

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

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

SETH S. COLBY, Ph.D.
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FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION DIVISION
OFFICE OF FEDERAL AWARDS MANAGEMENT

WRITTEN ONLY

TESTIMONY BY SETH S. COLBY, Ph.D.
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
ON
HOUSE BILL NO. 1890, H.D. 3, S.D. 1

April 1, 2026
10:03 a.m.

Room 211 and Videoconference

RELATING TO EDUCATION

The Department of Budget and Finance (B&F) opposes this bill.

House Bill No. 1890, H.D. 3, S.D. 1, authorizes public school teachers who have completed a year's satisfactory service and complied with the other requirements of Sections 302A-601.5 to 302A-642 and 302A-701, as applicable, and public charter school teachers who have completed a year's satisfactory service and complied with other specific requirements of Chapter 302D to be eligible for an annual increment if negotiated into a collective bargaining (CB) agreement (CBA) pursuant to Section 89-9, and subject to sufficient funding by a specific appropriation enacted by the Legislature. In addition, the bill authorizes public school teachers who have served satisfactorily for three years in their maximum increment step or in any longevity step and complied with the other requirements of Sections 302A-601.5 to 302A-642 and 302A-701, as applicable, and public charter school teachers who have served satisfactorily for three years in their maximum increment step or in any longevity step and complied with other specific requirements of Chapter 302D to be eligible for longevity step increases if

negotiated into a CBA pursuant to Section 89-9, and subject to sufficient funding by a specific appropriation enacted by the Legislature.

B&F opposes this measure because, while the bill acknowledges that public school teachers and public charter school teachers would be eligible for these annual salary increments and longevity step increases if negotiated into a CBA, the bill nevertheless legislates specific wage outcomes that are already subject to mandatory CB under Chapter 89, HRS, and preferentially directs the outcome of CB negotiations for a select BU.

While the Legislature has the authority to establish the overall scope of CB, it has already exercised that authority by creating the statutory framework in Chapter 89, HRS. Directly legislating outcomes that fall within mandatory subjects of bargaining, such as wages or step movements, circumvents the very structure the Legislature established, disrupts the CB process, and represents a partial return to pre-Chapter 89 practices of legislated wages and working conditions for public employees.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR



MAKALAPUA ALENCASTRE, ED. D.
CHAIRPERSON

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

<http://CharterCommission.Hawaii.Gov>
1164 Bishop Street, Suite 1100, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Tel: (808) 586-3775 Fax: (808) 586-3776

FOR: HB 1890 HD3 SD1 RELATING TO EDUCATION
DATE: April 1, 2026
TIME: 10:03 A.M.
COMMITTEE: Committee on Ways & Means
ROOM: Conference Room 211 & Videoconference
FROM: Ed H. Noh, Ed. D., Executive Director
State Public Charter School Commission

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwake, and members of the Committee:

The State Public Charter School Commission (“Commission”) appreciates the opportunity to submit testimony in **SUPPORT of HB 1890 HD3 SD1** which authorizes annual increments and longevity step increases under specified conditions, if the increases are provided for in a negotiated collective bargaining agreement, subject to funds appropriated by the Legislature.

Passage and adoption of this legislation should assist in the recruitment and retention of teachers in all public schools, including public charter schools, by increasing teacher pay.

The Commission appreciates the inclusion of charter schools in this measure and the acknowledgement that employment conditions and compensation are set by the charter school that employs the teacher(s).

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

JOSH GREEN, M. D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR
KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



J.N. MUSTO, PhD
CHIEF NEGOTIATOR
KE PO'O KŪKĀKŪKA

STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII
OFFICE OF COLLECTIVE BARGAINING
KE KE'ENA MĀLAMA LIMAHANA AUPUNI
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
KE KE'ENA O KE KIA'ĀINA
235 S. BERETANIA STREET, SUITE 1201
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-2437

Statement of
J.N. Musto, PhD
Chief Negotiator, Office of Collective Bargaining

Before the
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
Wednesday, April 1, 2026
10:03AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 211

In consideration of
HB1890 HD3 SD1, RELATING TO EDUCATION

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki and members of the committee:

The Office of Collective Bargaining (OCB) appreciates the intent of HB1890 HD3 SD1, which would provide annual salary step increases and longevity increases for public school teachers, if those items are negotiated into a collective bargaining agreement under HRS §89-9 and if funding is available. However, OCB must respectfully oppose this measure.

OCB believes that this bill circumvents HRS §89, as what was unobtainable at the negotiating table, the union is seeking through the legislative process. This is essentially getting two bites of the apple.

It should be noted that the current collective bargaining agreement (CBA) between HSTA and the State, negotiated the suspension of step movements and annual increments for the 2024-2025 and 2026-2027 school year.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
KA 'OIHANA HO'ONA'AUAO
P.O. BOX 2360
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

LATE

Date: 04/01/2026

Time: 10:03 AM

Location: CR 211 & Videoconference

Committee: WAM

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Keith T. Hayashi, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: HB1890, SD1, RELATING TO EDUCATION.

Purpose of Bill: Authorizes public school teachers and public charter school teachers to be eligible for annual increments and longevity step salary increases under specified conditions, if the increases are provided for in a collective bargaining agreement negotiated under section 89-9, Hawaii Revised Statutes, subject to funding by a specific appropriation enacted by the Legislature. Effective 1/1/2077. (SD1)

Department's Position:

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) respectfully provides comments on HB 1890, SD 1.

The Department appreciates the Legislature's continued efforts to improve the Department's ability to attract and retain quality employees to support Hawaii's K-12 public schools. Providing automatic step increases in teacher salaries for each year of satisfactory service completed has the potential to be a powerful tool to achieve that goal.

The measure explicitly provides automatic step increases for teachers for each year of satisfactory service. Bargaining Unit 5 (BU5) covers more than just teachers; it also includes librarians, counselors, and resource teachers.

If the Legislature proceeds with authorizing this measure, the Department recommends an adjustment to the language to include all members of BU5.

The Department believes that all of its employees serve diverse yet equally important roles to help ensure student achievement. In light of this, the Department encourages the Legislature to consider including all other Bargaining Units in acknowledgment of the tremendous team effort it takes to ensure a successful Department. Therefore, the Department urges the Legislature to consider including step movements for the following Bargaining Units to this measure:

Bargaining Unit 1 - Blue-Collar Non-Supervisory Employees

Bargaining Unit 2 - Blue-Collar Supervisory Employees

Bargaining Unit 3 - White-Collar Non-Supervisory Employees
Bargaining Unit 4 - White-Collar Supervisory Employees
Bargaining Unit 6 - Educational Officers
Bargaining Unit 9 - Registered Professional Nurses
Bargaining Unit 10 - Institutional, Health, and Correction Officers
Bargaining Unit 13 - Professional and Scientific Employees

The Department notes that Section 89-9 of the Hawaii Revised Statutes requires negotiations between the employer and the exclusive representative with respect to wages. While it is the Legislature's prerogative whether to approve or reject requests for appropriation of funds, including those resulting from a tentative agreement for a collective bargaining agreement under Section 89-9, this measure would expand the rejection of the requested fund appropriation beyond the cost item portions of the agreement and render the entire collective bargaining agreement void and unenforceable.

Finally, should the Legislature proceed with authorizing this measure, the Department respectfully requests that the Legislature simultaneously include the funds necessary to implement these step movements into the Department's base budget going forward, and include language that would limit the effects of a legislative rejection of requests for appropriation of funds to only "cost items" as defined under Section 89-2 of the Hawaii Revised Statutes.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on HB 1890 SD 1.

HB-1890-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 2:36:22 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2026 10:03:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Piikea Kalakau-Baarde	Testifying for Teach for America Hawai'i	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Senator Dela Cruz, Chair, Senator Moriwaki, Vice Chair, and members of the Ways and Means Committee,

My name is Pi'ikea Kalakau-Baarde, and I work at Teach for America Hawai'i. I'm a former public school teacher and now support TFA Hawai'i's local initiatives, including our corps member programming, early literacy, alumni leadership development, external affairs, and more.

I support HB1890, which relates to annual salary step increases for public school teachers. This bill is essential to improving teacher recruitment and retention in Hawai'i.

As a State Approved Teacher Educator Program (SATEP), one of the biggest barriers to recruitment that we face year over year is teacher pay, especially given the high cost of living in Hawai'i. Like the recently enacted and continued hard-to-staff differentials, automatic step increases in teacher salaries would help to attract high-quality professionals into open teaching positions, as well as retain them in years to come.

We appreciate your continued support of public education in Hawai'i and look forward to seeing the progress made at the legislature this year.

Mahalo,

Pi'ikea Kalakau-Baarde, EdD

HB-1890-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 2:40:07 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2026 10:03:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Meilan Akaka Manfre	Testifying for Teach For America Hawai'i	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Senator Dela Cruz, Chair, Senator Moriwaki, Vice Chair, and members of the Ways and Means Committee,

My name is Meilan Akaka Manfre, and I serve as the executive director of Teach for America Hawai'i. I'm a former public school teacher and public school parent.

I'm reaching out in support of HB1890, which relates to annual salary step increases for public school teachers. This bill is essential to improving teacher recruitment and retention in Hawai'i.

As a State Approved Teacher Educator Program (SATEP), one of the most persistent barriers to recruiting and retaining educators in Hawai'i is inadequate compensation, particularly given the state's high cost of living. Establishing automatic annual salary step increases would affirm teaching as a valued profession by providing educators with predictable and transparent salary growth.

Clear and reliable compensation pathways help aspiring and early-career teachers commit to the profession for the long term and support retention during the years when educators are most likely to leave the classroom. Automatic step increases would also help honor the state's investment in teacher preparation and contribute to stable, high-quality learning environments for Hawai'i's students.

We stand on our written testimony and are available for any questions. We appreciate your continued support of public education in Hawai'i and look forward to seeing the progress made at the legislature this year.

Mahalo,

Meilan Akaka Manfre



1200 Ala Kapuna Street • Honolulu, Hawai'i 96819
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Osa Tui, Jr.
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Vice President

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Secretary-Treasurer

Andrea Eshelman
Executive Director

TESTIMONY TO THE HAWAI'I SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Item: HB 1890, HD3, SD1 – Relating to Education

Position: Support

Hearing: Wednesday, April 1, 2026, 10:03 am, Room 211

Submitter: Osa Tui, Jr., President - Hawai'i State Teachers Association

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the committee,

The Hawai'i State Teachers Association (HSTA) **strongly supports** H.B. 1890, HD3, SD1 which establishes annual salary step increases for public school teachers and public charter school teachers. This measure is essential to addressing the crisis in teacher recruitment and retention.

Teachers in Hawai'i are financially struggling under the weight of the state's high cost of living. Once adjusted for these expenses, our educators are the lowest-paid in the nation.

This financial strain contributes directly to a staggering turnover rate. Nearly half of our teachers leave the profession or the state altogether within five years of starting. This high attrition poses a significant problem for our students and the stability of our schools.

Establishing automatic step increases is a priority for our educators and aligns with our current Unit 5 collective bargaining agreement. The collective bargaining agreement explicitly states that "the parties recognize that annual incremental step movements are a viable recruiting and retention tool."

The negotiated language further specifies: "Teachers who are not at the top of the salary schedule and who have effective evaluations shall move to the next highest step of the corresponding class at the beginning of each school year. Annual incremental step movements are subject to funding."

H.B. 1890, HD3, SD1 establishes the annual step increases that mirror this negotiated agreement. It provides the stability and predictability educators need to remain in the classroom by ensuring salary progression is a consistent part of their professional career.

The importance of this stability is also echoed in the *2025 HIDOE Teacher Compensation Report*. This study states: "Automatic annual step progression is the norm across most states and is strongly linked to teacher expectations of fairness...A shift to automatic steps would reinforce trust and potentially improve attrition."

By providing these increases, the State is sending a clear message that it values the experience of its educators. We respectfully urge the committee to pass this measure.

Mahalo.



HOUSE BILL 1890, HD3, SD1, RELATING TO EDUCATION

APRIL 1, 2026 · WAM HEARING

POSITION: Support.

RATIONALE: The Democratic Party of Hawai'i Education Caucus **supports** HB 1890, HD3, SD1, relating to education, which authorizes public school teachers and public charter school teachers to be eligible for annual increments and longevity step salary increases under specified conditions, if the increases are provided for in a collective bargaining agreement negotiated under section 89-9, subject to funding by a specific appropriation enacted by the Legislature.

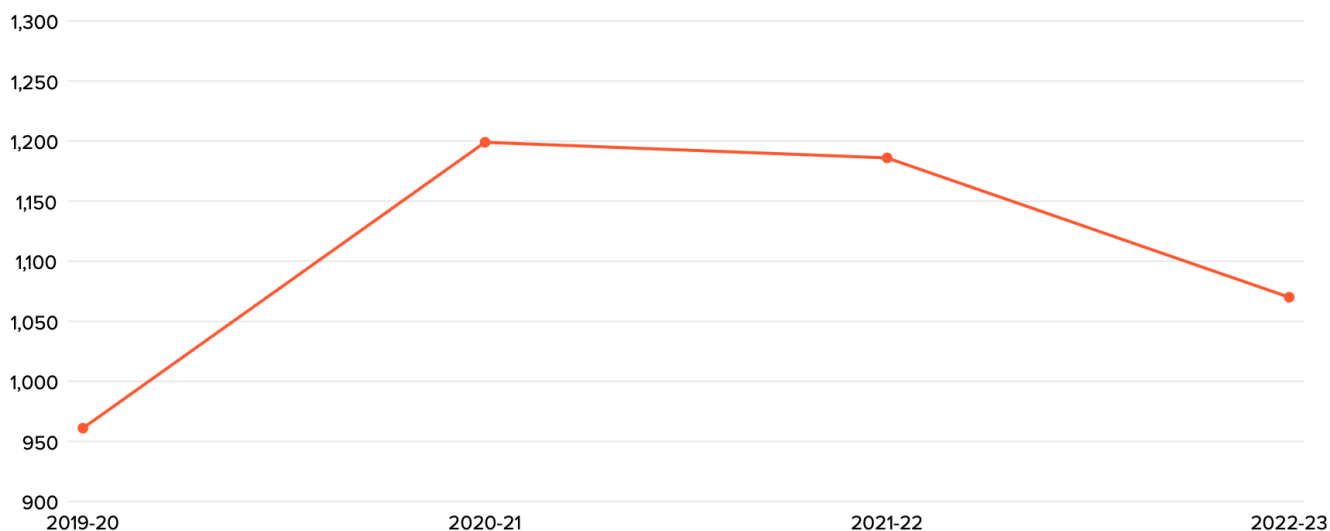
Teachers are the most important professionals in increasing student achievement. According to numerous studies, however, Hawai'i's average teacher salaries are the lowest in the nation when adjusted for cost of living. A 2020 study conducted by APA Consulting on behalf of the Hawai'i Department of Education found that when compared with other high-cost geographic locations, Hawai'i 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.

While that pay gap is decreasing because of the legislature's effort to fund differential pay increases and resolve salary compression in recent years, teachers are still underpaid compared to other professions that require a similar level of education. **Restoring guaranteed annual increments, more commonly known as "step increases," would significantly help to alleviate that gap.**

A 2022 survey by the Annenberg Institute at Brown University placed Hawai'i among the 10 states with the lowest teacher-to-population ratio. Moreover, as *Honolulu Civil Beat* reported in August of 2024, voluntary teacher separations remain high, at over 1,000 per year (see chart below).

Voluntary teacher separations, 2019 to 2023

The number of teachers annually leaving the DOE remains high but has started to decline following the pandemic.



DOE has not released data for the 2023-24 school year.

Chart: Megan Tagami/Civil Beat • Source: [Hawaii DOE](#)

These trends are further exacerbated by the aging teacher workforce. The Hawai'i State Teachers Association has repeatedly cautioned against being overly optimistic about positive teacher retention data, with a wave of experienced educators expected to retire in the next few years.

Moreover, the state is over reliant on unlicensed teachers to fill vacant positions. A December 2025 report found that 48 percent of new teachers in classrooms statewide are not fully licensed. As the Honolulu Star-Advertiser's editorial board recently wrote, "That is completely unacceptable." Strengthening teacher pay improves workforce retention. A Stanford University analysis found that raising wages by 10 percent reduces high school dropout rates by 3 to 4 percent. Similarly, a Florida study showed that pay raises reduced teacher attrition by up to 25 percent for hard-to-fill subject areas.

Contact: educationcaucusdph@gmail.com · 808-679-7454

HB-1890-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 6:36:27 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2026 10:03:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Daniel Liloa Pavao	Testifying for HSTA/HIDOE	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the committee,

My name is Daniel Liloa Pavao. I am a proud product of the Hawai'i Department of Education, and today I have the privilege of serving as a teacher at Leilehua High School. I am writing to you in strong support of HB1890, HD3 SD1.

My path to the classroom began with the foundation I received as a student in our public schools. The teachers I had growing up did more than just teach me academics; they mentored me to be the best person I could be. They consistently modeled the values of grit and pride, teaching me that the right thing to do is to give my absolute best effort in everything I pursue. Through the HIDOE, I was given opportunities to volunteer in environmental services and participate in school functions that showed me the importance of being an active, contributing member of our community.

These early lessons in service and integrity are what led me to the City & County of Honolulu Parks and Recreation. I started as a child participant in the Summer Fun program, transitioned into a teen volunteer, and have served as a Summer Fun leader since I was 18 years old. Working in our parks and guiding our keiki gave me the hands-on motivation to turn those values into a career. This lifelong connection to our community is why I chose to return to the HIDOE as an educator. Even now, after a demanding school year at Leilehua, I go straight into leading Summer Fun because I am committed to passing on that same grit and pride to the next generation year-round.

However, I am reaching a physical and financial breaking point. Because I care about my students' success, I consistently reinvest my own income back into my teaching spaces to provide the supplies and activities they deserve. As the cost of living in Hawai'i continues to rise, it is becoming impossible to sustain my professional dedication and my own livelihood on my current salary.

Lately, I have had to seriously consider finding an additional part-time job just to stay afloat. But I am aware of my own human limitations. Between the high-stakes environment of the classroom and the energy required for Summer Fun, I am already pushed to my limit. I worry that the added stress of a third job would lead to burnout, hurting my mental health and my ability to be the present, effective teacher my students at Leilehua deserve.

I want to be the veteran teacher that our students can rely on for decades. I want to stay because I believe our local children deserve teachers who understand their culture and see their potential. My goal is to make a lasting, positive change for future generations in Hawai'i, but I cannot do that if the system makes it a struggle just to survive here.

Establishing automatic step increases would provide the financial security I need to plan for a future family and remain in the profession I love. Passing HB1890, HD3 SD1 sends a message that the State values experience and wants to keep local educators here at home. I urge you to pass this measure so that I can continue to give my best to the keiki of Hawai'i.

Mahalo for your time and for your consideration.

Aloha,

Daniel Liloa Pavao Teacher, Leilehua High School Central District

HB-1890-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 2:16:28 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2026 10:03:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Paul McDonnell	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Paul McDonnell, and I am a public school teacher in Hawai‘i. I am writing in strong support of SB2391 / HB1890, which would implement automatic step pay increases for educators who complete a year of satisfactory service.

Automatic step increases are the norm across the country and are a basic expectation for teachers entering the profession. In Hawai‘i, however, step movement is uncertain, negotiated irregularly, and dependent on funding decisions that are often beyond an individual educator’s control. This unpredictability creates confusion, undermines morale, and directly contributes to the state’s ongoing recruitment and retention crisis.

The independent teacher compensation study completed last fall clearly confirmed what educators already know: once adjusted for cost of living, Hawai‘i’s teachers are among the lowest paid in the nation. At the same time, nearly half of new teachers leave the profession or the state within five years. These outcomes are not sustainable for our students, our schools, or our communities.

Automatic step progression is not a bonus or reward—it is a foundational structure that recognizes experience, promotes fairness, and builds trust in the system. Teachers should be able to plan their financial futures with reasonable certainty, especially in one of the most expensive states in the country. When step increases must be bargained year after year, it creates instability that discourages talented educators from staying in Hawai‘i long term.

As a Special Education teacher, I see firsthand how turnover disproportionately harms students with the highest needs. Continuity, experience, and institutional knowledge matter. Retaining skilled educators is not just a workforce issue—it is a student equity issue.

This bill aligns with existing contract language that already recognizes annual step movement as a vital recruitment and retention tool. Codifying automatic step increases, subject to available funding, would improve transparency, reduce confusion, and bring Hawai‘i in line with national standards.

I respectfully urge you to support SB2391 / HB1890 and take a meaningful step toward stabilizing Hawai‘i’s public education workforce.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Respectfully,

Paul McDonnell

HB-1890-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 2:24:18 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2026 10:03:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joshua Smith	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Joshua Smith, and I am a public school teacher in Hawai‘i. I am writing in strong support of HB 1890, which would provide automatic annual step increases for teachers who complete a year of satisfactory service.

I have worked in my school for over 13 years, and I have personally seen many excellent teachers leave because they could not afford to continue living in Hawai‘i. These are dedicated, hardworking educators who cared deeply about their students and their schools, but the high cost of living and unpredictable salary growth made it impossible for them to stay. This kind of turnover hurts students, schools, and our entire community.

Automatic step increases are not a bonus—they are a basic and fair part of a professional salary system. In many other states, teachers can count on predictable step movement each year. In Hawai‘i, this uncertainty makes it hard for educators to plan their lives, support their families, and commit long-term to teaching here.

With automatic step increases, teaching becomes a more sustainable career. It would help retain experienced teachers, improve stability in our schools, and reduce the constant cycle of losing good educators and trying to replace them. Most importantly, it helps ensure that our students have consistent, qualified teachers in their classrooms.

HB 1890 is a meaningful step toward valuing educators and strengthening public education in Hawai‘i. I respectfully urge you to support HB 1890.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit written testimony.

Respectfully, Joshua Smith

HB-1890-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 2:25:41 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2026 10:03:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kian Guan Au	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Bill: HB1890

Committee: Senate Ways and Means (WAM)

Position: Support

To the Honorable Chair and Members of the Committee on Ways and Means:

Aloha,

My name is Kian Guan Au, and I am a constituent from Honolulu (ZIP 96821). I respectfully express my continued support for HB1890.

As a public school special education teacher, I value predictable step increases as a key factor in teacher retention and workforce stability. Consistent compensation supports long-term planning and reduces turnover, which benefits both students and the efficient use of public resources.

HB1890 represents a practical and structured approach to strengthening Hawai'i's educator workforce. I respectfully urge the Committee to support this measure.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Kian Guan Au

Honolulu, HI 96821

HB-1890-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 2:42:58 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2026 10:03:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
David Ball	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this legislation.

David Ball

Waiialae-Kahala

HB-1890-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 4:54:21 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2026 10:03:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
John Fitzpatrick	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Hashimoto, and Members of the Committee,

My name is John Fitzpatrick, and I am a teacher at Kūlanihāko‘i High School. I stand in **strong support of HB 1890**, which would finally provide automatic annual step increases to our educators. If passed with a funding mechanism, **this would be the first time this century that educators receive the annual step increases** we have rightfully earned.

The Financial Reality vs. The "No Money" Narrative

We often hear that there is "no money" for teachers, yet in 2024, the legislature passed historic income tax cuts. Furthermore, the state currently holds over **\$1.6 billion** in the Emergency Budget Reserve Fund ("Rainy Day Fund"). We cannot justify hoarding nearly \$2 billion in reserves while telling the professionals who educate our future workforce that we cannot afford the estimated \$25 million needed for annual step increases. This is not a handout; it is a vital investment in retention.

The 24-Year Climb

Our current salary schedule is designed with 12 steps. In a logical system, a teacher should reach the top in 12 years. However, because movement currently only occurs roughly every other year, it takes a teacher **24 years** to reach the top. By the end of this current contract, many teachers will have faced three out of five years without any step movement. This wage makes teaching in Hawai‘i financially unsustainable. **In 2021 the Hawaii State Legislature and Governor Ige finally fixed this problem with repricing** and we are on our way to more of the same. HB 1890 corrects this, making Hawaii more competitive again.

Recruitment and the "Broken Pipeline"

While serving as a faculty representative at Maui Waena, I mentored recruits from Chicago who were shocked to learn we lack annual step increases. They have since moved back to the mainland. We are competing in a national market; when we cannot promise consistent salary growth, we lose talent to states that do and are **left having to give emergency hires five years instead of the three years I had to get their teaching license.**

The Impact on Haumāna

The lack of retention hits our students the hardest. In my 9th-grade science classes, I see significant math gaps because students lacked consistent, qualified teachers in elementary and middle school. One student recently told me: *“Mister, you are the best science teacher I have ever had. All my science teachers in middle school dipped out on us.”*

This cycle of abandonment is real. Just this year, I had to scramble to cover AP Biology classes because a fellow science teacher left for better pay, smaller classes, and adequate classroom and lab resources at a private school. My 9th graders thought they were being abandoned yet again.

Solidarity with Our School Ohana

I also wish to support our principals, vice principals, custodians, office staff, and cafeteria staff. Our principals are managing "impossible puzzles"—trying to run schools without all of their teaching lines filled by the beginning of school in August. They deserve a raise for managing these daily crises.

Conclusion

We are stuck in a cycle where the employer claims "no funding." However, there was a \$750 million surplus during our last negotiations during collective bargaining agreement. **We need the Legislature to break this cycle by passing HB 1890 and earmarking the funds specifically for annual steps.**

Please pass HB 1890 and the adequate funding to make this a reality. **Help us stop the exodus of talent and give our haumāna the qualified, consistent teachers they deserve.**

Mahalo for your time and support,

John "Fitz" Fitzpatrick

Science Educator,

Kūlanihāko‘i High School

HB-1890-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 6:46:10 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2026 10:03:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Hope McKeen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki and members of the committee,

As a 20-year veteran of Hawai‘i’s classrooms, I have witnessed firsthand the heavy toll financial instability takes on our schools. It is a painful reality that when adjusted for the cost of living, Hawai‘i’s educators are amongst the lowest paid teachers in the nation. This is more than just a statistic—it creates a revolving door of talent. With nearly 50% of new teachers leaving within five years, our students are stripped of the continuity and mentorship they deserve.

HB1890 addresses this crisis by honoring the language already established in our Unit 5 collective bargaining agreement. Specifically, it recognizes annual step increases as an essential tool for recruitment and retention. By codifying these increases, this bill provides the "predictability" identified in the 2025 HDOE Teacher Compensation Report as a critical factor in building trust and reducing attrition.

Furthermore, by incorporating retention bonuses, this bill acknowledges the dedication of long-term educators. After two decades in this profession, I can attest that a clear, reliable path to salary progression is what keeps a teacher in the classroom. I urge this committee to pass this measure and demonstrate to our educators that their experience and commitment are truly valued.

Na‘u Nō

Hope Pualani McKeen

Waiākea, Hilo, Hawai‘i

HB-1890-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 7:14:57 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2026 10:03:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kori Oros	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in strong support of HB1890 HD3 SD1, which establishes annual salary step increases for public school teachers. As a public educator in Hawai‘i, I see firsthand how the high cost of living creates a financial crisis for many of my colleagues. When adjusted for these expenses, Hawai‘i’s teachers are effectively the lowest-paid in the nation, making it increasingly difficult to sustain a long-term career in education here.

This financial strain contributes to a staggering turnover rate, with nearly half of our teachers leaving the profession or the state within five years. I have personally seen talented, dedicated educators walk away not because they lacked passion, but because they could not afford to stay. For example, a colleague at my school—an exceptional early-career teacher—relocated to the mainland after just three years. Despite being deeply committed to her students and community, she struggled to cover basic living expenses and saw no clear path to financial stability. Her departure left a gap that was difficult to fill and disrupted the continuity our students rely on.

This level of attrition undermines the stability of our schools and directly impacts student success. Students thrive in consistent, supportive learning environments, and frequent teacher turnover makes it harder to build those relationships and maintain strong academic programs.

Establishing automatic step increases provides the stability and predictability educators need to remain in the classroom. It ensures that teachers can plan for their future, support their families, and feel confident that their experience and commitment will be recognized over time. This measure sends a clear message that the State values its educators and is serious about improving teacher retention.

For the sake of our students, our schools, and the future of education in Hawai‘i, I respectfully urge the committee to pass this measure.

Mahalo,
Kori Oros

Central District

HSTA Central Chapter President

HB-1890-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 7:43:20 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2026 10:03:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Melinda Martinez	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha.

My name is Melinda Martinez and I am a Special Education teacher at Kūlanihāko'i High School on Maui. I am reaching out today in support of HB1890 which assures teachers that they will receive the annual step increases that are currently “subject to funding”.

I moved to Maui in 2018, unable to obtain a public school teaching position in Colorado despite obtaining a MA Ed in 2010, serving as an administrator in the private sector of Early Childhood Education, and having nearly 20 years experience in a variety of educational positions since my high school graduation. Quite simply, I moved 3200 miles, investing \$10000 of my own money for an opportunity. While the HDOE recruiters presented the step and class matrix, they never relayed the contractual jargon that lay the foundation for years of compression which in turn caused teachers to remain stagnant on the pay scale despite notable rising costs relating to food, fuel, utilities, and housing: the essential elements of survival.

Therefore, I conclude that denying annual step increases for teachers is a form of abuse.

Compulsory education for school-aged children under 15 years of age was an 1840 mandate under King Kamehameha III and Hawai'i's first written constitution. This preceded Massachusetts' 1852 segmented compulsory education law which required students aged eight years to fourteen years to attend school for thirteen weeks each year. Today, Hawaii requires children who are five years old to eighteen years old (as of July 31st each year and January 1st each year respectively) to attend school. Notably, Hawai'i was the first state, in 2014, to mandate kindergarten attendance.

Public school teachers are the backbone of Hawaii's economy. We provide childcare via compulsory education. We are strong in numbers at 13,000. We are proud. We hold college degrees, advanced degrees, which we achieved after investing blood, sweat, tears, and money. We continue to invest the same with our chosen careers as talented professionals. I spend approximately an additional twelve hours each week outside my contract hours planning and preparing lessons, assessing students, and communicating with families which takes away from not just my own personal time, but time with my own family. Last year I spent \$918 dollars on my own classroom supplies to include individual novels for my small group SPED students, Post-It Notes for each day's opening social-emotional low-stakes opening question, and organizational supplies to include binders, dividers, highlighters, and pencils. This figure pales in comparison to the \$65,000 I owe in student loans as my original investment for what I hope to be a life-long career. There are many nights I experience poor sleep because I worry about my students' academic prowess, critical thinking abilities, and the implications to their futures/my community's future. Rarely a moment occurs without some thought relating to my students because each is near and dear to me. I know I am not alone.

In 2016, the BU5 contract removed annual step verbiage because it hadn't been upheld and added the "subject to funding" wording. This is merely a loophole and it is simply a travesty because while other similarly educated professionals in public and private fields are already better paid, most also receive annual wage increases to reward their dedication, commitment, and achievements.

Public school teachers were decompressed (via repricing) in 2022 and since, have already been recompressed twice! Teachers are inherently nurturing, empathetic, and reflective but we are not ignorant. I urge you to do what is right and fair, and to not take past passivity for future acquiescence. Please pass annual step increases for teachers. Show us we are valued because lip service falls short. In the five year period since the epic repricing/recompression, this ELA teacher has lost roughly \$15,000 in earnings. Should I continue to teach for an additional 17 years to reach my required 25 years for full vesting as a Class 8 teacher, I will miss out on an additional \$77,000 in total earnings.

I began a career in public school education in 2018 when I was 39 years old. To fully vest as a post-2012 teacher with 25 years of service I would be 64 years old but I also must remember I am a high fiver and need five years at my top pay; 14B. Therefore, I expect to retire at 69. Yesterday, my mother celebrated her 73rd birthday; however, she was also diagnosed with breast cancer on March 23rd. My grandmother, her mother, died in 1975 at 55 from breast cancer. Should I stay with the HDOE, I might be able to enjoy a few cancer-free retirement years for personal pursuits.

Annual step increases prevent the professional pay gap.

Annual step increases help address cost of living expenses in an incremental manner.

Annual step increases recruit qualified teachers and retain qualified and experienced teachers.

Passing HB1890 will help me incrementally, but my younger colleagues, our keiki, and our communities moreso. I urge you to emulate a teacher and embody the qualities we wear as our daily uniform. Please place yourselves in our shoes and advocate an agenda that benefits Hawai'i's future.

Mahalo,

Melinda Martinez

MAEd Teacher Education

Special Education Teacher. Kūlanihāko'i High School

9th and 10th Grades Inclusion & Resource ELA

HB-1890-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 7:52:47 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2026 10:03:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Verona Holder	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in strong support of HB 1890 HD3 SD1, which establishes annual salary step increases for public school teachers.

As a public educator in Hawai'i, I see every day how the high cost of living impacts teachers. Many are working second jobs or leaving the profession because they cannot afford to stay. When adjusted for cost of living, Hawai'i's teachers are among the lowest paid in the nation. That does not reflect the level of responsibility, education, and commitment this work requires.

This is personal for me. After a full day teaching, I go home, change, and DoorDash to make ends meet. I have a master's degree and am working on a doctorate, and I still have to hustle. One job should be enough.

I have mentored six teachers who moved here hoping to build a life in Hawai'i. Every one of them left within one or two years because they could not afford to stay. They wanted to remain in our schools, but the system does not make it possible.

This level of turnover affects everything. Students lose consistency. Schools lose strong teachers. The remaining staff carry more of the load.

Step increases provide stability. They recognize experience and give teachers a reason to stay. If we want strong schools, we have to make it possible for educators to build a life here.

I respectfully urge you to pass HB 1890 HD3 SD1.

Thank you for your consideration.

**Mahalo,
Verona Holder
Central District Educator**

HB-1890-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 8:22:49 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2026 10:03:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mike Landes	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and members of the committee,

I strongly support HB 1890. If we are serious about providing our keiki with the best opportunities, we need to fully fund our public education system and pay our teachers what they're worth. As a parent of two public school students who deserve better, I urge you to pass this bill and others that will help to retain our best teachers and provide better schools for our students.

Mahalo for your time,

Mike Landes

Kihei

HB-1890-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 8:39:29 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2026 10:03:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
ashley monden	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Members of the Committee,

I am writing in strong support of HB 1890, HD1, which establishes annual salary step increases for public school teachers.

As a special education teacher, I see firsthand how difficult it is to make ends meet in Hawai‘i. Even with a full-time teaching position, I am unable to afford a home of my own. The cost of living continues to rise, while our salaries do not keep pace. When adjusted for the realities of living here, Hawai‘i’s teachers are effectively the lowest paid in the nation.

I have considered numerous times moving to the mainland, where the cost of living is more affordable and homeownership feels possible. But I was born and raised on O‘ahu, and as a fifth-generation local, I feel deeply rooted in this community. I want to continue teaching the next generation of Hawai‘i’s students without living under constant financial strain.

The financial pressure many of us face contributes to the alarming number of teachers who leave the profession or move out of state within just a few years. This instability hurts our schools and, most importantly, our students.

Establishing automatic annual step increases would provide the stability and predictability educators need to stay in the classroom long-term. It shows that the State values our commitment, experience, and dedication to Hawai‘i’s keiki.

I respectfully urge the committee to pass this measure.

mahalo,

Ashley Monden

Mililani Mauka Elementary School/central district

HB-1890-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 5:54:46 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2026 10:03:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Richard Stange	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in strong support of HB1890 HD3 SD1, which establishes annual salary step increases for public school teachers. As a public educator in Hawai'i, I see firsthand how the high cost of living creates a financial crisis for many of my colleagues. When adjusted for these expenses, Hawai'i's teachers are effectively the lowest-paid in the nation.

This financial strain contributes to a high turnover rate, with many teachers leaving the profession or the state within just a few years. This instability undermines our schools and negatively impacts student learning.

Establishing automatic step increases provides the stability and predictability educators need to remain in the classroom. It sends a clear message that the State values our experience and is committed to retaining teachers.

I respectfully urge the committee to pass this measure.

Mahalo,
Richard Stange
Mililani Middle School/Central

HB-1890-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 8:36:33 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2026 10:03:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jenna Tate	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony in Support of HB1890

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Jenna Tate, and I work at Kūlanihāko‘i High School as the Technology Coordinator. I am writing in strong support of HB1890.

This bill addresses a critical issue directly affecting the stability of our public schools: teacher recruitment and retention. While average teacher salaries in Hawaii fall in the middle of national rankings on paper, our educators become the lowest paid in the nation once adjusted for our state's exceptionally high cost of living.

Because of this financial strain, close to half of Hawaii's teachers leave the profession or leave the state altogether within five years of starting. This creates a revolving door of turnover that disrupts classrooms and shortchanges our students.

I came to Hawai‘i from West Virginia in 2017 via the Teacher Recruitment Program. It never occurred to me that the teacher shortage that provided me with my first full-time teaching position would be worse today than when I was hired. I believe the lack of competitive compensation is one of the reasons that deepens that shortage. This is especially true when you consider our recent financial and economic strains, which cause everyone's spending power to be variable at best.

A major driver of this retention crisis is the unpredictability of our compensation system:

- **National Norms:** In the vast majority of school districts across the country, automatic annual step increases are the standard practice to reward educators for their growing experience.
- **The Hawaii Reality:** In Hawaii, step increases are negotiated irregularly and remain dependent on uncertain funding. This unpredictability means it takes Hawaii educators up to twice as long to reach the top of the salary scale compared to teachers on the mainland, and contributes to the worsening teacher shortage in Hawai‘i.

- Independent Recommendations: An independent study of Hawaii's teacher compensation system recently recommended establishing automatic step increases. The study noted that this shift would build trust, promote a sense of fairness, and actively reduce attrition.

HB1890 implements this exact best practice. By authorizing annual step salary increases for satisfactory service, this legislature can provide the stability and predictability educators desperately need to plan their financial futures and stay in Hawaii classrooms.

Ultimately, without predictable, stable compensation, the teacher shortage in Hawaii will only continue to worsen. I urge the Committee to pass HB1890 to ensure our schools can attract and retain the dedicated educators our children deserve.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

Jenna Tate

Technology Coordinator, Kūlanihāko'i High School

Eight Years of Service with HIDOE

HB-1890-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 8:40:39 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2026 10:03:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brad Kusunoki	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki and Members of the Committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for this bill to implement annual salary step increases. Establishing a predictable pay scale is essential for long-term financial planning and the well-being of my family. Currently, the year-to-year uncertainty regarding pay adjustments creates significant and unnecessary stress. Given the high cost of living in Hawaii, financial stability is not just a preference—it is a necessity. Thank you for your time and for considering the positive impact this legislation will have on local families.

HB-1890-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 9:13:58 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2026 10:03:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Makanamaikalani Dudoit	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

March 2026

Aloha Chair and Members of the House Committee

In STRONG SUPPORT of HB 1890.

As a charter school kumu for 5 years now I know the struggles of trying to support an ohana with just this job. I have to have a second job to be able to stay in Hawai'i. I know many of my coworkers also have to do the same.

We love doing this job, but it is very demanding and can be tough on the mind and body. If we have to take up other jobs to sustain ourselves it takes away from us giving 100% to our students.

Mahalo for taking the time to read this.

Makanamaikalani Dudoit

Pālolo, O'ahu, Hawai'i

HB-1890-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 9:34:16 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2026 10:03:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sarah Kern	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

March 31, 2026

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Sarah Kern and I am a resident of Lihue, Kauai teaching at Chiefess Kamakahahei Middle School. I am testifying in strong support of HB1890, HD2, SD1 because the high cost of living in Hawai'i creates financial hardships for so many of my colleagues. Hawai'i's teachers are the lowest paid in the nation when our salaries are adjusted for the cost of living, which is unacceptable.

The financial strain put onto teachers contributes to our high turnover rate (nearly half of our teachers leave the profession within their first five years). High attrition means that our schools are constantly starting from scratch training our new teachers on school systems and getting everyone on the same page every year instead of spending that valuable professional development time helping teachers to improve their practice to increase student success.

The establishment of automatic step increases would provide stability and predictability for my colleagues and me, allowing more of us to remain in the classroom longer instead of moving on to other more lucrative opportunities. Many of my former colleagues have left teaching for the private sector not because they don't love their job as a classroom teacher, but because they can't make ends meet and don't feel that their work in shaping our keiki's future is valued as it should be. Passing this measure would send a clear message to our teachers that the state values our experience and expertise, and is committed to teacher retention. I respectfully urge, beg, and plead that the committee pass this measure. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

Mahalo,

Sarah Kern

Teacher, Chiefess Kamakahalei Middle School

HB-1890-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 9:50:44 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2026 10:03:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shantell-Tiare Tom	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the committee,

I am writing in strong support of HB 1890, HD2, SD1, which establishes annual salary step increases for public school teachers. As a public educator, I see how the high cost of living in Hawai i creates a financial crisis for my colleagues. When adjusted for these expenses, Hawaii's teachers are the lowest-paid in the nation.

This financial strain contributes to a staggering turnover rate where nearly half of our teachers leave the profession or the state within five years. This high attrition poses a significant problem for the stability of our schools and the success of our students.

Establishing automatic step increases provides the stability and predictability educators need to remain in the classroom. This measure sends a clear message that the State values our experience and is committed to teacher retention. I respectfully urge the committee to pass this measure.

Mahalo,

Shantell-Tiare Tom

Wai'anae High School/ Wai'anae

HB-1890-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 9:55:29 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2026 10:03:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sonja Giardina	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Sayama, Vice Chair Lee, and members of the committee,

I am writing in strong support of HB 1890, HD1, which establishes annual salary step increases for public school teachers. As a public educator, I see how the high cost of living in Hawai'i creates a financial crisis for my colleagues. When adjusted for these expenses, Hawaii's teachers are the lowest-paid in the nation. This financial strain contributes to a staggering turnover rate where nearly half of our teachers leave the profession or the state within five years. This high attrition poses a significant problem for the stability of our schools and the success of our students. Establishing automatic step increases provides the stability and predictability educators need to remain in the classroom. This measure sends a clear message that the State values our experience and is committed to teacher retention. I respectfully urge the committee to pass this measure.

Mahalo,

Sonja Giardina

Hālau Kū Māna Public Charter School

LATE

RE: HB1890 HD3 SD1 – Relating to Education
Wednesday, April 1, 10:03 a.m.

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in strong support of HB1890 HD3 SD1, which establishes annual salary step increases for public school teachers.

As a public school educator in Hawai'i, I witness daily the severe impact of our state's high cost of living on teachers. When adjusted for these realities, Hawai'i's educators are effectively among the lowest paid in the nation. This creates an ongoing financial strain that is unsustainable for many of us who are committed to serving our communities.

This economic pressure directly contributes to alarming teacher turnover rates, with many educators leaving either the profession or the state altogether. The loss of experienced, dedicated teachers destabilizes our schools and disrupts student learning, ultimately affecting Hawai'i's families and future generations.

Establishing automatic, annual step increases provides much-needed stability and predictability. It affirms that the State values the experience, commitment, and 'ike of its educators—particularly those of us who are from and choose to remain in Hawai'i to serve our communities.

For Kanaka 'Ōiwi educators like myself, this is more than a policy—it is about sustaining our ability to remain in our homeland, continue our work, and uplift the next generation in safe, supportive public schools.

I respectfully urge the Committee to pass this measure.

Mahalo

Lani Alo-Chu

Nānākuli High & Intermediate School

Kanaka 'Ōiwi lifelong educator and community member

LATE

HB-1890-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 10:30:32 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2026 10:03:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ryan Tong	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the committee,

I am writing in strong support of HB 1890, HD2, SD1, which establishes annual salary step increases for public school teachers. As a public educator, I see how the high cost of living in Hawai i creates a financial crisis for my colleagues. When adjusted for these expenses, Hawai i's teachers are the lowest-paid in the nation.

This financial strain contributes to a staggering turnover rate where nearly half of our teachers leave the profession or the state within five years. This high attrition poses a significant problem for the stability of our schools and the success of our students.

Establishing automatic step increases provides the stability and predictability educators need to remain in the classroom. This measure sends a clear message that the State values our experience and is committed to teacher retention. I respectfully urge the committee to pass this measure.

Mahalo, Ryan Tong

Waianae H.S.

LATE

HB-1890-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 10:36:18 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2026 10:03:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alex Tam	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a public school educator, I strongly support this bill because teachers deserve a living wage. I have seen how many great educators have left the profession because the cost of living is so high and they are not rewarded for staying in this profession. When this happens, our keiki suffer. We need automatic step increases to ensure we retain quality educators for our future.

Mahalo