

Statement Before The
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANSTuesday, February 11, 2020
10:40 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 211in consideration of
SB 2295, SD1
RELATING TO SERVICE LEARNING.

Chair DELA CRUZ, Vice Chair KEITH-AGARAN, and Members of the Senate Ways and Means Committee

Common Cause Hawaii supports SB 2295, SD1, which would require the Department of Education to implement a service-learning curriculum to develop student character, values, self-esteem, civic responsibility, and knowledge of local community issues and concerns through community service volunteer work.

Common Cause Hawaii is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, grassroots organization dedicated to reforming government and strengthening democracy through efforts that increase civic engagement, voter turnout, and voter participation in our democratic processes.

SB 2295, SD1 will teach young people the importance of civics, civic responsibility, and our governmental processes. It will also provide the foundation for civil, courteous, and respectful participation in the political systems.

Hawaii has the lowest voter registration rate in the Nation, according to American's Health Ranking from the United Health Foundation, and one of the lowest voter turnout rates in the Nation, according to Nonprofit VOTE and the U.S. Elections Project. Studies have shown that voting is a habit, which develops through repetition, and can become strongly ingrained if developed early. Hopefully, having young people learn the value of civics, a representative government, and democracy will encourage young people to register to vote and actually vote in the primaries and general elections, leading to a more vibrant and robust representative democracy and civil society.

Common Cause Hawaii supports SB 2295, SD1, and Common Cause Hawaii respectfully urges the Committee members to pass SB 2295, SD1 out of your Committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 2295, SD1. If you have further questions of me, please contact me at sma@commoncause.org.

Very respectfully yours,

Sandy Ma
Executive Director, Common Cause Hawaii

SB-2295-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2020 6:21:23 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/11/2020 10:40:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Barbara Best	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

We need citizens to know of civics so they will become informed voters

SB-2295-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/6/2020 4:44:36 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/11/2020 10:40:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Susan Pcola_Davis	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

SB2295

I am a grandparent and active member of the Parent Teacher Student Association at my granddaughters school.

After reading the Superintendent's testimony I can understand her reluctance. I cannot support another "add-on" for the school system that is struggling as it is.

SB2295 The purpose of this Act is to **require** public schools to implement a service-learning curriculum. Completion of the service-learning curriculum shall be a **requirement for graduation.**

Adding a **new requirement** is creates hardship on the school system, teachers, students as it is and creates another graduation requirement.

This course is just what you are looking for and it is an available elective. Here is the full description of the current course:

HLE4000 Community Service gives elective credit to students for volunteer work they perform on their own time. It provides opportunities for students to develop responsibility, encourages humanitarian attitudes by doing things for others without compensation, and encourages cooperative working relationships with peers and adults in the community.

Under the supervision of a school faculty member, students participate with service organizations beyond their school day. Upon completion of a **minimum of 60 hours, one-half credit** will be awarded. No letter grades will be given. This course may be repeated three times for credit, but only one credit total, may be counted towards the graduation requirements. Additional Guidelines for Implementing the Community Service Course

The following guidelines for implementing community service experiences for elective credit should be followed:

1. Services rendered by the student should be to organizations or groups outside of school and should be performed beyond the student's school day. Non-profit groups or organizations are preferred to for-profit organizations.
2. Hours claimed, activities performed, and the organization(s) for which community service was rendered should be documented.
3. The signature of the student's supervisor in the participating organization should be part of the documentation.
4. **Sixty hours should be accumulated within a semester or school year.** Exceptions may be considered on a case-by-case basis with the advisor. Start and end dates should be agreed upon by the student and school advisor.
5. Students must formally enroll for this course prior to service hours being accumulated.

SUPERINTENDENT'S EXCERPT:

Within the Department's Authorized Courses and Code Numbers (ACCN), there is a multidisciplinary, .5 credit elective high school course on Community Service. This course counts as part of the six-credit general elective graduation requirement for all students, requires a minimum of 60 hours of service, and is supervised by a school faculty member. It provides students with opportunities to develop responsibility, encourages humanitarian attitudes by doing things for others, and encourages cooperative working relationships with peers and adults in the community.

Should this course be required of all students, liability, accountability, and resource needs could limit the ability of a school to be innovative in their school design.

Additionally, increasing the graduation requirements would reduce the potential for students to enroll in such courses as Fine Arts, World Languages, and Computer Science.

Because there is an existing course, and because of the potential for adverse impacts on schools and student choice, SB 2295 is not needed at this time.

SB-2295-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/7/2020 10:59:37 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/11/2020 10:40:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Michael Golojuch Jr	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

SB-2295-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/7/2020 4:53:00 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/11/2020 10:40:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
tlaloc tokuda	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

SB 2295, SD1 will teach young people the importance of civics, civic responsibility, and our governmental processes. It will also provide the foundation for civil, courteous, and respectful participation in the political systems.

Hawaii has the lowest voter registration rate in the Nation, according to American's Health Ranking from the United Health Foundation, and one of the lowest voter turnout rates in the Nation, according to Nonprofit VOTE and the U.S. Elections Project. Studies have shown that voting is a habit, which develop through repetition and can become strongly ingrained if developed early. Hopefully, having young people learn the value of civics, a represental government, and democracy will encourage young people to register to voter and actually vote in the primaries and general elections, leading to a more vibrant and robust representative democracy.

I support SB 2295, SD1, and urge the Committee members to pass SB 2295, SD1 out of your Committee.

SB-2295-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/8/2020 12:09:24 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/11/2020 10:40:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Edward B Hanel Jr	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Concur with CommonCause Hawaii comments.

SB-2295-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2020 8:19:03 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/11/2020 10:40:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Mary Kathryn Afable	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support SB2295. Currently, our young people lack a basic knowledge of civics, volunteer community service and how our government works. The addition of these subjects to the school curriculum at *all levels* would help Hawai'i youth appreciate the benefits of civic engagement and civic responsibility. Hawai'i needs to improve its appallingly low voter turnout rate. We can do better!

Respectly,

Mary Afable, Hilo