

MAR 18 2009

S.R. NO. 101

SENATE RESOLUTION

REQUESTS THE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO MODIFY PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS BY REQUIRING FIFTY HOURS OF COMMUNITY SERVICE FROM ALL STUDENTS AS PART OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION'S CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY REQUIREMENT.

1 WHEREAS, a 1997 University of Maryland publication,
2 Mandatory Community Service: Advocates for Children/College
3 Park Scholars, reported that over five hundred school districts
4 across the nation require students to perform community service
5 as a graduation requirement; and
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7 WHEREAS, according to the Public Education Network, a
8 national association of local education funds and individuals
9 working to advance public school reform in low-income
10 communities across our country, young people who become involved
11 in their communities will remain civically engaged throughout
12 their adult years; and
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14 WHEREAS, Former President Clinton has voiced support for
15 community service as a means of building character, teaching
16 civic responsibility, opening doors to career possibilities, and
17 providing services to communities that the communities otherwise
18 would not have; and
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20 WHEREAS, according to the UNITE Foundation, a nonprofit
21 Kentucky organization that promotes drug free partnerships
22 between community members, youth, law enforcement, and
23 education, keeping youth occupied with positive activities is
24 the best way to combat underage drinking, drug use, and other
25 damaging behaviors; and
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27 WHEREAS, independent schools in Hawaii that require their
28 students to participate in community service have found that
29 students who were initially reluctant to participate find
30 personal fulfillment through this learning experience in
31 providing service to others; and
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33 WHEREAS, some independent schools recognize students who
34 provide more than the minimum number of required community



1 service hours during commencement exercises, thereby exhibiting
2 the school's valuing of civic responsibility; and

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4 WHEREAS, the Department of Education's vision for a public
5 high school graduate includes having graduates who "exercise the
6 rights and responsibilities of citizenship"; and

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8 WHEREAS, the Legislature finds that Hawaii's youth would be
9 well served by having them participate in community service as a
10 means of preparing for their role as responsible, voting
11 citizens in our society; and

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13 WHEREAS, fifty hours of required community service would
14 provide ample opportunity for youth to become immersed in
15 service without interfering with academic requirements; and

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17 WHEREAS, Hawaii public school students already electing to
18 perform senior projects may choose a service learning project
19 that would further help them learn civic responsibility and that
20 can be used in part to fulfill a community service requirement;
21 now, therefore,

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23 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-fifth
24 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2009,
25 that the Board of Education is requested to modify public high
26 school graduation requirements by requiring fifty hours of
27 community service from all students as part of the Department of
28 Education's Civic Responsibility requirement; and

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30 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education is
31 requested to report its findings and recommendations to the
32 Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of
33 the Regular Session of 2010; and

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35 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
36 Resolution be transmitted to the Chairperson of the Board of
37 Education, Superintendent of Education, and Executive Director
38 of the Office of Community Services.

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41 OFFERED BY: Norman Sakemf

