

SB2288

Relating to Education

EDU, WAM

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
GOVERNOR



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SUPERINTENDENT

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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Date: 01/27/2014

Committee: Senate Education

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Kathryn S. Matayoshi, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: SB 2288 RELATING TO EDUCATION.

Purpose of Bill: Amends or repeals various provisions of chapter 302A, Hawaii Revised Statutes, for housekeeping and other purposes.

Department's Position:

The Department of Education supports this bill. The DOE concurs with the proposed changes in the bill with the exception of the items listed below.

The Department of Education respectfully suggests for clarity of the language in this bill, that the following clarification of terms be incorporated.

- Definition of Enroll or Enrollment - Instead of "formally put on a school's roll" we suggest "formally placed on the school's roll".
- There are inconsistencies in the replacement of "district". Where ever "district" is used in the original statute, it should be replaced by "complex area." "Service area" should not be used to replace "district" as "service area" refers to the geographic area served by an individual school.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on this bill.



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SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Monday, January 27, 2014, 1:15 PM, Conference Room 414
S.B. 2288, RELATING TO EDUCATION

TESTIMONY

Janet Mason, Legislative Chair, League of Women Voters of Hawaii

Chair Tokuda, Vice-Chair Kidani and Committee Members

The League of Women Voters Hawaii agrees with the intent of SB2288 that amends or repeals various provisions of Chapter 302A, Hawaii Revised Statutes, for housekeeping and other purposes.

However, we point to Section 11(e)(2)(E) with the strike-out of *shall be composed of the principal and at least one member representing each of the following groups* where **(E) Student representatives selected by the student council of the school;** is struck and changed to: (3) At the elementary and middle school levels, each school community council may allow for student representatives selected by the Student council of the school, and

Switching 'shall' to 'may' in this context will potentially limit inclusion of a younger student membership on the School Community Councils. Changing this wording may not have a negative impact in schools with progressive leaders who will likely be inclusive of all of their students, including those in the early elementary grades. We are concerned that removing the directive to schools to include students in the composition of their school community councils will exclude student voice from decision making. We understand that young students are often not able to articulate their desires and opinions. But it is the adults in a community who are responsible for modeling listening and speaking skills, and skills in conducting meetings for our youngest learners. What these students are gaining from sitting at the table is a sense of inclusion and empowerment. It is at this kind of gathering that selected student representatives, no matter their age, begin to learn the skills that they can use to voice the opinions to set policy as well as to model these skills for other students.

Act 51, Session Laws of Hawaii 2004 [Statute 302A-1124] known as the "Reinventing Education Act" was created to support inclusion and student voice. Please reconsider changing this important statute through a word change in what appears to be billed as "housekeeping and other purposes." This is not 'housekeeping.' This is changing the intent of Act 51.

We respectfully request that you reconsider the wording of this proposed legislation to require inclusion by the schools of all students, regardless of age. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.