



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

**Date:** 03/28/2014

**Committee:** Senate Ways and Means

**Department:** Education

**Person Testifying:** Kathryn S. Matayoshi, Superintendent of Education

**Title of Bill:** HB 1776,HD2,SD1(sscr2952) RELATING TO EDUCATION.

**Purpose of Bill:** Requires children to undergo a physical examination prior to attending seventh grade beginning with the 2015-2016 school year. Makes an appropriation to the department of education. Effective July 1, 2030. (SD1)

**Department's Position:**

The Department of Education (Department) supports the substantive content and intent of HB 1776 HD2 SD1. In doing so, the Department notes that the mandate to present the results of a physical examination prior to seventh grade may serve as a deterrent to maintaining continuous enrollment and regular attendance.

For the Committee's information, the Department has estimated funding in the amount of \$1,603,250 for fifty-five full-time equivalent (55.0 FTE) Office Assistant positions to carry out the purposes of this measure. We respectfully ask for your favorable support of this appropriation since this measure places more recordkeeping and accountability responsibilities on the schools and will increase their workload. Should we receive the necessary appropriation we believe the effective date of this measure can be July 1, 2014.

The Department appreciates this opportunity to provide testimony.



**HPCA**

HAWAII PRIMARY CARE ASSOCIATION

**Senate Committee on Ways and Means**

Senator David Y. Ige, Chair

Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair

**Testimony on House Bill 1776 HD 2 SD1**

**Relating to Education**

**Submitted by Robert Hirokawa, Chief Executive Officer**

**March 28, 2014, 9:35 am, Room 211**

The Hawaii Primary Care Association (HPCA), which represents the federally qualified health centers/community health centers in Hawaii, supports the intent of House Bill 1776 HD1 SD1 requiring children to undergo a physical examination prior to attending seventh grade.

In Hawaii, public education is student centered and grounded in a commitment to equity. Part of that equity depends squarely on ensuring all children having the opportunity to pursue, and excel in, their education. The number one cause most often provided by parents of children experiencing chronic absenteeism from our public schools is healthcare. As a community, we must do more to ensure our students have access to health care, and utilize that access through wellness checkups and preventive visits so they can reduce their incidents of chronic absenteeism by identifying and addressing health issues early-on. Asthma, poor oral health, vision, hearing, depression, and many other health issues can be identified through dental and physical examinations. If you can't see clearly, if you can't breathe well, or if you're experiencing depression...it can be overwhelming, perhaps impossible, for a child to succeed in school. A child's health undeniably affects their ability to attend and thrive at school. In addition, people in Hawaii with a high school degree or less are TWICE as likely to be OBESE and THREE times as likely to SMOKE. For the sake of our health and our future, our kids must stay in school . . . and in order to stay in school, our kids must have their health.

We ask the committee to consider amending this measure to so that the program should commence at the end of a student's sixth grade year with educating parents and students on: 1) the physical examination requirement for grade seven; 2) provider options; and 3) wellness visits and screenings as a health insurance covered benefit under the Affordable Care Act. Community stakeholders, including providers and health insurance plans, may be able to assist with the sixth grade educational component of the program in addition to implementation.

We would like to offer comment though on relegating these examinations to any one provider group, which could overburden capacity and resources. Thank you for your consideration and the opportunity to testify.