

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



CRAIG K. HIRAI
DIRECTOR

GLORIA CHANG
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

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

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

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

WRITTEN ONLY
TESTIMONY BY CRAIG K. HIRAI
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
ON
SENATE BILL NO. 2820

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

RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.



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

Date: 01/28/2022

Time: 03:00 PM

Location: CR 229 & Videoconference

Committee: Senate Education

Department: Education

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

Title of Bill: SB 2820 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION.

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

Department's Position:

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

Similar to school districts throughout the United States, 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.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on SB 2820.

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

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

The State Public Charter School Commission ("Commission") appreciates the opportunity to submit this testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT OF SB 2820**. This measure appropriates funding for classroom shortage teacher differentials for the areas of special education, hard-to-staff geographic locations, and Hawaiian language immersion programs.

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

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

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

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.



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

January 27, 2022

TO: Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Chair
Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Education

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

SUBJECT: **Measure:** S.B. No. 2820 – RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION
Hearing Date: Friday January 28, 2022
Time: 3:00 p.m.
Location: Videoconference

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

EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON EARLY LEARNING'S POSITION: Support the Intent

Aloha. I am Coleen Momohara, Interim Director of the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL). EOEL supports the intent of S.B. No. 2820 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.

Recruitment and retention of qualified teachers is critical to the success of implementing high quality prekindergarten programs. The State's teacher shortage also impacts EOEL's Public Pre-Kindergarten programs, particularly in rural and remote areas. This bill may provide support towards recruitment and retention efforts. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

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

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

SB 2820 – RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

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

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

The University of Hawaii at Mānoa, College of Education supports the intent of SB 2820 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.



S E A C
Special Education Advisory Council
1010 Richards Street Honolulu, HI 96813
Phone: 586-8126 Fax: 586-8129
email: spin@doh.hawaii.gov
January 28, 2022

**Special Education
Advisory Council**

Ms. Martha Guinan, *Chair*
Ms. Susan Wood, *Vice Chair*

Ms. Sara Alimoot
Ms. Virginia Beringer
Ms. Mary Brogan
Ms. Deborah Cheeseman
Ms. Annette Cooper
Ms. Shana Cruz
Mr. Mark Disher
Ms. Mai Hall
Ms. Melissa Harper Osai
Dr. Kurt Humphrey
Mr. Kerry Iwashita
Ms. Melissa Johnson
Ms. Tina King
Ms. Jennifer Leoiki-Drino
Ms. Cheryl Matthews
Dr. Paul Meng
Ms. Kiele Pennington
Ms. Carrie Pisciotto
Ms. Kau'i Rezentes
Ms. Rosie Rowe
Ms. Ivalee Sinclair
Mr. Steven Vannatta
Ms. Lisa Vegas
Ms. Paula Whitaker
Ms. Jasmine Williams
Ms. Susan Wood

Ms. Annie Kalama, *liaison to
the Superintendent*
Ms. Wendy Nakasone-Kalani,
*liaison to the military commu-
nity*

Amanda Kaahanui, Staff
Susan Rocco, Staff

Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Chair
Committee on Education
State Capitol
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: SB 2820 - RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

Dear Chair Kidani and Members of the Committee,

The Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC), Hawaii's State Advisory Panel under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), **strongly supports** SB 2820 which appropriates funds for pay differentials for hard to fill teacher positions.

Pay differentials for classroom teachers in special education was first instituted in January 2020 as a means of addressing a decades-long chronic shortage of qualified teachers for the most vulnerable student population. All evidence has pointed to the fact that this program has been highly effective in recruiting and retaining qualified special education teachers over the past two years. Providing stable funding for these pay differentials is far less costly in the long run than the disruption to teacher recruitment, teacher retention, and above all student performance should these pay differentials be discontinued.

Teacher recruitment and retention. As evidenced by data from HSTA and the Office of Talent Management, as well as many testimonies received from teachers in the SY 20-21, the special education teacher pay differential was a major factor in motivating more teachers to fill vacant special education classroom positions (a 43% *increase* over the previous year). SY 20-21 also saw a 28% *decrease* in the number of teachers leaving special education for a general education position. No one doubts that these gains in recruiting and retaining teachers are likely to be lost, if the extra compensation is withdrawn.

A February 2019 presentation by Education Week for National Public Radio shared a worrisome trend that the number of special education teachers nationally has dropped by more than 17 percent over the past decade--a trend likely to have been exacerbated by the last two years



of the pandemic. This national shortage makes it harder to recruit qualified teachers who are willing to take on the extra time and paperwork demanded in special education, especially if we are unable to offer additional compensation. A likely outcome of not offering a differential to this shortage category is what Education Week refers to as a “quality shortage” where a higher percentage of special education teachers in the state are not fully qualified. In addition, the cost of not retaining teachers can include an average of \$20,000 per new hire, including expenses related to separation, recruiting, hiring and training new teachers (Learning Policy Institute, 2017).

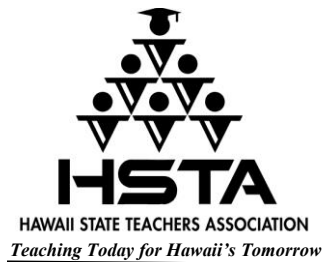
Student achievement. By far the greatest costs of not continuing the pay differential would be borne by the special education students themselves. High-quality teachers have the potential to provide substantially higher quality classroom education. A lack or shortage of qualified teachers will compound the already substantial achievement gap. Our special education students have arguably suffered greater academic losses than their peers during the past two years of the pandemic. They need the stability of teachers who know their individualized needs and have the skills to help them back on the path to positive academic and functional outcomes.

Mahalo for this opportunity to submit testimony in support of SB 2820. If you have any questions, we are happy to answer them.

Respectfully,

Martha Guinan
Chair

Ivalee Sinclair
Legislative Committee Chair



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

Osa Tui, Jr.
President

Logan Okita.
Vice President

Lisa Morrison
Secretary-Treasurer

Wilbert Holck
Executive Director

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

RE: SB 2820 – RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, JANUARY 28, 2022

OSA TUI, JR., PRESIDENT
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Chair Kidani and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association **strongly supports SB 2820**, 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 do ask for one amendment. The charter school commission does not have the authority to engage in negotiations with the Hawaii State Teachers Association BU5. The proper negotiating entity would be each public charter school's governing board. However, please do appropriate funds separately for the Department of Education and BU 5 members at public charter schools, so that charter schools do get those funds to provide differentials for their teachers in the selected areas. 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 the department of education to rely on emergency hires and long-term substitute



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Executive Director

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.



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

January 28, 2022

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

We support SB 2820, 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	Kaua'i Ho'okele Council
American Civil Liberties Union	Keiki to Career Kaua'i
Alliance for Place Based Learning	Kupu A'e
*Castle Complex Community Council	*Leaders for the Next Generation
Coalition for Children with Special Needs	Learning First
Education Institute of Hawai'i	McREL's Pacific Center for Changing the Odds
*Faith Action for Community Equity	Native Hawaiian Education Council
Fresh Leadership LLC	Our Public School
Girl Scouts Hawaii	*Pacific Resources for Education and Learning
Harold K.L. Castle Foundation	*Parents and Children Together
*HawaiiKidsCAN	*Parents for Public Schools Hawai'i
*Hawai'i Afterschool Alliance	Special Education Provider Alliance
*Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice	*Teach for America
*Hawai'i Association of School Psychologists	The Learning Coalition
Hawai'i Athletic League of Scholars	US PACOM
*Hawai'i Children's Action Network	University of Hawai'i College of Education
Hawai'i Nutrition and Physical Activity Coalition	<i>Voting Members (*) Voting member organizations vote on action items while individual and non-voting participants may collaborate on all efforts within the coalition.</i>
Hawai'i Scholars for Education and Social Justice	
* Hawai'i State PTSA	
Hawai'i State Student Council	
Hawai'i State Teachers Association	
Hawai'i P-20	
Hawai'i 3Rs	
*Hawai'i Youth Service	
Head Start Collaboration Office	
It's All About Kids	
*INPEACE	
Joint Venture Education Forum	
Junior Achievement of Hawaii	
Kamehameha Schools	
Kanu Hawai'i	



SENATE BILL 2820, RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

JANUARY 28, 2022 · SENATE EDUCATION
COMMITTEE · CHAIR SEN. MICHELLE N. KIDANI

POSITION: Support.

RATIONALE: The Democratic Party of Hawai'i Education Caucus supports SB 2820, 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 Kidani, Chair
Senator Kim, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Education

Re: **SB 2820, Relating to teacher compensation**
3:00 PM, January 28, 2022

Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and committee members,

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

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON
EDUCATION

RE: SB 2820 - RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, JANUARY 28, 2022

MITZIE HIGA, LEGISLATIVE CHAIR
DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF HAWAII LABOR CAUCUS

Chair Kidani and Members of the Committee:

The Democratic Party of Hawaii Labor Caucus **supports SB 2820**, 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.

FROM THE PERSONAL DESK OF JULIE REYES ODA

I am Julie Reyes Oda, math teacher, and department head at Nānākuli High and Intermediate School and HSTA Leeward President. Leeward District covers Pearl City to Mākaha. I am a classroom teacher....in a hard-to-staff area....in a testing grade/subject...with a population that has persistently low achievement. Nānākuli complex is located on Hawaiian Home Lands.

I am commenting on SB2820, a bill related to teacher differentials.

On p. 6-7, it is noted that “The legislature believes that the State should offer shortage differentials for these positions to address the high number of vacancies in these areas [special education, Hawaiian language immersion, hard-to-staff locations].”

I read this bill a few times and I am unsure about what the intention is for special education differentials. I see hard-to-staff and Hawaiian language immersion spelled out, but not special education. On p. 2, lines 1-13, special education is referenced, but I see no actual numbers for differential pay. I want to make sure that the bill explicitly includes the pay for special education teachers. Please state exactly what special education teachers would receive as a differential in the bill.

What I am also asking you to do, would be to stabilize this recruitment and retention model by changing it to cover five years until 2027 instead of covering 2022-23, so that we don't need to come back to this again. Let us go back to the work that we do. You can make laws for this great state of Hawai'i and we can get back to teaching the kids of this state.

Attached is a resolution passed by the Pearl City Neighborhood Board on Tuesday supporting increased teacher compensation specifically teacher differentials. Please see video clips from the neighborhood board meeting about this same topic below:

PEARL CITY NEIGHBORHOOD BOARD VIDEO CLIPS

Julie Reyes Oda (Nānākuli High and Inter) 1:40	https://drive.google.com/file/d/170asuVCDkjUdmYavDzjSL8UjqIOrBBWL/view?usp=sharing
Jayden Liu (Pearl City NB 21) 3:22	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1uOb-Tpq6irzEwvVjbRTp76W6WjXuBcbF/view?usp=sharing

Thank you for putting teacher compensation up for discussion at the legislature this year. It is much appreciated.



PEARL CITY NEIGHBORHOOD BOARD NO. 21 <https://pearlcitynb.com/>

NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION • 925 DILLINGHAM BLVD, SUITE 160 • HONOLULU, HAWAII, 96817
PHONE (808) 768-3710 • FAX (808) 768-3711 • <http://www.honolulu.gov/nco>

*Chair Larry Veray, Vice-Chair Dion Mesta, Secretary Charmaine T. Doran, Treasurer Guy Inouye
Kuni Agard, Elayne Funakoshi, Jayden Liu, Lawrence Miyazono, Kelsey Poaha, Shanda Delos Reyes Tony Velasco*

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING INCREASED COMPENSATION FOR HAWAII TEACHERS.

WHEREAS, “Children are the world's most valuable resource and its best hope for the future”ⁱ; and

WHEREAS, educating our youth is a tool to combat poverty, a source of economic growth, and a central tenet of our democratic society; and

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic reinforced the critical role of teachers in both our local communities and in broader society; and

WHEREAS, there are about 12,800 teachers in Hawai'i of which nearly 8,000 are both female and minorities;ⁱⁱ and

WHEREAS, despite the renewed importance of education and the significance of teachers during the pandemic, the State of Hawai'i reduced the education budget drastically in 2021;ⁱⁱⁱ and

WHEREAS, in addition, no base salary increases, or step movements, were authorized for teachers throughout the 2021-2023 contract period;^{iv} and

WHEREAS, the *Hawai'i Teacher Compensation Study and Recommendations*^v reported the following key findings in 2020:

- Hawai'i Teacher Salaries Are Not Competitive
- Hawai'i's Compensation System Has A Limited Number Of Pay Steps And There Is Step Compression
- The High Cost Of Living In Hawai'i Makes The Teaching Profession Less Sustainable; and

WHEREAS, according to the Hawai'i Department of Education (HIDOE) the compressed compensation system with limited steps, means that the salaries of experienced teachers in Hawai'i are almost equal to newer teachers with less experience; and

WHEREAS, the compressed compensation system is causing senior teachers to leave the profession; and

WHEREAS, throughout 2016-2021 HIDOE hired more than 5,000 teachers with roughly 20% hired^{vi} from out of state; however, during the same period about 4,500 teachers resigned with more than 30% choosing to leave Hawai'i;^{vii} and

WHEREAS, vacancies and turnover continue to plague HIDOE which reported more than 200 teacher resignations last month and currently has over 250 outstanding vacancies;^{viii} and

WHEREAS, the decreased investment in education, compressed compensation system, and non-competitive salaries, will likely remain significant factors in teacher turnover, shortages, and vacancies in Hawai'i; and

WHEREAS, our children deserve a well-funded and effective education system that values its teachers and ensures that they are both highly qualified and professionally compensated; NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED that the Pearl City Neighborhood Board (Board) has consistently lobbied in support of teachers and has included increasing teacher pay as a Legislative Priority in FY 20 and FY 22; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board is in full support of a robust and competitive teacher compensation package that includes, at minimum, the following:

- Salaries That Commensurate With Teacher Years of Service And Experience
- Permanent Funding Of Differentials For Special Education, Hawaiian Immersion, And Other Hard-To-Staff Posts
- One-Time Workforce Stabilization Payment For Teachers
- Establishment Of A Housing Assistance Program For Teachers; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that in addition to adopting a competitive compensation package for teachers, the Board also requests that the Hawai'i State Legislature work to accomplish the following:

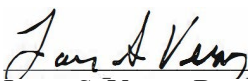
- Restoration Of HDOE Funding In The FY 2021–2023 Supplemental Budget^{ix}
- Strengthen Hawai'i's Teachers Ability To Negotiate Contracts
- Fund And Implement A Program To Increase Hiring Of Local Teachers; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that electronic copies of this Resolution be forwarded to Governor David Ige, the Hawai'i State Board of Education, the Superintendent of the Department of Education, Hawaii State Teachers Association - Leeward President Julie Reyes Oda, Senate Committee on Education, Senate Committee on Government Operations, Senate Committee on Ways and Means, House Committee on Education, House Committee on Finance, Hawai'i State Legislature – Pearl City Delegation, and all City Neighborhood Boards.

Respectfully Submitted By:



Charmaine T. Doran, Chair
Legislative and Capital Improvements
Committee

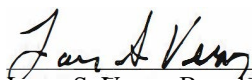


Larry S. Veray, Board Chair



Shanda Delos Reyes, Vice-Chair
Legislative and Capital Improvements
Committee

Adopted by the Pearl City Neighborhood Board No. 21 at its regular meeting on January 25, 2022, by a vote of 10-0-0.



Larry S. Veray, Board Chair

ⁱ <https://www.jfklibrary.org/learn/about-jfk/life-of-john-f-kennedy/john-f-kennedy-quotations#:~:text=Kennedy%2C%201963,-Children,Kennedy>

ⁱⁱ <https://www.hawaiipublicschools.org/Reports/EmploymentReport2020-21.pdf#page=8>

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://governor.hawaii.gov/newsroom/office-of-the-governor-news-release-governor-iges-budget-calls-for-increased-funding-for-pandemic-response-critical-services/>

^{iv} <https://www.hsta.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/HSTA-Tentative-Settlement-Summary-2021.pdf/>

^v <https://www.hawaiipublicschools.org/ConnectWithUs/MediaRoom/PressReleases/Pages/Compensation-Study-2020.aspx>

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

^{vii} <https://www.hawaiipublicschools.org/Reports/EmploymentReport2020-21.pdf#page=8>

^{viii} <https://www.hsta.org/news/recent-stories/lawmakers-will-consider-bills-to-fix-salary-compression-end-salary-class-cap/>

^{ix} <https://governor.hawaii.gov/newsroom/office-of-the-governor-news-release-governor-iges-budget-calls-for-increased-funding-for-pandemic-response-critical-services/>

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 11:08:35 AM

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

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

Comments:

Good afternoon Members of Hawai'i State Legislature,

My name is Elizabeth Wiggans and I teach science at Konawaena Middle School. I have only been at this school for 5 years, but it is a place I care about tremendously. I appreciate the supportive administration, my dedicated coworkers, and amazing students. However, over the past five years, I have seen a 40% annual turnover that are of course due to factors relative or dependent on the individual. But, the lack of financial incentive for employees to stay is always among the reasons they share. Over the past five years, I have seen 5 Special Education teachers come and go in our 6th grade alone. Today, after the 22nd month of the pandemic's effect on Hawai'i's schools, the staffing issues persist.

For 700 hundred students we have 2 custodians, for 700 students there is 1 counselor, for 700 students there is 1 school health assistant. Our administrators have had to remain on campus until midnight to take on the duties of contact tracers. Two years ago, we had 8 bus drivers take our keiki to school through the contracted company, Iosepa. Now we have 2 drivers taking Konawaena Complex students to and from school in just 2 routes.

This means that teachers are taking on transportation, janitorial, and administrative responsibilities. These responsibilities are what we take on, as always, because we want to do what is best for the students. We don't want to leave anyone behind. But this is frankly well above our paygrade. All working families across the islands are shouldering the burden of inflation without any adjustment to our paycheck whatsoever. With the influx of people buying property without regulation, there are fewer places to live, and we cannot compete financially with out of state money. Please take this opportunity to support the Kumu who 'ōlelo, and pass on that irreplaceable gift to the students. Please take this opportunity to address the labor shortages of qualified teachers and keep them in the classroom.

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 2:52:04 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Tiffany Edwards Hunt	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments:

Aloha,

Thank you so much for your efforts to rectify teacher compensation. I currently work as a teacher and then I also have a part-time job to try and supplement my income. It makes for a very long work week, considering I also do my prep for instruction and I make a point of staying up to date on my grading for my students. I am appreciative of any and all efforts to help us to be fairly compensated for this job that has just gotten to be ridiculously challenging in recent years with the onset of the global pandemic, especially. The gap in our children's academics is so dramatic now, so our work life is really challenging. Thank you for your effort to reward us for all of this by ensuring we are paid fairly and equally. I do sincerely hope that your bill makes it all the way! I'm willing to testify via Zoom and share the reality of teaching in 2022. Whatever it takes, please know that we teachers need to be incentivized for being in this profession and sticking with it. Our children are literally our future. I am vested, but I can see why people vacate this profession, because it's pretty arduous, and we don't rise too far above poverty level, honestly. Thank you so much for your consideration of our testimony. With sincerest aloha, Tiffany E Hunt

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 5:44:39 AM

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

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

Comments:

Support of this bill will help keep teachers

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 7:55:53 AM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Allan Lowe	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing in support of SB2820 relating to shortage differentials for special education teachers, hawaiian immersion teachers, and teachers in geographically hard-to-staff locations. I am in my seventh year teaching in Hawai'i and I am a special education teacher at Hilo Intermediate School. Before the institution of the differential pay, my plans were to relocate to the mainland due to the high cost of living and relatively low pay. The shortage differential makes it possible for me to teach in the place I love and with the people that I love. It has provided stability in our department that we have not had over the years with only one special education teacher leaving in the past three years (for a reason that had to do with family, not pay). This is critical for continuing to attract qualified special education teachers and to provide the services that our students both need and deserve. Please strongly consider this bill to secure funding for our shortage differentials. Mahalo!

Respectfully,

Allan M. Lowe

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 9:54:45 AM

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

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

Comments:

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

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2820. I am a special education teacher of 15 years and the teacher compensation has gone a long way in retaining me as a teacher at my school which is chronically short staffed. I have never once seen this school start the school year with all of it's teaching lines filled. We have to utilize subs and aides every year in order to get the school started. Then add in the fact that SPED teachers here often burn out and leave the school - sometimes on the very 2nd or 3rd day making things more difficult. As much as I love my students here and SPED, if the differential is done away with, it is very likely I will leave the Special Education field and this school. Please support SB2820 and thank you for letting me testify.

Sincerely,

Paul McDonnell

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 6:07:40 AM

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

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

Comments:

Subject Line: Testimony in Support of SB2820

Dear Hawaii State Senate,

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

I relocated to Hawaii from California as the special education and hard-to-staff differentials took effect. 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 district's 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 continue to invest in Hawaii's students and their teachers.

Mahalo,

Derek Bishop

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

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

I am submitting testimony in **Strong Support** of S.B. NO. 2820.

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

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

Thank you for supporting differentials. I was hired in November because a Special Education teacher quit. Ever since I was hired, we normally have a teacher or two leave mid year. When that happens the other Special Education teachers need to do more work. I also have seen a lot of emergency hires fill Special Education positions that go unfilled. Since the differentials started I have not seen the turnover or positions go unfilled.

My wife and I were looking to move to Washington State because we would gain \$77,000 more combined income there, compared to what we were currently are making here. The differentials has helped our family of four pay the bills on time.

I spent ten years working nights serving tables until I suffered a slipped disc due to my body breaking down from being overworked. You can't expect good results when teachers have to work two full time jobs. If I would have had the differentials when I started, I wouldn't have constant back pain from suffering a slipped disc due to having to work two jobs. The differentials are working and also show that if you pay teachers a comparable salary with other districts with the same cost of living, they fill the job openings.

This bill is long overdue. I am in **strong support** of S.B. NO. 2820.

Stay Safe,
Justin Hughey

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 9:32:02 AM

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

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

Comments:

Aloha. My name is Colleen Rost-Banik. I am a resident of Honolulu and an instructor within the University of Hawaii system. I encourage you to support and pass SB2820, which provides extra pay to teachers in special education as well as other positions that are considered hard-to-staff. This has proved to be a beneficial step in the past, and it can be again. Because Hawaii's teachers already receive the lowest pay in the nation when considering the cost of living, we need to raise the wages of all teachers. This is one positive step in that direction.

Respectfully,
Colleen Rost-Banik, PhD

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 9:41:49 AM

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

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

Comments:

Good Morning,

I am in support of SB2820. It is imperative that the differentials continue to support special education teachers so we can afford to live in Hawaii and support the community. Many teachers that come to Hawaii to teach love being teachers. I have always been a special education teacher, I found my calling when I started teaching. The high cost of living in Hawaii, lack of affordable housing, or housing at all, inflation, cost of food etc..... is the main reason the differentials should continue. Teachers need support to be able to support the keiki. I need the differentials to help me survive financially. Please continue to support certified special education teachers that love their jobs. This will help retain teachers indefinitely.

Mahalo,

Ms. Fawzia Ali

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 8:29:11 AM

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

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

Comments:

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

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

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

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

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

Sincerely,

Mrs. M. C. Dumapit

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 10:33:39 AM

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

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

Comments:

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

I am in support of SB2820.

A special education teacher has many challenges, more so than a general education teacher. We are often overwhelmed, with the needs of students, being a liaison between school-student-parent, paperwork, IEP meetings and reconvenes, trainings, meeting and collaborating with the general education teachers and support staff, and many, many more responsibilities.

We are overworked, underappreciated and burning out at a much faster rate than other teachers. When I first started teaching, I was told by a general education teacher "You're getting paid more than me." I informed them that I start at the bottom of the salary schedule like everybody else. Special education has never been addressed through legislation or union negotiations.

I was so appreciative of the recognition that special education teachers received through the differentials that were funded by the legislature. It also brought about a lot of resentment by the general education teachers who felt that because they teach our students that they should be recognized also. I once mentioned to a general education teacher that they would quit if they they had to do what our job entails.

Please vote in support of SB2820.

Mahalo for providing me the opportunity to testify in regards to this bill.

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 10:37:40 AM

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

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

Comments:

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

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2820. As a special education teacher, receiving the special education pay differential has been life-changing, allowing me to consistently save money each month and ultimately become a first-time homeowner. It is easy to imagine the impact that continued pay differentials will have for those eligible—whether they will be able to work toward goals similar to mine or simply feel less financial strain, especially as we face inflation and Hawaii’s high cost of living. Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2820 help draw and maintain more teachers to these roles and regions that are often harder to staff. Thank you for your consideration and for the opportunity to testify.

Katrina Karl

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 11:17:26 AM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Nicole Ilae	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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

My name is Nicole Ilae, and I teach at Olomana School in Kailua. I am in support of this bill because it helped to retain me a few years ago. I was ready to leave the profession because I just got divorced and wouldn't have been able to afford my own housing for my son and I. The extra money I got because I work at a "hard to staff" school REALLY HELPED!! I love my job, and wish to continue working as a teacher FOREVER. Please please please vote in support of SB2820.

Thank you for reading my testimony!

Nicole Ilae

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 12:55:50 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Glen Eastman	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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

My name is Glen Eastman and I am a Special Education teacher at Pomaikai Elementary School on Maui. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2820, relating to Special Education teacher differentials.

I have been teaching Special Education for 6 years and I can see why it has become more and more difficult to find Special Education teachers to fill the needs of our students in Hawai'i. Modifying curriculum, designing specialized instruction, writing IEPs, collecting data, monitoring IEP progress, staying after school for IEP and behavior plan meetings, implementing behavior interventions, collaborating and planning with gen ed teachers and service providers, and responding to crises/extreme behavior meltdowns are just an example of some of the day to day tasks that I handle. It takes a very unique psyche and set of skills to be a Special Education teacher In Hawaii. It is a tough job that less and less people want to do. In my 6 years of teaching at our school we have had maybe 20-30 student teachers come through our school. 0 have been Special Education student teachers. We can recruit special education teachers from the mainland but all the ones that have come to my school just move back to the mainland. For these teachers the pay in Hawaii isn't worth it. The responsibilities aren't worth it. The cost of living is too high. 1 bedroom apartments that used to be long term rentals for young professionals are sold to the highest bidder on airBNB. Even in paradise they decide that it just isn't worth it. While supply dwindles, the demand for these teachers is greater than ever not only locally but nationally. Other states have already begun increasing pay for hard to staff areas including Special Education as they understand how important Special Education teachers are. Hawaii must compete with that and continue these differentials. Add in the legal liability if IEP plans are not followed for the state and it puts an even greater burden on the importance of a quality Special Education teacher. Attracting and retaining Special Education teachers should be at the top of the state's list of things to do, and it should continue with paying them more through the differential pay. Another Felix case would be devastating for not only the state but our keiki.

The differentials have clearly worked too, look at the data. Special education teacher retention is up and there is less turnover, a direct result of the increase in pay from the differentials. As a special education teacher, all I do is look at data to evaluate educational decisions and this clearly shows the differential pay should continue. If I was in an IEP meeting, and the data showed a student was making progress towards a goal from a certain intervention, I would never discontinue that intervention without reaching the goal. That would never fly with the parents or

admin, I would absolutely continue it or even increase it! This is exactly the same thing. Discontinuing the shortage differentials would be two steps back after one step forward. We can't afford to have another Felix case on our hands. That would be devastating and inevitable if we don't continue to recruit and retain quality teachers for our keiki. Please continue to fund the differential pay for Special Education teachers, do what is right for our most vulnerable keiki.

Testimony 1-26-22
Andrew Henderson
In Support of SB2820 Relating to Teacher Compensation

Aloha,

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

- 1) Salary Compression
- 2) Differentials

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

Andrew Henderson

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 12:54:25 PM

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

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

Comments:

Aloha,

Please support compensation for teachers who are willing to take on these specific lines of teaching that are hard to fill. They are hard to fill for a reason - They are very difficult lines to teach every day and take so much further and continuing education to do.

The demands of what it takes to be qualified in these fields are stringent and rigorous. If a teacher can't survive on a regular teacher's salary - why would he/she go the extra length to teach in these lines that are so difficult?

I am SPED certified but teach regular ed reading/writing in middle school. I've taught for over 20 years here in my community. I might consider going back into SPED if the salary conditions were enticing.

As it is, I also coteach in a SPED class without that compensation. Please support our educators - especially those in very difficult lines that are hard to fill anywhere!

Mahalo,

Barbara L. Jensen-Haight

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 2:11:54 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
jennifer gillette	Individual	Comments	No

Comments:

Please remember to include charter schools in the language of this bill. Charter schools are just as important as DOE funded schools. Thank you for your time.

Jennifer Gillette

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 2:39:29 PM

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

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

Comments:

Aloha,

I teach at a special school and have seen with my own eyes the tremendous impact the stipends have made in the quality of my school. The faculty is more stable now, and that has had a huge influence on the functioning of the school overall. Our students here because they experience trauma on a daily basis in their home environments, and for them, being able to count on school as being a safe, steady, predictable place is so very important. Keeping the same teachers in place year after year allows for the development of a healthy, functioning community here on campus. Those stipends have proven their worth - they work! Please vote in favor of SB2820 to keep them in place.

Thank you,

Liz King Salz, Oloman Youth Center

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 11:45:44 AM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Angela Huntemer	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

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 3:23:01 PM

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

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

Comments:

To Whom it May Concern:

I, Rowan Puaa, am a teacher at Kaunakakai Elementary School. I write in support of Bill SB 2820, Teacher Differentials and hope for it to be rectified to help in maintaining our teachers within our rural communities.

I know that it can be hard living and working in a rural community and it can be hard on students and vested teachers alike to continue to train, year after year, new teachers who enter the profession and choose to move to Hawaii only to leave after a quarter of teaching because they can't afford to live here on their teacher wages or because the work is too much dealing with not only educating our children but also dealing with abuse within the family, child neglect because parents are working 2-4 jobs trying their best to provide for their own families. It's tough!

I have been an educator for 5 years. I have 5 children and am the primary provider for them. This differential helps a lot with being able to buy food, keep a roof over our head and have/maintain reliable transportation to get to work.

Keeping differentials will help teachers to stay within our rural communities and hopefully encourage them to stay vested as well because we know that consistency is key! Having consistent teachers will help in every aspect.

Thank you for allowing me to testify and I really hope you folks consider to continue teacher differentials because it makes a huge impact on being able to provide for my family while also providing this service of teaching for my community's keiki!

Sincerely,

Rowan Puaa

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 3:00:18 PM

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

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

Comments:

I am writing in full support of SB2820. This bill is essential to provide the basic compensation necessary to support our teachers who are filling hard to fill positions. We all know how underpaid our educators are and this is the basic, first step necessary to begin to remedy that situation. When any job is underpaid it will always result in understaffing, and teachers are one position that should never be understaffed. Our keiki should be supported by staff who are fairly paid for their work.

Mahalo,
Joshua

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 3:57:55 PM

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

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

Comments:

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee,**I am submitting my testimony in support of Senate Bill number SB2819**

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

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

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

The school district is unable to provide money for additional education and training. Any additional education received and required by a teacher is provided at the cost of the teacher.

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

Many teachers that I know have left the profession entirely due to the lack of salary. Many have changed professions entirely, or moved out of state in order to better provide for their families. I personally love the profession, but have always needed to work multiple part time jobs to be able to supplement my income. Hawaii is ranked among the lowest in the nation for teachers salaries and cost of living.

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

SB-2820

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

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Emily Fernandes	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

As a teacher in the DOE, the differential for hard-to-staff schools is extremely helpful. I am in a rural area and the extra compensation allows me to fill my gas tank every week and travel to school.

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 3:07:24 PM

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

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

Comments:

Aloha. Before the teacher differential for Special Education teachers was put into effect, I had left my position as a non-classroom teacher to become a school administrator. However, with the differential, I moved back into the classroom as a preschool special educator, my current position. The differential works to keep teachers in the classroom, benefiting the students and the DOE. Please consider supporting SB2820. Mahalo.

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 4:02:12 PM

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

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

Comments:

As a school counselor and teacher at Kailua High School for the last 20 years, I strongly support

teacher differentials to help address various labor shortages. Currently, at my school, I know that there are multiple vacant positions and I know that the COVID-19 pandemic and the additional stresses associated with school closures will most likely exacerbate the labor shortages affecting Hawaii schools. I know of 5 teachers at my school that will be retiring at the end of this school year (retiring because of the additional challenges of the pandemic) and I am worried that if this is the case at our school then our state will be in danger of a massive teacher shortage unless teacher differentials are funded.

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 8:27:33 AM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Laurie Varholak-Madani	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I have been teaching for 15+ years on Molokai. Receiving a salary any less than I do now will force me to teach in another state, or to pursue another career. I have carried a second job all these years to help meet my expenses. I have watched fellow teachers quit and retire early, not just because of the pandemic but because of the lack of support and overall moral. This effects our students on all levels. The working environment has become unbearable at times, carrying the load of subs and underqualified teachers has been rough. The Differentials were one of the few times that I have seen respect in the past years, and seriously hope the state will continue to support them. Hawaii needs to keep their dedicated and experienced educators in any way it can, if it cares about the education of the students. Please support keeping the "Differentials", and maybe even increasing them. Thank you for supporting teachers.

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 7:55:17 AM

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

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

Comments:

Having a differential has made a huge difference in my deciding to stay with as a teacher in this state. The pay is so different from what I could make in another state or another field. This differential ensures I can stay in this career.

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 7:26:08 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Dean Alip	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Kakou,

Working in a hard to fill position has been a blessing for me. I am able to live and work in the community I grew up in and service families on a personal basis. In addition, I have had family and friends to support me. Unfortunately many of the teachers in these hard to fill positions do not have the same support base and need to travel far distances just to get to and from work. I have seen more leave our school that stay. Please continue to fund hard to fill positions as it will provide and incentive for them to stay. Money talks but more importantly it motivates. Make it happen. Your continued support will be greatly appreciated.

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 6:19:35 PM

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

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

Comments:

RE: SB2820

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

My name is Christy Sakamoto. I am a teacher at Kamali'i Elementary School in Kihei on Maui. I am submitting testimony due to **my concerns about funding SB2820.**

Funding priority should be given to SB2819, the compression salary issue, before there is any discussion about funding SB 2820.

Only a select group of teachers are being rewarded with differentials, while all of the other teachers, including teachers who have taught 20 PLUS years, are now often paid less than those receiving differentials and have taught for many less years. WE are working just as hard as these teachers receiving differentials. Simply not fair or ethical or logical.

Also, \$10,000 is a ridiculously high amount for this differential. For one year??? \$10,000 more than the rest of us? If you put yourself in my shoes, as a teacher who has been dedicated to Hawaii's schools for 25 years, it is frankly unbelievable that this is actually happening when we have never been compensated for YEARS of lost wages to due lack of movement for years of service.

There is a teacher shortage throughout the schools, not only in special education. To prioritize these teachers over the rest of us is sad, insulting, heartbreaking, and divisive.

If we want to keep experienced, dedicated, qualified teachers in our school system, please treat us ALL fairly and fix this wrong that we have been dealing with for years.

Mahalo.

Christy Sakamoto, BKM Complex Area, Maui

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 6:30:27 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Liberty Furchgott	Individual	Comments	No

Comments:

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

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2820.

I am writing in reference to the extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs; also known as differentials.

My name is Liberty Furchgott, and I am a special education teacher who is teaching at a Big Island school deemed hard to staff, and to be honest I think about quitting everyday.

I am currently teaching English to students with special needs and have to prepare lessons for all six grade levels that I teach (grades 7-12). Not only must I create my lessons but I must consider each student's exceptionality, thier individual goals and objectives and how to reach the students who are not physically present in my classroom. In addition to being a special education teacher I am also a new teacher mentor for teachers working at my school and I just recently started working with a student teacher who is entering into the education profession.

I must confess that this year has been the hardest in my 14 plus years of teaching. In the midst of trying to navigate the inherent challenges in our educational system that the pandemic has revealed to those outside of the profession, it is in my advocacy for my students and thier needs where I do not feel valued, appreciated, respected or heard.

Although there are many issues that would increase the retention of qualified teachers, such as reevaluating current educational systems in place, the differential that I am getting is pretty much the only thing keeping me going right now. And in conferring with colleagues, I have heard them make similar statements suggesting that if the differntials are no longer funded then they too will quit.

The differentials are an effective incentive for keeping teachers in those hard to staff schools and filling those hard to fill positions. And although the differentials are not a fix all, they are a good start and need to remain in place. With staffing shortages on the rise, the department of education will witness even more teachers; good, effective, qualified teachers, leaving the profession if those differentials are taken away.

As a dedicated, passionate, overworked and underappreciated teacher I request that the differentials continue to be funded and I am grateful for the opportunity to speak on how they have helped me and my family as we contend with some of the toughest teaching scenarios educators have ever experienced.

Thank you to the committee for your consideration,

Liberty Furchgott; Special Education Teacher

Honoka'a High & Intermediate School

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 4:25:45 PM

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

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

Comments:

Aloha,

I humbly ask for your support of SB 2820 in regards to the salary differentials for educators. I am a special education teacher who has worked in the Hawaii DOE for 29 years, 8 as a special educator and 21 as a general educator. I am currently the Special Education Department Head and I can honestly say that the differential has kept several of our teachers from leaving teaching and/or special education and encouraged at least 2 new ones. And yet, we still have two vacancies and two who are on leave due to the stresses of the job.

Retirement is on the horizon for me and the differential will make all the difference in my decision to stay and for how much longer. Just today, I attended a meeting where we were given another new task that “must be done because of IDEA - federal law”. With all the vacancies, my workload has tripled this year alone. I was literally on the verge of tears not knowing how I will find the time in my days to accomplish this new task. Remove the differential and I will have little motivation to continue to put up with these demands that only special educators face.

Please support this bill to encourage the more teachers to consider becoming a special education teacher, to recognize those who already are, and to encourage those who are to stay during these incredibly trying times.

Mahalo,

Cindy Asato-Kochi

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 4:48:34 PM

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

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

Comments:

SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

RE: SB2820

Friday, January 28, 2022

IN SUPPORT OF SB2820

I am DANA KAU, a public school teacher. I am testifying in favor of SB2820. It is important that this committee passes bill SB2820 to guarantee that teachers' salaries are adjusted based on years of experience like their counterparts around the United States. When SB 28120 is passed, another step toward minimizing teacher shortage would be taken. Passing this bill would benefit all citizens of Hawaii.

Passing bill SB2820 would benefit all of Hawaii's citizens and help to retain and attract qualified and experienced teachers.

Mahalo,

DANA KAU

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 8:35:14 PM

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

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

Comments:

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

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

These differentials have been the finger-in-the-dam of massive teacher exodus. Remove the differentials, and I will not be surprised to see the HDOE hemorrhage teachers. 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. Wage stagnation for the last two years and the increased pace of inflation only makes jumping ship for other states more attractive.

Fixing salary compression, continuing the differentials, and raising the pay for all teachers will make a huge difference in retaining quality teachers.

Mahalo for your time.

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 8:38:54 PM

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

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

Comments:

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

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

Mahalo for your time,

Mike Landes

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 7:48:20 AM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Chyler Imai	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Chyler Imai and I am a public school teacher at Kohala Middle. This is my fifth year as a teacher here at Kohala Middle.

I am a recipient of the geographic hard-to-staff shortage differential, and having this differential has allowed me to stay in this profession I love.

I am the core math teacher for sixth and seventh graders, as well as the teacher for math workshop for seventh and eighth graders to help build basic math foundational skills. Our school is extremely small and we live in a rural area where resources are very difficult to possess. We all must wear many hats at our school due to a lack of adequate funding for rural schools. The hard-to-staff differential is an incentive for me to continue to support our students, families and staff. I bring a lot of expertise and experience to our school, and would like to continue in my roles.

I am the main source of income in my family, and the hard-to-staff differential has helped my finances at home, a mortgage, and college school debt.

Please know that the geographic hard-to staff differential makes a tremendous difference in the living conditions for all teachers, whether new, in the middle of our careers, or continuing to contribute to our communities.

Thank you for taking the time to read my testimony.

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 7:55:31 PM

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

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, 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.

Please know that the geographic hard-to staff differential makes a tremendous difference in the living conditions for all teachers, whether new, in the middle of our careers, or continuing to contribute to our communities 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

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 6:17:31 PM

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

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

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing in support of SB2820. Please approve this measure to support teachers in hard to staff areas as well as in special education positions. Teaching can be difficult under the best circumstances, but cannot be a continual sacrifice and drain on teacher resources and resourcefulness. We need our teachers to teach in these disciplines and locations.

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 7:28:34 PM

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

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

Comments:

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

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819.

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

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

Thank you for your time,

Ms. Heinze

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 6:44:54 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Chaya Ilikea Arakaki	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Chaya 'Ilikea Arakaki-Tohara, and I work as a public school teacher at Kohala Middle School. This is my second year in the State of Hawaii.

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 a Special Education teacher at Kohala Middle School. At my small school, I also serve as the Grade Level Head for 6th grade 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 would like to continue in my roles.

I am a main source of income in my family, and the hard-to-staff differential has helped my finances at home. I currently am still obtaining my Special Education certification, however, if the differential is still available, that will continue to motivate me to soon become fully certified in that field. I have connected to many of the students that I serve and I would love to continue to this work!

Please know that the geographic hard-to staff differential makes a tremendous difference in the living conditions for all teachers, whether new, in the middle of our careers, or continuing to contribute to our communities as veteran teachers.

Thank you for reading my testimony.

Kea

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 9:22:59 PM

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

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

Comments:

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

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2820.

My name is Darin Morris, and I teach Science grades 7 and 8 at Kohala Middle School. I support this bill, as my intentions are to continue in my chosen profession and to be able to financially support my family. There is no greater work than teaching.

This legislation makes it possible for me to teach, without which I would be unable to continue, not being able to afford financially to teach. I commute an hour and fifteen minutes one way to reach my school. The salary differential pays for the gasoline, maintenance of my car, and the total two and one-half hours commuting time each day from home to school and back to home again.

I support this bill, which helps pay fair compensation for the commute to this hard-to-fill position. I urge you, please vote in support of Senate Bill 2820.

I thank the committee for the opportunity to testify.

Darin Morris

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 5:58:22 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Melissa Turner	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

My name is Melissa Turner and I am a special education teacher for 5th and 6th grade at Honokaa Elementary School on the Island of Hawaii. I am speaking in support of SB2820. As most of you know Hawaii has some very rural locations. Honokaa is a small town in the middle of ranches and undeveloped land. The closest major grocery store is 20 miles away and approximately 30 minutes drive. The closest Walmart and Target are 37 miles away and about a 50 minute drive. The nearest Costco is 60 miles away and that is 1 hour and 20 minute drive. Now remember these are times without road construction and there is a lot of road work underway on the Hamakua coast. The reason you should approve the differentials is because these are hard to staff areas. The reason they are hard to staff is because most of them are very rural and not many people are willing to sacrifice the convenience of living in an urban area or the long drive to get to and from work each day. That doesn't make the students at our school any less worthy of certified teachers. The differentials help to offset the cost of living in a rural area or driving into a rural area to teach. This has made our area more appealing to teachers and has brought us many more applicants to our job postings. Last year my principal announced at a faculty meeting that for the first time he had applicants in the double digits for our posted position. He was confident that he would find the right fit for our school. That was made possible in part because of the differentials.

So yes indeed it has made a major difference for our rural schools. If you discontinue the differentials the teachers that were recruited for our opening will leave the coming school year. Thus, putting us back into the undesirable position to hire long term subs, uncertified teachers, and even worse of all VACANT positions.

I would also like to touch on the need for the special education differential. As many of you know our most vulnerable students are those with disabilities. They come with a wide variety of needs from just struggling in one area to not even being able to feed themselves. Special education teachers are asked to do what many will not. We work with the most challenging students where others have given up. We have students that throw tantrums, hit and run from us, most times without prior warning. We work very hard to keep regular routines for these students. These students are the most difficult to work with and that is why many special education teachers leave the field. Since the differentials went into place we have had, as stated above, quality applicants apply for our special education

positions. Most years they have been filled with long term subs. If you discontinue the differential for special education we will have a mass exodus of teachers from special education classrooms. The differential is the reason why I am teaching in a special education classroom. Let's face it the general population is much easier to teach than the one that comes with special needs. Remember these are our most vulnerable students. They demand a higher level of attention and are the most difficult to educate. The differential has demonstrated what it was intended to do. To get more qualified teachers for our most vulnerable population. I implore you to support SB2820 and fund the differentials.

Sincerely,

Melissa Turner

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 7:05:34 PM

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

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

Comments:

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

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

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 7:36:37 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Cindy A Martin	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

To whom it may concern,

My name is Cindy Martin and I am a special education teacher for 6th, 7th and 8th grade students at Waikoloa Elementary and Middle School on the Island of Hawaii. I am speaking in support of SB2820. As most of you know, Hawaii has some very rural locations. Waikoloa is a small town in the middle of resort areas and otherwise undeveloped land. The closest Target or Walmart is approximately a 45 - 50 minute drive. The nearest Costco is about a 35 - 40 minute drive. Now remember these are times without road construction or traffic. The reason you approved the differentials is because these are hard to staff areas. The reason they are hard to staff is because most of them are very rural and not many people are willing to sacrifice the convenience of living in an urban area or the long drive to get to and from work each day. That doesn't make the students at our school any less worthy of certified teachers. The differentials help to offset the cost of living in a rural area or driving into a rural area to teach. This has made our area more appealing to teachers and has brought us many more applicants to our job postings.

These differentials have made a major difference to our rural schools. If you discontinue the differentials the teachers that were recruited for our various openings will leave this coming school year. Thus, putting us back into the undesirable position to hire long term subs, uncertified teachers, and even worse of all VACANT positions.

I would also like to touch on the need for the special education differential. As many of you know our most vulnerable students are those with disabilities. They come with a wide variety of needs from just struggling in one area to not even being able to feed themselves. Special education teachers are asked to do what many will not. We work with the most challenging students where others have given up. We have students that throw tantrums, hit and run from us, most times without prior warning. We work very hard to keep regular routines for these students. These students are the most difficult to work with and that is why many special education teachers leave the field. Since the differentials went into place we have had, as stated above, quality applicants apply for our special education positions. Most years they have been filled with long term subs. If you discontinue the differential for special education we will have a mass exodus of teachers from special education classrooms. Let's face it, the general population is much easier to teach than the one that comes with special needs. Remember these are our most

vulnerable students. They demand a higher level of attention and are the most difficult to educate. The differential has demonstrated what it was intended to do. To get more qualified teachers for our most vulnerable population. I implore you to support SB2820.

Sincerely,

Cindy Martin

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 4:14:08 PM

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

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

Comments:

My name is Dawn Shiota and I am a Counselor at King Kekaulike High School on the island of Maui. I am not receiving pay differentials but I am in support of continuing to keep the pay differentials for teachers of hard to staff areas, Hawaiian Immersion, and Special Education . The data presented supports that these differential are making an impact to increasing teacher job positions filled and decreasing vacancies.

I have worked in the Hawaii Department of Education for over 24 years and believe that our schools are in a crisis. We are losing qualified teachers and students during this pandemic. Never have I seen such large percentages of staff shortages and large percentages of student's non attendance. From my observations, in the last few weeks we are having about a quarter (25) teachers absent a day and half of the positions are not filled with substitutes. How are Administrators suppose to run a school without appropriate staff on campus? These numbers are only including the teachers and not including , other employees like the EAs, custodians, Cafeteria, Security, office staff.

Students have reported to me that they want to change classes because they have day to day substitutes and they are doing nothing with the subs. Other students say they just want to get their GED because they are not learning and not engaged with their classes due to not having what they call "real teachers/subs". Some General education teachers and their students who are recieving IDEA services may be impacted as IEPs may not be implemented when their is no team teaching support for inclusion or subs changing on a daily basis.

In addition teachers that potentially could teach another 10 or 15 years are retiring early or just leaving and going into other professions because they say the stress of teaching today is not worth the compensation as they are so underpaid. I believe if nothing is done to increase teacher salaries we will see a mass exodus in June and December of 2022. Please support differentials for Special Education Teachers, Hard to Fill Positions and Hawaiian Immersion Programs. Mahalo for taking the time to read my testimony.

Sincerely,
Dawn Shiota

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 5:18:35 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Austin Morrissey	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

As a teacher who moved here from another State, the cost of living in Hawaii was one major shock that I had to adjust to. After a couple of years, I was considering moving back to the mainland, as I was insolvent and I could not support myself without taking a second job. With the differential, I've actually managed to get some savings together. I've been able to get things I need, such as eyeglasses and repairs to my car that I was putting off. Without the differential, I will have to resign my position and return to the mainland as I cannot make enough money to find a place to live on the Big Island and continue to teach.

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 5:41:38 PM

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

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

Comments:

To: Senate Education Committee

Re: In Support of SB2820

I am Laurie Dela Cruz, a public school teacher. I am testifying in favor of SB2820. It is important that this committee passes bill SB2820 to guarantee that teacher's salaries are adjusted based upon years of experiences like counterparts around the United States. When SB2820 is passed, another step toward minimizing teacher shortage would be taken. Passing this bill would benefit all citizens of Hawaii. Passing SB2820 would benefit all of Hawaii's citizens and help to retain and attract qualified and experienced teachers.

Mahalo,
Laurie Dela Cruz

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION RE: SB 2820, RELATING TO
TEACHER COMPENSATION

FRIDAY, January 28, 2022

3 P.M.

Chair Kidani and committee members:

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

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

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

We need your help. Mahalo.

Benjamin Duke

West Hawaii Explorations Academy PCS

Hawaii Island

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 7:18:33 AM

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

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

Comments:

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

My name is Matthew May, I am a SPED teacher at Stevenson Middle School in my second year.

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2820.

Pay differentials go a long way to help incentivize and retain teachers in hard to fill positions, this has a measurable effect, along with other measures on teacher compensation.

I am testifying in support of Senate Bill 2820, to recruit and retain teachers where they are needed.

Please vote in favor of this bill to retain our teachers where they are needed most.

Mahalo nui loa,

Matthew May, Stevenson Middle School, Honolulu

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 7:12:03 AM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Susan Williams	Testifying for Hokulani Elementary	Support	No

Comments:

SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

RE: SB2820

Thursday, January 27, 2022

IN SUPPORT OF SB2820

I am Susan Williams, a public school teacher. I am testifying in favor of SB2820. It is important that this committee passes bill SB2820 to guarantee that teachers' salaries are adjusted based on years of experience like their counterparts around the United States. When SB 28120 is passed, another step toward minimizing teacher shortage would be taken. Passing this bill would benefit all citizens of Hawaii.

Passing bill SB2820 would benefit all of Hawaii's citizens and help to retain and attract qualified and experienced teachers.

Mahalo,

Susan Williams

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 7:45:58 AM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Samantha Magine	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am Samantha Magine, a public school teacher. I am testifying in favor of SB2820. It is important that this committee passes bill SB2820 to guarantee that teacher's salaries are adjusted based on years of experiences like their counterparts around the United States. When SB2820 is passed, another step toward minimizing teacher shortage would be taken. Passing this bill would benefit all citizens of Hawaii.

Passing bill SB 2820 would benefit all of Hawaii's citizens and help to retain and attract qualified and experienced teachers.

Mahalo

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 7:39:47 AM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Lois Y Nagamine	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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

Passing bill SB 2819 would benefit all of Hawaii's citizens and help to retain and attract qualified and experienced teachers.

Mahalo,

Lois Nagamine

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 12:15:51 AM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Kryssa Isobe	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2820. I am Kryssa, and I am in my 8th year of teaching sixth grade in the Nanakuli-Waianae Complex. When I first began teaching, I was well aware that teaching was a profession that I wouldn't be compensated very well financially. I was naive to believe that my love for educating children would be enough. It's a shame that teachers often have a mindset that we'll accept low wages because we do what we do out of love. At the end of the day, we will always provide what is needed for our students.

It is evident that teacher turnover along the Leeward coast of Oahu is high. The numbers of vacancies and teacher transfers year after year in our complex is often some of the highest in the state. Our students deserve teachers who are willing to endure the long commute to and from Waianae. Our students deserve teachers who are willing to go the extra mile to differentiate lessons to meet the needs of students reading well below the grade level expectation. Our students deserve experienced teachers. When I received my master's degree and National Board certification, it wasn't just for me -- it was what I felt I needed to do in order to be a better teacher for my students. Many of them are already disadvantaged when compared to their peers elsewhere on Oahu, and ensuring that I could provide them with a quality education was one of the few things I had control over.

A year ago, I had considered transferring to a school that was closer to my home. I'd save tremendously on gas, I'd regain hours every week just from my commute alone, and I'd have less to plan in a community where students may have academic achievements. I also thought about the financial hit I'd take if I were to lose the hard-to-staff differential, and it was one of the many factors that retained me at my school in Waianae. If the differential was not provided in upcoming school years, it would be just one more reason why I would consider transferring.

Data has shown that the differentials have attracted and retained teachers in special education and in hard-to-staff areas. Students in hard-to-staff communities deserve highly qualified, experienced teachers like any other community. The differential is a proven way to do that. If you care about closing the learning gap, I urge you to support Senate Bill SB2820.

Mahalo for taking the time to consider our testimonies.

Kryssa

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 5:24:27 AM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Harmony Seivert	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

To the legislators who serve our state, thank you for all you do. I am writing in support of SB2820, to maintain teacher differentials for those working in hard-to-fill schools and serving as special education classroom teachers. I have been teaching special education for 20 years. I am currently working as a third grade special education teacher at Waimea Elementary School on the Big Island. It is a rewarding job, yet it can be exhausting. Many teachers burn out after the first 5 years. I have seen years where there were 4 new special education teachers in a department of 14 at the high school level. I have seen new special education teachers quit after 3 weeks of school at the elementary school level, leaving their caseloads to be managed by other teachers while a long-term sub is found. As a teacher leader (department head), I have stayed till 7:30pm the day before school starts, prepping the classroom for a long-term sub to greet students the next day. The constantly swinging door of new teachers has been an additional burden, on top of my own challenging caseload. These past two years, there have been no new special education teachers to support at my school. I am training to be a mentor of new teachers, and there was no one to mentor this year. Isn't it wonderful? The differentials are definitely working to retain teachers and provide our students with special needs with a stable team of teachers. I have students whose parents request additional meetings, which requires the team to meet for up to 20 hours per year on just one student. The time for paperwork is difficult to calculate, but as a mother of three, I write my IEPs from 4-6am, since I have other responsibilities during daylight hours. I am at the point in my career where I would normally take a leadership position in my school. I have been asked if I would consider taking non-classroom teacher jobs such as Student Services Coordinator, EL Coordinator, Literacy Coach, or TA Vice Principal. I have declined all of them because I currently earn more for my family as a National Board Certified special education classroom teacher in a hard-to-fill school than I would for any of those other positions. It has been a great blessing to me and to my family. We have been able to get ourselves out of credit card debt and doors have opened to us to make other investments and become more financially secure. And yet I am definitely earning it. Just yesterday, one of my students flipped his desk in an angry rage. I work with him daily on managing his feelings while simultaneously teaching him to read and write. It is emotionally draining to work with students with the level of needs my students have, and yet I show up every day to do it again. If I did not have these differentials, I simply would not continue to do what I do. I would mentor new teachers to do the job instead. The special education and hard-to-fill differentials may seem expensive, but I assure you they are preventing due process hearings because experienced teachers STAY where they are. I would add that the National Board Certified Teacher bonus has made it worth it for me to maintain my certification. I renewed during 2020, which was a crazy year to go through the process. Hawaii is a difficult place to afford to raise a family, but even

with my husband's income reduced during the pandemic, we have survived on my salary. Otherwise, we would have joined the exodus of those leaving to more affordable states. I urge you to maintain these differentials which have proven to retain teachers in special education classrooms and hard-to-fill schools. Our keiki deserve experienced teachers. Thank you.

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 10:40:50 PM

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

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

Comments:

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

Aloha, I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2820. 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, 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.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Robert Lozano

5th Grade Teacher

Robotics Coach

Waikoloa Elementary & Middle School

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 11:34:23 PM

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

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

Comments:

To Whom It May Concern,

I, Wendy Espaniola, am a teacher at Maunaloa School. I write in support of Bill SB 2820, Teacher Differentials and hope for it to continue in order 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.

I have been an educator for 16 years.

Continuing Teacher Differentials will provide extra income to most teachers as the cost of living increases and our economy remains unpredictable. It is with great hopes that this will help to persuade many of our teachers to remain on the job and stay in Hawaii where our keiki can benefit from highly qualified teachers..

Sincerely,

Wendy Espaniola

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 6:29:31 AM

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

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

Comments:

Written testimony has been attached.

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 6:43:33 AM

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

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

Comments:

Dear Hawaii State Legislature,

I support this bill. I am a single parent with a special needs young adult who decided to try and make a difference for our special needs students in the DOE system. I currently am an FSC teacher at a local school in my area. I have had to work for 80-100 weeks for months throughout Covid in order to provide these students with what they need to be successful and bridge their academic, functional and social/emotional needs. I am trying not to work so many hours because I need to be able to take care of myself so I can be around to help my young adult make it in this world. I know a lot of teachers who work a second job but I cannot do that because this job is already taking up so much of my time. FSC teachers have 4 jobs: full time teacher in class (teaching all day); SPED teacher doing all the accommodations and modifications to curriculum for all students in my class (this includes creating, prepping, physically making materials and training staff to implement those modifications or accommodations and take data on the child's progress); case manager for all students (writing 12-22 page IEPs for each child, PWNs, contacting parents, organizing meetings, managing all of the student's services and providers coming in and out of the classroom to care for student's needs, taking data, analyzing data, creating graphs and presenting data at IEP meetings, running IEP meetings and then finalizing all legal documents to activate the IEP); manage classroom staff (training, delegating daily jobs and schedules, managing staff conflict and any other staff issues that come up). If you are wondering how I teach all day and do all of those other jobs, then you are paying attention to what I am writing. All those other jobs are done on my own time without pay. Even with the differential, it honestly is not worth it. I am looking into switching to another SPED position for next year. I do not feel supported by the DOE at all. I am a go getter and I care about these students but this position's responsibilities have been severely over allocated to one person and is unsustainable, unmanageable and unreasonable. I have been in and out of the DOE for over 30 years in different capacities as a parent and employee in various positions and I am sad to say I have not seen very many positive changes in the workload and support for teachers in SPED position. We already have a teacher shortage in our state and an even more serious shortage in SPED teachers, yet the state does not want to pay their teachers appropriately? One has to wonder why teachers have historically been economically mistreated in this state, yet we are one of the main supports of our state economy right now, when it really counts. If we were not here, parents could not go out and keep our economy going.

Right now we are out on the front lines with our state's children during this war against Covid. We are out in the open, face to face and vulnerable to our enemy (Covid). I have never seen a

time where women, children and some men where put on the front lines of a war. Out in the open and gathered together in large groups in the halls of our schools while full grown, healthy adults of all genders in other state departments hide at home or in their offices with restricted access to protect themselves from Covid. Why are the women, men and children of the DOE thrown out on the front lines and told that it is safe while other state and government departments are hiding? If it is safe for us, then it should be safe for the rest the government employees.

We deserve to be paid appropriately for what we do. Please support this bill so that we can afford to continue doing what we do for our community through Covid and going forwards.

Thank you!

Tammy

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 10:19:55 PM

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

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

Comments:

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

Name is Michael Press and I am a teacher at Ilima Intermediate on Oahu in Ewa Beach. I am writing you to support 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

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 10:06:46 PM

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

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

Comments:

Regarding Salary Compression and Shortage Differentials:

As a:

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

Most importantly,

- Advisory Teacher

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

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

Sincerely,

Laura R. Peterson

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 9:17:04 PM

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

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

Comments:

SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

RE: SB2820

Wednesday, January 26, 2022

IN SUPPORT OF SB2820

I am Laurie Yoshinaga, a public school teacher. I am testifying in favor of SB2820. It is important that this committee passes bill SB2820 to guarantee that teachers' salaries are adjusted based on years of experience like their counterparts around the United States. When SB 28120 is passed, another step toward minimizing teacher shortage would be taken. Passing this bill would benefit all citizens of Hawaii.

Passing bill SB2820 would benefit all of Hawaii's citizens and help to retain and attract qualified and experienced teachers.

Mahalo,

Laurie Yoshinaga

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 10:02:35 PM

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

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

Comments:

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

I am writing in support of SB2820 and SB2819. Please excuse me for including both bills in this testimony, but it is very late and I am feeling weary and defeated. I am a Special Education Teacher in a Fully Self Contained classroom, at Honoka'a Elementary School on Hawaii Island and I have been so grateful for the differentials. They have enabled me to continue in my teaching position, as I can better support myself as a single person. Prior to the differentials, I was going to have to resign as I just couldn't make ends meet. With the amount of hours I put in beyond the school day, on nights, weekends and over breaks, to prep and complete paperwork, I do not have enough time or energy to get a second job. To be honest, with all the stress of teaching during a pandemic, the constant threat of losing the differentials doubles that stress, I don't know if it's worth it anymore. If I didn't love teaching, my students, school, colleagues and community, and have such a supportive principal and staff, I'd seek another profession. Perhaps if you folks spent a day with us, arriving at 6:30 or 7:00am like many of us do, see what the day in the classroom is like, social distancing/masking/sanitizing, while trying to make students feel safe and cared for, address learning loss and try to make learning fun and engaging. Oh, and make sure the students that are absent due to quarantine/illness have learning materials for the time they are out. Then stay and see the work we put in after school usually well past 3:00pm, prepping, grading, attending meetings etc. The work continues after we go home at night, on weekends and holiday breaks, even over the summer. Most professions leave work at work, can call out when ill or just take a day off. It's not so easy to do that when you're a teacher.. You need to write lesson plans, prep the materials and try to find a sub (there's a shortage). Most professions get annual raises but we have to take Professional Development courses on our own time, spending countless hours writing reflections and completing portfolios to get a raise. Teaching is a labor of love, but do we not deserve to be treated as professionals, compensated for our work. Across the country, teachers are leaving the profession in droves, and people wonder why. I hope you will stand with us and support us in being fairly compensated.

I appreciate you taking the time to read my testimony. I thank you for your consideration and believe you want what's best for Hawaii's keiki. They deserve quality teachers and one very important way to keep those teachers is to give them the means to support themselves and their families, especially with the recent increases in an already elevated cost of living.

Sincerely,

Karol Wack

Special Education Teacher

Honoka'a Elementary School

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 8:29:47 PM

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

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

Comments:

Dear Chair and members of the Senate,

I am submitting testimony in favor of SB 2820. My name is Cristy Athan and I am a school counselor at Waimea Elementary School. I recently moved from a school where I was receiving compensation to another closer to home that is at a higher rate of compensation and this has made a big difference in my financial well-being. It is difficult to survive on the salary alone. I rely on the differential to help with keeping me afloat. Please vote in favor of SB 2820 to help our teachers in these hard to fill areas.

Mahalo for your support!

Cristy Athan

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 7:20:18 PM

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

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

Comments:

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

I am submitting written testimony IN SUPPORT of "SB 2820" regarding shortage differentials for Hawaii State DOE teachers. It should not be a surprise that continued economic support in shortage and hard to fill areas will insure that Hawaii's children will receive the rich education they deserve. Many teaching lines are currently filled by unlicensed substitute teachers.

Sincerely.

John Van Ornum EdD

Molokai High School

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 6:35:32 AM

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

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

Comments:

Teacher differentials are needed to retain both veterans and those entering the field. During even the best of times, teachers are underpaid and overworked, however COVID-19 has increased our vulnerability and work loads, especially with special education students.

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 8:19:24 AM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Leinaala Kealoha	Testifying for Department of Education	Support	No

Comments:

Given the continual issue of recruitment and retention of teachers; undoubtedly, our veteran teachers should be honored with competitive and equitable compensation for their dedication. If that is not enough, the mere fact that Hawai'i teachers are the lowest paid in the nation is a stammering statistic and should be improved.

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 8:41:36 PM

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

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, 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

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 8:47:18 AM

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

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

Comments:

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

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2820.

My husband is a special education teacher. He puts in a lot of extra time to provide high quality special education services to his students. Special education teachers should be compensated for this time.

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

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 8:53:06 AM

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

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

Comments:

My name is Mitchell Ishihara and I am a public school counselor. I am testifying in favor of SB280. It is important that this committee passes this bill to guarantee that teachers' salaries are adjusted based on years of experience like their counterparts around the United States. When this bill is passed, another step toward minimizing teacher shortage would be taken. Passing this bill would benefit all citizens of Hawaii.

Passing bill SB2820 would benefit all of Hawaii's citizens and help retain and attract qualified and experienced teachers.

Mahalo!

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 8:55:16 AM

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

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

Comments:

Chair Kudani and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Cicily Bilecki. I am a special education at Kalaheo High School in Windward District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of Action Item A. for the Special Meeting, regarding Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

I want to thank the Legislature for finding ways to revise the state budget and cover COVID-19 revenue losses without including any suggestions of pay cuts or furloughs for our educators in our public schools, including our charter schools, or any other state employees. As Chair Dela Cruz had previously said, "We don't want to have an additional negative effect on the economy that might make matters worse."

Over 17 years ago, I moved from Texas to teach in Hawaii. At that time, I had immediately taken an immediate \$10,000 reduction in base pay because, at that time, the state of Hawaii did not provide a pay differential for special education teachers. It took me nearly a decade and costly graduate school course credits and \$160, 000 in student loan debt for undergraduate and graduate studies to move up in teacher reclassification pay. Finally, after 17 years of teaching special education in Hawaii and recently in the past few years earning a \$10,000 special education differential, I can finally come close to covering my \$2,500 a month rent with just one of my paychecks. However, this does take into account all my other growing expenses to live in Hawaii. In my entire teaching career, I have never been able to do that, and it brought some financial relief to my family. I no longer had to work side hustles (i.e. part-time, babysitting, or tutoring, custodial work at a local gym, etc) to make ends meet as a single working parent. I do not have a family to lean on for support, as they live thousands of miles away. I am the sole provider of my household and the reality we live paycheck to paycheck in Hawaii. Although I make a decent living, it is not nearly enough to cover our basic necessities, and I have seriously considered leaving Hawaii and the teaching profession as a whole. Over the course of my career, I have watched droves of my colleagues move to the mainland for higher-paying wages and a lower cost of living. I am tempted every day to make that same decision. Just this year, my rent increased another \$500 each month, but I am having a hard time keeping up.

With the constant reminders and prospects of being furloughed and teachers receiving a 30% pay cut PLUS losing my SPED differential, I do not know how I will survive living in one of the

most costly cities in the United States. Honestly, if I am struggling as a veteran teacher, I cannot imagine what our younger teachers, who already make very little will do to make an honest living. What will happen to the future of teachers in Hawaii? Who would be motivated to become the next generation of teachers, knowing they would be struggling financially? Who will be left to teach our Keiki?

It seems convenient after Hawaii's Special Education teachers have been spending months holding double and triple the IEPs that have been mandated by the State of Hawaii to address the COVID19 Impact Closure meetings, so Hawaii DOE is not sued by all our students' families, that we get a professional slap in the face by taking away a portion of our pay.

Special education is called special education because it requires specific knowledge, experience and a highly-skilled professional to provide specialized instruction. Yet, here we are AGAIN, begging to be paid for the work we have put into the DOE and our KEIKI.

Special education does not end when the release bell rings at 3 PM. Do you know that I spend up until one or two in the morning writing IEPs, transition plans, analyzing student data, parent communication, etc. it cannot get done within our working hours with students?

The goodness of my heart DOES not pay the bills. As a single mom, I will need to look for a career field that values my professional talents and I do not have to live in constant anxiety that I will take a huge pay cut on the backs of special education teachers.

We don't want your applause. We don't want your, "Oh, what a noble profession!" We want to be paid our worth. We want to feed our own keiki. We want to afford to rent an apartment. We want to pay our student loans. We want to STOP living paycheck to paycheck in paradise.

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

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

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

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

Mahalo,

Cicily Bilecki, Windward District, Oahu, Hawaii

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 8:57:32 AM

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

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

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing this testimony in support of SB2820 relating to teacher compensation (differentials) on behalf of myself and all the teachers who have benefited from them.

I have been a special education teacher in the HIDOE for the past 16 years. Prior to the implementation of the differentials, I was seriously looking to leave the profession. My husband and I both hold a master's degree in special education and are highly qualified at what we do, but in 2018 he had to leave the profession because we could not financially afford to both be teachers. He now works as a laborer because it pays more than what we make as teachers. His current job is not his passion, nor is it what he wants to do, but he had to for our financial safety.

When the DOE began providing differentials to teachers, it made a tremendous impact on our lives. The extra money helped provide some relief to our amounting debts. We were able to start paying off more than just the minimum on our bills, and make some progress towards becoming debt free.

If the differentials cease to exist, it will cause another financial burden for our family, especially with the current inflation going on. Without the differentials, I would definitely have to reconsider continuing to work as a special education teacher in the HIDOE. I have seen opportunities at private schools that would pay me more, especially since I am a NBCT, which would leave the HIDOE and students of my community with one less qualified teacher.

Aloha,

Natalia Sandoval, M.A. SPED, NBCT

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 9:06:18 AM

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

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

Comments:

I am a SpEd Teacher. Last night I worked until 7pm writing up legal IEP documents for yet another "exceptional case" for emotional disabilities that had to be completed within 3 days of the emergency IEP meeting. These are challenging times and I get that but what I do not understand is how I am expected to be in the classroom the exact same amount of hours as my gen ed co-teacher (we teach 10th grade biology, inclusion) as well as create my curriculum for my resource biology class and do the grading for that and then find time to attend special workshops for all the changes to laws or IEP implementations for Hawaii and write the IEP documents, plan the meetings, have the meetings, follow-up every two weeks with every parent on my variance students' list then document that in the system and not expect to be paid more for my job than a general educator who goes home at 2:45pm to relax for the night. I am considering moving back to the mainland because of the cost of living and stress related to my job but I have invested my time and money in Hawaii's professional development classes to move my pay scale. I will lose that investment as well as my time in service. Being a teacher is hard. Being a Special Education Teacher is Extremely Difficult, like doing everything with one hand tied behind your back and figuring it out as you go while being treated less than your counterpart(s) the majority of the time.

If I lose the differential incentive to stay permanently, I will leave because I want to be respected and treated fairly while doing what I love for keiki with disabilities. Mahalo for your time! Miss Sarah, Maui High

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 9:06:18 AM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Griffin Kelley	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Esteemed Members of the Education Committee,

I write to you to express my support of SB2820 in hopes that each of you will as well. My name is Griffin Kelley. I am a special educator at Kauai High School. I care deeply about my students and education.

I was placed at Kauai High by a recruiter during the summer of 2021 to fill one of a handful of vacant positions; I was fortunate enough to be the recipient of astonishing kindness and generosity upon my arrival. A fellow teacher allowed my wife and I to stay with her while we secured housing, which took longer than expected. Although I have only been in the profession for four years, I am a qualified, educated, and passionate teacher. The special education differential has made the difference for me. Without the differential, I would not be able to afford housing and would be unable to remain on the island to serve the community. I understand that these are different issues that compound for teachers, but whereas affordable housing is a complicated and multifaceted challenge to tackle, teacher differentials seem much simpler to me. I am in awe of my colleagues who have, for years, put their students first. Far and above their own comfort and personal time and space. I write to you humbly, as a newcomer to the island and the Hawaii Department of Education. I, like many of my colleagues, entered into the field knowing that we would not be made wealthy from our work. I write only to ask you to allow us to keep the roofs over our heads.

I urge you to support SB2820. For many teachers currently earning differential pay, it is the definitive factor for remaining in the profession and remaining part of the community. It is my hope that I may continue to dedicate my work to students with disabilities on this island. Without the differential, that will not be possible.

With respect and humility,

Griffin Kelley

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 9:23:17 AM

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

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

Comments:

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

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

I am a special education teacher at Chiefess Kapiolani Elementary School, in Hilo. I strongly support the continuation of shortage differentials for special education teachers because they have proven to be successful in increasing the number of licensed special education teachers in our schools. As a special education teacher, I have witnessed the benefits of our students receiving their special education services by a licensed teacher. This program has really helped increase the amount of licensed special education teachers in our schools, which our keiki need and deserve. Please help in keeping these differentials for the sake of our most vulnerable student population.

Thank you,

Jennifer Jo

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 9:27:59 AM

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

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

Comments:

Given the decades-long paucity of qualified teachers in Hawai`i, this is a reasonable approach to incentivize teaching professionals to remain in the teaching force and even to seek licensure for teaching.

We can bemoan that too few graduates are licensed teachers, but the low retention rates in Hawai`i schools are an equal or greater issue. The proposed approach to incentivizing hard-to-fill positions is reasonable and appropriate.

Paul McKimmy, Ed.D.

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 9:28:26 AM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Danielle Hartwick	Testifying for Hawaii Dept of Education employee	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

My name is Danielle Hartwick and I am a preschool special education teacher at Makawao Elementary. I am writing in support of SB2820, salary differentials. This additional money is imperative for maintaining our special education staff. As the longest preschool teacher in the school, I have trained over 6 teachers in this position in the last 10 years. This turnover is difficult for staff, families and children. They deserve a teacher who is paid for her/his expertise and can remain committed to seeing children grow. The pay differential has helped maintain a teacher in this position for the last 2 years. I am grateful not to have to mentor another preschool teacher. With the pandemic, SPED teachers had to work twice as hard to ensure students were receiving their supports virtually and in person. It was necessary to keep strong relationships with families sometimes taking extra time after school to be sure our student needs were being met. This stipend is important in compensating SPED teachers for their time completing paperwork through IEPs. IEPs are time consuming (often days to gather data, create documents/data charts and produce a strong legal document for each one of our students. Often this happens after all of our other daily school duties are completed. Therefore the additional stipend actually feels like compensation for the time needed to complete our paperwork and hold meetings. Mahalo for showing your support for our students, families and teachers by recognizing the additional work needed to provide for our most vulnerable students. Mahalo for your time. Danielle Hartwick

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 9:43:22 AM

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

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

Comments:

To the State of Hawai'i,

I write to you as a citizen of this great state to ask for the passing of this Bill to keep our school teachers committed and motivated to our children. During this pandemic the teachers have been so important to our children's mental health. I have two children in the DOE elementary school system, as parents we work full time day jobs and have no other better resource for enrichment of growth and knowledge than their school teachers. We love and appreciate the teachers we have and they are always accommodating after and during school hours to our 'ohana. Incentives are so important to keep good teachers here working in Hawai'i. I know that the success of this state relies on a great school system. Please be the example to the world that the State of Hawai'i is strong because we put value into our school system.

Mahalo,

Lisa Yee

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 10:09:48 AM

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

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

Comments:

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

My name is Melanie Pokakaa, a first grade teacher at Waianae Elementary School. I am writing in support of Senate Bill 2820 relating to teacher compensation in the form of salary compression. I have taught at my school for seven years and I have to say that no one is rushing to fill the many open positions that we have. These open positions are filled with unqualified individuals or people who have traveled from the continent. Often coming to Hawaii with the mindset of a "Hawaii Vacation." Many of these unqualified or out-of-state individuals often do not stay past their contracted 2 years, which leads us back to where we started with teacher shortage.

We are in 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 SB2820, 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 myself but more than anything this differential pay supports my students. With being at a Title I school, which is a low income 100% free and reduced 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 education. 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 position are filled with unqualified individuals or long-term subs. When there already are professionals in those positions that we could keep by fixing their pay that they deserve .

I ask you to please support Senate Bill 2820.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Melanie Pokakaa

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 10:16:48 AM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Patrick Karjala	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

It is essential that we support our teachers and pay them appropriately for their skill level and education that are REQUIRED for the jobs that they are taking on.

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 10:40:10 AM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Glenda Bendell	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

As a Special Education Teacher on Maui, I could not express strongly enough the urgency for teachers to be retained and recruited to support the students in our state. The cost of living on Maui is one of the highest in the country and I would not be able to continue living and working in Hawaii schools if the Shortage Differential is not continued into the next school year and beyond. I support myself and currently supplement my income with tutoring home hospital students as needed. Please support this bill so that we can start on a path of stability in our teacher recruitment in Hawaii. Mahalo for reading my testimony. I speak for many in my position in Hawaii.

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 10:38:27 AM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Grace Chen-Ellis	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I write to support passage of Senate Bills 2819 and 2820 which I view as critical to the recruitment and retention of high quality educators in Hawaii. I am a high school teacher on Molokai and I know firsthand that some very good teachers here are considering leaving the profession because of low compensation and little opportunity to see their wages grow as they gain experience. We must do all that we can to stop this kind of attrition. Hawaii is behind most states in terms of educator compensation relative to cost of living. It is our responsibility as educators and legislators to ensure that our students are led by a team of educators with exceptional abilities. We cannot fulfill that obligation if our brightest young people choose another career because of relatively low wages for educators, if we cannot compete with other states for the very best teachers, and if we cannot retain teachers. If teachers in Hawaii were guaranteed what most teachers in every other state have -- salary adjustments based on years of experience -- we could increase the number of college students who would choose education as a career, be in a better position to compete with other states for the best teachers, and retain the quality teachers we already have. In addition, we have seen the positive impact shortage differentials have by substantially reducing teacher shortages in the fields and geographic areas to which they apply. We should continue a valuable program that we know works. Senate Bills 2819 and 2820 will help us meet our responsibility to our students to keep their schools fully staffed with the best teachers available. For these reasons, I urge passage of Senate Bills 2819 and 2820. Thank you for your consideration.

Grace C. Chen-Ellis

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 10:37:33 AM

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

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

Comments:

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE**Friday, January 28, 2022 at 3:00pm****RE: SB 2820****Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and Members of the Committee,**

My name is Sarah "Mili" Milianta-Laffin. I teach at Ilima Intermediate School in the Campbell-Kapolei Complex, Leeward District on O'ahu. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2820.

SB2820 would make sure funding is secured for the differentials currently in place for special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and geographically hard-to-fill areas. 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.

Sarah Milianta-Laffin, Teacher**'Ilima Intermediate School****Leeward District**

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 3:34:14 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Francine J Scheer Snell	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

To Whom It May Concern: My husband and I are retired teachers who taught in Oregon, Hawaii and Japan. We come from a family of teachers and we are very concerned about the state of education today. We have worked as educators in rural areas and with children with special needs and are aware of how important education is to this vulnerable population. Hawaii needs to provide qualified teachers who are fairly compensated to fill these challenging positions. These students have been underserved and teaching positions in these areas have been difficult to fill due to the many challenges. More teachers than ever are thinking of quitting the profession. Everything should be done to provide salaries that encourage teachers to stay. If this bill is not enacted it is going to cause Hawaii to lose even more teachers. We want the passage of SB2820 to ensure that the future of all of the children of Hawaii (including our grandchildren) are assured a quality education. We want experienced and dedicated teachers who are acknowledged and compensated for the important work that they are doing. The future of all the children of Hawaii is riding on the passage of this bill. Fran and Richard Snell 160 South Lanikai Pl Haiku Hawaii 96708

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 11:01:50 AM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
George Macklin	Testifying for HSTA	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Senators,

Thank you for your consideration of SB2820 to fund the differentials in hard-to-staff areas and positions of the state. Of the 90 teachers on our campus, 15 are leaving either mid-year, or at the end of the year. These teachers represent hundreds of years of experience leaving our profession. Of the 15 leaving fully 10 are moving to more lucrative positions so they can pay bills. Many of these teachers developed side jobs because our teaching jobs fail to pay for simple living expenses. Please raise teacher pay as inflation rises and we continue to live in increasingly vulnerable situations.

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 11:04:04 AM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Ryan Omine	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Members of the Committee:

My name is Ryan Omine, and I am a teacher at Momilani Elementary in the Leeward District, on the island of Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819. I am not going to sugar coat things and write you a long testimonial letter as I am not even sure how many of you actually read our testimony. I am just going to be as blunt and get my point across.

I have been teaching for almost 20 years, and before I got into this profession, I knew that teachers never got paid much, especially in Hawaii. Despite knowing this fact, and knowing that the cost of living in Hawaii is ridiculously high, I still wanted to become a public school teacher, a public servant for our keiki. Over the years as teacher morale and respect for our profession continually declines, I started to ask myself that philosophical question, "Why? Why did I choose to become a public school teacher?"

My answer has always been to make a positive impact in the lives of all of the students I teach. No amount of money can ever compensate any teacher for what we do. We do it because we love working with our students, we do it because we love the art and craft of teaching, we do it because it enriches our lives and the lives of our students.

I think we are entrusted with one of the most important responsibilities on the face of the earth with educating our children and preparing them for future generations. Yet, we get paid peanuts in comparison to every other profession. As I said earlier, I never cared about the money going into this profession. I get more respect from my students than adults at times, or I should say many times. Why? I think my students know I care about them and their well being, my students know that I am willing to do anything within my power to make them feel special, to make THEM feel EMPOWERED. They know that they can trust me now more than ever to keep them safe and healthy from the COVID. My students know that I will always be here for them when they need me, like any family member.

With all this being said, I have done my part as a teacher for nearly 20 years, and now I hope you will do your part as a politician. I might not even see any compensation in my lifetime, but I am hoping those future educators after me will. With the continual cost of living going up, houses on small parcels of land going for nearly \$1 million and up, please

help our unappreciated profession by passing this bill. Honestly, without the support of my parents/family, there is NO way I would and could ever afford to live here with my own family. I would have left my home, my family, my state a long time ago. Thanks for your time and reading this letter.

Respectfully,

Ryan Omine

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 11:07:39 AM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Scott Robinson	Testifying for UH Manoa, College of Education	Support	No

Comments:

Please support SB2820 Teacher Compensation for maintaining pay differential for hard to staff, special education, and Hawaiian Language Immersion. HIDOE teachers in these areas need to be given additional pay due to the special challenges of recruitment and retention. This would provide more equitable pay for effective teachers working in these areas.

Thank you for reading my testimony.

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 1:18:04 PM

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

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kidani and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 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.

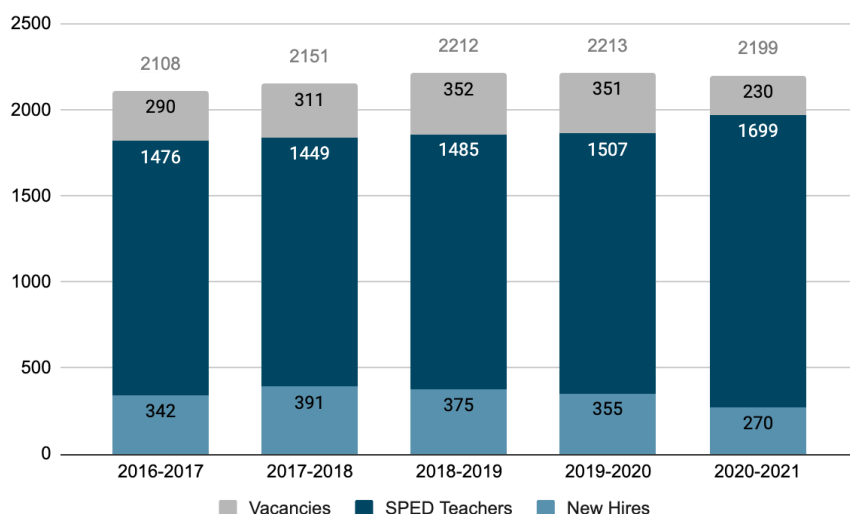
Aloha Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2820. 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, initiative 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.

Thank you for your time,

Janet Kim

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 12:38:36 PM

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

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

Comments:

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

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2820. I have been an educator on Molokai for almost 27 years. When I first started working for the Hawaii DOE on Molokai in 1995, there was a tremendous amount of turn over of personnel. Since the increase of the hard-to-fill differential and the addition of Special Education and Hawaiian Immersion differentials I have seen teachers come back to Molokai to teach here. Our Special Education Department and Hawaiian Immersion dpeartments have become very stable. Almost all our teachers have ties to Molokai. This is critical in relationship building with students and the community. Our teachers incur a higher cost of living on Molokai from gas to groceries to electricity. Our Molokai teachers could find a lower cost of living in the mainland. The only way they can make it is through the differentials. Please seriously consider voting for Senate Bill SB2820.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 12:01:03 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Elizabeth Laliberte	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Senators,

I'd like to express my strong support for the continued funding of differentials for Special Education positions. This is my 16th year as a Sped teacher with the DOE and I will say that the impact of having licensed and qualified sped teachers is tangible. And the benefits aren't limited to their students, they are felt across the department and the school. One reason that all sped teachers benefit is that our caseload burden is lighter when cases can be distributed evenly among all sped teachers. Non-licensed teachers aren't trained to do IEPs and therefore cannot be case managers. A lighter caseload means more time to plan, prepare and assess. Another benefit is more stable staffing at the school and less turnover. We all agree that relationships are a key factor in student success. It's a challenge for long-term subs to build relationships with students if they are here today, gone tomorrow. Continuity and stability are crucial for students to feel safe at school, especially in chaotic times such as this. Please consider these reasons when deliberating whether to continue the special education pay differential. The program is working as intended. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Liz Laliberte

Hilo, HI

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 12:45:01 PM

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

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

Comments:

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

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2819 and Senate Bill 2820 relating to teacher compensation (salary compression).

My name is Jo Anne and I am a Dually Certified Elementary & Special Education teacher on the island of Maui. I was born and raised in Hawai'i and have lived in Hawai'i all my life. I earned my teaching degree in both elementary education and special education at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. Hawai'i is my home and the thought of having to leave Hawai'i due to not being able to afford the cost of living is a decision I do not want to have to make.

I have been teaching for 8 years and have barely moved up the salary schedule. In addition to writing IEPs, analyzing and compiling data, making modifications and accommodations and personalizing learning programs, I have started a family and have two children under 3 years of age. It has been very challenging to enroll and participate in professional development workshops and trainings that will help me reclassify to higher classes in the salary schedule, while also trying to be a mother to my children and a wife to my husband. There are teachers who have been teaching for a shorter period of time than I have and yet are further in the salary schedule than I am. That is very, very discouraging. I have many colleagues and teacher friends who have left the profession because they have been forced to choose between their family and their career. The choice for them was easy due to our salary that is not financially sustainable to raise a family.

I have been contemplating leaving the Department of Education for a couple of years now because my salary is not enough to cover all daycare expenses and it would save us money for me to stay home instead. Thankfully, my husband and other family have been able to care for our children while I am teaching. Preschool enrollment and tuition fees are in my family's near future and still, my salary is not enough to cover that cost in addition to our living expenses. We are still living with parents and have hopes to own our own home one day.

The teacher compensation / differentials (SB2820) have already helped convince me to remain with the State of Hawaii Department of Education for the past few years as it has helped my family financially tremendously. Earning fair wages based on teaching experience and knowing that I would be moving up the salary schedule each year would convince me to remain in the teaching profession with the State of Hawaii Department of Education until I have reached the

top of the salary schedule at the very least. From what I've gathered through discussions with my colleagues and peers, I know that many - if not most of the teachers within my department also feel the same way as I do.

With that, I am a elementary special education teacher with the State of Hawaii Department of Education and I am in support of Senate Bill 2819 and Senate Bill 2820.

Please please please vote in support of Senate Bill 2819 and Senate Bill 2820.

Thank you so much for the opportunity to share my testimony, as well as for your time and consideration.

Mahalo nui loa.

Me ke aloha,

Jo Anne

Elementary & Special Education Teacher

Hearing Date: January 28, 2022

Hearing Time: 3:00 PM

RE: SB 2819 & 2820 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

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

My name is Shelby Loo and I am a National Board Certified Mathematics teacher at Waimea Middle Public Conversion Charter School who resides with my husband -a Hawai'i County Police Officer, and our two children in the Hamakua district on the Big Island. I have been a teacher at Waimea Middle School for the past 17 years, serving as the sixth-grade level chairperson and currently the Math Department Head and a member of our School's Leadership Team for the past 14 years. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2819 & 2820.

SB 2819 - Teacher Compensation - Experimental Modernization Project

SB 2820 - Teacher Compensation - Differentials for SPED, Hard-To-Fill & Hawaiian Language Immersion teachers

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. Fixing the compression issue will place our teachers, such as myself, where they should be for their many years of service and the very long arduous hours they dedicate to supporting students. Further, funding the differentials will help us recruit and retain our teachers in the hardest-to-fill areas. Our teachers are worth it as they are important to ensuring the next generation has the essential skills to thrive.

The cost of housing, child care, food, and fuel has exceeded wages earned for a while now, but has become an even bigger issue in light of the pandemic. I have seen friends leave the profession and or move away from our State in order to seek better living conditions on the mainland. If we don't compensate our working class appropriately, I predict we will continue to lose members of our working class who provide essential services and this will be detrimental to our communities.

I am passionate about my job and find value in the day to day work that I do with my 6th grade students. It is my hope to inspire them to become lifelong learners who dream big, work hard, and are always humble and kind community contributors. The job is demanding, even more so in recent years with the challenges that the pandemic has presented, and requires that I serve some of our most neediest students who require extra compassion, care, and encouragement. It is a 12+ hour a day job that often requires that I put time in over the weekend or after tucking my children in at night in order to be effective for my students.

When considering these measures please be sure to include Public Charter Schools along with the HDOE schools, as we are equally as deserving of appropriate compensation.

We need your help to rectify this issue and continue to ensure that we can attract highly qualified teachers for our keiki. Mahalo for your consideration.

Shelby Loo

6th Grade Mathematics Teacher, NBCT

Math Department Head, Waimea Middle PCCS

66-1803 Alaneo Street

Kamuela, HI 96743

(808)989-8125

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 12:31:49 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Hillary Watt	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

As a special education teacher who has worked for the Hawaii DOE for 17 years, I know how stressful it can be. I've watched teachers come from the mainland and leave again when they realized their salary didn't meet the cost of living. I've watched teachers with licensure in other areas back out of SpEd to be in Gen Ed because the paperwork or problem behaviors were overwhelming. I've worked in high school departments where the majority of the SpEd positions were filled with long term subs and emergency hires with little to no experience. I've witnessed turnover in the SpEd department outpacing any other and consistently having the most vacancies (oftentimes being the ONLY department with vacancies).

So what happens? More work gets placed on the shoulders of the qualified SpEd teachers who remain. It becomes even more of a burden and a vicious cycle continues. Also, as good special education teachers find work elsewhere (either other states or in completely different fields where the stress is less but the pay is the same), we have less quality teachers to mentor the new ones.

The differentials are important to provide incentives for quality teachers to stay and for teachers with other licensures to consider switching to our specific field. Otherwise, we will be left with no one to support our students with the highest needs.

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 12:39:44 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Julia Kotzian	Testifying for Hawai'i Department of Education	Support	No

Comments:

Senate Bill 2820

RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

Jan 28, 2022 3:00 PM via. Videoconference

IN SUPPORT

I am currently an employee of Hawai'i DOE and a member for the HSTA. I am testifying in favor of SB 2820. It is important to make sure our special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and geographically hard-to-fill areas are filled with loving and supporting staff which are also cared for. Consistency is key when filling these positions, so resignation rates don't continue to grow. I would like to restate that I am in support of this bill.

Sincerely,

Julia Kotzian

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 1:17:21 PM

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

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

Comments:

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

This testimony is in support of SB2820, continuing differentials for hard to staff positions in Hawaii's hard to staff public schools.

I am an English teacher at a large high school on Hawaii Island, and on a personal level, I am not sure how I would survive without the differential, especially in light of losing the embedded 21 hours. Not only do I lose the income that comes with those missing hours, I also now have to pay for professional development to reclassify, which will also take even longer without the embedded pd hours. The differential at least cushions that blow.

I also know that due to the pressures teachers are currently facing due to Covid in general and also changes in admin at my school, at least 2 eligible teachers are retiring, and the Teach for America teachers are not staying past their contracts. This has provided a stressful environment and makes me wonder what will entice people to fill these positions. It's already difficult to find highly qualified teachers to staff my rural west Hawaii Island school and will become even more so without the differential.

Given that state coffers, according the Civil Beat, "...are expected to top \$8 billion for the first time ever this fiscal year, taking state finances from a dire, doom-and-gloom scenario just a year ago to a huge surplus," I would think that education is one of the most important sectors to infuse with cash, that is if we truly care about our state's children and the future we want them to be able to create.

I implore you to please vote to support SB2820 to demonstrate your support for the teachers and communities of Hawaii.

Mahalo,

Shannon Jacob Kline

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 2:52:30 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Tracey Jeffers	Testifying for HSTA - Educator	Support	No

Comments:

I have been a Culinary teacher for 25 years. Many of my colleagues in the same field have also been teaching for as long if not longer. We have to shop on our own time in our own cars, we then have to bring all the groceries up to the class and of course put it all away. If we don't then the students won't have the supplies to create dishes to enhance their learning. There is no compensation for the things we do and there aren't many young educators in this pathway's content area currently.

It's hard enough that we aren't paid overtime or provided the resources from the school to take care of this extra work we need to do for our students to be successful in our classes, but when we all start to retire, the pathway will die out without young educators wanting to take on this pathway. Culinary is a path to the Hotel and Restaurant Industry. The passion starts in their teen years and is nurtured in school but without the pathway, the students may not choose this path or may take longer to find that passion to enter the industry. There needs to be more provided for educators whose content requires extra outside of class time and the work day as well as the extra preparation time needed.

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 11:42:54 AM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Nicholete Ito	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

This testimony is regarding the shortage differential pay for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language, and hard to staff locations.

I SUPPORT continuing funding of the shortage differentials that were implemented in January of 2020. Continuing the differentials will ensure that many teachers in Special Education positions teachers will not vacate those positions. Ensuring that students with disabilities have care coordinators who are qualified and certified should be a priority in public education.

Special Education and other vulnerable students have already been severely impacted by this pandemic, and many SPED, Hawaiian Language, and hard to staff positions were filled upon inception of the differentials. These staffing gains could be undone if the differentials are not funded and do not continue. This will result in SPED positions being staffed by subs and non-SPED-certified teachers, leaving the DOE vulnerable to the liabilities that unqualified staff brings to legally binding documents.

On a personal level, I am currently tasked with teaching Special Education AND General Education while simultaneously carrying my caseload. I received my SPED certification immediately after differentials were announced, and I can say with absolute certainty, that I will not return to SPED if the differentials come to an end.

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 11:56:06 AM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Erin Dunn	Testifying for Hawaii DOE	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Legislators

My name is Erin Dunn and I am a Special Education teacher on Kauai. I teach high school students who have severe and/or multiple handicaps in the community-based instruction / life skills classes. My position is one of the hard-to-fill positions that even substitute teachers often choose not to do. The pay differential is ABSOLUTELY CRITICAL to attempt to lessen the severe shortage in this area! It did help when it was implemented but I believe it needs to be a larger differential for Hawaii to attract and keep teachers. It needs to be larger because of the much higher cost of living and the cost of traveling to see family when necessary. Those are the usual, obvious reasons that you've heard over and over but myself and many colleagues are still struggling to afford housing in the current economic situation.

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 12:10:06 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Liana White	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 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

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 1:51:13 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Richard H. Ornellas	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

To the Hawaii State Legislature;

As a public high school teacher, SpEd certified, in a rural high school and only high school on the island, Molokai, the differentials cover the many hours we spend after school and on weekends to provide the services our students need. The pandemic has caused tremendous SEL Social Emotional Learning problems increasing our student care and instruction. This is a critical situation and legislators must recognize the services, beyond academic instruction, teachers are providing for our students and the society as a whole.

Richard Ornellas

Molokai High School SpEd Teacher

SCC Chair



Ho'okāko'o Corporation

THE SENATE
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Chair
Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Vice Chair

**Testimony In Support of SB 2820
Relating to Teacher Compensation
January 27, 2022**

Honorable Kidani and Members of the Committee:

Ho'okāko'o Corporation is in **strong support of SB 2820** which appropriates funds for various teacher differentials to help address various labor shortages.

Ho'okāko'o is a private non-profit that manages and governs three public conversion charter schools in the state of Hawai'i: Kamaile Academy in Wai'anae, Kualapu'u School on Moloka'i, and Waimea Middle School on Hawai'i Island. Collectively, our schools serve over 1,500 children in Pre-K through 12th grade, the majority of whom are from low-income families and are of Native Hawaiian ancestry.

As mandated by the HSTA Collective Bargaining Agreement, we gladly pay our teachers working in our hard-to-staff areas the \$3,000 annual retention incentive. We have found that this incentive does help to attract and retain qualified teachers who may not otherwise consider working in our more rural and underserved communities. Pay incentives have also helped with recruiting teachers from out of state as well as in addressing Hawaii's higher cost of living.

Conversely, we have lost teachers due to competition. In 2020, some teachers left charter schools to pursue the generous compensation differentials offered by the Department of Education to its hard-to-staff, SPED and Hawaiian immersion teachers. To remain competitive, Ho'okāko'o schools also paid this differential without receiving any additional state funds. However, this is unsustainable.

Any funding support to Hawaii's public schools must also include Hawai'i's charter schools along with the mechanism to ensure those funds can be appropriately disbursed.

We urge the Committee's support of SB 2820 as we believe it will go a long way towards attracting and retaining the highest quality teaching professionals that Hawaii's public school students need and deserve.

Thank you,

David Y. Gibson, Executive Director
Ho'okāko'o Corporation

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 1:19:00 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Amelia Thorne	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am writing on behalf of myself and my fellow Hawaii public school teachers to express strong support for SB2820. The Big Island high school where I teach has lost at least 4 fully credentialed teachers and one administrator since the beginning of the school year, and none of the positions have been filled by a credentialed educator or administrator, and at least one has not been filled at all, requiring other teachers to increase their class sizes or lose their designation teacher collaboration time in order to accommodate those students. Passing this bill will directly address one of the biggest issues in recruiting and keeping qualified educators in "hard to fill" positions: the fact that Hawaii's teachers are paid the least in the nation when accounting for cost of living. The strain of teaching at a school that is understaffed makes teacher retention even more difficult. I am hopeful that the Senate will vote to pass SB2820 and thereby demonstrate that they see Hawaii's public school system and our keiki as worthy investments in Hawaii's future. Thank you.

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 12:56:55 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Elizabeth Sharrock	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Legislators,

I'd like to formally ask you to approve teacher differentials. This small contribution to making our jobs easier to swallow, might just save the DOE from losing some of it's most valued personell: Our special education teachers and language immersion teachers. The hard to fill bonus, the bonus for taking on the long thankless hours that SPED teachers do, and the bonus to help preserve an indigenous language is of utter importance! Please show the public you value us. Please show the teachers in this state that we have not been forgotten or pushed aside. You know as well as we do, that our job is one of the toughest around. Now more than ever, we need to show people in this profession that they can't leave. They can't abandon the keiki. So let their time be worth it! Give them the money they so deserve and PASS THIS BILL!

Mahalo,

Elizabeth Sharrock

6th grade ELA teacher at Kea'au Middle School

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 1:52:05 PM

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

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

Comments:

I, Brandi Rawlins, am a teacher at Kualapu‘u Public Conversion Charter School, I write in support of Bill SB 2820, relating to teacher differentials and hope for it to be rectified to save the fidelity of Hawaii’s teachers.

Retaining our current Hawaii teachers is top priority. We don’t want them to either leave the profession or move to the mainland in search of a higher pay.

I have been an educator for 6 years.

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

Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2820.

Sincerely,

Brandi Rawlins

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 1:52:46 PM

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

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

Comments:

January 27, 2021

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

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

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 1:51:29 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Waynele Yu	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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

I am writing to submit testimony in support of SB 2820. I am an instructor at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa College of Education teaching in a distance program that supports students in becoming licensed teachers across the state. My testimony is submitted as an individual and not as a representative of the University of Hawai‘i.

The teacher shortage in Hawai‘i makes the news year after year. Despite the positive employment outlook, there are over a thousand vacancies each year. As someone who actively recruits students into our teacher education programs, the most common concern prospective students have is whether they can afford our program and whether they will earn enough money to sustain their families in Hawai‘i on a teacher salary. Financial concerns are the largest reason for declining their offers of admission. When adjusted for the cost of living, Hawai‘i teachers are among the lowest paid in the nation (McCann, 2019). It’s no wonder that leaving Hawai‘i has been the most cited reason for teachers leaving the DOE for the past five years, outnumbering retirements (See Hawai‘i Department of Education employment report:

<https://www.hawaiipublicschools.org/Reports/EmploymentReport2020-21.pdf>). Research supports that higher teacher compensation would not only improve teacher retention in public schools in Hawai‘i but also educational outcomes, particularly in schools with a higher percentage of Native Hawaiian, Filipino-American, and Pacific Islander students (See http://hawaiischolars.weebly.com/uploads/1/3/5/6/135637363/hsej_brief_2_-_increased_teacher_compensation_can_lead_to_more_equitable_education_in_hawaii.pdf)

This bill is a small step in counteracting the historical underfunding of public education in this state. I urge you to vote in support of SB 2820.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Waynele Yu

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 2:13:21 PM

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

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

Comments:

Aloha Senate Education Committee,

My name is Caroline Freudig and I am in strong support of SB2820. I am a first grade teacher at Kalaheo Elementary School on Kaua'i. While this bill does not directly impact my salary as I am not eligible for any of the differentials, I know that the differentials are making a difference in having qualified teachers in areas of need such as Special Education, Hawaiian Language Immersion and areas that are geographically hard to fill. I know colleagues who are dual-certified and transferred into a Special Education teaching line because the differentials would help their families stay afloat and it would lessen their economic burdens. This meant that those students would now be taught by licensed special education teachers rather than have long-term substitute teachers. This makes a huge difference for the students. I urge you to support this bill.

Mahalo,

Caroline Freudig, Kaua'i, Kalaheo Elementary School, First Grade

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 1:56:50 PM

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

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

Comments:

Welina ke aloha,

‘O au nō ‘o Uluhuni 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 kākō'o i kēia lā. A hui hou kākou ma ka wā kūpono a ke Akua pū.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2820.

'O wau iho nō me ka ha'aha'a a me ke kākō'o mau,

Uluhane Waialeale

Kualapu'u Public Conversion Charter School

Ke Kula Kaiapuni O Kualapu'u

Moloka'i, Hawai'i

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 2:04:03 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Chere Costales	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support.

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 1:45:26 PM

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

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

Comments:

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

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2820 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 with 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.
Thank you for your time.

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 2:22:09 PM

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

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

Comments:

Aloha Distinguished Members of the Senate Committee on Education,

I humbly request your support for SB2820 as it pertains to maintaining pay differentials for Hard-to-Staff, Special Education, and Hawaiian Language Immersion. I am a Hawaiian medium educator and have seen the tireless dedication of Hawaiian language immersion and special education teachers over the years. Their responsibilities require a unique skill set and vast knowledge base which requires constant professional development and research. They must also design, develop and test their own curriculum materials to accompany their innovative lessons. Therefore, I strongly urge your acknowledge their heroic efforts by providing a pay differential that aligns with their dynamic work output. Mahalo a nui!

‘O au iho nō me ka ‘oia‘i‘o,

na P. Kanoe Kanaka‘ole

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 12:57:09 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Davelyn Lokelani Han	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I, Davelyn Lokelani Han, am a teacher at Kula Kaiapuni o Kualapu‘u and I write in support of Bill SB 2820, Teacher Compensation and hope for it to be rectified to save the fidelity of Hawaii’s teachers.

Retaining our current Hawaii teachers is top priority. We don’t want them to either leave the profession or move to the mainland in search of a higher pay.

I have been an educator for over 20+ years, all of those in the Hawaiian Language Programs here on Moloka‘i. Our Kaiapuni teachers struggle to provide appropriate instructional materials for our haumāna that address language, culture, and that satisfy State standards for student learning. We are tasked with translating materials from English to Hawaiian daily! There are limited resources that provides materials already translated into Hawaiian (unlike English language learners that have unlimited resources).

Your support for this differential pay will be helping to persuade many of our Kaiapuni teachers to remain on the job and stay in Hawaii where our keiki can benefit from their experience.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2820.

Sincerely,

(Davelyn) Lokelani Han

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 2:19:15 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Jonathan Drayton	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

High needs students and hard-to-fill school districts are a problem that is growing across the state. The main reason for this is underresourced schools that have a lack of qualified teachers. As, vital as inclusion and diversity is to the well-rounded-development of our students, we can not expect our students to take care of other students while attempting to learn. However, with a deluge of students requiring special accommodations, this is exactly what is happening in under-resourced districts (and throughout the greater majority of our state).

Our school systems desperately needs the funds to employ special workers who can meet the needs of our children. Please children attending public education the right to an equal, fair, and uninterrupted learning experience. Now, more than ever, children are facing additional hardships and need these additional services (which we legally must provide, but do not have qualified staff to provide them.

Please support SB2820 and our Keiki.

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 2:36:54 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
B. Noelani Iokepa- Guerrero	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Kāko‘o nō i ka pila SB2820 no ka uku pono ‘ana i nā kumu kula kaiapuni.

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 2:14:59 PM

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

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

Comments:

As an elementary school teacher for the DOE on the Big Island, salary is an issue as I decide whether to continue teaching in the state. I have over a decade of classroom experience, yet I am working four jobs to be able to afford housing and cost of living in the state. I am in my 40's, yet, I am living in the most expensive but least safe apartments I have ever lived in during my career. The cost of housing takes over half of my monthly salary, and combined with a car payment and cost of living, I do not have extra funds leftover for savings or retirement. The housing shortage means that I cannot find a cheaper option closer to work. I am lucky to receive the differential for teaching in a hard to staff area. I drive 40 miles each way to my school, which adds an enormous cost for gas. I took a pay cut from my last job to teach in the state. I love the kids and my school, but salary might be the deciding factor that causes me to switch careers.

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 2:41:12 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Debbie Yamamoto	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2820.

Our Special Education teachers work so hard with our students and I fully support this bill.

I thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 2:52:03 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Doug McDowell	Testifying for DOE - West Hawaii	Support	No

Comments:

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

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2820

My name is Doug McDowell. I have been teaching at Honoka`a High and Intermediate School for 16 years. I have seen too many good teachers come and go. We must support funding and policy to attract and retain good teachers. Only by them being able to stay and learn can they become a permanent part of our community. Their years of service will be reflected in the high quality education that they will be able to bring to our rural schools. The differentials make a huge difference in the attracting and retaining teachers. Our rural schools need your support of SB 2820.

Mahalo for you time and consideration. Please support our teachers with the differentials for these hard to fill teaching positions in our rural communities. We have so little access compared to larger demographic area with more money, industry and people. These differentials greatly help our teachers be able to stay, while creating the highest quality education we can for our communities.

Please support SB 2820. Aloha! Doug McDowell

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 2:48:06 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
chris pascual	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

To Kidani, Kim and members of the education committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of bills: SB2819, SB2820, relating to teacher salary compression and teacher differentials respectively.

Correcting the teacher salary compression by awarding teachers the compensation that are past due and using differential pay that acknowledges rural isolation and specialized fields is the first step to addressing the needs of students by retaining and recruiting teachers in the state of Hawai'i. There needs to be more done and I anticipate this committee to do what is right in order set the bar on where lawmakers stand in supporting public education and public school teachers.

Thank you,

-C Pascual

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 2:25:32 PM

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

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

Comments:

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

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

Mahalo for your time,

Evelyn Gamez

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 12:46:52 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
DEANNA J.K. KACKLEY	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

This testimony is being submitted in support of SB 2820. I am a teacher who works at Honokaa High and Intermediate. Please rest assured that the monetary supports provided for me to access this school, in order to share my expertise and guidance, is one of several driving reasons for me to drive one hour, one way, each day - which makes that two hours per day in driving - in order to build science literacy on Hawaii Island.

Please continue to support the differentials which make it worth my while to drive to these rural communities. The differentials are practical and support teacher retention and satisfaction. Workforce supports throughout Hawaii need to be examined on a regular basis and the strategies updated for 2022 and forward.

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 2:52:56 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Mapuana Dudoit	Testifying for HSTA	Support	No

Comments:

I support SB2820 because having qualified individuals working to teach our students are so important. There aren't very many qualified/educated teachers willing to work in Hawaii for very long because prices are so high and salaries are so small.

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 2:45:02 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Nichole Cootey	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

January 27, 2022**Dear Senate Education Committee,**

Aloha! My name is Nichole Cootey. I am a 6th grade teacher at Honoka'a Elementary School on the island of Hawai'i. I have been teaching in the HDOE for about 16 years. I was born and raised on the Hilo side of the Big Island and about 9 years ago, relocated to Waimea. My husband's family is from the Waimea & Honoka'a area. I am writing to ask that you please fully fund SB2819 & SB2820, the bills that would help pay veteran teachers for their years of service as well as continue to fund the shortage differentials. This is critical for many Hawai'i teachers.

Paying teachers for years of service & shortage differentials will help me because I am like many other teachers and I work a second job. The cost of living is so high here. My 2nd job takes time away from spending time with my family and also I am unable to spend enough time focusing on teaching. If we are able to get higher pay, I may be able to quit my 2nd job and be able to spend more time being a better teacher and have time for my family, especially my children who are growing up so very fast. There have been many times that I have chosen to spend my own money on school supplies which then means I am unable to spend those funds on my family just so that I can be a better teacher. I should not have to choose between providing for my own children & my students.

Funding teacher salaries will help students because veteran teachers will stay in the profession longer, spend more time lesson planning and not have to worry about how much they are spending of their own money on school supplies. Students will have stability because there won't be a new teacher or substitute year after year. Veteran teachers would also have the time to mentor new teachers and help them be better at teaching.

Sincerely,**Nichole Cootey****Grade 6**

Honoka'a Elementary

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 11:49:02 AM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
andrew beh	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Working at a hard staff school and receiving the differential bonus this last year has made a huge difference for myself and family. With the extra money we have been able to send our seven-year-old son to ukulele lessons. Also, we were able to send my daughter who is in preschool to speech therapy. I can say this money makes a huge difference for teachers, takes away some financial stress and the money goes right back into our local economy. Please support this measure.

Chairperson Kidani & Members of the Committee:

I am Laverne Moore, a special education teacher at McKinley High School, and I speak in Support of SB 2820 RELATING TO TEACHER COMPENSATION.

Online teaching was the most challenging in my 52 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?

Why, as a social activist, I love teaching History and working with the special education students. The \$10,000 special education differential adds to my high three and is an incentive to continue teaching. Mentoring and supporting incoming special education teachers is a way of giving back to my profession and the HSTA for all of the training and leadership skills I have acquired throughout my career.

My peers, need the differential for they are starting out in their careers, have college loans, living pay check to pay check, working two or more jobs after school or on the weekends.

I urge your committee to pass SB2820 for differentials are a needed benefit for the service our teachers render on behalf of our children in Hawaii's public schools.

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 12:18:22 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Jenna Bachmann	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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

I am submitting testimony on SB2820. Hawaii already faces a huge shortage of teachers, special education teachers in particular. I love my job as a special education teacher, and the shortage differential helps to compensate us for the time we spend writing individualized education plans, meetings for our students and families, and other special education related duties not performed by general education teachers. By discontinuing the shortage differential, this will cause a bigger shortage of licensed special education teachers. Our special education students need licensed special education teachers now more than ever in order to recoup the learning loss from the school closures due to COVID 19. We have tirelessly been working to fill in these educational gaps to get our students back on track. I urge you to vote in support of SB2820. Please consider the already existing teacher shortage, shortage of educators at hard to staff schools, shortage of special education teachers, and the future of our students' education when voting.

Mahalo,

Jenna Bachmann

7th grade special education math and science, Wheeler Middle

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 12:23:55 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Jeffrey Uyeda	Testifying for HSTA	Support	No

Comments:

To Whom It May Concern,

Please consider funding an increase in salary adjustments/ differentials for teachers. I have been a special education teacher for over 20 years here in the state of Hawaii. We have been struggling to fill teacher positions in- Special Education, Hard to Fill Areas, and Hawaiian Immersion Schools- for YEARS. To put it simply, clowns have been hired to fill these lines... YES, I said "clowns." These individuals being hired 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 - who often leave the profession - and (b) not enough money to recruit new, qualified and educated teachers, ESPECIALLY IN THE AFOREMENTIONED TEACHING LINES.

The government always states that "Education is a priority." Your past actions have NOT backed that claim up. NOW IS YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO REMEDY THIS ISSUE. In other words, "PLEASE PUT YOUR MONEY WHERE YOUR MOUTH IS... IT IS TIME!!!"

Thank you,

Jeff Uyeda

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 2:55:41 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Tiari Carreira	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Senate Education Committee,

Aloha! My name is Tiari Carreira. I am a 5th grade teacher at Honoka'a Elementary School on the island of Hawai'i. This is my very first year teaching in the HDOE. I was born and raised on the Big Island and currently reside on the Hilo Side. I am writing to kindly request that you please fully fund SB2820, the bill that would continue to fund the shortage differentials. It has a huge impact on Hawaii Teachers.

I currently use the differential money to pay for my gas, as well as, the maintenance on my vehicle. I am a single person and travel from Hilo to Honokaa every single day. The extra money allows me to continue working at Honokaa. With the rising prices in housing and the cost needed to supply my kids with proper content and material, I am already struggling. I struggle to provide my students and myself with the salary already given to me. If my paycheck was cut any more, I would need to start considering a change in career or location. However, as a first time teacher, I am not able to choose where I am placed. I plead with you to continue to fund the shortage differential as it has taken some stress off the already impossible load a teacher carries.

The stability this will allow is substantial. Thank you for your consideration and time.

Sincerely,**Tiari Carreira****Grade 5****Honoka'a Elementary**

To Whom it May Concern,

My name is Misty Figueira. I am a seventh grade English Language Arts inclusion an resource Special Education teacher. I am writing in support SB2820. We need to continue the pay differentials for special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language immersion programs.

I was born, educated, and graduated from Pāhoa High and Intermediate School. Throughout my thirteen years of receiving public education from Keonepoko and Pāhoa High and Intermediate School, I saw a high turnover rate of teachers. We would have a Social Studies teacher one year that would be gone and replaced by a long term substitute teacher the next. The turnover rate and the unqualified teachers deeply affected our quality of education and the relationships we were unable to build. The hard-to-staff pay differential helped to negate this problem. The pay difference means that high quality effective teachers are placed into schools such as the one that I am a product of, instead of emergency hire teachers that are unqualified who leave the school in a few years.

I graduated from Mānoa last year with my Master's of Education in Teaching, with licenses in Secondary English Language Arts and Special Education: Mild/Moderate. My cohort began with ten students. In the end, we had seven left. Of the seven of us, only two of us are on Hawai'i island. That means that this May, there will be two new Special Education teachers graduating with their Master's of Education in Teaching for the Big Island. Two. I am the only one born and raised here. Of my cohort, I am the only local teacher who will enter the hiring pool as a special education teacher for the Big Island. There are thousands and thousands of students with disabilities on the Big Island.

With the pay differentials, the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa saw a huge increase in the amount of people wanting to become Special Education teachers. To go from a cohort of seven to having to turn away teacher candidates... That's incredible and because of the pay differentials.

It would be a devastating mistake to cut these pay differentials. To cut these pay differentials is to deliberately refuse to invest in not only our students and teachers, but Hawai'i. You are telling our students that they are not worth it. You are telling teachers that not only is our work in these difficult fields not worth it, but that we should move somewhere else where teachers do get paid what they are worth. Please do not cut these differentials. Please, continue investing in our teachers and in our students. Please invest in Hawai'i's future.

Mahalo,
Misty Figueira

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

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

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

I've been honored to be working at one of the best schools in Hawaii, where our school administrators do their best to support our students and teachers. However, there are things that are out of our control. Our school admins cannot help with our extra work time outside of school with an extra paycheck. I know many of us are working longer hours than what's on our contracts. It's because I do love what I do. But the reality is not easy. It is simply because of our pay.

I'm on my way to pay a chunk of money to IRS, plus my husband is about to get surgery on the mainland. Simply just going to use our savings to keep our life going instead of saving money for later. We are one of the highest living cost states, but why are we ranked 24th place of a teacher earning in the U.S. How can we afford to live and keep our teaching career? It is simply impossible so we lose so many great teachers. It is just a bad influence on our education system.

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

Please support the bill,

Mahalo,

Yumie Lefebvre, Leeward District, Oahu

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 2:53:56 PM

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

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

Comments:

I am in support of Senate Bill 2820 which would make sure funding is secured for the differentials currently in place for special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and geographically hard-to-fill areas. The passing of Senate Bills 2820 will ensure higher take home pay for me. I am grateful for the current differential which has helped me tremendously.

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 2:35:18 PM

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

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

Comments:

Mahalo for your support of teachers!

Committee on Education
The Hawaii State Senate
415 S Beretania St.
Honolulu, HI 96813

LATE

Re: SB 2819 & 2820 Testimony

January 27, 2022

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

I SUPPORT WITH BILLS SB2819 and SB2820, which seek appropriate funds to attract and retain qualified educators for our island public schools.

My name is Erika Molyneux, and I am a mother and community college instructor living in Kaneohe and working in Pearl City. As someone interested in my own children's education, my students' preparation for college, and the professional, educational, civic, and social training of all members of our community, I am extremely invested in our state's education system. I have also taught at the secondary level previously and have training in both my subject matter and as an educator. Additionally, a number of my friends are public teachers in the DOE. As such, I am aware of the rigorous training our public school educators undergo.

As you know, we live in the state with the highest cost of living, making our educators' salaries the lowest of all states in comparison. Quality teachers change the lives of their students. They encourage attendance, attainment, curiosity, and a lifelong pursuit of knowledge. They create a culture of generative, learning communities. Level of education is indicative of financial attainment in later life. Our students today will be our professionals of the future, and we want to ensure their academic success by giving them the instruction and support they need.

Teachers' work is never done, and most are fueled by the love of their craft and students. But this love alone cannot help them care for their own families' needs or encourage them to stay.

For all these reasons and more, I strongly support PASSING BILLS SB2819 and SB2820 and help secure quality of life for our community for years to come. Mahalo nui!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'Erika Molyneux', written in a cursive style.

Erika Molyneux

Patti Cook

Box 6960, Kamuela, HI 96743
(808) 937-2833 – cookshi@aol.com

TESTIMONY TO SUPPORT SB 2819 & 2820 – 2022 Hawai'i State Legislature

Aloha Chair Kidani and Members of the Senate Committee on Education:

*** SB 2819 - Teacher Compensation - Experimental Modernization Project**

A warm mahalo for keeping the urgent educational needs of our public school students on the 2022 Legislative priority list – more so in light of the extremely harmful impacts that extended distance and hybrid learning have had on our children's academic and social-emotional growth. We also appreciate the focus being given to what it takes to attract and retain well-trained certificated teachers for in-person instruction, and the painful health, social-emotional and economic impact the pandemic has had on teachers and staff as well as our families and community.

As you may know, I'm deeply involved in Waimea Middle Public Conversation Charter School and support SB 2819's proposed experimental modernization project. I am especially grateful that the bill includes public charter schools in the funding plan. We are very proud of and grateful to our teacher team for their resilient commitment to doing what it has taken to provide our middle school adolescents with meaningful lessons and learning experiences despite the pandemic, but they too are experiencing the same challenges that regular DOE teachers are encountering and this includes serious economic hardship due to a shocking rise here in the cost of living – especially housing, food and gas.

*** SB 2820 - Teacher Compensation - Differentials for SPED, Hard-To-Fill & Hawaiian Language Immersion teachers**

Much of what I've said previously applies here. Our public charter school teachers deserve these differentials as applicable.

In closing, we are available to discuss your plan in depth should this be helpful, especially since the funding mechanism for public charter schools is so different from that for regular DOE schools.

I would also quickly add that Waimea Middle has consistently received "clean" audits annually for virtually all of the nearly 20 years since we converted, and recently received renewed 6-year Accreditation from the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) and a renewed Charter from the Commission. Together, these require Action Plans that are monitored to continuously improve academically, operationally and fiscally.

I share these details to make the point that we are very committed to being academically and fiscally accountable and transparent while striving to fulfill our mission of "empowering all students with the skills, values and cultural understanding to successfully navigate high school and beyond."

Mahalo for your time and concern for our children –

Patti Cook

LATE

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 4:35:07 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
christine chow	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I am Christine Noelani Chow, a current parent of 1 Kaiapuni Hawaiian Immersion student and 2 former Kaiapuni students. I am in support of SB2820. I have been a part of Hawaiian Immersions schools as a parent, a part time teacher, substitute teacher and volunteer. I have seen how difficult it is to find quality kumu that will stay in the profession. I have had to step up without a teaching degree and without complete 'olelo Hawai'i capabilities to fill in vacancies at my childrens' schools. At my child's current school, Ke Kula Kaiapuni o Waimānalo, there has been teacher vacancies in each grade level since opening in 2019. We currently have 2 kumu teaching 4 grade levels and both those kumu came from other Kaiapuni schools, leaving vacancies that needed to be filled there. We need more incentive to attract more quality kumu to our schools and to keep them there. Our kumu have skills of language and culture above and beyond the requirements of regular ed DOE teachers. They should be properly compensated for it. Our children deserve it. Our language and the education of our children depend on it.

Mahalo,

Christine Noelani Chow

46-229 Kahuhipa St. #F403

Kāne'ohe, HI 96744

LATE

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 5:41:47 PM

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

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, regarding teacher compensation.

My testimony supports the Regards of the differentials for Special Education and Hawaiian language Immersion teachers in hard to staff places such as Moloka'i.

My degree is in Special Education with a Certification in Hawaiian Language. Although my title in my school is not in both, I still teach in the only Hawaiian Immersion Elementary Speaking school here on the island. I am in support of continuing the differentials because of all the extra work, translations, and time consuming extra hours I, along with the other Hawaian Immersion teachers here are putting in. Along with academic curriculum, implementing the cultural protocols and Hawaiian values are also important as well. Creating a balance in students lives so they can be impacted successfully is what we educators are trying to convey.

Special education teachers also deserve the differentials to continue. They are also spending extra time creating IEPs & meeting deadlines along with collaborating with regular education teachers and parents to create a modified education plan for our children to be successful!

Thank you. I support SB 2120 .

Briann Starkey

LATE

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/28/2022 1:11:29 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Mikiʻala Taylor	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Mikiʻala Taylor, I teach PreK at Ka ʻUmeke Kāʻeo Hawaiian Language Immersion school in Keaukaha. I strongly support sb 2820, all students DOE and Charter are public school students and deserve equitable access to high quality teachers. I am a proud graduate of the Hawaiian Immersion program and I chose to continue my career path in Hawaiian language education as a Hawaiian Immersion teacher. I have worked hard to fulfill all the necessary certifications to become a highly qualified Hawaiian immersion Kumu. As a bargaining unit 5 member I should receive the same opportunities of teachers in DOE programs.

mahalo nui,
Mikiʻala Taylor

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/28/2022 1:35:03 PM

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

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Emilia Kaawa	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

My name is Emilia Kaawa, I am a teacher at Ka 'Umeke Kā'eo Hawaiian Immersion Public Charter School located in Keaukaha. I strongly support SB2820. All students, DOE or charter are considered public school students and deserve equitable access to high quality teachers. As a BU (bargaining unit) 5 member, I should receive the same opportunities of teachers in the DOE programs. I pay the same union dues, I am held to the same expectations, I should be held to the same pay and raises others have been receiving. It has been 3 years since differentials have been paid to those in the DOE setting and nothing to teachers who are teaching in public schools. Mahalo nui for your time.

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 4:55:15 PM

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

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Dylan Ramos	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and Education Committee members,

Please support efforts to address Hawaii's problems with teacher shortages, recruitment, and retention. If we want our students taken care of, we must also take care of their teachers.

Mahalo,
Dylan Ramos

LATE

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 5:17:01 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Kahanu Nguyen	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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

My name is Kahanu Nguyen. I am a 2nd grade Special Education resource teacher at Waiakeawaena Elementary School on the Island of Hawaii. I have taught for 15.5 years here in Hawaii. I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2820.

I have been eligible to receive the shortage differential for SpEd teachers for the last three years and I accepted this position in the special education classroom for next year because of the differential. This has helped me afford to remain in Hawaii and raise a family. As teachers, we choose to work beyond our salaried hours because we love our calling to serve our keiki. This differential has been a major factor in remaining in special education. Thank you for advocating for what is best for teachers because it will be what's best for our keiki! Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2820. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Kahanu Nguyen, Hawaii District, Island of Hawaii

LATE

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 4:27:57 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Karin Hansendelrey	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I am a teacher of 20 years, stuck at level 07-11. I, like many of my colleagues, work two side jobs in addition to teaching full time just to survive here, in Hawai'i. I do not own a home. I strongly advocate this bill so that we teachers may work one job and focus fully on our students. Our students of Hawai'i deserve our full attention. We teachers deserve an equitable salary system taht allows us to go beyond surviving and propels us to thriving.

Mahalo,

Karin Hansen del Rey

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/28/2022 2:05:58 PM

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

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Louisa Lee	Testifying for Ka 'Umeke Ka'eo	Support	No

Comments:

Ka 'Umeke Kā'eo strongly supports SB 2820. Including differentials for charter school teachers is essential for teacher retention at charter schools. There is an acute need for more Hawaiian language teachers and the state must come up with ways to recruit Hawaiian language speakers to the field of teaching. Providing this differential is just a small part of this work but it creates an un-even playing field for immersion charter schools who cannot compete with DOE teacher salaries if funding for the differential is only provided to DOE schools. Charter school students deserve equitable access to high quality teachers and immersion education.

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/28/2022 8:22:45 AM

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

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Carol DeForest	Testifying for HIDOE	Support	No

Comments:

To whom it may concern,

Bill 2820 must be passed to ensure our special education and Hawaiian immersion students receive a high-quality education from licensed specialized teachers. Teachers in Hawaii struggle to pay rent and feed their families causing them to frequently leave the islands creating shortages in the area of special education and other specialized areas of instruction. Our keiki deserve appropriate education to meet their unique needs. The people of Hawaii are compassionate and support the special education and Hawaiian stipends to provide for our keiki and retain our specialized teachers. Please pass bill SB2820 and support our teachers and keiki.

LATE

Nau'ileilima Murphy
PO Box 6006 Kamuela, HI 96743
(808) 8965799 - nauilei@gmail.com

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT of SB 2819 & SB 2820

Aloha to the Hawai'i State Senate Education Committee,

Mahalo nui loa for your commitment to the keiki and 'ohana of Hawai'i and your continued support of all public school educators in helping you to meet those commitments.

SB 2819 - Teacher Compensation - Experimental Modernization Project

As a kama'aina of Waimea and a dedicated teacher of 20 years at Waimea Middle Public Conversion Charter School, I am very grateful to our community and the faculty and staff for providing our youth with opportunities to learn, grow and contribute as young people. Teachers are leaving the profession and the state as families have endured economic hardship. We need to support all our public schools including public charter schools to retain highly qualified teachers and attract others into the profession to meet the needs of our growing communities.

I have a Masters degree, am a National Board Certified science teacher and have worked diligently to obtain additional training to better serve my students and in doing so have reached the highest class possible on our current salary schedule. I have volunteered throughout the years to support students in cultural experiences, community services, robotics, the sciences, and travel experiences. As you can see, I am devoted and want to continue to make a difference in the lives of our youth. In saying that, I urge you to address the salary compression so that despite the high cost of living, teachers like myself can continue to work in this profession we love, live in this place we malama, and support children to become happy, healthy citizens.

SB 2820 - Teacher Compensation - Differentials for SPED, Hard-To-Fill & Hawaiian Language Immersion teachers

Another opportunity to address recruitment and retention are differentials. I appreciate that differentials were provided to address the shortage of licensed special education teachers, teachers in hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language immersion program teachers. Please continue this funding to support these areas of need and also include public charter school teachers in a way that is equitable.

Mahalo for your time and care,

Nau'ileilima Murphy

LATE

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 6:07:56 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Kalelani Ogata	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Thank you for the differentials thus far. It has really helped (financially and professionally) and honestly, helped me to keep one foot still in the special education teaching door. Recognizing special education teachers as the professionals they are who chose to get that added certification to teach this population of students (a very difficult population I must add) by having a salary that matches the educational rigor achieved is simply right. No professional in their right mind with the degrees they've achieved would accept anything less. Please continue to support the differentials for ALL the hard to staff positions. All of our keiki benefit from highly qualified teachers. Thank you!

LATE

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/28/2022 2:36:55 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Hauolikeola H Pakele	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha mai kākou,

My name is Hau‘olikeola Pakele and I am presently in my eighteenth consecutive year as a kindergarten teacher at Ka ‘Umeke Kā‘eo Hawaiian Immersion Public Charter School located in Keaukaha, Hawai‘i Island. Here are a few mana‘o that I feel should be conveyed at this moment in time and are my reasons for supporting this bill:

- DOE and Charter students are all public school students who deserve equitable access to high quality kumu

-All public school teachers DOE and Charter are BUO5 members and part of the same collective bargaining agreement and thus should be provided with the same opportunities

-For Admin and Board members ensuring the legislature includes charter school kumu in this bill is important because it supports teacher retention - we should not be faced with potentially losing kumu who need/want to work at DOE immersion schools because we cannot afford to offer the differential without legislative funding.

Me ka mahalo ha‘aha‘a iā ‘oukau pākahi a pau,

Hau‘olikeola Pakele

Kumu Papa Mālaa‘o

Ka ‘Umeke Kā‘eo Hawaiian Public Immersion School

Keaukaha, Hawai‘i Island

LATE

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/28/2022 2:59:24 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Michelle Nahale-a	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Nohea Nahale-a and I am the current Po‘okumu at Ka ‘Umeke Kā‘eo PCS. I am writing on behalf of my past, current and future kumu of our program and all Hawaiian Immersion programs across our pae‘āina. I am in support of SB2820 for ALL Kumu Kula Kaiapuni of our pae‘āina but will speak for my kumu and all kumu kula ho‘āmana in this written testimony.

With the initial provision of the differential for Hawaiian Immersion DOE kumu in 2019, I was elated with the proactive steps that our State was taking to recognize the extraordinary work our kumu Kula ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i take to become HQT as a Hawaiian Language/Kula Kaiapuni Kumu. Not only do they need to meet the requirements per SATEP programs for Hawai‘i in English, but also meet those same if not more stringent requirements in the second language of instruction, ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i.

What we discovered when this went into effect though was that although we were happy that our counterparts in the Hawaii DOE Kula Kaiapuni schools may be receiving their differentials, kumu at our kula ho‘āmana/Charter Schools were not afforded the same opportunity. We were told that as charter schools we could ourselves use our PPA and other operating funds to provide these differentials, but there would be no support from the state. As a charter school, our PPA and other possible grants or income sources are used not only for program needs and payroll, but also day to day expenses including facilities, utilities, bus service, schoolwide improvements (DAGS is not an option if not on a DOE State facility), etc. For most charter schools there is no "extra" money or ways to be creative with our yearly budget to include it for our kumu, who are more than deserving of this differential. Charters cannot afford to provide this differential without legislative funding.

How this impacts our organizations as a whole is that this plays a huge part in kumu recruitment and retention for Charter Immersion schools. Being able to tell potential and current kumu that they will also receive the differential being offered in DOE Immersion will ensure that we remain competitive and provide highly qualified kumu so that we can have kula that our keiki and communities deserve. All public school teachers(including charter) are part of the same collective bargaining agreement (BU05) under HSTA and should be provided equal opportunity for differentials or supports in order to ensure equity amongst all members.

Mahalo for considering my testimony and others when making your decision on this bill. We all hope that the right decision is made today in order to support our kumu, keiki and community.

E ola mau i ka ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i.

‘O wau iho nō,

Nohea Nahale-a

LATE

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 3:33:10 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Elvera Kapuniai	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

As a a dedicated educator for more than 30 years, I am in full support of the teacher differentials. Though I have been an educational assistant for more than half of my 30+ years of employment with the DOE, I have been made aware of the difficulties and hardships that have become apparent over the years involving the maintenance of qualified certified SPED teachers. Not everyone is cut out to be good, dedicated, driven teachers. It takes a lot more to take on the responsibilities, liabilities, and day to day demands of a teacher and more so for a SPED teacher. I have seen these teachers come and go faster than any other profession in my opinion. I believe the differentials are necessary in order to provide incentives for both new teachers and current ones. Without this option, I believe there will be a great chance that the shortage of these teachers will become a larger problem than what exists today. As a SPED teacher for nearly 15 years, I too would consider retiring earlier had it not been for such incentives. For those reasons, I support this bill in full. Thank you for your consideration and support! EK

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/27/2022 3:28:33 PM

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

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Tisha Gusman	Testifying for Waimea Middle School	Support	No

Comments:

Tisha Gusman**PO Box 872, Kamuela HI 96743****808-333-4173, tika_g@yahoo.com****TO: Hawai'i State Senate Education Committee – 2022 Session****SUPPORT for SB 2819 & SB 2820****Thank you for considering these bills to better meet the educational needs of all of Hawai'i's public – and public charter – school students.****SB 2819 - Teacher Compensation - Experimental Modernization Project**

Please support this. Hawai'i's high cost of living, pre-COVID, has been exacerbated by the pandemic, making it hard to seriously consider continuing as a teacher. Though the compensation package seems better than those offered by many states, the cost of housing, child care, food and fuel now exceed wages earned even when there are several incomes in the household.

I am an 8th grade teacher at Waimea Middle School. I have been teaching here for about 20 years, since the school became a public conversion charter school in 2002. I have been fortunate enough to have a full-time teaching position here despite challenges in student enrollment due to cost of living, families having to find new employment or housing. I mention this, because student enrollment affects how many full-time teaching positions are available at the school. As enrollment decreases, so does the number of teaching staff. With less students and less teaching staff, some teachers are teaching more than one subject area. With less students, there is not enough funding for additional support staff, educational assistants, or part-time teachers to assist in the general education

classroom. Teachers are expected to do more with less resources and support. Of course, our students are our primary focus.

The cost of living and effects of COVID has made teaching and education today much more difficult. Students and families affected by COVID have missed school, educational instruction, free meals, and socialization with their peers. Distance learning is not an easy fix to education. Having taught using a distance learning model for 5 quarters, was a new and challenging experience for me as a teacher and more so for my students. Not all students were successful in learning that way. Many of my students that I had were not ready for 8th grade and their learning gaps got wider. Our students are already struggling to keep up and need to be in school with trained teachers and support staff. Students benefit from in-person instruction and learning.

Please move forward with this project and please be sure to include the public charter schools – equitably – in the funding plan.

SB 2820 - Teacher Compensation - Differentials for SPED, Hard-To-Fill & Hawaiian Language Immersion teachers

Even though Waimea Middle School is a public charter school, it should be recognized as an educational institution, just like the DOE. Oftentimes, Waimea Middle School is not included in certain funding or professional development opportunities for teachers based on the fact of being a charter school. All students deserve teachers that are trained and educated to help them become lifelong learners. In order for teachers to obtain an increase in salary, 15 professional development credits must be earned for re-classification. Right now, some of the teachers at Waimea Middle School are having difficulty finding professional development courses related to TESOL-Teachers of Secondary Languages because we teach at a charter school. This is not right. I would also like to mention that, because I teach at a charter school, the school is not considered a “hard-to-fill” school even though it is within a “hard-to-fill” district. Teachers in the DOE receive a “hard-to-fill” differential, but not charter school teachers. Again, this is showing the inequity between charter schools and the DOE. I strongly believe that teachers at Waimea Middle School should receive this differential and that the funds should not come from the school’s budget.

Please take into consideration these thoughts I have shared with you. In order to encourage individuals to pursue a career in education, salary matters in being able to support one’s family and to remain here in Hawaii. Teachers work hard. Teachers put in a lot of time and effort into educating our students. There are many other occupations that earn more money than teachers do. Teachers deserve to earn much more than what we are currently given. By approving these senate bills, it will show your support for education, both public charter schools and DOE.

Hawai’i’s public charter schools – as well as regular DOE schools - deserve these specific differentials to help recruit and retain trained, qualified teachers. We also believe these

differentials over time will help attract more individuals to these specific fields or areas of expertise.

Thank you for your consideration.

Signature

Tisha Gusman

LATE

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/28/2022 3:02:43 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Noah W Davis	Testifying for Ka Umeke Kaeo	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha kākou,

I have been teaching for 7 years now. While teaching is a rewarding job, it also requires extreme commitment and far more working hours than I am compensated for. Our pay needs to be held to the same standard as all committed and highly qualified teachers. Below are the basic points that I would like to convey:

- DOE and Charter students are all public school students who deserve equitable access to high quality kumu

-All public school teachers DOE and Charter are BUO5 members and part of the same collective bargaining agreement and thus should be provided with the same opportunities

-For Admin and Board members ensuring the legislature includes charter school kumu in this bill is important because it supports teacher retention - we should not be faced with potentially losing kumu who need/want to work at DOE immersion schools because we cannot afford to offer the differential without legislative funding.

Mahalo a nui

na‘u nō

Kumu Noah Davis

Ka ‘Umeke Kā‘eo Charter school.

January 27, 2022

LATE

To: Senate Committee on Education

From: Aha Kauleo Statewide Council for Ka Papahana Kaiapuni

RE: SB2820

Aloha mai e na lala o ka Aha Olelo - Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and Members Dela Cruz, Fevella and Kanuha

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.

We, the Aha Hooko (Aha Kauleo Board), **strongly support** SB2820, 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 HODOE 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 it's 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
Aha Hooko (Executive Board)
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 Kaew HI PCS (K-6), Ka Umeke Kaew 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 Nahienaena (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.

SB-2820

Submitted on: 1/28/2022 3:45:06 PM

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

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Pohai Kyota	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha, My name is Pōhaikēaloha Kyota. I teach grade 3 at Ka 'Ūmeke Kā'eo Hawaiian Language Immersion School in Keaukaha. I strongly support SB 2820. All students, DOE and charter, are public school students and deserve equitable access to high quality teachers. As a bargaining unit member, I should receive the same opportunities teachers in DOE programs receive. Mahalo