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The Twenty-Eighth Legislature, State of Hawaii
Hawaii State Senate
Committee on Ways and Means

Testimony by
Hawaii State AFL-CIO
February 25, 2015

S.B. 822, SD1 – RELATING TO EDUCATION

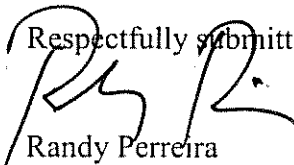
The Hawaii State AFL-CIO opposes S.B. 822, SD1 which requires all public secondary schools to implement a school year that includes 990 student hours to all school years beginning with the 2015-2016 school year and clarifies that the definition of "student hours" shall be determined by the board of education in consultation with the exclusive representatives of the appropriate bargaining units.

The Hawaii State AFL-CIO strongly supports a top-tier public educational system for all of our keiki. We know a good quality education is important to our parents, teachers, and keiki alike and we know investments in our keiki will payoff for future generations.

As a result, no one wants to see our keiki fail and therefore, various policies are proposed and a number of bills are adopted to see that our keiki are provided the best opportunities possible. Sometimes, some well-intentioned policies are proposed or adopted that don't necessarily improve our school system. Unfortunately, S.B. 822, SD1 – while well-intentioned does not necessarily improve the success of our school children. Finland, often regarded as having one of the best public educational systems in the world only requires students to have roughly 600 instructional school hours per year. That is nearly 400 instructional school hours less than Hawaii and yet Finland school children thrive. This is partly attributed to teachers having more time in the classroom preparing lesson plans and being able to spend more time on professional development.

Further, we believe Hawaii has many unique communities and a "one size fits all" approach does not necessarily work for determining instructional school hours. Some schools may have a shortage of teachers, while other schools may be overcrowded and in the end best determined by the school administrators.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Randy Perreira
President

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Honolulu, Hawaii 96813



Telephone: 808 926-1530
Contact@HEECoalition.org

Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Senator Jill Tokuda, Chair
Senator Ronald Kouchi, Vice Chair

February 25, 2015

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Kouchi and Committee Members:

This testimony is submitted in support for SB822 SD1 on student instructional hours.

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.

Act 167/52, which was passed in 2010, established a minimum number of student instructional hours and days per year. The purpose of the law was to:

1. Prevent future furloughs for students
2. Provide instructional time equity among Hawaii students and their mainland peers
3. Establish transparency and clarity in the definition and amount of instructional time provided by each school

Prior to the law, there was great disparity especially in secondary schools on instructional time for students. The law has helped bring schools in line.

Since the inception of the law, we have heard that schools have experienced tremendous challenges in implementing Act 167/52. Therefore, we support the current amendment in SB822 SD1, which changes student instructional hours to "student hours." We know that schools need flexibility and we believe this change will help. At the same time, we agree that the Board of Education in consultation with representatives of collective bargaining units should still define what "student hours" are, to add clarity for schools.

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

Academy 21
After-School All-Stars Hawaii
Alliance for Place Based Learning
*Castle Complex Community Council
*Castle-Kahuku Principal and CAS
Center for Civic Education
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.*

February 24, 2015 (Revised)

To: Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Chair

Senator Ronald D. Kouchi, Vice Chair

Members of Ways and Means Committee

From: Alohilani R. Zapata

Subject: Support of Senate Bill 822, Department of Education; Student Hours

Aloha! My name is Alohilani Zapata, and I am currently a sophomore at Kalaheo High School. I believe that SB822 would be the best thing, for everyone involved, and I would like to ask you for your support. Students would have more time to get involved in extracurricular activities, more time for homework and tutoring, more family time, and they would get the amount of sleep they need. Teachers and administration would have enough time to help students after school, and still be able to have their meetings, they would also have time for their personal life as well.

Let's do what's best for everyone: administration, teachers, parents, and students. Let's not put any more pressure, or stress, us students have very busy lives as it is. Teachers, also have very busy lives, and they already work so hard to allow us to achieve. Schools will also have an easier time in making the bell schedule each year.

Thank you for your time, I would really appreciate it if you look this over a little more, and think about it. Please give your support for Senate Bill 822.

February 24, 2015

To: Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Chair

Senator Ronald D. Kouchi, Vice Chair

Members of the Senate Ways and Means committee

From: Austin Maglinti

Subject: Supporting Senate Bill 822-SD1

Aloha my name is Austin Maglinti and I'm currently a sophomore at Kalaheo High School. I strongly ask you too support and pass Senate Bill 822-SD1, Senate Bill 822-SD1 is an attempt to change the definition of instructional hours to student hours. if this bill is passed students hours will consist of 1,080 hours of school in a total 180 days of school and that would mean each school day is 6 hours long so school hours would be shorter and better cause if we get out at 2:45 on a normal day teachers have the choice to leave and no give any assistance to their students. also if this bill is passed the is more time for extracurricular activities.

Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Chair
Senator Ronald Kouchi, Vice Chair
Members of the Ways and Means Committee

Emily Woitas

Tuesday, February 24, 2015

Support for SB No. 822 SD 1 , Relating to Student Hours

Aloha! My name is Emily Woitas and I am currently a sophomore at Kalaheo High School in Kailua. I strongly believe in SB 822 SD 1, relating to student hours.

The newly developed term "student hours" makes the proposed 1,080 hours much more reasonable. SB 822 SD 1 is an attempt to change the number of hours in each school year to 1,080 hours instead of demanding 990 hours per year of "student instructional hours," it suggests that we have 1,080 overall hours, including lunches and action periods. I am in support of this bill because it gives a more reasonable requirement to schools for the number of hours they must comply with.

This bill allows for possible 6-hour long days. The closer the release time gets to 2:00 pm, the more reasonable it is for student athletes. As school ends later, sports practices will begin and end later. Students will now have more opportunities to balance their academic and athletic lives. This definition also allows for teachers to be able to offer help after school.

In proposing a law of 1,080 student hours, we are keeping a balanced schedule in students lives and allowing for an overall increase in student achievement. I completely support SB 822 SD 1 and encourage the committee to pass this bill. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

SB822

Submitted on: 2/23/2015

Testimony for WAM on Feb 25, 2015 09:00AM in Conference Room 211

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Javier Mendez-Alvarez	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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February 24, 2015

To: Senator Jill Tokuda, Chairperson
Senator Ronald Kouchi
Members of the Ways and Means Committee

From: Jessica Dickerson

Subject: Support of Senate Bill 822, Department of Education; Student Hours

Aloha! My name is Jessica Dickerson, I am a current senior at Kalaheo High School on Oahu. I strongly believe in SB 822 and I would like to ask for your support. In recognition that public high schools have been struggling to develop a school schedule that is structured in the fame of "instructional hours." Now that the fame has changed to "student hours," it makes it more specific and will help the students.

At Kalaheo High School we get out of school at two forty-five every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday and then at one forty-five every Tuesday and Thursday on a normal week. As a school we already meet the new requirements for nine hundred and ninety student hours. This will benefit us because the students will receive more time to allow communication between the students and teachers. The school could even evaluate the schedule of instructional time and reduce the time teachers have meetings to farther the time with students. This will also allow for the time for athletics to begin sooner and have more time afterwards for homework or vice versa whereas they can have enough time to begin their homework or studies after school and then can continue to practice while still having the opportunity to clarify the work with their teacher.

Thinking of the other schools that still do not meet the new requirements it may be challenging to achieve this bill but I still believe that it is important to strive high to accomplish SB 822. Kalaheo High School is able to achieve it so it is possible, it will take dedication and change, but it is crucial for Hawaii public to continue to advance to raise our national standing and to develop stronger students to be more successful in life. The more we do for our students now the more beneficial it will be to creating the best future for the state of Hawaii.

Thank you for your time and consideration, and I truly hope that you will support Senate Bill 822

February 24, 2015

To: Representative Jill N. Tokuda, Chair

Representative Ronald D. Kouchi, Vice Chair

Members of the Senate Ways and Means Committee

From: Sarah Benzing

Subject: Support of Senate Bill 822 SD1, Relating to Education

Aloha! My name is Sarah Benzing and I am currently a sophomore at Kalaheo High School in Kailua. I strongly support Senate Bill 822 SD1, relating to student hours.

The change from student instructional hours to student hours in school will greatly aid students. Instead of school days getting out later to accommodate the student instructional hours, students will be able to keep current schedules with extracurricular activities such as sports or a job. If school gets out later, then activities run later leaving less time to complete homework and get the recommended 10 hours of sleep a night. Although the student hours would be 1,080 hours a year with 180 school days, students would only have to spend about 6 hours a day at school instead of possibly 7-8 hours a day to keep up with regulations.

As a student in Student Government and working a job that requires at least 12 working hours a week, school days not getting extended to have all student instructional hours will help me and other students keep up with our work and activities that we enjoy. I truly hope that you will pass Senate Bill 822 SD1 as it currently stands.

Seiko K Chow
3725 Likini st
Honolulu Hi 96818

February 24, 2015

Dear 2015 Senate Committee on Education

Aloha,

My name is Seiko K Chow

I am a senior at Radford High School

I am writing in support of SB 822

This bill is to clarify what exactly school hours can be considered as instructional time. With recess and lunch being considered as instructional time we have 6 hour day that leaves enough time for after school tutoring as well as different sports.

SB822

Submitted on: 2/24/2015

Testimony for WAM on Feb 25, 2015 09:00AM in Conference Room 211

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
keven rodriguez	Individual	Comments Only	No

Comments: School shouldn't be extended because that means that practices are gonna be extended. For instance paddling practices at Keehi lagoon and there are no lights at the park so we pretty much race the sun. If we end school late then we would only have a very limited time to practice and that would affect our performanceto achieve our goals.

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SB822

Submitted on: 2/24/2015

Testimony for WAM on Feb 25, 2015 09:00AM in Conference Room 211

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Mele	Individual	Comments Only	No

Comments: I think making school longer will affect many athletes. If school gets extended we will have a later practice meaning less practice when the sun is out. Me as a paddler, we practice at keehi lagoon and theres no light there, so we have to finish practice before the sun goes down. If school gets extended we will have less time to practice. This year our practice got cut by 30 minutes because of school getting out at 2:50 P.M. I don't think school hours should be extended some more.

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SB822

Submitted on: 2/24/2015

Testimony for WAM on Feb 25, 2015 09:00AM in Conference Room 211

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kylene Aggasid	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments: Finland has consistently scored in the top two on the international education ranking table for many years and they have far shorter school days than the United States. The US is ranked number 14. Here in Australia we have shorter school days than the US and we rank number 6. Children have undeveloped attention spans; spending more time in school does not mean better learning.

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