



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

Date: 02/04/2021

Time: 02:00 PM

Location: Via Videoconference

Committee: House Education

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Dr. Christina M. Kishimoto, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: HB 0525 RELATING TO TEACHER HOUSING.

Purpose of Bill: Clarifies that the Department of Education may construct teachers' housing on a public school campus. Requires that teachers' housing units constructed or acquired on a school campus after 6/30/2021, be rented at a low cost or no cost to new teachers employed full-time at that school.

Department's Position:

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) supports HB 525.

The Department is currently exploring the possibility of developing teacher housing on select public school campuses. Supporting more opportunities to increase low cost or no cost teacher housing options statewide directly improve the Department's recruitment and retention efforts.

A January 2020 compensation study contracted by the Department revealed that 78 percent of survey respondents indicated that the lack of housing availability negatively impacted teacher retention in Hawaii. Additionally, a December 2020 comparison report developed for the Department on teacher recruitment revealed that similarly situated school districts in other states provide greater opportunities for low cost or no cost teacher housing for full-time employees. Furthermore, this report reveals that focus groups of current and former Department teachers echoed the need for not only more affordable housing opportunities, but inventory both in geographically isolated areas and in higher priced rental locations.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on HB 525.

The Hawai'i State Department of Education is committed to delivering on our promises to students, providing an equitable, excellent, and innovative learning environment in every school to engage and elevate our communities. This is achieved through targeted

work around three impact strategies: school design, student voice, and teacher collaboration. Detailed information is available at www.hawaiipublicschools.org.

February 4, 2021

The Honorable Justin Woodson, Chair

House Committee on Education

Via Videoconference

RE: H.B. 515 Relating to the Department of Education

HEARING: Thursday, February 4, 2021, at 2:00 p.m.

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

I am Ken Hiraki, Director of Government Affairs, testifying on behalf of the Hawai'i Association of REALTORS® (“HAR”), the voice of real estate in Hawai'i, and its over 10,000 members. HAR **supports** House Bill 525, which clarifies that the Department of Education may construct teachers' housing on a public school campus. Requires that teachers' housing units constructed or acquired on a school campus after 6/30/2021, be rented at a low cost or no cost to new teachers employed full-time at that school.

According to the Department of Business Economic Development and Tourism's 2019 report on Housing Demand in Hawai'i, the State needs up to 46,000 housing units to meet demand in Hawai'i by 2030. Ultimately, we have a housing supply problem, and we need creative solutions to build more housing at all price points, including for teachers. Land costs is a big part of the development costs, so by utilizing public school lands to build teacher housing would help address this.

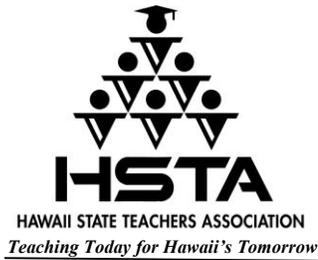
Furthermore, the National Association of REALTORS® Profile of Home Buyers and Sellers found that for first-time homebuyers, saving for the down payment was the most difficult task in the buying process. To put this in perspective, the following is the median sales price in December 2020, for a single-family home, based on a 20% conventional loan:

County:	Median Sales Price:	20% Downpayment:
Hawai'i Island	\$485,000	\$97,000
Kaua'i	\$915,000	\$183,000
Maui	\$865,000	\$173,000
Oahu	\$870,000	\$174,000

Additionally, according to the Profile Report, student loans and high rent costs were debts that delayed savings for a down payment. By renting at low-cost or no cost to teachers, this would help our teachers save for a down payment.

Furthermore, at a time when our economy is hurting, this is a creative and budget-neutral approach to tackle the solution of housing and helping our teachers.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.



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

Corey Rosenlee
President
Osa Tui Jr.
Vice President
Logan Okita
Secretary-Treasurer
Wilbert Holck
Executive Director

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
EDUCATION

RE: HB 525- RELATING TO TEACHER HOUSING

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2021

COREY ROSENLEE, PRESIDENT
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Chair Woodson and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association **supports HB 525**, relating to teacher housing. This bill clarifies that the Department of Education may construct teachers' housing on a public school campus. Requires that teachers' housing units constructed or acquired on a school campus after 6/30/2021, be rented at a low cost or no cost to new teachers employed full-time at that school.

Hawai'i continues to suffer from a shortage of licensed teachers. Financial incentives and affordable options for teacher housing are key strategies for the recruitment and retention of teachers, particularly given that Hawai'i's teacher salaries continue to trail the nation when adjusted for cost of living. Housing is a big portion of each teacher's paycheck.

IF we concentrate on retaining our teachers, the Department would not have to focus so much on the recruitment of teachers. To recruit and retain effective educators, policymakers must find ways to lessen the financial burden of being a public school teacher. Building more teacher housing, especially for our new teachers, and establishing affordable teacher rental housing is helpful. In the islands, where new housing rarely becomes available, the percentage of renters who face cost burdens—financial handicaps incurred by people spending over 30 percent of their income on housing—is roughly 57 percent, according to the National Low Income Housing Coalition. Many of those cash-strapped renters are state educators, who are chronically underpaid. To make ends meet, many teachers are forced to pick up second and third jobs, live in cramped studio apartments, and cut back on necessities



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

Corey Rosenlee
President

Osa Tui Jr.
Vice President

Logan Okita
Secretary-Treasurer

Wilbert Holck
Executive Director

like medical and dental care. Thus they cannot devote their full attention to their students and the preparation of lessons and grading that they usually complete after school once their students have left for the day. Instead, they are rushing off to their second or even third jobs when they would much rather concentrate on their teaching duties and their students.

Thus, building more teacher housing, as long as it is affordable for teachers, will assist them in attaining sustainable and stable residency, while staving off crushing debt burdens. It would also make the teaching profession more attractive by increasing educators' ability to find affordable housing that won't take their whole paycheck.

To take care of the needs of our hardworking public school educators in Hawai'i, the Hawaii State Teachers Association asks your committee to **support** this bill.

HB-525

Submitted on: 2/2/2021 1:25:22 PM

Testimony for EDN on 2/4/2021 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ann S Freed	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair and members,

I have always supported this idea as a way to address teacher shortages in our public schools.

Strong support.

Mahalo, Ann S. Freed

HB-525

Submitted on: 2/3/2021 11:27:46 AM

Testimony for EDN on 2/4/2021 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
cheryl B.	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Support. If there is any way to give additional support to educators, we should support. This being said, addressing the \$\$ situation that has so many educators currently traumatized about whether they have a job or not, would also be quite appropriate.