

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR



KEITH T. HAYASHI
SUPERINTENDENT

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
KA 'OIHANA HO'ONA'AUAO
P.O. BOX 2360
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

Date: 02/26/2025

Time: 10:03 AM

Location: CR 211 & Videoconference

Committee: Senate Ways and Means

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Keith T. Hayashi, Superintendent of Education

Bill Title: SB 0422 RELATING TO EDUCATION.

Purpose of Bill: Authorizes the Department of Education to award a high school diploma to qualified persons who did not receive a high school diploma as a result of compulsory or voluntary induction into the armed services of the United States or whose high school education was interrupted due to wartime practices during World War II, the Korean War, or the Vietnam War.

Department's Position:

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) supports SB 422, which authorizes the Department to award high school diplomas to individuals who did not receive a diploma due to military service and individuals whose high school education was interrupted due to wartime practices during World War II, the Korean War, or the Vietnam War.

Act 101, Session Laws of Hawaii 2007, which previously authorized the Department to issue the Kuponu diploma to World War II, Korean War, and Vietnam War veterans, as well as individuals whose schooling was interrupted due to military service or internment, sunset in 2020. The Department would appreciate authorization to resume awarding high school diplomas to the individuals outlined in this bill in recognition of their sacrifices during wartime.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on SB 422.



**SUPPORT OF SB 422
RELATING TO EDUCATION**

Senate Committee on Ways and Means
The Honorable Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair
The Honorable Sharon Moriwaki, Vice Chair

Wednesday, February 26, 2025 at 10:03 a.m.
Conference Room 211 & Videoconference
Hawaii State Capitol; 415 South Beretania Street

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii Military Affairs Council ("MAC") wishes to offer our support of SB 422 which authorizes the Department of Education to establish a program to award high school diplomas to persons who did not receive a diploma as a result of compulsory or voluntary induction into the armed services and persons whose high school education was interrupted due to wartime practices during World War II, the Korean War, or the Vietnam War.

The MAC was established in 1985 when the Chamber was appointed by the State to serve as the liaison to the military. The MAC advocates on behalf of Hawaii's military, and is comprised of business leaders, academic institutions, State and County officials, members of the CODEL, community leaders, labor unions and organizations and retired U.S. flag and general officers. The MAC works to support Hawaii's location as a strategic U.S. headquarters in the Indo-Asia-Pacific region which is crucial for U.S. national and homeland security.

SB 422 would provide high school diplomas to those whose education was interrupted by military service during World War II, the Korean War, and Vietnam War. Veterans deserve recognition for educational sacrifices during wartime. By authorizing the Department of Education to award these diplomas, we honor those who put national service ahead of their personal educational goals. We applaud the legislature for advancing this measure to restore dignity, acknowledge sacrifice, and offer long-overdue educational justice to those who defended our country.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support.

**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair**

**Wednesday, February 26, 2025, at 10:03AM
Conference Room 211 & Videoconference**

RE: SB422 Relating to Education

Aloha e Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Sherry Menor, President and CEO of the Chamber of Commerce Hawaii ("The Chamber"). The Chamber supports Senate Bill 422 (SB422), which authorizes the Department of Education to award a high school diploma to qualified persons who did not receive a high school diploma as a result of compulsory or voluntary induction into the armed services of the United States or whose high school education was interrupted due to wartime practices during World War II, the Korean War, or the Vietnam War.

SB422 aligns with our 2030 Blueprint for Hawaii: An Economic Action Plan, specifically under the policy pillar for Military & Defense. This bill promotes policies that drive economic growth, enhance workforce opportunities, and improve the quality of life for Hawaii's residents.

Many individuals had their high school education interrupted due to military service or wartime practices during World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War. Act 124, Session Laws of Hawaii 2015, previously allowed the Department of Education to award diplomas to those affected by compulsory military service or wartime internment, but this authorization expired in 2020. This bill reinstates and expands the program, allowing veterans and other qualified individuals whose education was disrupted during these wars to receive a high school diploma, whether their induction into military service was compulsory or voluntary.

The Department of Education will establish a process for eligible individuals to apply for and receive their diploma. Applicants must have been residents of Hawaii or the Territory of Hawaii at the time of their service or education interruption and must have been enrolled in a high school during specific wartime periods. By recognizing their sacrifices and granting them long-overdue diplomas, this bill honors their contributions and provides them with well-deserved educational recognition. The Chamber supports this bill as it acknowledges the dedication of veterans, strengthens community ties, and reaffirms the state's commitment to honoring those who served.

The Chamber of Commerce Hawaii is the state's leading business advocacy organization, dedicated to improving Hawaii's economy and securing Hawaii's future for growth and opportunity. Our mission is to foster a vibrant economic climate. As such, we support initiatives and policies that align with the 2030 Blueprint for Hawaii that create opportunities to strengthen overall competitiveness, improve the quantity and skills of available workforce, diversify the economy, and build greater local wealth.

We respectfully ask to pass Senate Bill 422. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

SB-422

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 7:07:48 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/26/2025 10:03:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ellen Awai	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I stand in support of SB422. I'm sure going the military and having lived experiences was probably way more beneficial to individuals than being in high school where the previous generations had only gone up to perhaps 8th grade and then needed to find a job to support the family. Mahalo for correcting the mistakes of history and helping the selfesteem of many who are labeled not being a high school graduate!

LATE

SB-422

Submitted on: 2/26/2025 2:05:06 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/26/2025 10:03:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
David Fukuzawa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Honorable Legislative Members,

I humbly support SB422.

Sincerely,

David Fukuzawa