do so.

We have watched our students struggle. We have been with them every day while they did, looking into their eyes through a computer and speaking with them through their struggles. We are now dealing with the fallout of a year of social distancing in our classrooms. Trying to teach through masks while students have difficulty remembering how to connect with other people. They are unable to read facial expressions. Everyone is hard to hear and more importantly understand.

Teaching has never been an easy career. We are not simply here to teach. The academics is actually a small portion of what we get to do. We help students learn how to behave in society. We teach students to value community. We are the ones taking children that play with toys on the beach to their positions they strive for as adults as guides, mentors, and instructors. We also teach them how

to handle conflict and move them from “He’s staring at me too much!” to “Let’s have a conversation to fix this problem”. Teachers do a lot more than anyone can possibly give them credit for. At the very least in any given day, they are caregivers, teachers, conflict resolvers, providers, and currently therapists for at least 20 – 30 kids per day.

They also teach students to have self-worth. They spend hours and hours instructing students on how to value themselves as individuals. They foster voices and ideas from every one of the students they work with and make them believe that every single student and person has value and should be treasured.

It gets harder and harder to teach this, to foster this in students, when you, yourself have to struggle to feel valued by the people employing you. We have a saying we use at my school and I’m sure it has made it out to the real world in some capacity. You can either help someone fill their bucket or you can dip into it. Filling a bucket means you help make someone feel better, feel good, make them see their worth. Dipping is of course, the opposite position. You say something that undermines another’s worth. Make a snide remark. Treat someone unfairly.

In the case of teachers, these last years have dipped in our bucket multiple times because we suffer when our students suffer. It has been hard on them and has been hard on us as a result. We have also been told multiple times that pay cuts might also have to happen so we ourselves have felt panic and terror and uncertainty.

Our buckets are pretty low.

Help us feel like we are valued. Help us fill our buckets.

I am supporting keeping differentials and fixing salary compression because I know the value of making sure the people that educate and care for young people should be a priority. I hope you all do as well.

Again, I am asking for actions that support senate bills **SB2820 SD1** and **Senate Bill 2819 SD1**. I hope shortage differentials can continue and salary compression is fixed.

Thank you very much for considering my testimony.

Brett McCardle

Special Education Teacher

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2022 7:45:59 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Chanelle	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

To whom it may concern:

I was raised in a small town that is considered hard-to-staff. On top of it being hard to staff, there is always a shortage of Special Education Teachers, and the school is in the beginning stages of the Hawaiian Language Program. Having the additional incentive ensures that the keiki there get qualified teachers. Without qualified teachers, the students have difficulty striving for a better future. The students there already have limited opportunities, do not take away the opportunity to have qualified teachers.

Today I am a qualified Special Education teacher. I am licensed to teach General Education and Special Education. Before the incentive, I worked for a private school and decided to take a Special Education Position due to the incentive and I am thinking about moving home. The incentive plays a big part with my decision. Working as a Special Education Teacher, I realized how much of a difference the incentives makes. During my regular work hours, I ensure that my students get the specialized instruction they need. When my students leave for the day, I either have IEP meetings to attend or an IEP to write. I also have to evaluate how each student is doing. I have to evaluate them according to (HELDS) Hawaii Early Learning and Development Standards and each of their individualized goals. Therefore the extra compensation makes up for the additional work that special education teachers need to do as opposed to general education teachers.

Would you put in additional time and effort after being promised an incentive then have it taken away? We need to prioritize better. Our students are our future; your child is the future. What are we teaching them? That they are not deserving? That in life, the goal is to become qualified and skilled at what you do but not get compensated for it?

We saw the numbers in what the incentive did. We have seen how it helped teachers switch positions or take a Special Education position. It gave our students qualified teachers; why take that away from them. They deserve a chance at a bright future, and qualified teachers give them that chance, but qualified teachers will not stay unless they get paid for their hard work.

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2022 7:51:26 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

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

Comments:

I support this measure.

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2022 7:52:42 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Caroline Freudig	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Cruz and committee members,

I am in support of this bill that will secure the differentials for our teachers who teach Special Education, Hawaiian language immersion and geographically hard-to-fill areas. These students need our best and most qualified teachers. Supporting these differentials will ensure that the students have teachers qualified to teach in the areas of Special Education and Hawaiian language immersion. It will also ensure that hard-to-fill areas have a qualified teacher to teach our students in areas that may need a little extra love, support and attention. Please support this bill.

Mahalo,

Caroline Freudig

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2022 7:55:59 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Tammy Holt	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Kieth-Agaran, and members of the Committee,

My name is Tammy Holt and I am writing in support of SB 2820.

I am respectfully writing in support of SB 2820.

Special education, hard to staff and Hawaiian Immersion teacher salary differentials are an invaluable resource to teachers who spend personal time, money and resources to create individualized teaching resources that cannot be bought. Hard to staff areas often require extra time to commute to and from thus costing gas money and wear and tear on personal automobiles.

Furthermore, Hawaiian Immersion teachers and schools must be supported. As educators, we must perpetuate the Native Hawaiian language and culture. In doing so, we are creating learning spaces and relationships where students of Native Hawaiian culture will be supported as stewards of this land, culture, language and home.

Regarding Special education, as a general education kindergarten teacher, I can attest to the fact that many students come to kindergarten with undiagnosed learning disabilities, gross and fine motor skill impairment and behavioral issues. These children are in immediate need of special education services and are often forced to wait long periods of time before their eligibility is determined.

Please, let's continue these salary differentials so that our students can be recipients of quality education provided by highly qualified teachers.

Mahalo for allowing me to testify in support of SB 2820.

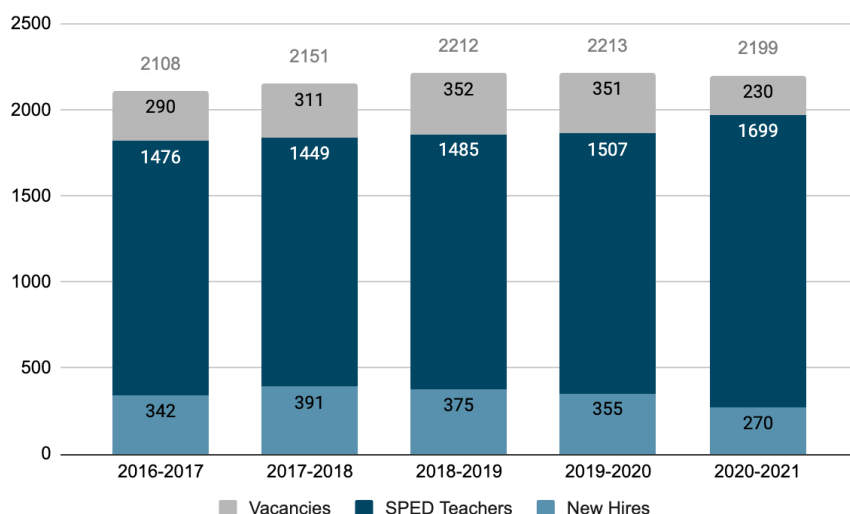
Aloha members of the WAM Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2820 SD1. My name is Janet Kim and I am the UHM Special Education Recruitment Specialist, and I have devoted the last 8 years of my career to looking at how to build and sustain a quality special education teacher workforce across our state. My testimony is submitted as an individual and not as a representative of the University of Hawai‘i.

As part of my dissertation research, I have closely followed data related to our special education workforce needs in Hawaii. The shortage of special education teachers has been perennial, with Hawaii having reported a shortage of teachers in special education every year since 1990 (Cross, 2017). Between 2016-2021, special education positions made up 16% of the teacher workforce, yet 32% of the state’s vacancies each year. Our state needs an average of 2,177 special education teachers each year and has only averaged of 1,870 of positions being filled (85%) since 2016.

In 2019, the Hawaii DOE took a bold step and provided \$10,000 pay differentials for all special education teachers in the state. As a result, the shortage in special education saw dramatic improvements by SY 2020-2021 (see below). Although there was a drop in new hires, more positions were being filled internally - by general education teachers, or licensed special education licensed who had taken other positions and chose to move back into the special education classroom. As a result, the state experienced the largest percentage of special education positions being filled, with 90% of the special education workforce filled with licensed teachers and 95% of positions filled overall. This indicates that not only did these pay differential support filling more positions in the state, it also significantly decreased the number of emergency hires (unlicensed teachers) by 9%.

Special Education Positions, 2016-2021



Note. Data taken from Strategic Plan Dynamic Report, 2016-2021, *Hawaii Department of Education*

The positive impacts these pay differentials have had on our highest areas of need in the state (i.e., special education, Hawaiian language Immersion, and hard-to-staff geographical areas) have become obvious in just a few years. I believe this initiative has done more to support the recruitment to retention pipeline of our teacher workforce than all other initiatives combined. We need to commit to these differentials long-term and establish a bill that removes the constant fear that teachers have had over the past two years that the funding will be taken away. The power of this initiative will become stronger and more effective if we can show that we are committed to funding these differentials long-term. From a recruitment lens, I can not use the pay differentials to help incentivize more individuals into pursuing teacher certification because there is no guarantee the differentials would be there once they graduated. This means we have not yet had the opportunity to even fully capitalize on this type of investment.

Over the last decade, the Hawaii DOE lost more teachers to retirement for SY 2020-2021 than any other year. However, when you look specifically at special education, we had the highest internal retention rates than ever before. This suggests that these pay differentials have saved these high-need fields from what would likely have been a detrimental exodus of our teacher workforce even further. We can not afford to lose these pay differentials at a time when our teachers have been struggling to make it through a single school day. I believe that if that without this bill, we would see a second, and more extreme wave, of teachers leaving the profession next school year. Our children deserve to have a high-quality teacher workforce, which comes from having a stable stream of committed teachers who build upon their skills and experience over their years in the classroom. Therefore, initiatives that support retention of our teachers, especially in these high need, chronically hard-to-staff areas, are crucial to the success of our public education system. We need to prioritize incentives that validate, value, and commit to keeping our teachers long-term. I ask you to please vote in support of SB2819 SD1.

Thank you for your time,

Janet Kim

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2022 8:01:45 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Aoi Shinagawa	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Honorable Chair, Vice Chair and Committee Members,

My name is Aoi Shinagawa I have been a teacher in Ewa Beach for almost three years. I am writing to you today in Strong Support of SB 2820 SD1. I personally have known many people who were forced to start in hard-to-staff communities due to the current system and immediately left their position when eligible. These people always enjoyed their work but found it difficult to either continue the commute or balance the time required of their work with personal responsibilities, such as childcare. There is a high-rate of turnover in hard-to-staff positions and these differentials play a key role in motivating people to apply for and stay in these positions.

It has been proven repeatedly that Hawaii public school teachers are some of the lowest paid in the country, when adjusted for cost of living. When combined with the unique challenges faced by educators in special education and remote areas, this discourages qualified educators from applying for and staying in these positions. This prevents the youth who are in the most need from accessing the same educational opportunities that their able-bodied peers in the city receive. Please support SB 2820 SD1 and support the a high-quality education for all.

Mahalo Nui Loa,

Aoi Shinagawa

Band Director, 'Ilima Intermediate School

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2022 8:07:55 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Jessie Ford	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Testimony in support of **SB2820 SD1**

2/17/2022

Jessie Ford

Molokai High School

To: Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the Committee

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill **SB2820 SD1** (special education & hard-to-fill differentials). The consistency and importance of this funding cannot be understated. Special education jobs have been woefully underfilled for a long time (particularly in hard-to-fill locations); this differential's purpose - to incentivize highly qualified teachers to enter and remain in these positions - is doing its job. More positions are being filled than before, and locally-grown talent is entering teacher preparation programs for special education, which is critical!

Students deserve highly qualified teachers, especially when they are part of a vulnerable population and need services to access education. Services range from specially designed instruction to fully self-contained to skilled nursing, and are extremely critical to be delivered by persons trained and skilled to do so. Students in Hawaii deserve teachers who are dedicated to Hawaii, and to the job of special education, for the long term.

For me, this differential literally kept me in the job last year. I saw myself possibly becoming part of the typical sped teacher attrition rate - transferring out of the job after about 5 years. Teaching special education has been increasingly stressful during the pandemic for several

reasons, not least of all the burden of additional meetings and documentation such as contingency plans. I was feeling burnt out. If I had transferred out of special education, it would have meant a hardship on my fellow teachers, because since we are additionally in a hard-to-fill location, I know my position would likely not be filled quickly. If it was filled by an emergency hire, then my special education colleagues would still have to absorb my caseload, and we already have 12-15 students each. The differential ultimately provided enough rationale and incentive for me to continue on in special education.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill **SB2820 SD1**. Mahalo.

To Whom it May Concern;

I am a Special Education Teacher on the Big Island of Hawaii. I support both bills SB2819SD1 and SB2820SD1. Both are important to hire and retain qualified teachers for Hawaii.

Sincerely,

Charlotte Husen

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2022 8:09:00 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Melanie Pokakaa	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

To Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the Committee,

My name is Melanie Pokakaa, a first grade teacher at Waianae Elementary School. I am writing in support of Sentate Bill 2820 relating to teacher compensation in the form of salary differential pay. 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 pass their contracted 2 years, which leads us back to where we started with teacher shortage.

We are need of the legislation support the teacher differential pay. As a teacher who has been working at Waianae Elementary School for 7 years. We have a huge teacher turnover rate. Every year a large amount of teachers leave our coastline schools due to the teacher pay, or the school socioeconomics. Instead of investing in the local educators that we already have or future educators from our Hawaii Universities, the state inquires with unqualified or out-of-state individuals to work in the educational field. These people go into a teaching line without the certifications to be a teacher.

This Senate Bill SB 2820, teacher differential pay, really hits close to me. This is because I am a teacher on the Waianae Coast who is impacted from the teacher turnover, inefficient funds for our students every year. This differential pay supports teachers like myself but more than anything this differential pay supports our students. With being at a Title 1 school, which is a low income 100% free and reduce breakfast and lunch school, our students need more hands-on; multi-sensory learning. So my differential pay goes towards the purchase of resources and tools that will give these students more tools to learn and remember the content that is being taught. These students that are in these hard to staff schools deserve a fair and equal educational opportunity. These students do not deserve unqualified individuals especially if these individuals do not understand or value our Hawaii values. These students deserve teachers who are willing to put in the years, like myself, to help these underprivileged communities grow and thrive.

We cannot continue to think that students are getting “quality learning time: when open positions are filled with unqualified individuals or long-term substitutes. When there are already are professional in those positions that we could keep by fixing their pay that they deserve. I ask you to please support Senate Bill 2820.

Mahalo for your time.

Sincerely,

Melanie Pokakaa

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2022 8:14:35 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

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

Comments:

Dear Hawaii State Senate,

This is my testimony in support of SB2820. My name is Derek Bishop. I am a 32-year special education teacher veteran at Paauilo Elementary and Intermediate School on the Big Island.

I relocated to Hawaii from California as the special education and hard-to-staff differentials took effect in 2020. These differentials have made all the difference in retaining me in my employment with the State of Hawaii. 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.

It will be very hard to make ends meet without the differentials. I will be more likely to return to California should the State of Hawaii discontinue these incentives to staff critical shortage areas.

I would like to add that the special education differential is warranted, on account of the paperwork and general compliance burdens of the Department of Education's special education practices being much greater than other districts I have worked for on the mainland. A great deal of my personal and weekend time is tied up with special education paperwork, to a degree that I had been unfamiliar with previously.

Please make a greater investment in Hawaii's students and their teachers.

Mahalo,

Derek Bishop

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2022 8:16:55 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
christopher castillo	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the Committee

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2820 SD1 and hope after reading my story that you also push to support it as well.

My name is Chris Castillo. An 8-year teacher at Waianae Elementary School, who also works multiple jobs after school. I am writing about the pay differentials which have really made an impact on whether or not I stay in the profession. The pay differentials were developed to attract teachers in hard-to-staff positions. We as a state push for "Grow your own" programs and building local teachers, but that is not the demographics at most of these schools.

In my own opinion, and 8 years of experience watching teachers come and go, I can say that no one is rushing over to teach here. For many years we have covered positions by hiring from the mainland or hiring TFA-like programs. Where people can pursue teaching, be placed in a classroom as an emergency hire without the teaching experience that many of us have worked for.

When I first started, the hard-to-staff was a bonus of \$3000 that we got at the end of the year which was even less after taxes and then some coming to be about 1,200. That bonus helped pay off some of the debt that I accumulated but not enough. I was spending over 3,000 a year on my classroom, supplies, and my students. Buying fans and water for my classroom to fight the heat, school supplies because my kids came with none, or even food some of my kids could take home or eat during class. But that payout came at the end when I could have used it throughout the year.

Right before the pandemic hit, the amount raised and it was spread amongst our paychecks throughout the year, which gave me a little more breathing room. Until it was in the conversation that would take that away use. That news broke me, and even though I was struggling living on my own I felt like an accomplished adult. I didn't think I would be able to continue teaching in the community I love because of the debt I had accumulated putting my heart and soul into it. If those cuts would have been made, I would have had to leave and try to figure out a "Plan B"

Knowing that my story is not a special one because many teachers are facing this problem, I often think how much longer can we keep going in this circle. Teachers are getting tired of the lack of support, materials, and pay.

A teacher's work conditions are a student's learning conditions.

While teacher pay is an overall problem, this differential was to entice people to come to teach at these schools, but we can't expect them to thrive and to stay if a lot of their paycheck is going into our classrooms and not to themselves.

If we want to keep our teachers in these areas, I implore you to please support SB2820 SD1 not just for this year, but for the many years to come so it is one less thing to deal with as we tackle other issues revolving around teacher retention and supporting our student during a pandemic. Thank you for your time.

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2022 8:17:22 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Kathryn Whitman	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha!

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2820. I am a special education teacher on the Big Island of Hawaii. The differential for SPED teachers and hard to staff districts has had a big impact on my decision to continue teaching in Hawaii. I know many other teachers who are struggling to make it in our economy need every penny to make it work. Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2820.

Mahalo, Kathryn Whitman

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2022 8:19:21 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Sara O'Rourke	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2820.

My husband has been a special education teacher in the DOE since 1994. He puts in numerous hours of his own time each week to provide high quality special education services to his students. Special education teachers deserve to be compensated for this time.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2820. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2022 8:29:04 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

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

Comments:

Testimony in support of SB2820 SD1**2/17/2022****Derek Govin****To: Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the Committee**

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2820 SD1 (special education & hard-to-fill differentials). The consistency and importance of this funding cannot be understated. Special education jobs have been woefully underfilled for a long time (particularly in hard-to-fill locations); this differential's purpose - to incentivize highly qualified teachers to enter and remain in these positions - is doing its job. More positions are being filled than before, and locally-grown talent is entering teacher preparation programs for special education, which is critical!

Students deserve highly qualified teachers, especially when they are part of a vulnerable population and need services to access education. Services range from specially designed instruction to fully self-contained to skilled nursing, and are extremely critical to be delivered by persons trained and skilled to do so. Students in Hawaii deserve teachers who are dedicated to Hawaii, and to the job of special education, for the long term.

For me, this differential literally kept me in the job last year. I saw myself possibly becoming part of the typical sped teacher attrition rate - transferring out of the job after about 5 years. Teaching special education has been increasingly stressful during the pandemic for several reasons, not least of all the burden of additional meetings and documentation such as contingency plans. I was feeling burnt out. If I had transferred out

of special education, it would have meant a hardship on my fellow teachers, because since we are additionally in a hard-to-fill location, I know my position would likely not be filled quickly as a fully self-contained classroom teacher. If it was filled by an emergency hire, then my special education colleagues would still have to absorb my caseload, while supporting my students who display challenges in not only academics, but with behavioral self-regulation as well. The differential ultimately provided enough rationale and incentive for me to continue on in special education.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill SB2820 SD1. Thank you

Derek Govin

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2022 8:34:20 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Shannon Cover	Individual	Comments	No

Comments:

Hi, my name is Shannon Cover, I teach at Waianae Elementary School, and the implementation of the teacher shortage differentials for special education and hard-to-staff geographical locations are key reasons I'm able to continue to afford the cost of living and feel as though my efforts are being fairly compensated. Even with these differentials, many teachers continue to leave island due to the expenses and high expectations. Especially in the area I teach (which I do love), the students took a hard hit during the pandemic. All of the teachers are essentially teaching three grade levels of content in each classroom, and we have to buy a lot of our own supplies for students who can't afford it on their own. Without these differentials, I wouldn't be able to justify the work I put in with the expenditures, and I would be devastated to leave. Please don't take these away.

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2022 8:37:23 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Kileigh Sanchez	Testifying for DOE, Waianae Intermediate	Support	No

Comments:

Please continue to support the teacher compensation through the differentials for hard-to-staff and Hawaiian immersion. These differentials are the reason that my current school in Wai'anae is almost fully staffed. If you take away these differentials from hardworking teachers, you will find that our Leeward coast schools, as well as the primarily Native Hawaiian populations that they serve, are disproportionately affected. If the teachers don't matter to you, which is what a lot of us feel based on our salary and "support" from our current interim Superintendent, please for the love of the keiki, support these differentials.

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2022 8:44:39 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Bernadette I. McGill	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the Committee,
My name is Bernadette McGill, I am writing in support of Senate Bill SB2820 SD1. The differentials help with the cost of living in Hawai'i and teacher retention. Many teachers are leaving the profession due to the high cost of living, work overload, and lack of compensation. Why do we have to beg to keep our differentials year after year for positions that people are not rushing to take because of the difficulties and lack of support these positions deal with. Should I also start taking away the rewards that I give to my students for their hard work and efforts? This way, they will get used to the feeling of being unworthy.
Support SB2820 SD1.

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2022 8:51:54 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Kari	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the Committee,

My name is Kari and I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2820 SD1. I have been a special education teacher in Hawaii for 6 years. The differential pay we receive is essential. Special Educators have more paperwork, late after school meetings, and work more closely with families on a regular basis. I have meetings and staffings weekly, that almost always go past our 3:00 work time. I also have at least 10 IEP meetings a year that go well past 4:00. Our families and students with disabilities have needs that demand our attention and care. At one time I had 18 students on my caseload. The differential will help us to be able to hire more Special Education Teachers and lessen the load for all of us who are already putting in extra time and work to keep up.

It is so hard to survive in Hawaii on our current pay, if we aren't given this differential pay, I'm not sure I can afford to live and teach here anymore. Please continue to help us and support us by continuing to provide the differential pay.

Thanks for your time and consideration,

Kari Odo

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2022 8:56:53 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

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

Comments:

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee:

I am writing to voice my strong support of SB2820.

I am a teacher at Waikoloa Elementary and Middle School, which is considered a hard-to-staff area. As such, we receive a \$5000 differential. This differential has made it possible for me to pay for my daughter's college tuition without either of us having to take out a student loan. She is about to graduate but has applied to graduate school, and depending on which school she chooses, I anticipate continuing to pay a ridiculous amount of money in tuition and expenses. Although \$5000 may not seem like a large amount to some, it has made a tremendous difference in our lives because it has kept us from having to go into student loan debt.

I'm sure there are many stories out there from teachers who receive this differential pay, and while each person's scenario is different, the bottom line is that any extra money in our paycheck helps the families living in the country's most expensive state, but it also allows us to put money BACK into the economy because we have more expendable income. It really is a win-win situation if this differential continues.

Teachers have never worked harder than we currently are, and I truly believe that if our paychecks are reduced during a time when our workload has quadrupled, we will indeed lose educators when we most need them. We have already lost several teachers at my school this year- so imagine those who are on the fence about whether to stay or go- if their paychecks are reduced, why would they stay? It is imperative that our paychecks are not reduced and that the shortage differentials continue to receive funding.

Please support SB2820, and thank you in advance for caring for Hawaii's teachers!

Elizabeth Noetzel

7th Grade ELA, Waikoloa Elementary and Middle School

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2022 8:57:33 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Briann Starkey	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

To Whom It May Concern,

I, Briann Starkey, am a teacher at Kualapuu Public Conversion Charter School on Moloka'i, I write in support of Bill SB 2820, 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 16 years of which I have moved only 7 step increases to date. Grateful for the the Negotiations committee for including the 3% step increases in our last contract. With the Compression rate, my pay gap is resulting almost \$7,700 of where I should be on the rating scale according to my years of service.

There is, however, an economic hardship even with being a teacher especially with living on a small tiny island such Moloka'i. Seven thousand dollars a year is a lot and so is the daily cost of living.

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,

Briann Starkey

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2022 8:59:42 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

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

Comments:

To: Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the Committee

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2820 SD1 (special education & hard-to-fill differentials). The consistency and importance of this funding cannot be understated. Special education jobs have been woefully underfilled for a long time (particularly in hard-to-fill locations); this differential's purpose - to incentivize highly qualified teachers to enter and remain in these positions - is doing its job. More positions are being filled than before, and locally-grown talent is entering teacher preparation programs for special education, which is critical!

Students deserve highly qualified teachers, especially when they are part of a vulnerable population and need services to access education. Services range from specially designed instruction to fully self-contained to skilled nursing, and are extremely critical to be delivered by persons trained and skilled to do so. Students in Hawaii deserve teachers who are dedicated to Hawaii, and to the job of special education, for the long term.

Do you want qualified sped teachers or newbies who cannot write a proper IEP. Pay us a living wage as we cannot live off any less that we get now. For this level of education and the cost of rent it is ridiculous to think the differentials would go away. INFLATION, we need more not less. If you do not support the differential then you will have lost many qualified teachers to better paying jobs. Support teacher differentials.

Sincerely

John Van Plantinga

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2022 9:16:52 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

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 SB2820 D1. My name is Evelyn Gamez, and I teach special education for a self-contained classroom at Maui High School. I've been teaching in this position since 2015.

Since the inception of the differentials in 2020 sped teacher positions in Hawaii seem to have stabilized. The differentials helped to decrease vacancies by 66% between 2019-2020 SY to 2020-2021 SY. Personally, having that pay increase has deterred me from leaving the classroom and pursuing a position with the district as a BCBA.

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.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2820 D1.

Mahalo for your time,

Evelyn Gamez

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2022 9:20:21 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Natalia Sandoval	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

My name is Natalia Sandoval and I am writing in support of maintaining the teacher differentials for SPED, Hawaiian Imersion, and Hard to Fill areas.

I have been a special education teacher for the HI DOE for the past 16 years, which hasn't been easy to do. Before the differentials, I had seriously considered going back to school, taking on more student debt, and changing careers. In fact, my husband did just that. In 2018 he left his career as a high school special education teacher for some of our most severe students, and joined the labor force. That's right, he became a laborer. Why? Because it paid him double what he was currently making as a special education teacher, and allowed our ohana to stay here in Hawaii, instead of moving to the mainland.

My husband has a masters degree in special education and works as a full time laborer. It's not something that's his passion, but its something he had to do.

When the differentials were put in place, it took so much pressure off of us financially. We were able to start saving a little money here and there. We were able to breathe in our budget. Imagine, we were living off \$500 every two weeks, for a family of 4. That's insane!!

The differentials literally helped me stay in the special education field because it made me feel a bit more valued.

Mahalo,

Natalia Sandoval, MA SPED, NBCT

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2022 9:24:36 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Shane	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha.

Mahalo for your time in considering a greater sense of equality for our keiki, 'ohana and educational staff by considering this bill 2820 SD1.

As an educator of 17 years, from the Big Island, mainlan, Philippines and to Australia. I have always done my best as well as surrounded by colleagues who provided their best, towards our keiki, our future. Here in Hawaii we hold a special lens towards our young haumana. The community always doing its best to provide and guide, to lead by example.

Funding in, for and with education has always been a hot topic. The simplest view is that in any industry or business, if provided with adequate resources which are responsibly used, that industry or business thrives. Education too thrives from resources. Whether those resources provide experience, extra guidance, furthered education or materials; our keiki benefit. In turn, we benefit as our societies continue to evolve and grow towards the light we choose to shine.

A shortage of qualified, educated personnel in the field of education has caused a delay in our educational "industry". For years, across many states this is evident. If we are to lead the way by becoming a state truly focused on its people, we too will recognize where we can allocate our resources. Do we allocate them to a public works project which possibly has mismanaged funds and that looks for the cheapest bid, yielding the poorest quality outcome? Do we allocate our states resources towards program, guides and teachers? Teachers who will be able to offer support and guidance to our haumana. Support beyond the 7-3 school day. Support that is tailored towards the student whose needs far exceed the status quo "curricula of Math and ELA".

By supporting SB2820 SD1, ensuring that some resources are allocated to retaining quality educators or inspiring new ones to embark upon the road of teaching; we will help lead the way and guide our future as well the world by showing that people, children, society comes first. This comes first over our pursuit of political and financial gains.

I urge and suggest for you to consider the outcome of your decisions with SB2820 SD1

Mahalo for your time.

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

RE: SB 2820, SD1 – RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2022

Chair Dela Cruz, and Members of the Committee:

I, Laverne Moore, special education teacher at McKinley High School, strongly supports SB 2820, SD1, relating to teacher compensation. This bill appropriates funds for various teacher differentials to help address various labor shortages. These shortages are in the areas of special education, hard-to-staff geographic locations, and Hawaiian language immersion programs.

Online teaching has been the most challenging in my 53 years of teaching. Add to it, SPED state and federal mandates, procedures, paper work, training and retraining, reevaluation, eligibility and IEP meetings makes one ask, why am I still teaching?

To be honest, the \$10,000.00 differential is a means of adding to my high three, and as I say to my peers, it pays us for dealing with the hardship and mandates that are placed on special education teachers.

My co-workers need the differential because they are starting out in their careers, have college loans, living paycheck to paycheck, working two or more jobs after school or on the weekends.

We need the legislature's help to end the teacher shortage crisis and retain our license and experienced teachers by funding these differentials for our hardest-to-staff positions, in special education, and in Hawaiian immersion.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide written testimony and do support this needed legislation.

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2022 9:27:45 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
RONALD G STEBEN	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Testimony in support of SB2820 SD1**Date:2/17//2022****name:Ronald Steben****School:Maui High School****To: Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the Committee**

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2820 SD1 (special education & hard-to-fill differentials). The consistency and importance of this funding cannot be understated. Special education jobs have been woefully underfilled for a long time (particularly in hard-to-fill locations); this differential's purpose - to incentivize highly qualified teachers to enter and remain in these positions - is doing its job. More positions are being filled than before, and locally-grown talent is entering teacher preparation programs for special education, which is critical!

Students deserve highly qualified teachers, especially when they are part of a vulnerable population and need services to access education. Services range from specially designed instruction to fully self-contained to skilled nursing, and are extremely critical to be delivered by persons trained and skilled to do so. Students in Hawaii deserve teachers who are dedicated to Hawaii, and to the job of special education, for the long term.

For me, this differential literally kept me in the job last year. I saw myself possibly becoming part of the typical sped teacher attrition rate - transferring out of the job after about 5 years. Teaching special education has been increasingly stressful during the

pandemic for several reasons, not least of all the burden of additional meetings and documentation such as contingency plans. I was feeling burnt out. If I had transferred out of special education, it would have meant a hardship on my fellow teachers, because since we are additionally in a hard-to-fill location, I know my position would likely not be filled quickly. If it was filled by an emergency hire, then my special education colleagues would still have to absorb my caseload, and we already have 12-15 students each. The differential ultimately provided enough rationale and incentive for me to continue on in special education.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill SB2820 SD1. Mahalo.

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2022 9:30:40 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Jody K Africa Aguilar	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Testimony in support of SB2820 SD1**Date: 2/17/22****Name Jody K. Africa Aguilar****School: Maui High School****To: Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the Committee**

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2820 SD1 (special education & hard-to-fill differentials). The consistency and importance of this funding cannot be understated. Special education jobs have been woefully underfilled for a long time (particularly in hard-to-fill locations); this differential's purpose - to recognize and give incentives to highly qualified teachers to enter and remain in these positions - is doing its job. More positions are being filled than before, and locally-grown talent is entering teacher preparation programs for special education, which is critical!

Students deserve highly qualified teachers, especially when they are part of a vulnerable population and need services to access education. Services range from specially designed instruction to fully self-contained to skilled nursing, and are extremely critical to be delivered by persons trained and skilled to do so. Students in Hawaii deserve teachers who are dedicated to Hawaii, and to the job of special education, for the long term.

For me, this differential is appreciated and long overdue. I have been teaching in a Special education teaching line since 2004! Long before incentives, even prep periods, and somehow many of us have managed to support our students in their learning progress.

Teaching special education has been increasingly stressful during the pandemic for several reasons, not least of all the burden of additional meetings and many more documentation tasks for special education teachers to complete with deadlines such as contingency plans, communication logs, and more..

If incentives do not continue special education teaching positions will likely not be filled. If it was filled by an emergency hire, then my special education colleagues would still have to absorb my caseload, and we already have 12-15 students each. The differential ultimately provided enough rationale and incentive for me to continue on in special education.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill SB2820 SD1. Mahalo.

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2022 9:33:02 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Mia-Pia Cummins-VanHerreweghe	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2820 SD1

I am a science teacher at Konawaeana Middle School in Kealahou. I have been a teacher for the last 14 years, have a Master's in Education, an advanced teaching license, and am highly qualified in Math, Biology, and Chemistry. I have been teaching at this school for 11 years by choice, as I live in the same community. This year alone, our school lost 4 teachers who left and moved back to the mainland because of not being able to make ends meet here on a teacher salary., even after the salary differential. This is hurting our students as we cannot teach them as successfully as we should. It is also hurting the positive morale of teachers.

Our rural schools need good teachers who stay at our schools because they can afford to live in our community.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2820 SD1.

Thank you for your consideration,

Mia-Pia Cummins-VanHerreweghe

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2022 9:33:42 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Brandi Rawlins	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2820. My name is Puanani Rawlins and I am a Hawaiian immersion kindergarten teacher at Ke Kula Kaiapuni o Kualapu'u on Molokai.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2820, relating to teacher compensation (teacher differentials), in order to properly and morally support kumu financially.

Mahalo nui for this opportunity to testify to you folks today.

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2022 9:54:11 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Uluhane Waialeale	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Welina ke aloha e Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the Committee

‘O au nō ‘o Uluhane Waialeale no ka ‘āina wehiwehi o Moloka‘i nui a Hina. He kumu au ma ke Kula Kaiapuni o Kualapu‘u a a‘o au i ka Papa ‘Ekahi. I am testifying today in support of Bill SB2820 to fund classroom teacher shortage differentials for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

As a Hawaiian language immersion teacher living in a hard-to-staff geographical location, I have witnessed the many challenges and struggles of teacher shortages in our own Hawaiian language immersion program as well as throughout the entire island. We have 1 Hawaiian language immersion program on Moloka‘i and still it has been very difficult to recruit and retain highly qualified teachers for our students. I have taught many years of combination classes with classroom sizes of up to 31 students.

Teaching in a Hawaiian language immersion program can require double or even triple the workload of your average teacher in a regular English classroom. We spend countless hours, days, nights and weekends translating curriculum, books, resources, and prepping many other resources that are not always readily available in Hawaiian language. The amount of time, work and energy we put into our Hawaiian language immersion program can feel so overwhelming, burdensome and endless.

We continue to do what we do because of our aloha, commitment and passion to perpetuate our mother tongue here in Hawai‘i. E ola ka ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i!!! The work is hard and the days are long, but we love what we do and we will continue to do whatever it takes to provide quality instruction and education for our keiki in the Hawaiian language immersion program. The shortage differential was the first time that we have ever been compensated or recognized for doing any additional duties, responsibilities and time worked. This extra compensation has been a blessing and answered prayer to help us in our financial struggles in order to make ends meet for our families. Ending this extra compensation would be devastating to all of us who are already working 2 or more jobs to support our families.

Moloka‘i has one of the highest costs of living in the state of Hawai‘i and we pay double or even triple the price of goods, services and other important necessities. Paying almost \$6.00 for gas or over \$12.00 for milk can leave a huge hole in your pocket and the struggle is very real for many families on our island. Our stores have raised the price many times for products and groceries due to the rising cost of the shipment and the barge. Without any extra compensation for living in a hard-to-staff geographical location, it will be almost impossible to end teacher shortages on our island.

In closing, I humbly request your support to continue funding our teacher differentials so we can continue the quality of education our keiki deserve and to help us end our teacher shortages in these special programs and hard-to-staff geographical locations. Mahalo palena ‘ole i ko ‘oukou ho‘olohe ‘ana mai i ko‘u mau mana‘o kāko‘o i kēia lā. Thank you so much for this opportunity to testify. I humbly ask you to please vote in support for Senate Bill 2820. A hui hou kākou ma ka wā kūpono a ke Akua pū.

‘O wau iho nō me ka ha‘aha‘a a me ke kāko‘o mau,

Uluhuni Waialeale

Kualapu‘u Public Conversion Charter School

Ke Kula Kaiapuni O Kualapu‘u

Moloka‘i, Hawai‘i

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2022 9:55:06 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Christine Ornellas	Testifying for an HSTA member and public servant	Support	No

Comments:

I have been a regular education teacher for 16 years. Please pass this bill so that teachers can finally be paid the salary we are supposed to be paid based on our years of experience. We need to pass these long overdue updates to our pay schedule so they will be in place for current and future teachers. Teacher retention is a problematic issue and adjusting teacher salaries to compensate professionals for their years of experience, will encourage teachers to stay in the profession.

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2022 9:56:13 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Lara Mangieri	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support this bill wholeheartedly. Teachers deserve compensation for the work they do.

Testimony in support of **SB2820 SD1**

February 16, 2022

Lisa Bolton

Maui High School

Maui, HI

To: Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the Committee

I am submitting written testimony in support of Senate Bill **SB2820 SD1** (special education & hard-to-fill differentials). There are not enough words to explain WHY the differential for Special Education teachers needs to remain in place. Let me state the first and most important reason- This segment of our student population deserves the best that Hawaii has to offer. They are as deserving a quality education as their non-disabled peers. Without this funding there will be a mass exodus of highly qualified teachers.

This segment of our student population requires more intensive services. This means that they require educators who have gone the extra mile to obtain the necessary knowledge and credentials to work, train and educate them. Special education teachers attend additional classes to serve this population in both education and medical needs.

I have been teaching for twenty-one years and have acquired my teacher credentials in Special Education, a Masters of Education in Educational Administration and Administrative credentials in California. I am blessed to serve a student population who had traditionally been neglected and chose Maui, Hawaii to complete my career. Even with the differential I am making less than half of what I was earning in California. I am currently making less per month than when I began teaching twenty-one years ago. I do this because I have a passion to teach those students who need extra patience, love and knowledge. If this differential is cut I will have to leave the teaching profession. This breaks my heart as I love to teach and am a gifted educator.

I have had to pick up a second job serving at Maui Brew Co. and now am teaching for Moreland University in their teacher credentialing program. Education is every part of the fabric of my being. If the differential is cut from Special Education I will have to cease teaching for the HDOE. I will have no choice. I am a single mother and helping my daughter to attend college. I implore you to maintain the status of funding for special education. Having experienced teachers helps to narrow the gap between the non-disabled and the disabled.

Please continue to give our keiki the best that they deserve.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill **SB2820 SD1**.

Mahalo Nui Loa,

Lisa Bolton, Special Education Teacher

Maui High School, Maui, HI

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2022 9:57:44 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
cheryl goo	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Testimony in support of **SB2820 SD1**

2/17/2022

Cheryl Goo

Kanoelani Elementart

To: Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the Committee

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill **SB2820 SD1** (special education & hard-to-fill differentials). The consistency and importance of this funding cannot be understated. Special education jobs have been woefully underfilled for a long time (particularly in hard-to-fill locations); this differential's purpose - to incentivize highly qualified teachers to enter and remain in these positions - is doing its job. More positions are being filled than before, and locally-grown talent is entering teacher preparation programs for special education, which is critical!

Students deserve highly qualified teachers, especially when they are part of a vulnerable population and need services to access education. Services range from specially designed instruction to fully self-contained to skilled nursing, and are extremely critical to be delivered by persons trained and skilled to do so. Students in Hawaii deserve teachers who are dedicated to Hawaii, and to the job of special education, for the long term.

For me, this differential literally kept me in the job last year. I saw myself possibly becoming part of the typical sped teacher attrition rate - transferring out of the job after about 5 years. Teaching special education has been increasingly stressful during the pandemic for several

reasons, not least of all the burden of additional meetings and documentation such as contingency plans. I was feeling burnt out. If I had transferred out of special education, it would have meant a hardship on my fellow teachers, because since we are additionally in a hard-to-fill location, I know my position would likely not be filled quickly. If it was filled by an emergency hire, then my special education colleagues would still have to absorb my caseload, and we already have 14 students each. The differential ultimately provided enough rationale and incentive for me to continue on in special education.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill **SB2820 SD1**. Mahalo.

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2022 9:58:09 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha,

Thank you for taking the time to consider this bill that will help our schools have more qualified teachers in the Special Education classes. When I started teaching special education, I was an emergency hire, which is common in special education classes because the positions are hard to fill. It struck me as absurd that the students who have the biggest needs were being taught by the teachers that were the least qualified. Since I started, I received a Masters of Education in Teaching and became highly qualified, but I still feel that my students during the first 2 years of my teaching deserved someone who was better prepared to handle their needs.

This bill will help support keeping highly qualified teachers in the Special Education classroom and will incentivize having teachers become highly qualified to support our students with a higher level of needs. Please pass this bill to help us as educators have the resources we need to best help our students in special education settings.

Mahalo,

Kekoa Michael Bay

Pearl City High School

Special Education / Science.

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2022 10:00:50 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Stephanie Po Yi Ho	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2820. Teachers are underpaid and we are seeing less interest in the profession. I fear that The Great Resignation will have a tremendous effect on teachers leaving our children without qualified teachers. The future of Hawaii depends on this bill to support the educators. Thank the committee for the opportunity to testify.

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2022 10:02:59 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Keanuenue Gannet	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2820 SD1.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill SB2820 SD1.

LATE

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2022 10:23:55 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Kaleo Waiau	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Testimony in support of SB2820 SD1

Date: 02/17/2022

Name: Kaleo Waia'u

School: Maui High School

To: Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the Committee

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2820 SD1 (special education & hard-to-fill differentials). You have heard the concerns raised regarding this bill by numerous educators and supporters. My mother taught at Hilo High School before there was even a Union and I remember how it was back then. Teachers do not need to be pushed to the side to ensure another “more Important concern” is addressed. This is the important concern. I am a special education teacher. I bankrole family of 17 and the differential is MUST!

“The consistency and importance of this funding cannot be understated. Special education jobs have been woefully underfilled for a long time (particularly in hard-to-fill locations); this differential’s purpose - to incentivize highly qualified teachers to enter and remain in these positions - is doing its job. More positions are being filled than before, and locally-grown talent is entering teacher preparation programs for special education, which is critical!

Students deserve highly qualified teachers, especially when they are part of a vulnerable population and need services to access education. Services range from specially designed instruction to fully self-contained to skilled nursing, and are extremely critical to be delivered by persons trained and skilled to do so. Students in Hawaii deserve teachers who are dedicated to Hawaii, and to the job of special education, for the long term.

For many, this differential literally kept me in the job last year. I saw myself possibly becoming part of the typical sped teacher attrition rate - transferring out of the job after about 5 years. Teaching special education has been increasingly stressful during the pandemic for several reasons, not least of all the burden of additional meetings and documentation such as contingency plans. I was feeling burnt out. If I had transferred out of special education, it would have meant a hardship on my fellow teachers, because since we are additionally in a hard-to-fill location, I know my position would likely not be filled quickly. If it was filled by an emergency hire, then my special education colleagues would still have to absorb my caseload, and we already have 12-15 students each. The differential ultimately provided enough rationale and incentive for me to continue on in special education.”

Please support the effort to pass this bill! Please vote in support of Senate Bill SB2820 SD1. Mahalo.

LATE

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2022 10:28:28 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Trinity Soares	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the committee:

I thank you for giving me, Trinity Soares, a former Leeward Coast student who is now a high-schooler attending school in Manoa, the opportunity to give my testimony in support of Senate Bill 2820. This bill would address the shortage of funding for differentials currently in place.

This matter is not to be taken lightly, and I'm grateful for the time and energy you are putting in to address it.

To begin, SB 2820 would allow the differentials currently in place such as special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff areas to receive secure funding.

I, myself, was a former student of a school that was a hard-to-staff school in the Leeward Coast. An old teacher of mine told me that by the time I was in school, they'd had an almost entirely new staff. And I'd noticed this too. As I progressed through the years, new teachers had been coming in and older teachers had been leaving. I noticed the change immediately. I'd been sad when a teacher I wanted got moved around into a different grade--or when they'd left the school.

I dread the moment where good teachers will need to leave the school and younger students won't get to experience learning in their class. Senate Bill 2820 is an incentive to keep needed teachers at these schools.

In conclusion, SB 2820 would allow the vacancies to be filled and prevent any more from opening.

With each of these points in mind, I, Trinity Soares, request that you please vote in support of Senate Bill 2820.

LATE

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2022 11:18:16 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Brook Cretton	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

My name is Brook Cretton. I have been a Special Education teacher here at King Kekaulike High School for 8 years. We all know that the teacher shortage is a crisis in Hawaii and I believe the SB2820 SD1 pay differential for SPED, Hawaiian Immersion, and hard to staff areas has been beneficial in helping to alleviate that ailment afflicting our keiki. Throughout the previous years I have seen so many SPED teachers get hired and then leave because they realize that they are not able to make ends meet here with this career.

These vacancies in our school systems have had effects beyond just losing that one teacher. Because SPED teachers have variance lists with a caseload of students that they are care coordinators for, when vacancies occur, more students are added to our caseloads. This added burden makes it more difficult to provide adequate care to each student and their IEP and leaves us more open to due processes, which further deplete our resources. The added stress of the large caseloads and being spread thin with additional paperwork and IEP meetings also produces more burnout and SPED teachers leaving. It becomes a cycle with the ones being the most affected those struggling students who are getting even further behind and being more prone to dropping out, illiteracy, limited options, and uncertain futures.

I believe this stipend is an intervention that has slowed this cycle and secured many more long term committed SPED teachers ensuring that our most challenged and needy keiki are getting the same opportunities in life as their peers. I hope that this bill passes so that we can continue to have the resources and motivated personnel to support these students to our fullest capacity.

LATE

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2022 12:21:39 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Stacy	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Special education is a hard to staff area with high turnover rates. Differentials have helped with recruitment and retention. Teacher retention is key. Our vulnerable population deserve qualified and experienced teachers.

LATE

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2022 1:26:32 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Jamie Lai	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Teachers simply deserve to be compensated for their hard work! Teachers have one of the most important professions in the world, yet they get paid the least for educating children of the future. Teaching is one of the hardest jobs out there and they should be compensated! They also have to deal with problematic students, conferencing with parents, and the list is endless. Please support and pay our teachers what they deserve.

LATE

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2022 8:00:18 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Karol Wack	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Distinguished Members of the Legislature,

I am writing in support of bills SB2820 SD1 and SB2819 SD1 regarding teacher differentials and compression. Please excuse me for including both bills in this testimony, but it is 8pm and I was at school until 5pm completing paperwork for an IEP and am not only physically and mentally exhausted but feel defeated and weary beyond what I thought was possible. You see, teaching a group of young students with special needs during a pandemic is the most stressful, exhausting and challenging thing I've ever done. I love teaching but the challenges of teaching at this time paired with the continual threat of losing the shortage differentials is taking its toll.

I've been so grateful for the differentials, they have enabled me to support myself. Without them, I would have to leave teaching for another profession. I would probably be wise to leave, as I don't know how much more I can take. I love working with and for my students, school, administration, colleagues and community. I arrive at school before 7am and stay past 4pm, with work regularly extending into nights, weekends and holiday breaks. It is what teachers do, we are dedicated and continually give, despite the challenges.

Please support us in receiving a livable wage, our keiki deserve dedicated teachers for a better tomorrow.

Mahalo for the opportunity to share my testimony. I hope you will stand with and for our keiki by providing teachers with what we need to continue serving.

Sincerely,

Karol Wack

Special Education Teacher

Honoka'a Elementary School

LATE

SB-2820-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/18/2022 7:49:22 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/18/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Tracy Ann K Davis	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

February 18, 2022

Aloha "Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the Committee,"

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2820 SD1.

My name is Tracy Ann K Davis and I am a 4th grade teacher at Kaunakakai Elementary School on the island of Molokai. I am writing in favor of supporting Senate Bill SB2820 SD1. Your actions can help keep teachers invested in their profession. The cost of living and expenses are the highest in our country and with your support this bill will ensure that teachers keep their jobs, stay until they retire, continue living in Hawaii, and stay passionate about why they chose to be teachers in the first place. Teachers invest thousands of dollars and hours to do what they are passionate about, shouldn't you do that for them to?. Isn't our keiki worth it?

I appreciate all the hard work you have put in, to support the future leaders of Hawaii, by helping educators stay invested. I humbly ask that you please vote in support of Senate Bill SB2820 SD1.

Mahalo to your committee for doing all you can to support the educators of Hawaii. It is evident that educators shape the future through our children and with your support you can help keep teachers here in Hawaii and employed.

Mahalo Nui Loa,
Kumu Tracy Ann K Davis

4th grade teacher