



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

Date: 02/26/2021

Time: 09:30 AM

Location: CR 211 & Videoconference

Committee: Senate Ways and Means

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Dr. Christina M. Kishimoto, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: SB 0508 RELATING TO EDUCATION.

Purpose of Bill: Requires the Department of Education to establish and administer an ocean safety and stewardship education program for all fourth grade students.

Department's Position:

The Department of Education (Department) supports the intent of SB 508 noting that resources will be needed to fully implement the program as envisioned by this measure.

As an island state, the Department recognizes the importance of ocean safety and stewardship education for all of Hawaii's keiki. The Department has recommended and continues to recommend using resources provided by Nā Kama Kai in all of its elementary schools. The Nā Kama Kai resources educate students about the importance of ocean safety and place-based cultural values related to the sea and stewardship.

The Department's school design strategy prioritizes a flexible and adaptive approach, empowering each school to make decisions about specific contexts and partnerships for developing high-quality and relevant learning experiences based on the needs of their students and the local community.

Given the Department's ongoing efforts to promote ocean safety and stewardship education and the availability of the Nā Kama Kai and other resources, the Department respectfully suggests that this measure is not necessary at this time.

Should this bill pass, the Department respectfully requests additional resources to implement and monitor the program adequately.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on SB 508.

The Hawai'i State Department of Education is committed to delivering on our promises to students, providing an equitable, excellent, and innovative learning environment in every school to engage and elevate our communities. This is achieved through targeted work around three impact strategies: school design, student voice, and teacher collaboration. Detailed information is available at www.hawaiipublicschools.org.