



STATE OF HAWAII
HAWAII TEACHER STANDARDS BOARD
650 IWILEI ROAD, SUITE 268
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96817

March 5, 2026

WRITTEN TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

PERSON TESTIFYING: Mitzie Higa, Licensing Specialist, on behalf of the Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board (HTSB)

DATE: March 5, 2026

TIME 10:01 AM

LOCATION: Conference Room 016 & Videoconference State Capitol

TITLE OF BILL: SB 3262 HTSB; BOE; Executive Director; Appointment; Advice and Consent

POSITION: Opposes SB 3262

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary:

The Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board (HTSB) respectfully opposes SB3262, relating to education, which would require the board to employ an executive director for a term of up to four years, who shall be appointed by the board of education, with the advice and consent of the senate.

There is always a process prescribed by law for appointing the HTSB's Executive Director and for terminating the Executive Director of HTSB. Hawai'i Revised Statutes clearly states:

§302A-801 f) The board may employ an executive director for a term of up to four years, who shall be appointed by the board of education without regard to chapters 76 and 89; provided that the board shall submit a nominee to the board of education for approval or disapproval; provided further that if the nominee is disapproved, the board shall submit another nominee to the board of education for approval or disapproval. The board may terminate the executive director's contract for cause; provided that the board shall submit the recommendation for termination to the board of education for approval or disapproval.

The Separation of Powers doctrine was established to prevent tyranny from a single branch of government and preserve the integrity of U.S. citizens. This bill encroaches on this doctrine in that it requires the Board of Education, a part of the Executive Branch, to appoint the Executive Director only upon the advice and consent of the senate. This bill does not allow the Board of Education the autonomy to appoint the Executive Director on their own accord.

HTSB is tasked by law to establish licensing and certification standards that govern teacher licensing and certification in Hawai'i to ensure that public-school children in Hawai'i are taught by teachers who are qualified to practice the profession of teaching.

This bill would change the process by adding an additional layer, as a process is already in place with the Board of Education to determine who the Executive Director should be of the Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board, as well the process that is already in place for the Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board to nominate who they think will understand the mission and vision of the HTSB, as well as help them pursue the course of having high quality teachers in our state that are needed by an Executive Director.

Therefore, we humbly ask this committee to **oppose** this bill.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR



ROY M. TAKUMI
CHAIRPERSON

**STATE OF HAWAII
BOARD OF EDUCATION
PAPA HO'ONA'AUAO**
P.O. BOX 2360
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

Senate Committee on Judiciary
Thursday, March 5, 2026
10:01 a.m.
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 016

Measure: Senate Bill 3262, Relating to Education

Purpose of Measure:

Requires that the Hawaii Teacher Standards Board submit three nominees for its Executive Director to the Board of Education. Requires the Board of Education to appoint an Executive Director from the nominees on the list, subject to advice and consent of the Senate.

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

The Board of Education (Board) respectfully offers comments on Senate Bill 3262.

Should the Legislature determine in its wisdom that the proposed process for appointing the executive director of the Hawaii Teacher Standards Board is in the public interest, the Board will fulfill its responsibility to carry out the bill's intent.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify on behalf of the Board.



1200 Ala Kapuna Street • Honolulu, Hawai'i 96819
Tel: (808) 833-2711 • Fax: (808) 839-7106 • Web: www.hsta.org

Osa Tui, Jr.
President

Logan Okita
Vice President

Cheney Kaku
Secretary-Treasurer

Andrea Eshelman
Executive Director

TESTIMONY TO THE HAWAI'I SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

Item: SB 3262 – Relating to Education

Position: Support

Hearing: Thursday, March 5, 2026, 10:01 am, Room 016

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

Dear Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the committee,

The Hawai'i State Teachers Association (HSTA) **supports** S.B. 3262, which seeks to refine the appointment process for the Executive Director of the Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board (HTSB). As an organization representing the interests of educators across the islands, we believe that robust oversight in this selection process is essential for the future of our profession.

The HTSB plays a critical role in our educational ecosystem, directly impacting all teachers statewide as well as new and upcoming educators entering the field. The board's decisions on licensing and standards set the foundation for the quality of instruction in our classrooms.

This measure ensures that the Executive Director is thoroughly reviewed by the Hawai'i State Senate through the advice and consent process. We believe this additional layer of scrutiny is vital to ensure that the individual leading this influential body is properly suited for the responsibilities of the job.

By requiring a list of three nominees and involving both the Board of Education and the Senate, S.B. 3262 promotes transparency and accountability. This collaborative approach helps guarantee that the HTSB is led by a highly qualified professional dedicated to upholding the highest standards for Hawai'i's educators.

We respectfully request that the committee pass this measure.

Mahalo

