

SCR93/SR47

Measure Title: REQUESTING THE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO REVIEW WHETHER THE STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE TO THE BOARD SHOULD BE GIVEN VOTING RIGHTS.

Report Title: Board of Education; Student Representative; Voting Rights

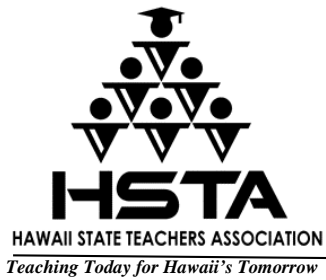
Description:

Companion:

Package: None

Current Referral: EDU

Introducer(s): KIDANI, TOKUDA, Harimoto, Inouye, Keith-Agaran, Kouchi, Shimabukuro, Slom, Wakai



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TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

DATE: WEDNESDAY, APRIL 1, 2015

RE: SCR 93 / SR 47 – REVIEW VOTING RIGHTS OF STUDENT MEMBER ON
THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

PERSON TESTIFYING: JOAN LEWIS, VICE PRESIDENT
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

The Honorable Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Harimoto and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association (HSTA) **supports SCR 93 / SR 47** requesting the Board of Education to “review whether the student representative to the Board of Education should be given voting rights.”

The State board of education is an integral part of the public education system. The BOE must be an unbiased broker for education decision-making, focusing on the big picture, making policy based on the best interest of our students and teachers.

The BOE must advocate for quality education, promote excellence articulate the needs of students and teachers to the legislature and private constituencies while at the same time build public consensus.

HSTA believes that the Board of Education is the appropriate entity to research, review and determine the feasibility of fiduciary obligations that a voting student member of the BOE would be legally held to as well as the manner in which a voting student would be selected to the BOE (i.e. through the State Student Council or by the Governor).

HSTA **supports SCR 93 / SR 47**

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Senate Committee on Education
Senator Michelle Kidani, Chair
Senator Breene Harimoto, Vice Chair

April 1, 2015

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Harimoto and Committee Members:

This testimony is in support of SCR93/SR47, which requests the Board of Education to review whether the student representative to the Board should be given voting rights.

The Hui for Excellence in Education (HE'E) is a diverse coalition of over 40 parent and community organizations dedicated to improving student achievement by increasing family and community engagement and partnerships in our schools. Our member list is attached.

One of the priorities of the Coalition is influencing public policy that affects education. Consequently, Coalition staff attends Hawaii Board of Education (BOE) meetings on a regular basis. We see the BOE student member present at every Committee and General Business Meeting, actively engaged. It is a privilege and a sacrifice for the student member to attend and participate in Board of Education meetings; the student member must give up two full days of school to attend the meetings, but participates in critical discussions on education policy. The Coalition believes that we should empower and allow our student member the next step, which is to have voting rights. According to the Education Commission of the States, four out of the fourteen states that have student members on their state education boards have student members with voting rights.¹ We believe that the student will have a true voice if they have the right to vote. In addition, the student member gives the unique student perspective and is also directly affected by the policies of the Board. We therefore support this resolution, asking the BOE to review whether the student members should be given voting rights.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Our support of this bill represents a 75% consensus or more of our membership.

Sincerely,

Cheri Nakamura
HE'E Coalition Director

¹ Education Commission of the States, 50-State Analysis, State Boards of Education, June 2013
(<http://ecs.force.com/mbdata/mbquestU?SID=a0i700000006evYW&rep=K12G413&Q=Q0643>)

Academy 21
After-School All-Stars Hawaii
Alliance for Place Based Learning
*Castle Complex Community Council
*Castle-Kahuku Principal and CAS
Coalition for Children with Special Needs
*Faith Action for Community Equity
Fresh Leadership LLC
Girl Scouts Hawaii
*Good Beginnings Alliance
Harold K.L. Castle Foundation
*Hawaii Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice
Hawai'i Athletic League of Scholars
*Hawai'i Charter School Network
*Hawai'i Nutrition and Physical Activity Coalition
*Hawaii State PTSA
Hawai'i State Student Council
Hawai'i State Teachers Association
Hawai'i P-20
Hawai'i 3Rs
Head Start Collaboration Office
It's All About Kids
*INPEACE
Joint Venture Education Forum
Junior Achievement of Hawaii
*Kaho'omiki
Kamehameha Schools
Kanu Hawai'i
*Kaua'i Ho'okele Council
Keiki to Career Kaua'i
Kupu A'e
*Leaders for the Next Generation
Learning First
McREL's Pacific Center for Changing the Odds
Our Public School
*Pacific Resources for Education and Learning
*Parents and Children Together

*Parents for Public Schools Hawai'i
Punahou School PUEO Program
Teach for America
The Learning Coalition
US PACOM
University of Hawai'i College of Education
YMCA of Honolulu

Voting Members () Voting member organizations vote on action items while individual and non-voting participants may collaborate on all efforts within the coalition.*