

Charlotte A. Carter-Yamauchi
Director

Shawn K. Nakama
First Assistant

Research 808-587-0666
Revisor 808-587-0670
Fax 808-587-0681



LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU
State of Hawaii
State Capitol, Room 446
415 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Written Comments

HB1192 **RELATING TO ADVANCING CIVIC ENGAGEMENT**

Charlotte A. Carter-Yamauchi, Director-
Legislative Reference Bureau

Presented to the House Committee on Legislative Management

Wednesday, February 8, 2023, 2:00 p.m.
Conference Room 312 and Via Videoconference

Chair Nakamura and Members of the Committee:

Good afternoon, Chair Nakamura and members of the Committee, my name is Charlotte Carter-Yamauchi, and I am the Director of the Legislative Reference Bureau (LRB). Thank you for providing the opportunity to submit written **comments** on H.B. No. 1192, Relating to Advancing Civic Engagement.

The purpose of this measure is to:

- (1) Amend section 21G-2(a), Hawaii Revised Statutes, to require the Public Access Room at the State Capitol (PAR) to establish and maintain an outreach and engagement program for primary, secondary, post-secondary, and community education; and
- (2) Establish a full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) position for PAR and to appropriate funds for the position.

The Bureau takes no position on this measure but submits the following comments for your consideration.

PAR was established in 1994 to help enhance the public's ability to participate in the legislative process; it became part of LRB in 1996. PAR's office and services are utilized year-

round, offering equipment, services, and facilities to enhance the public's ability to participate in the legislative process. We note that PAR already provides, as part of its services, *universal* community outreach and civic engagement seminars, workshops, and information that are not limited to one specific target audience. Accordingly, students can and do already benefit from these pre-existing educational sessions and information. However, this measure provides an unspecified amount of funds for a permanent full-time equivalent position, to be placed within PAR, to enable PAR staff to undertake a more targeted educational outreach and engagement program with Hawaii educational institutions. The Bureau notes that if the intent is to provide a mechanism for civics education, it would seem that a more effective approach would be to require age-appropriate civics education as part of the public school curriculum.

Should the Committee decide that it would like PAR to explicitly provide educational outreach to Hawaii educational institutions, and authorize PAR to have an additional full-time equivalent position to assist with this augmented purpose, the Bureau would do its best to carry this out. However, we recommend that in order to truly facilitate the implementation of an effective civic engagement educational program as envisioned in this measure, providing dedicated, complementary counterparts within the Department of Education (DOE) and the University of Hawaii (UH) system, or at least a statutory requirement that each entity coordinate with the Public Access Room to assist with this effort, should be strongly considered to ensure cooperation between entities. For the Committee's reference, we have provided a proposed Senate Draft 1, which is attached to this testimony. The new language within the draft:

- (1) Inserts new statutory language to require the Department of Education and University of Hawaii to assign appropriate staff to coordinate with PAR with respect to the new outreach and engagement program;
- (2) Amends the purpose section to reflect the new scope of the bill; and
- (3) Makes technical amendments.

Thank you again for your consideration.

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO ADVANCING CIVIC ENGAGEMENT.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that civic engagement
2 provides an opportunity for residents to become involved with
3 improving their local communities and neighborhoods. In 2021,
4 the supreme court enacted Rule 23 to establish the commission to
5 promote and advance civic education (PACE commission). One of
6 the main functions of the PACE commission is to provide
7 leadership, oversight, and initiatives to increase civic
8 education in the community and at schools, increase citizens'
9 knowledge about government, and promote informed participation
10 in government and democracy in the State.

11 The legislature further finds that the public access room,
12 an office under the legislative reference bureau, provides the
13 public with information, equipment, facilities, and services to
14 assist in research activities, educational outreach, and public
15 engagement related to work with the legislature. The
16 legislature additionally finds that the public access room is
17 well-positioned to further civic engagement between the

1 legislature and students in the State through educational
2 partnerships such as the Hawaii P-20 partnerships for education.
3 However, the public access room currently lacks resources to
4 provide outreach services beyond its current efforts.

5 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to:

- 6 (1) Require the public access room to establish and
7 maintain an outreach and engagement program for
8 primary, secondary, post-secondary, and community
9 education and provide funding for one full-time
10 equivalent (1.0 FTE) position to assist in
11 effectuating this requirement; and
- 12 (2) Requires the department of education and university of
13 Hawaii to assign appropriate staff to coordinate with
14 the public access room with respect to the outreach
15 and engagement program.

16 SECTION 2. Section 21G-2, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
17 amended by amending subsection (a) to read as follows:

18 "(a) There is established in the state capitol a public
19 access room in which members of the public shall be allowed to
20 utilize various equipment, services, and facilities to enhance
21 their ability to participate in the legislative process. As

1 part of its duties, the public access room shall establish and
2 maintain an outreach and engagement program for primary,
3 secondary, post-secondary, and community education."

4 SECTION 3. Chapter 302A, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
5 amended by adding a new section to part II, subpart C, to be
6 appropriately designated and to read as follows:

7 "§302A- Coordination with the public access room;
8 outreach and engagement. The department shall assign
9 appropriate staff to coordinate with the public access room with
10 respect to the outreach and engagement program described in
11 section 21G-2(a)."

12 SECTION 4. Chapter 302A, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
13 amended by adding a new section to part II, subpart G, to be
14 appropriately designated and to read as follows:

15 "§304A- Coordination with the public access room;
16 outreach and engagement. The university shall assign
17 appropriate staff to coordinate with the public access room with
18 respect to the outreach and engagement program described in
19 section 21G-2(a)."

20 SECTION 5. There is appropriated out of the general
21 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so

1 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2023-2024 and
2 the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal
3 year 2024-2025 to establish one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE)
4 position within the public access room.

5 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the legislative
6 reference bureau for the purposes of this Act.

7 SECTION 6. New statutory material is underscored.

8 SECTION 7. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2023.

Report Title:

Legislative Reference Bureau; Public Access Room; DOE; UH Educational Outreach and Engagement Program; Appropriation

Description:

Requires the Public Access Room to establish and maintain an outreach and engagement program for primary, secondary, post-secondary, and community education and appropriates funds for one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) position to assist in effectuating this requirement. Requires the Department of Education and University of Hawaii to assign appropriate staff to coordinate with the Public Access Room with respect to the outreach and engagement program. (HD1 Proposed)

The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.

Chief Judge Lisa M. Ginoza
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Vice-Chair

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Prof. Colin Moore

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Magistrate Judge
Wes Reber Porter

Testimony to the Thirty-Second Legislature, 2023 Regular Session

Committee on Legislative Management
Rep. Nadine K. Nakamura, Chair
Rep. Dee Morikawa, Vice Chair

Wednesday, February 8, 2023 at 2:00 p.m.
Conference Room 312 and Videoconference

By

Chief Judge Lisa M. Ginoza, Intermediate Court of Appeals
Chair, Commission to Promote and Advance Civic Education
(PACE Commission)

Bill No. and Title: House Bill No. 1192
Relating to Advancing Civic Engagement

Purpose: Requires the Public Access Room to establish and maintain an outreach and engagement program for primary, secondary, post-secondary, and community education and appropriates funds for one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) position to assist in effectuating this requirement.

PACE Commission Position: Strong support

The PACE Commission strongly supports this bill, which would: (1) revise Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS) § 21G-2 to add that “[a]s part of its duties, the public access room shall establish and maintain an outreach and engagement program for primary, secondary, post-secondary, and community education”; and (2) appropriate funds to establish a full-time position within the Public Access Room.

The proposed amendment to HRS § 21G-2 is important to ensure establishment of the outreach and engagement program, which would have a significant impact in reaching and educating students and citizens across the state about the Legislature. It is also crucially important to have a dedicated position to focus on this important effort, and thus it will be highly beneficial to

have funds appropriated to establish the full-time position in the Public Access Room. These crucial steps would create a positive and focused engagement with students, educators and citizens to promote learning about the Legislature, understanding of and participation in the legislative process, and further interaction with Legislators. The more direct contact that students, educators and citizens can have with the Legislature, and the more they can see the process in action, the more they will understand and want to be part of this key part of our democracy. The proposals in House Bill 1192 clearly advance the purpose of the Public Access Room to “ensure improved public participation in the legislative process” set forth in HRS § 21G-1.

Having a clearly stated focus on outreach and engagement for student and community education, and the resources to support such an effort, will go a long way. Although there are many in our community who are seeking to advance civics in different ways, having a full-time dedicated position within the Legislature will be a tremendous asset. Such an individual could also collaborate with the Judiciary History Center to bring diverse programming on civic education to students and the community. Moreover, in today’s virtual world, having a dedicated position in the Public Access Room would greatly assist students, educators and others with following bills online, watching videoconference hearings, and submitting testimony on issues important to them.

Brief background about the PACE Commission:

The PACE Commission was created pursuant to Rule 23 of the Rules of the Supreme Court of the State of Hawai‘i, issued on January 7, 2021. The purpose of the PACE Commission is to promote and advance civic education for students and citizens throughout Hawai‘i. The commission has fourteen members appointed according to Rule 23 by the following: Chief Justice of the Hawai‘i Supreme Court, Governor, President of the Senate, Speaker of the House, Office of Hawaiian Affairs, Superintendent of the Department of Education, Chief Judge of the U.S. District Court for the District of Hawaii, President of the University of Hawai‘i, Dean of the William S. Richardson School of Law, Hawaii State Bar Association, Hawai‘i Association of Independent Schools, and two members selected by the other appointed members.

The commission currently has two committees, one focused on civic education in the schools and one focused more generally on civic engagement in the community. The mission statement adopted by the PACE Commission is: "To create, implement and amplify sustainable programs, resources, and practices that improve place-based, constitutionally informed and culturally sensitive civic education and engagement in Hawai‘i schools and communities."

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