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David Miyashiro  
Executive Director

February 1, 2022

Committee on Education

Rep. Justin H. Woodson, Chair

Rep. Jeanne Kapela, Vice Chair

Aloha Chair Woodson, Vice Chair Kapela, and Members of the Committee,

**HawaiiKidsCAN strongly supports HB1560**, which amends the minimum qualifications for board of education members.

Founded in 2017, HawaiiKidsCAN is a local nonprofit organization committed to ensuring that Hawaii has an excellent and equitable education system that reflects the true voices of our communities and, in turn, has a transformational impact on our children and our state. We strongly believe that all students should have access to excellent educational opportunities, regardless of family income levels and circumstances.

In terms of generational sustainability, it is clear the status quo won't cut it. Hawaii continues to be a place that is losing population, and research shows that a significant number of young and educated former residents have now found other states their home.<sup>1</sup> Addressing and fundamentally changing this trajectory will require cross-sector strategies that look at how we are equipping our young people to live, play, and work in Hawaii.

To that end, we have seen some exciting developments in our schools, including the growth of career readiness programs. However, as educational opportunities and schools continue to become more innovative and sophisticated, policy leaders at the Hawaii Board of Education will increasingly need to understand and foresee how the K-12, higher education, and workforce sectors intersect, and how technology and entrepreneurial skills will play a larger role into the future. To that end, HB1560 will

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.civilbeat.org/2022/01/hawaiis-population-drain-outpaces-most-states-again/#:~:text=From%20July%202020%20to%20July,from%20the%20U.S.%20Census%20Bureau.&text=This%20means%20about%2014%2C500%20people,Hawaii%20has%20lost%2030%2C000%20residents.>

highlight the kinds of diverse experiences the BOE will need to successfully tackle these issues. We believe such diversity will help the BOE consider education both as it has been delivered in the past, but also what shape it will take in the future. The more our education system can break down silos and further innovation, the better positioned our kids will be to thrive and remain in Hawaii.

Let's put a stake in the ground this session to change the trajectory of our state, and fully leverage the diverse perspectives and backgrounds in our community to chart a new and better course for local education.

Mahalo for your consideration,

David Miyashiro  
Founding Executive Director  
HawaiiKidsCAN

**HB-1560**

Submitted on: 1/29/2022 6:54:09 AM

Testimony for EDN on 2/1/2022 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
chelsea pang	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Copied from HCAN

- Hawaii is a state that continues to lose population, and many of our talented young people are leaving the state for better opportunities.
- More than ever, we need to have a sophisticated and strategic approach to education that takes a holistic approach to how we set our kids up for success. That means breaking down silos and looking across sectors like K-12, higher education, and the workforce to find creative solutions that puts our kids one step ahead versus one step behind.
- As the policy-making body for our public school system, the Hawaii Board of Education must have a diverse representation of members that can help to tackle these complex issues. This bill will make sure the BOE doesn't just keep up with innovation in our schools, but can push them to think bigger and bolder.

**HB-1560**

Submitted on: 1/30/2022 12:43:45 AM

Testimony for EDN on 2/1/2022 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Erica Yamauchi	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I'm writing today in support of this bill as a mother of two children in the public school system.

As the policy-making body for our public school system, the Hawaii Board of Education must have a diverse representation of members that can help to tackle these complex issues. This bill will make sure the BOE doesn't just keep up with innovation in our schools, but can push them to think bigger and bolder.

Erica Yamauchi, Kaimiki/Wilhelmina Rise

January 30, 2022

**Testimony commenting on HB 1560, Relating to the Board of Education**

Honorable Chair Woodson and members of the Committee on Education:

As we look to address the make-up of our Board of Education (BOE), we should be guided by our overall mission and goals for our public education system and what we see as the purpose for our schools.

While I agree that our education system should address the needs of our students in terms of acquiring the skills to work and make a living, and that new ideas can be valuable, I also would caution that our schools should not be primarily governed by the immediate needs of business or those unfamiliar with the learning needs of our students.

As we have seen in the past two years, the ability to understand the context of history and science, and to read, analyze, and weigh information to make sense of the world is critical, not just for us as individuals, but as a working democracy and community. Our schools should provide all students with the background and understanding and analytical skills that allow them to fully participate and engage in their communities. In any field or future endeavor, these abilities are valuable; they also are what we should be giving to our students so they may be richer in their lives. Innovation that enhances these abilities and opportunities is good but it needs to be evaluated within this context.

As you look at the membership of our BOE, please consider the importance of the fundamental needs and purposes of education to ensure that the board is constituted to address them.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
Lynn Otaguro  
Oahu, Hawaii

**HB-1560**

Submitted on: 1/31/2022 1:20:55 PM

Testimony for EDN on 2/1/2022 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Amy Sun	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

From a bird's eye view, schools are not alone. Schools are another integral part of our larger community. Schools are community centers that nurture and raise our future leaders, business owners, and neighbors. Because of the diversity in our actual community and the assumption that we respect this diversity, we should look to diversifying the Board of Education. I support HB 1560.

As a teacher I know that not every student has the same needs. And I am also aware that I hold a lot of power as the sole leader in my classroom to make the final decision. However, I still take time at the end of each quarter to check in with my students: What's working? What's not working? How can we come to a compromise, meeting my requirements and meeting your needs? The Board of Education also needs to recognize its immense power and reevaluate its attention to different needs. The easiest way to provide more fair decision-making is to elect board members who come from diverse backgrounds, representing different aspects of our community.