

SB2586

Measure Title: RELATING TO EDUCATION.

Report Title: Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act; Education; Air Conditioning; Teachers; Testing; Evaluations; Supplies; Salaries; Class Size; General Excise Tax; Student Loan Subsidy Program; Special Fund; Appropriations (\$)

Description: Requires the department of education to provide public school students with a whole child education curriculum, air conditioning in certain classrooms, and decrease class size. Requires sufficient allocation of special education teachers and provides special education teachers with additional preparation time and funding. Establishes the student loan subsidy program and special fund. Expands vocational, technical, and career pathway programs. Amends weighted student formula factors to be considered by the committee on weights. Limits participation in standardized tests, prohibits the use of standardized test scores for evaluation purposes, authorizes standardized testing exemptions, and requires the board of education to provide notice of the right to opt-out of standardized testing. Requires all eligible children to attend preschool by the 2020-2021 school year. Amends evaluation program for teachers and educational officers. Increases the general excise tax. Makes appropriations.

Companion:

Package: None

Current Referral: EDU, WAM

Introducer(s): KIDANI



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

Date: 02/10/2016

Time: 01:15 PM

Location: 229

Committee: Senate Education

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Kathryn S. Matayoshi, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: SB 2586 RELATING TO EDUCATION.

Purpose of Bill: Requires the department of education to provide public school students with a whole child education curriculum, air conditioning in certain classrooms, and decrease class size. Requires sufficient allocation of special education teachers and provides special education teachers with additional preparation time and funding. Establishes the student loan subsidy program and special fund. Expands vocational, technical, and career pathway programs. Amends weighted student formula factors to be considered by the committee on weights. Limits participation in standardized tests, prohibits the use of standardized test scores for evaluation purposes, authorizes standardized testing exemptions, and requires the board of education to provide notice of the right to opt-out of standardized testing. Requires all eligible children to attend preschool by the 2020-2021 school year. Amends evaluation program for teachers and educational officers. Increases the general excise tax. Makes appropriations.

Department's Position:

The Department of Education offers COMMENTS on S.B. No. 2586, S.B. No. 2587, S.B. No. 2588, S.B. No. 2589, S.B. No. 2590, S.B. No. 2591, S.B. No. 2592, S.B. No. 2593, S.B. No. 2594, S.B. No. 2595, S.B. No. 2596, S.B. No. 2597, S.B. No. 2598, and S.B. No. 2599.

Overall Comments

The Department of Education's (Department) vision is that our students are educated, healthy, and joyful lifelong learners who contribute positively to our community and global society. To achieve this goal, our schools and educators need the proper tools and resources.

We support initiatives aimed at improving working conditions for teachers and educational opportunities for students. In 2004, the Legislature established the "Reinventing Education Act," allowing schools the autonomy and responsibility to allocate school-based budgets to support school-identified programs and priorities, whether it be hiring more staff or purchasing supplies and materials. And, it empowered schools to make the best decisions to fit the needs of its students and communities.

Over the last decade school funding levels have not kept up with our education costs. Nevertheless, our public schools have made significant strides that have not gone unnoticed by the U.S. Department of Education and other national organizations. Attendance has improved, students are progressing and achieving more, and more students are going to college. This is a testament to the dedication of our educators and students, as well as other community leaders and partners.

The measures before you address many important aspects of education – curriculum, assessments, staffing, facilities, class size, funding, etc. However, respectfully, the Department is concerned that the crafted language, such as providing specific types of teachers for schools or a one-size-fits-all approach to instructional time or class size, detracts from school-level decision making and also circumvents the appropriate participants and venues for these conversations. Such a proposal would hinder the progress made by school leadership teams or School Community Councils, the collective bargaining process, the Board of Education which sets the policy direction for the Department, and principals and teachers in collaboration with Department leadership.

We welcome continued support from HSTA and the Legislature for additional resources for public education as well as the Department's budget priorities, as set out in the Executive Budget request. Adequate funding for our students helps to ensure a quality education that they deserve, and need, to prepare to be contributing members in our community and global society. Teachers have the most impact in ensuring a quality education. It's important that they have the support, the right tools, and the best facilities to thrive in their profession.

We look forward to working with the Committee and other stakeholders to address the issues raised in these measures.

Specific comments to the parts of the bill are itemized below.

Part II. WHOLE CHILD EDUCATION (S.B. No. 2587)

The Department recognizes the importance of promoting creative thinking, self-directed learning, and cultural understanding, as well as the impact it has upon children's future outcomes and the state's economic growth.

Since 1999, the Department has provided "whole child education" through its K-12 standards-based system which includes the General Learner Outcomes (GLOs). GLOs are the overarching goals and content standards in nine areas including fine arts, social studies, Hawaiian studies, world languages, and physical education. Complex areas and schools have the flexibility to design class offerings that are best suited to their

community.

Additional funding would support increased opportunities and more diverse offerings for students.

Given that a Board of Education policy for whole child education is already in place, the Department respectfully finds S.B. No. 2587 to be unnecessary.

Part III. SPECIAL EDUCATION (S.B. No. 2588)

The Department appreciates the intent of S.B. No. 2588 to provide each teacher with \$1,690 of discretionary funds for instructional materials and equipment and to add additional preparation time for special education (SPED) teachers. This additional preparation time, during which teachers would "not be required to interact with students", would be to complete individualized education programs (IEPs), which are required for each SPED student.

Teachers' preparation time is subject to collective bargaining. Article VI of the current HSTA contract and Department regulations include provisions for preparation periods and that address providing SPED teachers with additional non-student time to work on IEPs and other related SPED duties.

If this measure is adopted, additional funds would be required to either pay SPED teachers for the additional 40 plus hours of additional preparation time, or alternatively, schools would need to establish and hire additional SPED teachers or substitute teachers to cover the instructional time for SPED teachers during the extra preparation period. Because Hawaii's SPED teaching positions are "hard-to-fill," as they are nationwide, creating more positions in order to hire more SPED teachers will not, in the near term, be a solution.

The Department is not opposed to the Legislature appropriating funding for \$1,690 for every SPED teacher to purchase additional instructional materials and equipment, provided that it does not replace or adversely impact priorities as indicated in budget approved by the Board of Education (Board).

Given that teacher preparation time is included in the collective bargaining agreement, the Department respectfully does not support S.B. No. 2588.

Part IV. VOCATIONAL EDUCATION (S.B. No. 2589)

The Department supports the intent of S.B. No. 2589 to expand vocational, technical, and career pathways programs and welcomes additional funding to support career and technical programs, provided that it does not replace or adversely impact priorities as indicated in budget approved by the Board.

Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs (formally known as Vocational and Technical Education) are currently offered in 46 public high schools. In school year 2014-2015, 29,356 students were registered in at least one CTE course and 4,453 seniors had completed a CTE program of study. Also, the Department awards Honors

Recognition Certificates for graduates earning Career and Technical Education Honors or Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Honors.

CTE programs are organized under six Career Pathways: Arts and Communication, Business, Health Services, Industrial and Engineering Technology, Natural Resources, and Public and Human Services. The Department currently offers 41 programs of study within the six career pathways framework. Current Board Policy No. 2103 defines Career and Technical Education.

The Department is committed to improving CTE opportunities for students throughout the state. The Department respectfully finds the provisions of S.B. No. 2589 to be unnecessary, as the intent of this bill is currently being implemented.

Part V. FACILITIES (S.B. No. 2590)

The Department welcomes additional funding for heat abatement and energy efficiency measures. The Department's Ka Hei program is a comprehensive energy and sustainability program designed to provide comfortable learning environments for our students and teachers. One of the key objectives of the program is to reduce costs and energy consumption at all 256 public schools. The Department has made significant progress in working toward the goals of Ka Hei and appreciates the support of the Legislature to further these efforts.

In addition, the Governor announced his plan to air condition 1,000 classrooms by the end of 2016, and is making available GEMS financing. We appreciate his initiative and are moving rapidly to execute his proposal.

Part IV. WEIGHTED STUDENT FORMULA (S.B. No. 2591)

The Department offers the following comments:

This bill states: "Principals, in consultation with teachers and school community councils, shall expend moneys provided to the principals' school." Section 302A-1124, HRS, currently defines the role of the school community council and mandates a composition that includes teachers.

The new language related to a "superintendent's reserve" states both that the reserve is "to address needs at unique and remote schools," and that "the committee on weights shall make recommendations...for how the reserve should be used." Stating that the reserve is for "unique and remote schools" would be unnecessary if the intent is to allow the committee on weights to determine the criteria for the reserve's use.

The Weighted Student Formula (WSF) reserve was established in school year 2012-2013 based on a committee on weights recommendation that was approved by the Board. A portion of WSF funds are set aside in this reserve to provide supplemental funds to schools that demonstrate a need as combination school (e.g., K-8, 7-12), geographically isolated, has very low enrollment, or is experiencing an extraordinary circumstance. The distribution of these funds is made based on committee on weights-recommended guidelines.

Part VII. STANDARDIZED TESTING (S.B. No. 2592)

Statewide standardized tests provide one valuable source of information on student learning for students, parents, teachers, and educational administrators, but also informs educators and policy-makers about the progress of the education system. Standardized testing is an efficient method for reliably and objectively measuring the academic performance of the over 90,000 students in tested grades and 275 public schools (Department and charter) across the state. Standardized test scores provide one consistent measure, although incomplete, of school and student performance. Thus, all of the Department's accountability systems – for schools, educators, and students - use multiple measures.

Many provisions in this bill related to testing conflict with federal requirements which are a condition of receiving federal educational support including Title I funds. Despite the elimination of No Child Left Behind, its successor, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), still requires states to administer a statewide student test and use those test scores to "meaningfully differentiate" schools and identify the lowest-performing. Federal requirements for minimum participation of 95% of students continue under ESSA. And students who have individual needs may receive accommodations on a test based on their IEP, which is informed by their teachers' assessment of their needs. The Department also administers an alternative assessment for students with significant cognitive disabilities and an exemption for the English Language Arts state assessment for students with limited English proficiency who are in their first year in a U.S. school.

The Department understands that instructional time is incredibly valuable for teaching and learning. The Department is continuously reviewing the tests that are required for all students to ensure that they are necessary and valuable. Over the last two years, we have reduced the number of tests that are required. Currently, the number of standardized tests required by the state is at the federal minimum with the exception of grade 11 which is being reviewed.

The Department remains cognizant to minimize the burden on students while balancing the need to support students through measuring achievement and complying with federal requirements. As such, the Department respectfully suggests that S.B. No. 2592 is unnecessary.

Part VIII. CLASSROOM SUPPLIES (S.B. No. 2593)

The Department supports providing teachers with the resources necessary to help our students thrive in the classroom. The Department estimates the fiscal impact to be approximately \$11,900,000 per year using the calculation of \$1,000 per Full Time Equivalent (FTE) positions at schools which total approximately the Department's workforce of 11,100 classroom teachers, 200 libraries, and 600 counselors.

Additionally, there may be some administrative issues that need to be addressed before

implementing such a program through a debit card system, as described in the bill. These administrative considerations include processing, procurement, reconciliation, and workload issues at the school and vendor payment levels.

Part IX. TEACHER RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION (S.B. No. 2594)

The Department supports the intent of S.B. No. 2594. Loan subsidies can encourage prospective teachers to contemplate careers in special education, vocational education, technical education, and career pathways.

However, the Department believes the bill may not be necessary. Federal loan forgiveness is already available for teachers in areas the Department has designated as “teacher shortage,” including special education, technical, and vocational education.

Furthermore, the program proposed for teacher recruitment and retention is complex and would be, as a result, administratively burdensome given the Department’s current systems and staffing. The Department anticipates the establishment and maintenance of the program would require substantial resources to fund the incentives and administer the program.

Part X. EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION (S.B. No. 2595)

The Department supports efforts to provide opportunities for early childhood education for all of Hawaii’s keiki as it is critical that they enter kindergarten ready to learn. Children deserve the best possible foundation upon which to build success and early childhood education is integral to this foundation. Children are most successful when they enter the public school system prepared with the socio-emotional and pre-academic skills that make them kindergarten-ready.

Part XI. EVALUATIONS (S.B. No. 2596)

The Department offers the following comments on S.B. 2596:

The Department recommends maintaining the existing 302A-638, HRS, which was established in 1996 and preceded the current evaluation systems which were negotiated between the State and its unions. The proposed changes should be bargained, as HSTA has previously testified in response to prior year’s efforts to legislate aspects of teachers’ evaluations.

The Department supports the intent of the portion of paragraph (a), which requires the Department to consult with the unions in establishing an evaluation program for teachers and educational officers (EOs), but notes that proposed language is redundant with existing statute and practice. A consultation process is already codified in section 89-9(c), HRS, and in the past, the Department has consulted, and at times negotiated, with Hawaii State Teachers Association (HSTA) and Hawaii Government Employees Association (HGEA) regarding evaluation programs for teachers and EOs.

Many provisions of this measure are currently governed by agreements with HSTA and HGEA.

Part XII. CLASS SIZE (S.B. No. 2597)

The Department supports the intent of S.B. No. 2597 but respectfully opposes the measure for the reasons identified below.

Class size is a subject of collective bargaining and is addressed in the Department's contract with HSTA. Article VI, Teaching Conditions and Hours, Section A. 6., of the current contract states that the employer agrees to maintain the "average statewide class size ratio of 26.15 to 1."

Moreover, class size is product of school-level decisions by the principal and School Community Council in budgeting of school funds. Thus, schools are empowered to select its number of teachers based on its allocation of its student population-based budget toward personnel. Rather than class size limitations determined by the Legislature, class size is better addressed by providing additional funding for the Weighted Student Formula, which would allow schools to allocate additional resources towards personnel and thus reduce class size.

The current HSTA contract also provides a process to follow should there be issues in connection with the class size of individual classrooms. For example, a class size committee is required, with the authority to hear and investigate class size complaints and make recommendations to the Superintendent for change. If there is no majority vote on a decision of the committee, the HSTA may have the matter submitted to arbitration.

Finally, any change to the class size requirements, including a change from average statewide ratio to individual classroom maximum, would have significant cost implications due to the need for more teachers and additional facilities to house additional classrooms. The Department believes there are other, often less costly, means to provide students with quality education and to address working conditions for teachers.

Part XIII. FUNDING (S.B. No. 2599)

The Department has no position on this measure and defers to the Administration with regard to the generation of revenues to fund public programs.

Part XIV. MISCELLANEOUS (S.B. No. 2598)

The Department supports the intent of S.B. No. 2598. The additional funds would provide the Department with additional teaching positions to support the programs and needs of our schools and students. However, this bill is prescribes the subject area of

teachers to be funded, and the Department supports schools' using their autonomy to determine the types of positions necessary for their school program and community.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



CATHERINE PAYNE
CHAIRPERSON

STATE OF HAWAII
STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION
('AHA KULA HO'ĀMANA)

<http://CharterCommission.Hawaii.Gov>
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Tel: (808) 586-3775 Fax: (808) 586-3776

FOR: SB 2586 Relating to Education
DATE: Wednesday, February 10, 2016
TIME: 1:15 PM
COMMITTEE(S): Senate Committee on Education
ROOM: Conference Room 229
FROM: Tom Hutton, Executive Director
State Public Charter School Commission

Testimony providing comments on SB 2586

Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Harimoto, and members of the Committee:

The State Public Charter Commission appreciates the opportunity to provide these comments on Senate Bill 2586, "Relating to Education," an omnibus bill proposing a variety of appropriations and statutory changes regarding public education in Hawaii. We have comments on certain provisions only:

- Section 3: We believe that requirements for whole child education are intended to apply only to Department of Education (DOE) schools, as dictating how a public charter school allocates instructional time would be contrary to chartering principles. We therefore would request that references to "public" schools be changes in this section to specify "department" schools.
- Section 8: If an appropriation is made for instructional materials and equipment for teachers certified and licensed to teach in a vocational, technical, or career pathway program, we request that the amount appropriated factor in any charter school teachers that would qualify.
- Section 10-14: The appropriation for air conditioning states that it is for "all public elementary school classrooms," which would include public charter elementary schools, start-up schools as well as conversion schools. This could be a step toward addressing

the longstanding problem of inadequate state support or charter school facilities, although the need at many start-up charter schools are more basic than air conditioning.

- Section 15: We are grateful for the proposed appropriation specifically for charter school facilities needs. We do note that under state charter school law, the Legislature is to consider a general fund appropriation and general obligation bond authority to the Commission for this purpose starting this Session. We would urge that the restriction on the use of such funds to state-owned property be eliminated.
- Section 25-26: We request that this provision be amended to state specifically that students who will become public school teachers serving in charter schools also qualify for the program. This presumably would be the case even without the clarifying language, but the reminder would be helpful.
- Section 38: We appreciate the specific exclusion of charter schools from this provision.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.



STATE OF HAWAII
Executive Office on Early Learning
1390 Miller Street, Room 303
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

February 9, 2016

TO: Michelle Kidani, Chair
Senate Committee on Education

FROM: Lauren Moriguchi, Director

SUBJECT: SB 2586 – RELATING TO EDUCATION
Hearing Date: Wednesday, February 10, 2016
Time: 1:15 p.m.
Location: Conference Room 229

Purpose of Bill: Requires the department of education to provide public school students with a whole child education curriculum, air conditioning in certain classrooms, and decrease in class size. Requires sufficient allocation of special education teachers and provides special education teachers with additional preparation time and funding. Establishes the student loan subsidy program and special fund. Expands vocational, technical, and career pathway programs. Amends weighted student formula factors to be considered by the committee on weights. Limits participation in standardized tests, prohibits the use of standardized test scores for evaluation purposes, authorizes standardized testing exemptions, and requires the board of education to provide notice of the right to opt-out of standardized testing. Requires all eligible children to attend preschool by the 2020-2021 school year. Amends evaluation program for teachers and educational officers. Increases the general excise tax. Makes appropriations.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON EARLY LEARNING'S POSITION: The Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) acknowledges the intent of SB 2586 to further invest in public education and expand access to high quality early learning experiences to students in the year prior to kindergarten eligibility. However, we are concerned that an aggressive expansion of the public Pre-Kindergarten Program will come at the expense of quality, without first building a solid foundation and infrastructure. EOEL respectfully offers comments for consideration.

There are currently 17,500 four year old students in the state of Hawai'i. In order to make the program available to all four year old children in the year prior to kindergarten eligibility, EOEL would be required to open 875 Pre-Kindergarten classrooms over a five year period which would cost approximately \$131 million, excluding the cost of building facilities. This would require a commitment of establishing 175 preschool classrooms, as well as hiring 175 preschool teacher and educational assistant positions per school year.

In Hawai'i we currently have three institutions of higher education who offer teacher licensing and preparation programs in the area of Early Childhood Education (ECE). These programs are

AN AFFIRMATIVE ACTION AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

offered through University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, University of Hawaii West O'ahu, and Chaminade University. Between 2010 – 2014, these three programs combined, have produced an average of 30 teachers (on island) with bachelors degrees in the area of ECE per year. These graduates supply the workforce for both public and private programs in grades pre-k through 3, and are currently unable to meet the need for highly qualified ECE providers across the state.

Research and evidence from established programs continually prove that investing in high quality early learning programs, is an investment in society that pays high dividends. The quality and the availability of pre-school teachers is a key factor to achieving success. While the Department of Education (DOE) requires that all teachers have a bachelor's degree, 80% of the educators currently teaching in the EOEL Pre-Kindergarten Program and 90% of special educators of preschool students in the DOE do not have ECE credentials.

In the EOEL Pre-Kindergarten Program, 6 Early Learning Resource Teachers (RT) provide support to each of the schools in the form of professional development opportunities, professional learning communities, coaching, and mentoring. Teachers who are less experienced in ECE, have the opportunity to receive in-person support on a weekly basis. Although 80% of teachers in the program do not have ECE credentials, coaching and mentoring support provided through the Early Learning RTs resulted in 96.7% of students showing readiness for kindergarten at the end of the program. Expanding the program to 875 classrooms would require additional Early Learning (RT) positions.

Additionally, the DOE is currently conducting an assessment of its facilities. The result of this assessment will provide information on the number of existing classrooms which can be utilized for pre-school aged children. Until this information is available for consideration, it would be premature to mandate that the program be available to all children in the year before they attend kindergarten.

Prior to investing in an aggressive expansion of the Pre-Kindergarten Program, EOEL respectfully suggests first considering the results of the DOE's facilities assessment as well as an investment in developing the workforce of ECE providers throughout the state in order to commit to the implementation of high quality early learning programs.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



WESLEY K. MACHIDA
DIRECTOR

RODERICK K. BECKER
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM
HAWAII EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH BENEFITS TRUST FUND
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

**STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE**

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ADMINISTRATIVE AND RESEARCH OFFICE
BUDGET, PROGRAM PLANNING AND
MANAGEMENT DIVISION
FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION DIVISION
OFFICE OF FEDERAL AWARDS MANAGEMENT (OFAM)

**TESTIMONY BY WESLEY K. MACHIDA
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
ON
SENATE BILL NO. 2586**

February 10, 2016
1:15 p.m.

RELATING TO EDUCATION

Senate Bill No. 2586 is an omnibus education bill that proposes to establish the "Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act" which makes changes to Chapter 302A, HRS, Education, by establishing statutory program requirements and providing various specified and unspecified appropriations for the Department of Education (DOE) for materials and equipment for the Special Education and Vocational Education student population, air conditioning for schools, facility funding for Charter Schools, classroom supplies via a debit card system, annual step increases for teachers, student loan subsidy program, early learning, and teachers for the "Whole Child Education" component. The funding mechanism for these items comes from the General Excise Tax (GET) which is proposed to increase from 4% to 5%, which all taxpayers and business pay on goods and services in the State of Hawaii.

The Department of Budget and Finance has serious concerns with this bill as currently drafted and provides the following comments. While we support the general intent of improving Hawaii's educational system, we need to carefully assess the provisions of the bill with respect to revenues (the current resources that exist and the

resources proposed in the bill) and expenditures necessary to implement the bill's required provisions in the upcoming fiscal year and beyond.

Concerns include, but are not limited to:

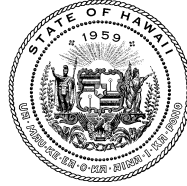
- Unknown costs for the proposed annual step increase for qualified teachers for FY 17 and beyond.
- Unknown costs related to “fringe benefits” costs for new positions and salary increases for FY 17 and beyond.
- Unknown costs related to the proposed reduction in class sizes which will result in the need for more teachers.
- Whether there is sufficient facility capacity to accommodate proposed changes associated with this bill.
- Unknown costs for next year and out years given the proposed inflation adjustment relating to the Consumer Price Index.
- Whether there are sufficient instructional hours in the current school year to comply with the proposed measures.
- Unknown costs for establishing a debit card system for the purchase of classroom and curriculum supplies.
- Unknown costs or facility capacity to meet the 2020-2021 school year requirement that the Early Learning Public Pre-Kindergarten Program be available to all children in the year prior to kindergarten eligibility.

Consequently, as not all of the costs for the aforementioned items are known, we are unclear if the proposed 25% increase in the GET base from 4% to 5% will cover all of the total costs required for this measure in the near term and future. Further, there is a question whether the proposed measure circumvents the collective bargaining

process. Pursuant to Attorney General Opinion 74-6 (related to §89-10, HRS), the Legislature has the power to pass laws increasing salaries of one unit of State employees; however, the proposed bill appears to be inconsistent with the collective bargaining law.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR

SHANTSUTSUI
LT. GOVERNOR



STATE OF HAWAII
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MARIA E. ZIELINSKI
DIRECTOR OF TAXATION

JOSEPH K. KIM
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

To: The Honorable Michelle N. Kidani, Chair
and Members of the Senate Committee on Education

Date: February 10, 2016

Time: 1:15 P.M.

Place: Conference Room 229, State Capitol

From: Maria E. Zielinski, Director
Department of Taxation

Re: S.B. 2586, Relating to Education.

The Department of Taxation (Department) appreciates the intent of S.B. 2586, and provides the following comments relating to the general excise tax (GET) provision for your consideration.

Sections 40, 41, 42, and 43 of S.B. 2586 amends sections 237-13, 237-15, 237-16.5, and 237-18, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), by increasing the general excise tax on the business of selling tangible personal property; contracting; operating a theater, amusements, radio broadcasting, etc; performing services for another; all other business activities; technicians supplying dentists or physicians with dentures, orthodontic devices, braces, etc.; leasing of real property by a lessor to a lessee; and tourism related services; from 4% to 5% of the gross income or proceeds.

Section 44 of S.B. 2586 amends sections 237-31, HRS, by creating a new subsection (c), beginning on January 1, 2017, directing the additional revenues generated and collected from the 1% increase in the GET rates imposed by Sections 40 to 43 of S.B. 2586 to be deposited into a special account in the general fund for operations, including salaries and maintenance costs, of the Department of Education under Chapter 302A, HRS.

First, the Department notes that an amendment to section 237-16.5(f), HRS, seems to have unintentionally been omitted. If this is the case, the Department suggests adding the following provision to Section 42 of this measure:

"(f) This section shall not cause the tax upon a lessor, with respect to any item of the lessor's gross

proceeds or gross income, to exceed [~~four~~] five per cent."

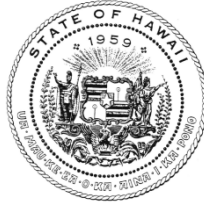
Second, the Department notes that this measure does not increase the corresponding use tax rates. The use tax, codified at chapter 238, HRS, is a tax meant to complement the GET levied on gross income derived from business activity in Hawaii, and serves to level the playing field for business activity within and without the State. Raising the GET rates without raising the corresponding use tax rates will destroy this balance. The Department suggests that the Committee adopt the appropriate amendments to chapter 238 to retain parity of the GET and use tax rates.

Third, the Department notes that the allocation provision in subsection (c) cannot be administered as written as there is no way to know whether an increase in collections is based entirely on the increase in rate. For example, an increase in collections may also be attributable to the economy, so it cannot be said with certainty that all increases in collections are due to the increase in the tax rate. The Department suggests clarification of this provision.

Finally, this measure applies to taxable years beginning after December 31, 2016. The Department believes that it is able to implement an increase in the GET rate as proposed in this measure by this effective date.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



SARAH ALLEN
ADMINISTRATOR

PAULA A. YOUNGLING
ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR

**STATE OF HAWAII
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**TESTIMONY
OF
SARAH ALLEN, ADMINISTRATOR
STATE PROCUREMENT OFFICE**

**TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE
ON
EDUCATION**
February 10, 2016, 1:15 p.m.

**SB 2586
RELATING TO EDUCATION**

Chair Kidani, Vice-Chair Harimoto, and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on SB 2586. The State Procurement Office (SPO) supports the intent of the bill in Part VIII, Section 21, and offers an alternative to a debit card system. Additionally, the SPO opposes the language, in Part VIII, Section 22, §302A-, page 20 lines 7 to 8, exempting school supplies from chapter 103D.

The SPO administers the State's pCard program which includes the traditional credit card and a declining balance purchasing card (DBpC). As a participating jurisdiction, the DBpC feature is available to the Department of Education to implement at any time.

The declining balance pCard (DBpC) is comparable to a gift card rather than a traditional credit card. The DBpC is set to a specific dollar amount for each cardholder (may vary for each cardholder) and used until the value is depleted. Expiration dates may be assigned to the card allowing the issuance for a specific period (monthly, quarterly, or annually). The DBpC utilizes authorized controls for credit and merchant categories and may be used with any approved vendor accepting MasterCard.

The DBpC does not require prepayment associated with typical 'gift cards' programs, or require a checking/savings account associated with a debit card. With a DBpC, the DOE will be billed monthly for purchases, thereby taking advantage of the float associated with the State's pCard program. The transaction amount is withdrawn immediately, but payment to the pCard provider is made based on when the cycle ends, this averages 50 days from the time the purchase is made to when the payment is due to the bank.

Currently, jurisdictions enjoy quarterly rebates based on pro-rated spend volume through the State's pCard Program. All expenditures on a declining balance pCard would also be included in the State's total spend volume and qualify for quarterly rebates, thus giving more back to the State.

The DBpC is personalized with teacher's name, offering enhanced accountability and audit tracking capabilities. The program allows the DOE to allocate budgeted funds without fear of overspending due to revolving or refreshing credit lines. Teachers will have 24-hour internet access to verify transactions and check balances.

The declining balance card program offers the Department of Education more flexibility, while maintaining control and accountability with audit capabilities.

Recommendations:

1. The State Procurement Office recommends deleting all reference to a debit card, or debit card system and replace with a Declining Balance pCard as follows:
 - Part VIII, Section 21, page 19, lines 17 to 18, "...to use ~~debit card system~~ the Declining Balance Card Program, under the existing pCard contract for purchasing school and classroom supplies."
 - Part III, Section 22, Page 20, lines 1 to 3, "Purchase of classroom and curriculum supplies: ~~debit card system~~. Declining balance pCard. (a) The department shall establish and manage at each individual public school a ~~debit card system~~ DBpC program for the purpose of purchasing classroom and curriculum supplies."
2. The State Procurement Office opposes the language in Part VIII, Section 22, §302A-, page 20, lines 7-8, exempting debit card purchases from chapter 103D. SPO recommends the following language:

"...provided that ~~debit card~~ DBpC purchases shall be ~~exempt from~~ in accordance with chapter 103D."

Thank you.



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Written Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Education
February 10, 2016 at 1:15 pm
by
Robert Bley-Vroman, Chancellor
and
Donald B. Young
Dean and Professor
College of Education
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

SB 2586 – RELATING TO EDUCATION

Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Harimoto, and members of the Senate Committee on Education, thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 2586.

The College of Education at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UH) supports the intent of SB 2586 and the comprehensive nature of the reforms proposed. We respectfully suggest preserving this list by keeping this omnibus bill alive throughout the session to provide all stakeholders the opportunity to better understand, analyze and suggest appropriate amendments to each section.

Specific section comments on PART II. (Also SB 2587, and Part XIV and SB 2598)
UH strongly supports whole student education, including that of the arts, vocational education, physical education, and other elements of importance but not yet mandated by the Board of Education. Many schools have, within their budgets and within the instructional and learning day schedules, incorporated many of these elements. The University Laboratory School, a charter school operated in collaboration with the College for example, has for many decades provided a comprehensive arts program and a requirement that all students participate in a performance music ensemble. We note also that the Hawai'i Educational Policy Center (HEPC) has prepared a short brief on the value of arts education that has been provided to you. Part XIV and SB 2598 complements this policy with funds to hire more teachers in these areas. However, we recognize there may be reluctance for the Legislature to mandate a specific number of hours of instruction.

Specific section comments on Part III. (See SB 2588)
We support Part III. UH recognizes the significant challenges in providing Free and Appropriate Education for Special Education students, as well as the difficulty in recruiting future SPED teachers.

Specific section comments on Part IV. (See SB 2589)
UH supports funding for vocational educational and technical training. This is particularly important given Hawai'i's interest in promoting and supporting STEM education. To date, so much of STEM instruction has been channeled into robotics and other activities after school, which has a limited capacity to reach a larger number of students.

Specific section comments on Part V. (See SB 2590)
UH supports efforts to create a physical environment more conducive to student attention and

learning. What has been missing is a standard for heat abatement similar to OSHA standards for employees. We suggest an effort that includes health professionals, as well as consideration of proper hydration for students during particular hotter days. Dehydration can render both adults and students unable to concentrate.

Specific section comments on Part VI. (SB 2591)

UH sees value in involving school community councils (SCC) in more meaningful decisions. The SCCs represent stakeholders not part of the formal HDOE hierarchy that better ensure community engagement whereby all interested parties and perspectives contribute to good decision making. UH notes that the Board of Education has created a Permitted Interaction Group to evaluate the current status of SCCs throughout the system.

Specific section comments on Part VII. (SB 2592)

We agree with the perspective that there has been too great an emphasis on high stakes testing at the expense of more meaningful learning opportunities. Should there be a process established to further examine this issue, UH notes that the Curriculum Research and Development Group (CRDG) along with faculty in other units have expertise in developing effective assessments. CRDG could, with appropriate resources, assist in developing more meaningful assessments.

Specific section comments on Part VIII. (SB 2598)

UH agrees that teachers should not be pressured to use personal funds to ensure that students have adequate supplies.

Specific section comments on Part IX. (SB 2594)

UH has considerable experience with student loans and scholarships specific to supporting teacher preparation. Various efforts at providing such incentives have been implemented in the past with funding from the Legislature, for example, in support of Hawai'i Association for Future Teachers (HAFT), an effort that enjoyed some success, but no longer receives funding. A partnership with the Hawai'i Department of Education providing funding support to prepare more special education teachers has been successful in recruiting and preparing individuals for the persistent hard-to-fill field. We note that student loan incentives have had limited success. Of considerable concern is the added expense and administration necessary to track recipients and when necessary recapture funds due to recipient not meeting their obligations regarding number of years of service.

Specific section comments on Part X. (SB 2595)

UH has always been a strong supporter of early education. We have long anticipated the State commitment to improving early learning opportunities for our children and within the College we have shifted internal resources to be ready to meet the increase in workforce demands. We have increased the number of our tenure track faculty with expertise in early childhood education, building capacity to better prepare teachers who are ready to provide age-appropriate early childhood education. We have created new programs to prepare early learning teachers and leaders. Anything that moves this agenda forward would be a positive move.

Specific section comments on Part XI. (SB 2596)

We wish to point out that the College of Education has specific processes for evaluating the preparation of teacher candidates. At present we are working to better align assessments of

teachers in preparation with how graduates will be assessed on the job. The UH through the Teacher Education Coordinating Committee (TECC) is in frequent communication with the Department of Education on this issue.

Specific section comments on Part XII. (SB 2597)

UH notes that the sizes of individual schools can also be problematic. A study several years ago by the Hawai'i Educational Policy Center found that the average size of Hawai'i's schools at all levels was often twice the size of comparable mainland schools. For some students and communities, this can create barriers to meaningful engagement with the learning community.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



HAWAI'I EDUCATIONAL POLICY CENTER LEGISLATIVE GUIDE

HSTA Omnibus Bill Outlined

http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/session2016/bills/HB2733_.HTM

Prepared by HEPC. Outline is only a guide to be used with references to the bill.
There are Fourteen Parts, and Fifty-seven sections to the bill. Tax related sections are very detailed and indexed according to income and year. Funding sections do not include CIP for classrooms that may need to be built to meet the standards of lower class sizes or limits.

PARTS & Sections	TOPIC	HRS CHANGE?	FUNDING?	SECTION TYPE OR POLICY ISSUE
PART I	WHOLE CHILD ED			SY 2017-18
1				Findings and Purpose
2a	Minimum % of student hrs	New § 302A	NO	Sets % of student ours for whole child
2b	Definitions			“student hours” & “whole child education”
PART II	SPED			
3				Findings and Purpose: Teacher support; \$1,690 / yr inst. materials
4	Teacher IED Time	New § 302A	yes	Teacher IED, planning time
5	SPED WSF Working Group	No	No	Est. group, agenda, members
6	Funding	No	\$3.7 m	DOE \$
PART III	VOCATIONAL & TECH ED			
7	All students. Dual credit. \$ for teachers' equipment			Findings and Purpose; SY 20-21
8a	Available to all	New § 302A		Courses, credits, pathways
8b	Up to 50% of grad credits			
8c	9 th grade into to voc ed			
8d	Grade 12 Internship			
8e	District pathway programs for all students with transportation			
8f	Voc ed can include core courses			
8g	Highly qualified teachers			
8h	\$ for materials		\$\$	Up to \$1,500 annually
9	Appropriation for materials		Yes \$	SY 16-17
PART IV	FACILITIES & AIR CON			
10				energy efficient within 5 years; charter facility fund; tax credit for charter donations.
11a	Classroom climate & cool	New § 302A		Require Air Con in all DOE

HAWAI'I EDUCATIONAL POLICY CENTER

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<http://manoa.Hawaii'i.edu/hepc/>

				schools
11b	Off grid air con for 10 schools			SY 2016-17 Tech mixes
11c	Master Plan for all schools			SY 17-18
11d	Air con for 50% deadline			SY 19-20
11e	Air con for 100% deadline			SY 20-22
12	Demonstration projects		YES	16-17
13			GO Bonds	Dir of Fin
14	Extends lapsing deadline		YES	Annual CIP Authorized
15	Charter School Credits	New § 235		Individual: 15a-h details
16	Charter Facility Dev Fund	New §302D		16-C details
17	\$ for Charter Dev fund		Up to \$10 m	
18	Appropriates dev funds		\$10 m	
PART V	STAFFING EQUITY			Purpose
19a	WSF & SCCS	302A-1303.6		COW to consult with teachers & SCC
19b	Inflation adjusted increases	same		
19c	\$1 per school minimum			
19d	Minimum staff required at each DOE school			Librarian, tech coordination, VP, counselor, SPED transition coord.
PART VI	TEACHER RECRUITMENT & RETENTION			
21				Findings and Purpose
22	T PD loan subsidies	New 302A		SPED & Voc ed
	Est. Special fund			
23	Salary Schedule steps	302A-624		Removes some requirements
24	Automatic step increases	30A-626		
25	Funds for student loan fund		\$5 mil	Deposit into fund
26			\$5 mil	Appropriates same amount
27	\$ to realign steps with yrs of service		\$73.5 mil	

PARTS & Sections	TOPIC	HRS CHANGE?	FUNDING?	SECTION TYPE OR POLICY ISSUE
PART VII	TESTS			
28				Findings and Purpose
29a	Limits student tests per year	New 302A		Students
29b	Bans use of T to assess school			School Ratings
29c	Bans use of T to categorize			School Categories

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29d	Bans use of T to eval teachers			Teachers
29e	Opt out for SPED and EL			Teachers can request for students
29f	Lets all parents opt out			
29g	Defines Testing Day			
PART VIII	EARLY EDUCATION			
30				Findings and Purpose
31	All eligibility 1 yr before K	302L-7		Starts 20-21
32	\$ for Office of Early Learning		\$125 mil	
PART IX	TEACHER EVAL SYSTEM			
33				Findings and Purpose
34	Defines student achievement	302A-101		= change in perform. Over 2+ yrs
35a	Must consult with Union	302A-638		Process to create criteria for eval
35b	Chronic Absents students			T not responsible for achievement
35c	May not use for salaries			Except if in CBA
PART X	Teacher Out of Pocket \$			Debit Cards, Tax credits
37a	Out of pocket tax credit	HRS 235		
37b	\$500 limit on tax credit			
37c	Can apply to tax liability			
37d	Limits use			
37e	Dir of Tax to Implement			Assigned responsibility
37f	Definitions			“expenses” & qualifying taxpayer
38a	DOE to est. debit card syst.			
38b	Can contract to implement			
38c	Exempts from 103D			Exempts from procurement code
39	\$ to DOE to Implement		Yes blank	

PARTS & Sections	TOPIC	HRS CHANGE?	FUNDING?	SECTION TYPE OR POLICY ISSUE
PART XI	CLASS SIZE LIMITS			HIDOE ONLY
40				Findings and Purpose
41a	Limits class sizes SY 20-21	New 302A		20 for elem. 26 for middle & high
41b	Limits total # of students			No more than 150 per teacher
41c	Exempts band, choir, etc.			

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SPED	SPED Class Sizes	New 302A		Drafting error, should be new section
SPED a	Elem 15, 2ndary inclusion 20, self-contained 6			
SPED b	Exemption for music, etc			
SPED c	Definitions			
	EL students			Should be separate section #
EL a	Elem. Limits of 15, 2ndy 20			
EL b	Definitions			Content-based.
42	BOE Can Amend			
PART XII	NEW TAX INCREASE & CREDITS TO OFFSET			
43	Income tax + for over \$300K			Findings and Purpose
	Excise tax 1% + for all			
	Tax credit for under \$60K			
	Food credit			
44	Details for income tax +	235-51		
45	Income tax credit for low income renters under \$60K	235-55.7		
46	Food excise tax credit			
47	Business tax			
48	Technicians tax	237-15		
49	Real property lease tax	237-16.5		
50	Tourist tax +	237-18		
51	Paying the taxes	237-31		
52	Upon approval			
53	New Teachers for fine arts, visual arts, drama, dance, music, Hawaiian and Polynesian studies, Hawaiian language, voc and tech and career pathway programs and mentors.		\$10 mill	
PART XIV	REPORTS			
54	Elements of Reports			
55	BOE Adopt Rules			
56	Brackets etc			
57	Upon Approval			



February 9, 2016

Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Chair
Senator Breene Harimoto, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Education

Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Chair
Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Education

Testimony in Opposition to SB 2356 Relating to Wheeling for Educational Institutions. (Authorizes state educational institutions to utilize wheeling to transmit renewable energy generated electricity to themselves at other locations, and requires the public utilities commission and electric utilities to adopt rules and tariffs consistent with the wheeling mandate.)

EDU/TRE Hearing: Tuesday, February 9, 2016, 3:00 p.m., in Conf. Rm. 229

The Land Use Research Foundation of Hawaii (LURF) is a private, non-profit research and trade association whose members include major Hawaii landowners, developers and a utility company. One of LURF's missions is to advocate for reasonable, rational and equitable land use planning, legislation and regulations that encourage well-planned economic growth and development, while safeguarding Hawaii's significant natural and cultural resources and public health and safety.

LURF and its members strongly support educational institutions such as the Department of Education (DOE) and the University of Hawaii (UH). LURF and its members helped draft and supported the DOE Impact Fee law, which requires all builders of new homes to pay their fair share of the costs of new or renovated DOE facilities; provide funding for numerous educational scholarships and projects, provide the use of lands, and also maintain numerous working partnerships with the University of Hawaii system and campuses on all islands.

While LURF believes that this bill as introduced with good intentions, and despite the fact that LURF and its members have proven to be strong supporters of the DOE and UH, it must regrettably **OPPOSE the current version of SB 2356**, and LURF respectfully recommends that the bill be **held in your Committees** until the key stakeholders can confirm the facts, work out the details, and determine whether this is a fair and prudent proposal for all parties – a win-win-win, or, if it is a win-lose proposition - then another alternative should be researched and agreed-to by the key stakeholders.

SB 2356. This bill authorizes state educational institutions to utilize wheeling to transmit renewable energy generated electricity to themselves at other locations, and requires the public utilities commission and electric utilities to adopt rules and tariffs consistent with the wheeling mandate. In English, this means that DOE and UH want lower electricity rates and to use 100% renewable energy or be “net-zero,” however, they don’t want to spend the money to build the electrical infrastructure to do so. So DOE and UH will hire a third-party power “seller” to help generate the electricity, “use” Hawaiian Electric’s infrastructure, and sell the power to DOE and UH!

Another egregious provision in this measure is DOE, UH and its the *third party “seller” do not need to pay fair compensation to Hawaiian Electric* - SB 2536 provides: “tariffs shall not result in making state educational institution wheeling cost prohibitive or infeasible.”

LURF’s Position. LURF opposes SB 2536, because it creates Winners (DOE, UH and its third-party “seller” and

SB 2536 will solely benefit one side – “the Winners:”

- **Only benefits DOE and UH**, (likely lower electricity costs)
- **Only benefits the third-party power “seller”** hired by DOE and UH (more profits).
- **No guarantee that payments to Hawaiian Electric (tariffs) will be fair, reasonable and cover its costs** (SB 2536 provides: “tariffs shall not result in making state educational institution wheeling cost prohibitive or infeasible.”)

Meanwhile, SB 2536 would have negative impacts on the other side – “The Losers:”

- **Increase costs of repair, maintenance and development costs of Hawaiian Electric Company** with increased costs (more usage, more wear and tear, maintenance and replacement of infrastructure, etc.)
- **No guarantee that Hawaiian Electric will be fairly reimbursed by DOE, UH or the third-party power “Seller”** (SB 2536 provides: “tariffs shall not result in making state educational institution wheeling cost prohibitive or infeasible.”)
- **Increase electricity rates of regular customers of Hawaiian Electric.**

For the reasons stated above, LURF **must strongly oppose SB 2536** and respectfully requests that this bill be **held in your Committees** until the key stakeholders can confirm the facts, work out the details, and determine whether this is a fair and prudent proposal for all parties, or, if not, then another alternative should be researched and agreed-to by the key stakeholders.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony regarding this matter.

February 10, 2016

The Honorable Michelle N. Kidani, Chair
Senate Committee on Education
State Capitol, Room 229
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

RE: S.B. 2586, Relating to Education

HEARING: Wednesday, February 10, 2016 at 1:15 p.m.

Aloha Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Harimoto, and Members of the Committee:

I am Myoung Oh, Government Affairs Director, here to testify on behalf of the Hawai'i Association of REALTORS® ("HAR"), the voice of real estate in Hawai'i, and its 8,800 members.

HAR strongly opposes Sections 39-42 of S.B. 2586 which increases the General Excise Tax ("GET") 25% from a rate of 4 to 5%.

HAR believes that, while education is of great value to the State, the GET increase in this measure will be especially burdensome for low to moderate-income families. Hawaii's excise tax is a regressive tax that weighs more heavily on the poor because lower-income residents are forced to contribute a larger share of their incomes to cover the tax.

The GET burden pyramid is hidden in the prices of goods and services. For example, if a person buys a loaf of bread on O'ahu for \$5.00, the store will typically add the excise tax of 4.712% and charges the person \$5.24, so the "visible tax" is 24 cents. In reality, however, the \$5.00 price has to cover the tax on goods and services as the bread moves through the production chain albeit at a lesser 0.5%. When it is all added up, the tax is a lot more than 24 cents.

Hawaii's general excise tax is unique and while it looks like a sales tax being imposed on every transaction, it is nothing like a retail sales tax found in some forty-four other states. This is because it is not a tax that is paid by the consumer, but one that is imposed on the business for the "privilege of doing business in the state."

Studies have shown that with the pyramiding effect of the GET, the effective tax rate is considerably higher. For example, an increase from 4% to 5% or 5.5% on O'ahu would be equivalent to at least 17.5% upwards to 26% retail sales tax depending on the pyramiding whereas the GET in Hawaii is applied to 160 of 168 goods and services, the most of any State in the nation.

HAR believes that Hawaii's families and businesses continuously struggle to keep up with the cost of living and doing business in Hawai'i and a GET increase will only add to this burden. An increase of GET will have a regressive impact on families already living paycheck-to-paycheck, our renters, and our seniors.

There are many important programs that the state funds, but doing this could set a dangerous precedent for other programs with constituencies to come in for further tax increases.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

TAX FOUNDATION OF HAWAII

126 Queen Street, Suite 304

Honolulu, Hawaii 96813 Tel. 536-4587

SUBJECT: GENERAL EXCISE, USE, Increase tax rate, disposition for department of education

BILL NUMBER: SB 2586

INTRODUCED BY: KIDANI

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: Increases the general excise tax by 1% and provides that the revenue generated by the increased rate will be used for department of education operations, including salaries and maintenance costs. With a tax increase of this magnitude, economic ripple effects are likely to be enormous because of the all-encompassing nature of the tax. We also question why such a massive increase is being sought given that the Department of Education already has a gargantuan share of the State budget but is still beset with such issues as frustrated teachers and students roasting in our classrooms.

BRIEF SUMMARY: This is an omnibus bill. The Foundation's comments relate only to Part XIII of the bill, entitled Funding.

Amends HRS sections 237-13, -15, -16.5, -18 to increase the general excise tax from 4% to 5%.

Amends HRS section 237-31 to provide that the revenue derived from the increase in the general excise tax shall be deposited into a special account in the general fund and be appropriated to and expended for operations of the department of education provided that this revenue shall be in addition to and not substituted for moneys otherwise appropriated to the department of education.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon approval; the tax sections of the bill apply to taxable years beginning after December 31, 2016.

STAFF COMMENTS: This measure is proposed to provide additional revenue to the department of education by increasing the general excise tax by 1%. It should be remembered that any increase in the general excise tax rate will not only increase the cost of living in the state but also increase the cost of doing business. Thus, businesses must build the added cost of the additional rate into their overhead and, therefore, it must be recovered in the cost of the goods and services they sell. The general excise tax is perhaps the worst tax to increase because of its broad-based application. Increases in the cost of living, as well as the cost of doing business in the state will drive more and more businesses out of operation and with them the jobs Hawaii's people need. For teachers who have requested this increase in the tax to fund their salaries, they should acknowledge that they are just making it worse for everyone as the cost of food, shelter, clothing, transportation and every other essential household item will increase making it harder for all families, including their own, to survive.

The general excise tax is all-encompassing. The Hawaii courts have said it is “a wide and tight net.” *In re Island Holidays, Ltd.*, 59 Haw. 307, 316, 582 P.2d 703, 708 (1978). It covers “virtually every economic activity imaginable.” *Pratt v. Kondo*, 53 Haw. 435, 436, 496 P.2d 1, 2 (1972). It “applies at all levels of economic activity ... and to virtually all goods and services.” *In re Central Union Church*, 63 Haw. 199, 202, 624 P.2d 1346, 1349 (1981). It is an “omnipresent snare.” *Wasson-Bendon Partners v. Kamikawa*, 93 Haw. 267, 278, 999 P.2d 865, 876 (Ct. App. 2000). Not only will the general excise tax increase the cost of doing business, but it will affect the cost of all other non-food purchases, be it clothes, textbooks for university students, rent for those people who don’t own their shelter which are generally the poor and middle class, the price at the pump for gasoline - everything right down the line. Residents of Honolulu already know what such an increase can do the price of goods and services as a result of the transit surcharge.

More importantly, because the general excise tax is a tax on gross income, most businesses will try to recover as much of the cost of the tax by passing it on to the customer. As Oahu taxpayers learned when the 0.5% surcharge on the general excise tax for transit went into effect, the amount passed on to the customer went not from 4% to 4.5% but the charge went from 4.16% to 4.712%. Thus, the tax rate actually passed on will be more than the nominal 5%. Indeed, a 5% tax corresponds to a pass-on rate of 5.263%, and in Honolulu the rail surcharge will result in a pass-on rate of 5.820%. Again, such an increase will ripple through the economy and into the cost of all goods and services purchased by residents and visitors alike. To that degree, taxpayers can take their hats off to teachers for upping the cost of living and doing business in Hawaii.

While the measure earmarks the revenues from the 1% rate increase for the department of education and states that these new funds will be in addition to the \$1.5 billion the department currently receives from the state general fund. Lest advocates of this measure believe that education will be guaranteed these funds, the track record indicates how disingenuous lawmakers have been about earmarked special funds, raiding those special funds when it is expedient and even in the face of federal prohibitions such as the monies that were collected and designated to build the enhanced 911 system.

A tax increase of any magnitude in Hawaii’s fragile economy will, no doubt, have a negative impact as costs soar due to higher taxes. As costs and overhead increase, employers will have to find ways to stay in business by either increasing prices to their customers or cut back on costs. This may take the form of reducing inventory, shortening business hours, reducing employee hours, or even laying off workers. A tax increase of any magnitude would send many companies, especially smaller ones, out of business taking with them the jobs the community so desperately needs at this time.

While the teachers believe that they have not been given a fair shake at the negotiating table, that is an issue that should be resolved at the table and not by asking for tax increases or an earmarked source of funding. It is up to the teachers to ask for what money is available just like any other collective bargaining units. Although public employee union leaders complain about how the public employees should not be asked to bear the brunt of the downturn in the economy,

they seem to ignore the fact that employees in the private sector have taken hits early and often, with many of them either working shorter hours or having taken pay cuts if they are working at all. To prove the point, lawmakers should ask how many of the unemployed workers come from the public payroll and how many are employees laid off from the private sector. The downsizing during the recent economic downturn may seem to have hit more public employees, but then again, government is the largest employer in the state. However, one cannot ignore the impact the closing of businesses such as Aloha Airlines that affected more than 3,000 employees directly and many more indirectly in companies which provided goods and services to the airline.

Teachers do have a legitimate complaint that should demand the attention of lawmakers and Board of Education members, namely that teachers are being asked to do more and more administrative paperwork and are spending less and less time in the classroom. If nothing else, the funds that are being appropriated to the DOE are failing to reach the classroom because of the top-heavy administrative structure of the department that demands reports and schedules and evaluations to justify the role of administrators. The frustration of classroom teachers is that they spend too much time filling out forms and reports and not enough time in the actual classroom. Unfortunately, with more than \$1.5 billion in its budget and more than 20% of the general fund budget, teachers are frustrated, and kids are roasting in the schools. The department of education still cannot get it right. Until it does, there is little justification for an increase of financial resources let alone an increase in the general excise tax.

Digested 2/3/16



AMERICANS FOR DEMOCRATIC ACTION

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Feb. 3, 2016

TO: Honorable Chair Kidani Members of the Committees

RE: SB2586 Relating to Education
Support

Americans for Democratic Action is a national organization founded in the 1950s by leading supporters of the New Deal and led by Patsy Mink in the 1970s. We are devoted to the promotion of progressive public policies.

We support SB 2586 as it would provide for a host of programs to improve public education in Hawaii. Our NAEP scores show that 32% of our students are at or above competency in math at grade 8 compared to the national average of 34%, and 28% of our students are at or above competency in reading at grade 8 compared to national of 34%. While we are not doing a lot worse than the national average, we still are not preparing most of our students for a productive future. We can save a lot of taxpayer dollars down the road in prisons and social services by providing a better education for our young people today. Many parents know this (as may some of you) and send their students to private school. We have a very high rate of private school (17 percent by one estimate) enrollment. We need to raise the quality of our public schools so that fewer parents choose that option and more are satisfied with public school education.

Yet quality costs money. If you take out special education students, the DOE is probably spending about \$7,000 to teach each student. That is way below the figure of our top private schools which spend three times that or more.

SB2586 would make progress in education by educating the whole child and not just preparing them for a test, limiting case load of special education teachers who are fleeing their profession in droves, establishing reasonable maximum class sizes, promoting vocational education for non-college bound, attracting and retaining quality faculty, and especially promoting public pre-school. Together these reforms can make a difference. All pieces are important to raising a system much in need of help.

All students deserve a quality education. Our society needs an educated populace for its economy and democracy. Some say we cannot afford this bill. In the long term, we cannot afford to continue without these improvements.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

John Bickel
President



1200 Ala Kapuna Street ♦ Honolulu, Hawaii 96819
Tel: (808) 833-2711 ♦ Fax: (808) 839-7106 ♦ Web: www.hsta.org

Corey Rosenlee
President
Justin Hughey
Vice President
Amy Perruso
Secretary-Treasurer
Wilbert Holck
Executive Director

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

RE: SB 2586 - RELATING TO EDUCATION.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2016

COREY ROSENLEE, PRESIDENT
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Chair Kidani and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association **strongly supports SB 2586**, relating to education.

Teachers are the frontline of education and know how to improve our schools. Accordingly, we visited every HSTA chapter in the state, talked to hundreds of teachers, and polled our members. The same issues were voiced again and again. These issues became the focus of our Schools Our Keiki Deserve campaign and the omnibus bill that bears the same name.

We're facing a pressing reality: Hawai'i *must* improve its schools. By many measures, our keiki are struggling. In 2015, we scored last in the nation on ACT scores, 48th on the 8th grade NAEP reading test, and 46th on the 4th grade NAEP reading test. In 2009, the last time NAEP tested science, Hawai'i scored third worst in the country. Our mathematics results show promise, but still hover below national averages.

Our state ranks dead last in education funding. We trail all other states in teacher pay adjusted for cost of living. Our per pupil spending, approximately \$12,000, lags behind many other districts, such as Washington D.C. (\$26,000), New York City (\$25,000), Boston (\$23,000), and even Detroit (\$18,000). When adjusted for cost of living, our per-pupil spending is at the proverbial bottom of the pack, with facilities funding falling far short of our national peers.

Investment in education correlates with student success. To quote a 2014 article in *Education Week*, "In districts that substantially increased their spending as the

result of court-ordered changes in school finance, low-income children were significantly more likely to graduate from high school, earn livable wages, and avoid poverty in adulthood.”

In short, we get what we pay for.

This is not just about education. This is about inequality in the United States. The US is just one of only three industrialized nations that spends more on rich children than on poor ones. When we perpetuate class inequality through unequal funding of our public schools we codify a class system and deny all children the opportunity of the American Dream. What could be more valuable than our children’s civil rights? The landmark case *Brown v. Board of Education* was not only about racial discrimination, but unequal resources for marginalized students. Yet, when we rank poorly in test scores and funding, where is the outcry? Hawai’i has an exodus of students fleeing our public schools for their private counterparts, giving us the highest per-capita private school attendance in the nation, along with one of the highest public school teacher turnover rates. We must not remain silent.

Problem: What will we do for the child who can’t afford private school or doesn’t have a qualified teacher in the classroom? Solution: Pass the Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act, which fully funds our public schools, while implementing research-based education reforms that reflect best educational practices.

SOKD showcases the interrelatedness of education issues. Vocational education, for example, will never be available to all students wishing to participate in career pathways, unless we provide more learning time and scheduling flexibility by ending toxic testing. If we do not improve pay for public school teachers, then we will not have enough vocational education instructors because the vocations, themselves, often offer better salaries. Putting forty students into an auto mechanics class, moreover, is both detrimental to learning and dangerous. Finally, no education initiative—from class size to public preschool to classroom cooling to recruitment and retention of effective educators—can be successful without proper funding, which our bill generates at an estimated \$750 million per year.

While there are many parts to our omnibus proposal, they combine to envisage a school system based on opportunity, creativity, and equity. To make that vision a reality for our keiki, please **support** this bill.



1200 Ala Kapuna Street ♦ Honolulu, Hawaii 96819
Tel: (808) 833-2711 ♦ Fax: (808) 839-7106 ♦ Web: www.hsta.org

Corey Rosenlee
President
Justin Hughey
Vice President
Amy Perruso
Secretary-Treasurer
Wilbert Holck
Executive Director

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

RE: SB 2586 - RELATING TO EDUCATION.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2016

MITZIE HIGA, in behalf of HSTA
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Chair Kidani and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association **strongly supports SB 2586** with amendments, relating to education.

This year, HSTA listened.

Teachers are the frontline of education and know best how to improve our schools. Accordingly, we visited every HSTA chapter in the state, talked to hundreds of teachers, and polled our members. The same issues were voiced again and again. These issues became the focus of our Schools Our Keiki Deserve campaign and the omnibus bill that bears the same name.

We're facing a pressing reality: Hawai'i *must* improve its schools. Our state ranks dead last in education funding. We trail all other states in teacher pay adjusted for cost of living. Our per pupil spending, approximately \$12,000, lags behind many other districts, such as Washington D.C. (\$26,000), New York City (\$25,000), Boston (\$23,000), and even Detroit (\$18,000). When adjusted for cost of living, our per-pupil spending is at the proverbial bottom of the pack, with facilities funding falling far short of our national peers.

At the same time, by many measures, our keiki are struggling. In 2015, we scored last in the nation on ACT scores, 48th on the 8th grade NAEP reading test, and 46th on the 4th grade NAEP reading test. In 2009, the last time NAEP tested science, Hawai'i scored third worst in the country. Our mathematics results show promise, but still hover below national averages.

Investment in education correlates with student success. To quote a 2014 article in *Education Week*, "In districts that substantially increased their spending as the result of

court-ordered changes in school finance, low-income children were significantly more likely to graduate from high school, earn livable wages, and avoid poverty in adulthood.”

In short, we get what we pay for.

And what could be more valuable than our children’s civil rights? The landmark case *Brown v. Board of Education* was not only about racial discrimination, but unequal resources for marginalized students. Yet, when we rank poorly in test scores and funding, where is the outcry? Hawai’i has an exodus of students fleeing our public schools for their private counterparts, giving us the highest per-capita private school attendance in the nation, along with one of the highest public school teacher turnover rates. We must not remain silent.

Problem: What will we do for the child who can’t afford private school or doesn’t have a qualified teacher in the classroom? Solution: Pass the Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act, which fully funds our public schools, while implementing research-based education reforms that reflect best educational practices.

SOKD showcases the interrelatedness of education issues. Vocational education, for example, will never be available to all students wishing to participate in career pathways, unless we provide more learning time and scheduling flexibility by ending toxic testing. If we do not improve pay for public school teachers, then we will not have enough vocational education instructors because the vocations, themselves, often offer better salaries. Putting forty students into an auto mechanics class, moreover, is both detrimental to learning and dangerous. Finally, no education initiative—from class size to public preschool to classroom cooling to recruitment and retention of effective educators—can be successful without proper funding, which our bill generates at an estimated \$750-850 million per year.

That said, while we wholeheartedly endorse passage of this bill, we request two amendments to align this measure with the requirements of the recently enacted Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). First, in Part VII, Section 20, proposed subsection (b), we urge you to add the following clause: “...except for the purpose of determining the bottom five per cent of schools, no more than once every three years.” Second, also in Section 20, we encourage you to delete proposed subsection (e), since ESSA requires that special needs students continue to be tested.

While there are many parts to our omnibus proposal, they combine to envisage a school system based on opportunity, creativity, and equity. To make that vision a reality for our keiki, please **support** this bill.

Committee on Education
Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Chair
Senator Breene Harimoto, Vice Chair

Sandy Sproat
64-646 Puu Pohu Place
Kamuela, HI 96743
Email: sproatks@gmail.com

Wednesday, February 10, 2016 1:15 pm

Support for SB 2586 Relating to Education

I am in support of SB 2586 because the measures to be implemented through this bill help students, teachers, and communities by bringing the educational opportunities available to our children more in line with the future needs of Hawaii.

I would like to suggest that included with the place-based curricula planned for the “Whole child” education section a component of increasing knowledge of good mental health be added. Children can be taught skills in communicating personal needs, emotion regulation and recognition of the signs of stress. I work in a middle school as an Educational Assistant and so many of our students lack skills of self-control. I believe many suffer from unresolved trauma and would benefit from improved mental health.

The sections on special education teachers having increased preparation hours and equipment, increasing vocational educational pathways, cooling classrooms, debit purchases for classroom supplies, and the ability to opt-out of standardized testing seem reasonable and needed at this time.

The section on early education will be helpful for families who qualify for Pre-K services for their child. I would not support mandatory Pre-K for any child.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

From:
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: testimony
Date: Thursday, February 04, 2016 1:00:06 PM

Testimony for: Committee on Education
Hearing on Wednesday, February 10, 2016
1:15pm

Honorable Chair Kidani and committee members,

My name is Leena Kilpelainen. I am a teacher at Castle High School school on the island of Oahu. As a teacher of 2 years in Hawai'i.

I am writing in support of SB2586 The Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act.

Public education in Hawaii has the potential power to democratize and make our society more equal, fair, and just. The teachers in our public schools think that public education policy should accordingly be designed, developed, and assessed in as democratic a fashion as possible. The Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act will support this vision. In this shared preferred future, public schools become a primary site of public investment, and the resources and facilities available for learning in our public schools reflect the high value we place on our keiki and future generations.

The Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act will support...

1. Educating the whole child (by ensuring the arts are provided in every school, along with Hawaiian Studies and cultural and language programs, and P.E and that these subjects are NOT pushed out by over-testing policies)
2. Supporting all students (including resources needed for those students with special needs and English Language Learners)

3. Reducing class sizes (to allow for more responsive instruction, collaborative learning, individualized, and small group learning experiences for our students)
4. Providing a robust vocational education path to rewarding careers, along with a college path
5. Providing quality facilities (not 90+ degree classrooms!)
6. Properly funding our rural and small schools (these schools should not have to sacrifice their funding to buy paper all year in order to allow a much needed librarian or counselor to be placed at their school),
7. Attracting and retaining the best and brightest teachers (we pay our teachers the LOWEST in the nation, when you consider the cost of living, this fact is unacceptable. We were short 250 special education teachers this year! We need competitive salaries to achieve this!)
8. Ending high-stakes standardized testing (we need to stop the test and punish policies)
9. Supporting public preschools (that our families desperately need)
10. Putting classroom supplies in teachers hands (Teachers know best what supplies their students need)!

I am especially concerned about # 3, Reducing class sizes (to allow for more responsive instruction, collaborative learning, individualized, and small group learning experiences for our students), because...[Tell your personal story here]

I am equally concerned about #_____, because I have personally witnessed how students are able to learn when they are in a small class environment. They have more access to the teacher and are able to gain the instruction that they need to prosper in the subject.

All of these points are inter-related and support each other in providing the quality public schools that ALL of our keiki deserve.

We hope we may count on you for your support. Our keiki need you!

Thank you for your time,

Leena Kilpelainen

Math Teacher

Castle High School

kilpelainenl@knights.k12.hi.us

From: [Clifford Lim](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2586
Date: Friday, February 05, 2016 11:33:01 AM

Testimony for: Committee on Education

Hearing on Wednesday, February 10, 2016

1:15pm

Honorable Chair Kidani and committee members,

My name is _Clifford Lim_. I am a teacher at _Fern Elementary_ school on the island of ___Oahu___. As a teacher of ___3___ years in Hawai'i.

I am writing in support of SB2586 The Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act.

Public education in Hawaii has the potential power to democratize and make our society more equal, fair, and just. The teachers in our public schools think that public education policy should accordingly be designed, developed, and assessed in as democratic a fashion as possible. The Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act will support this vision. In this shared preferred future, public schools become a primary site of public investment, and the resources and facilities available for learning in our public schools reflect the high value we place on our keiki and future generations.

The Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act will support...

1. Educating the whole child (by ensuring the arts are provided in every school, along with Hawaiian Studies and cultural and language programs, and P.E and that these subjects are NOT pushed out by over-testing policies)
2. Supporting all students (including resources needed for those students with special needs and English Language Learners)
3. Reducing class sizes (to allow for more responsive instruction, collaborative learning, individualized, and small group learning experiences for our students)

4. Providing a robust vocational education path to rewarding careers, along with a college path
5. Providing quality facilities (not 90+ degree classrooms!)
6. Properly funding our rural and small schools (these schools should not have to sacrifice their funding to buy paper all year in order to allow a much needed librarian or counselor to be placed at their school),
7. Attracting and retaining the best and brightest teachers (we pay our teachers the LOWEST in the nation, when you consider the cost of living, this fact is unacceptable. We were short 250 special education teachers this year! We need competitive salaries to achieve this!)
8. Ending high-stakes standardized testing (we need to stop the test and punish policies)
9. Supporting public preschools (that our families desperately need)
10. Putting classroom supplies in teachers hands (Teachers know best what supplies their students need)!

I am especially concerned about #7, retaining the best and brightest teachers, because I am a new teacher in the last year of my probationary period, and I am very active with HSTA. As a new teacher it saddens me that some of my colleagues leave after teaching in Hawaii for three years. They end their probationary period and decide to teach out of state or leave the profession all together. I see that the issue is Not pay, but in teaching to the whole student. With high stakes testing, the teachers don't get to teach the arts. As teachers, we are pulling for student achievement and fun in the classroom. A new teacher never dreams of only teaching math and reading or following a scripted reading and math program. The best and brightest teachers have a vision of engage students reading stories and doing plays and laughing...not frustrated students who must sit for hours taking tests. Attendance, referrals, and bad attitudes can be lesson with the arts being taught again within the curriculum; not just once a week. If we teach to the whole student, this will create a better learning environment for both students and teachers. If this bill is passed, the whole student will be taught, and this will help with creative thinking and improved academic achievement across all subject areas. With students able to think outside of a testing setting, the new teachers will have a less restrictive environment and more local born best and brightest teachers will not decide to leave.

I am equally concerned about #2, because even though I am a probationary teacher, I had my first inclusion class this year. I have to share a SPED teacher with the room next door. There are six Special Ed. students between our two classes, and this one SPED teacher handles them and their IEPs. The SPED teacher is also a new teacher still in her probationary period. She is trying to juggle our two classrooms, which have the same amount of students as a noninclusion classroom, along with her IEPs. She is doing a good job, regardless, but we might lose her as well due to the classroom sizes and not enough time to do her other SPED duties. When I started on my education path, my first job was a Part-Time Teacher (PTT) in the ELL Department at Fern Elementary School. The ELL had five other PTTs and two ELL teacher /coordinators. Currently, Fern has an even larger ELL population, and one Coordinator, a half time teacher and a volunteer that comes in to help with WIDA testing. I watch as this small ELL team stays late, search for space for testing, and run all over campus

to reach all the ELL students. The teachers try to help how they can by being accommodating with space and scheduling, but it is very little help and this is not helpful to the students. Some ELL and SPED students are not getting the best out of an inclusion setting if there are too much students (the SPED student does not get the servicing he or she is entitled to). This is a shame. Students must come first and we must support all students, like this bill advocates.

All of these points are inter-related and support each other in providing the quality public schools that ALL of our keiki deserve.

We hope we may count on you for your support. Our keiki need you!

from AOL Mobile Mail

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From:
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: I support The Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act
Date: Thursday, February 04, 2016 2:30:39 PM

Honorable Chair Kidani and committee members,

My name is Mara Kyle. I am a teacher at Castle High School on the island of Oahu. As a teacher of 10 years in Hawai'i.

I am writing in support of SB2586 The Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act.

Public education in Hawaii has the potential power to democratize and make our society more equal, fair, and just. The teachers in our public schools think that public education policy should accordingly be designed, developed, and assessed in as democratic a fashion as possible. The Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act will support this vision. In this shared preferred future, public schools become a primary site of public investment, and the resources and facilities available for learning in our public schools reflect the high value we place on our keiki and future generations.

The Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act will support...

1. Educating the whole child (by ensuring the arts are provided in every school, along with Hawaiian Studies and cultural and language programs, and P.E and that these subjects are NOT pushed out by over-testing policies)
2. Supporting all students (including resources needed for those students with special needs and English Language Learners)
3. Reducing class sizes (to allow for more responsive instruction, collaborative learning, individualized, and small group learning experiences for our students)
4. Providing a robust vocational education path to rewarding careers, along with a college path
5. Providing quality facilities (not 90+ degree classrooms!)
6. Properly funding our rural and small schools (these schools should not

have to sacrifice their funding to buy paper all year in order to allow a much needed librarian or counselor to be placed at their school),

7. Attracting and retaining the best and brightest teachers (we pay our teachers the LOWEST in the nation, when you consider the cost of living, this fact is unacceptable. We were short 250 special education teachers this year! We need competitive salaries to achieve this!)
8. Ending high-stakes standardized testing (we need to stop the test and punish policies)
9. Supporting public preschools (that our families desperately need)
10. Putting classroom supplies in teachers hands (Teachers know best what supplies their students need)!

Sincerely,

Mara Kyle

Teacher at Castle High School

From: [Jennie Yee](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in Support of SB2586
Date: Thursday, February 04, 2016 2:01:09 PM

My name is Jennie Yee. I am a teacher at Castle High School and have worked in the Hawaii Department of Education for 19 years. My two children are public school graduates who have successfully completed their college education and about to embark on dynamic careers.

I am writing in support of SB2586 The Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act.

Public education in Hawaii has the potential power to democratize and make our society more equal, fair, and just. The teachers in our public schools think that public education policy should accordingly be designed, developed, and assessed in as democratic a fashion as possible. The Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act will support this vision. In this shared preferred future, public schools become a primary site of public investment, and the resources and facilities available for learning in our public schools reflect the high value we place on our keiki and future generations.

The Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act will support:

1. **Educating the whole child** by ensuring every student is exposed to arts, Hawaiian Studies, PE, music, and other subjects often taken away by more drill and practice to increase reading and math scores.
2. Supporting all students, including resources needed for those students with special needs and English Language Learners.
3. Reducing class sizes so students get the personal attention they need when encountering difficulties.
4. Providing a robust college preparatory and/or vocational education path to rewarding careers.
5. Providing quality learning facilities with indoor temperatures not exceeding 90 degrees.
6. Properly funding our rural and small schools so they can afford basics like a school librarian.
7. Attracting and retaining the best and brightest teachers at competitive salaries so they can afford at least a modest standard of living.
8. Ending high-stakes standardized testing.
9. Supporting public preschools.
10. Putting classroom supplies in teachers hands.

I am especially concerned about the overemphasis on testing and the negative

effects it has on students, to the point of making them hate being in school. Education and learning should be enjoyable, and students should continue their love of learning from the public school system well into their adult lives. Nothing turns off a student to learning when they are continually told they do not meet proficiency. A recent graduate of our school expressed this, "For all 13 years of my life in the public school system, I have been told that I am a failure - - that I do not meet proficiency. When does that change?" Do we keep taking away elective courses from students who "do not meet proficiency?" Do we ever tell the majority of students that they deserve to be told that they DID succeed?

I am also concerned about the physical conditions of our aging schools, where the backlog of classroom repairs keeps growing larger. No child deserves to go to a school where the roof is caving in on them.

All of these points are inter-related and support each other in providing the quality public schools that ALL of our keiki deserve.

We hope we may count on you for your support. Our keiki need you!

Thank you for your time,

Jennie Yee

Tech/Test Coordinator
Castle High School

yeej@knights.k12.hi.us

From:
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2586
Date: Thursday, February 04, 2016 1:48:39 PM

Honorable Chair Kidani and committee members,

My name is Rebecca Kerwin. I am a teacher at Castle High School on the island of Oahu. I am writing in support of SB2586 The Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act.

Public education in Hawaii has the potential power to democratize and make our society more equal, fair, and just. The teachers in our public schools think that public education policy should accordingly be designed, developed, and assessed in as democratic a fashion as possible. The Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act will support this vision. In this shared preferred future, public schools become a primary site of public investment, and the resources and facilities available for learning in our public schools reflect the high value we place on our keiki and future generations.

The Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act will support...

1. Educating the whole child (by ensuring the arts are provided in every school, along with Hawaiian Studies and cultural and language programs, and P.E and that these subjects are NOT pushed out by over-testing policies)
2. Supporting all students (including resources needed for those students with special needs and English Language Learners)
3. Reducing class sizes (to allow for more responsive instruction, collaborative learning, individualized, and small group learning experiences for our students)
4. Providing a robust vocational education path to rewarding careers, along with a college path
5. Providing quality facilities (not 90+ degree classrooms!)
6. Properly funding our rural and small schools (these schools should not have to sacrifice their funding to buy paper all year in order to allow a much needed librarian or counselor to be placed at their school),
7. Attracting and retaining the best and brightest teachers (we pay our teachers the LOWEST in the nation, when you consider the cost of living, this fact is unacceptable. We were short 250 special education teachers this year! We need competitive salaries to achieve this!)
8. Ending high-stakes standardized testing (we need to stop the test and punish policies)
9. Supporting public preschools (that our families desperately need)

10. Putting classroom supplies in teachers hands (Teachers know best what supplies their students need)!

I am especially concerned about # 1, 2, 5, & 7. This is because, as someone who has benefited from having a well-rounded liberal arts education, I have discovered the benefits of exploring all kinds of subjects and interests that I may not have if I did not have arts, music, P.E., or a foreign language as a part of my education. If we want to educate students who are exposed to these kinds of subjects than we have to provide them. I also recognize the need for specialized teachers for our special education students and English language learners. Without proper training classroom teachers cannot provide everything these students need in order to keep up with their classmates. This also has to do with #7 and our challenge to keep teachers in the classrooms. Teachers should feel supported by their fellow teachers, administrators, and the community instead of bombarded by additional demands on our time which equals more stress on an already stressful job. Teachers don't teach for the money, but having a competitive salary which is appropriate for the cost of living here in Hawaii and our positions as specialists in education and our specific subjects could make teaching more appealing and worth the effort of pursuing a teaching career here. Finally, providing facilities with air conditioning is necessary, especially in the summer months. I remember the first two months of this school year as the most humid and hot months that I have ever had to work in. By lunch-time, I would have sweat dripping down my back and students complaining that they were having a hard time focusing because it was so hot. I also recall hearing about several students going to the emergency room because of heat stroke.

All of these points are interrelated and support each other in providing the quality public schools that all of our keiki deserve.

We hope we may count on you for your support. Our keiki need you!

Thank you for your time,

Rebecca Kerwin

English & Yearbook Teacher

Castle High School

From:
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in Support of SB2586
Date: Thursday, February 04, 2016 1:21:33 PM

My name is Lauren Pokipala. I am a teacher at Castle High school on the island of Oahu. As a teacher of 2 years in Hawai'i,

I am writing in support of SB2586 The Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act.

Public education in Hawaii has the potential power to democratize and make our society more equal, fair, and just. The teachers in our public schools think that public education policy should accordingly be designed, developed, and assessed in as democratic a fashion as possible. The Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act will support this vision. In this shared preferred future, public schools become a primary site of public investment, and the resources and facilities available for learning in our public schools reflect the high value we place on our keiki and future generations.

The Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act will support...

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8. Ending high-stakes standardized testing (we need to stop the test and punish policies)
9. Supporting public preschools (that our families desperately need)
10. Putting classroom supplies in teachers hands (Teachers know best what supplies their students need)!

I am especially concerned about #3 because from my experience working in both a large (35+) & small (less than 20) setting, students are more productive when in a small setting because I am able to provide individual assistance as needed. However, because of funding, we are not able to have small classes which affects the learning environment in a negative way. From my observations, learning becomes a "chore" & it is easier for students to become disengaged because they are "lost in the pack."

I am equally concerned about #8, because standardized testing is not the only way to measure student abilities. There are various ways to determine if they have met standards and should be able to demonstrate it through their learning style. Education is like a box & they expect everyone to learn the same way, but in reality, students may come in many shapes & have different learning styles, so if we are here for the students, teachers need to be able to accommodate their needs.

All of these points are inter-related and support each other in providing the quality public schools that ALL of our keiki deserve.

We hope we may count on you for your support. Our keiki need you!

Thank you for your time,

Lauren Pokipala
Teacher

James B. Castle High School

pokipalal@knights.k12.hi.us

From:
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2586
Date: Thursday, February 04, 2016 1:15:52 PM

Honorable Chair Kidani and committee members,

My name is Kana Naipo. I am a teacher at James B. Castle High School on the island of Oahu. As a teacher of 9 and a half years in Hawai'i. I am writing in support of SB2586 The Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act.

Public education in Hawaii has the potential power to democratize and make our society more equal, fair, and just. The teachers in our public schools think that public education policy should accordingly be designed, developed, and assessed in as democratic a fashion as possible. The Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act will support this vision. In this shared preferred future, public schools become a primary site of public investment, and the resources and facilities available for learning in our public schools reflect the high value we place on our keiki and future generations.

The Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act will support...

1. Educating the whole child (by ensuring the arts are provided in every school, along with Hawaiian Studies and cultural and language programs, and P.E and that these subjects are NOT pushed out by over-testing policies)
2. Supporting all students (including resources needed for those students with special needs and English Language Learners)
3. Reducing class sizes (to allow for more responsive instruction, collaborative learning, individualized, and small group learning experiences for our students)
4. Providing a robust vocational education path to rewarding careers, along with a college path
5. Providing quality facilities (not 90+ degree classrooms!)
6. Properly funding our rural and small schools (these schools should not have to sacrifice their funding to buy paper all year in order to allow a much needed librarian or counselor to be placed at their school),
7. Attracting and retaining the best and brightest teachers (we pay our

teachers the LOWEST in the nation, when you consider the cost of living, this fact is unacceptable. We were short 250 special education teachers this year! We need competitive salaries to achieve this!)

8. Ending high-stakes standardized testing (we need to stop the test and punish policies)
9. Supporting public preschools (that our families desperately need)
10. Putting classroom supplies in teachers hands (Teachers know best what supplies their students need)!

I am especially concerned about #7, because I am barely making a living on this salary. I'm a highly educated teacher with strong ties within my community and though it has been my personal endeavor to seek a career in education I have found myself looking towards a more stable and financial career.

All of these points are inter-related and support each other in providing the quality public schools that ALL of our keiki deserve.

We hope we may count on you for your support. Our keiki need you!

Mahalo,

Kana Naipo BA, MEDd, MAT

CSAP/ SMC Teacher

James B. Castle High School

45-386 Kaneohe Bay Drive

Kaneohe, HI 96744

(808) 305-0779

**Testimony for support of SB 2568
Committee on Education Hearing
Wednesday February 10, 2016**

Honorable Chair Kidani and Committee members

My name is Jalen Holder, I am a freshman at Mililani High School, and I support section XI. Section XI of SB 2586, states that in evaluations, teachers should not be held responsible for test scores of students that are chronically absent. In other words, teachers should not be penalized for bad test scores of students who don't come to school enough. I completely support this legislation because chronically absent students can completely destroy a teacher's evaluation, and a teacher should not be harshly graded on the students not coming to class enough.

Teacher evaluations are done by taking each student's test score from the previous year, and comparing that to their score at the end of the year, and the amount the score has grown is what the teacher added to the student's knowledge that year. Teacher's are harshly judged on the new material learned by their students.

It's not fair if the student is not learning enough because he/she is not coming to school frequently enough. According to a study done in 2013 by the Department of Education, every 2 out of 10 elementary school students were considered to be chronically absent. That 20% is major issue, and this section of the bill will definitely benefit our teachers that work so hard to educate us, the students of Hawaii.

Sincerely,
Jalen

Testimony for SB2586-Schools Our Keiki Deserve Education Omnibus bill

My name is Debbie Matthews. I am presently the Student Services Coordinator in a small, rural, poor, culturally diverse, amazing school called Pahoa Elementary. We long ago adopted the motto of our previous Complex Area Superintendent Mary Correa, 'if can, can. If no can, how can.' We made solid gains under her watch, and continue the legacy with CAS Chad Farias. We are ranked third on the Big Island in the elementary category for achievement. So, why the testimony? Because what we are doing is not enough to support and sustain our keiki, not enough to make them ready to compete in a global economy. I look at our precious charges through the lenses of Service Coordinator, classroom teacher, resource teacher, and temporary Vice Principal, all positions I have held in my 30 years of service.

I humbly ask for your support for SB2586-Schools Our Keiki Deserve Education Omnibus Bill. This is why.

We struggle mightily to stretch every cent of our budget to provide what our keiki need. Our administrator and staff apply for grants. We build community partnerships to fill in gaps for resources we cannot access. It hurts when we hear that larger schools have funds to hire additional personnel or provide students with opportunities for educational experiences which our school and our parents clearly cannot afford. When having slippers and enough food daily is a big deal, educational outings are a luxury. Our school is rural, but we contend with many of the issues large or inner city schools face. Our keiki deserve more, and, since our resources reside with you, we are asking that you provide for us.

With the emphasis on unrelenting testing, there is little time to teach more than reading, writing, and mathematics and do interventions in those subjects for children who do not comprehend initially at the break neck speed of instruction. Social Studies and Science have taken a back seat to the dominant three subjects. Keiki need to know how the world works and where we fit in, which Social Studies teaches. We need to allow time for wonder, critical thinking, and experimentation for the children to lead the world in scientific innovation. Teachers are no longer provided the resources of time, materials, and assistance to teach art, music, drama, PE. There are volumes of evidence that instruction in the fine arts and physical education not only buttresses learning in the core content, but allows for the whole child to develop. Some of our children learn best through the arts. It also provides an incentive for regular school attendance; if a child loves to come to school because he is successful, he will be there every day. Recently a parent stopped me to ask why art and music are not taught as often; her child, who struggles with reading and loves art and music, no longer sees school as an exciting place of expression and is starting to rebel at reading so much. Her teacher is highly qualified and integrates art when possible, but I could give this mother no satisfactory answer. The mother is my daughter; the child is my granddaughter. It breaks my heart.

All students do better with a smaller class size. NOT just an arbitrary ratio where classes can be packed, with adults added. They need more instructional time with highly qualified personnel. This is especially true for students with learning difficulties, whether in need of special education or because English is their second language. I coordinate meetings to provide services for students who struggle or excel, either academically or behaviorally. It takes a very long time to find and fill voids in knowledge. A child

who, because of his needs, must have the same concept taught 40 times when his peers can comprehend after the second time, needs the attention available in a small class.

The world works because we do not all have the same skills, likes, or desires when it comes to work. I teach, but cannot fix my car. Why are the children who are passionate about careers that are not blueprinted out in a college catalog not given the same education as college bound children are? Do we tell them that they are less? Is not our obligation to ALL children to support their growth? It appears that technical programs are the first to be cut; in any case, the funding is clearly not there.

We are blessed with one public pre-school class at Pahoa Elementary. There is a wait list. There always is. Why is this a closed asset available to only the first 20 poorest children? It's certainly not because all the wait listed families can either find or afford \$500 per month to send their child to a private pre-school. If a child is fortunate enough to be one of the 20, transportation and participation in the after school A+ program are not provided, as they are for all other children on our campus. If it is important enough for some children to be offered this educational opportunity, it should be extended to all youngsters. Children are expected to come to kindergarten with knowledge of letters and letter sounds, some counting acumen, knowing colors, having some idea about how to follow directions, ask for help, and play well with others. Many homes do not provide the foundation for these accomplishments. Children who do not have the opportunity to experience educational enrichment come to school less prepared for kindergarten than their peers who have had pre-school. Please level the playing field. It's just the right thing to do.

Finally, please provide the training and financial incentives that will attract and retain the best teachers we can find to work with our keiki. The young teachers at our school are phenomenal; they are energetic, bright, engaged, and involved. They care about our kids. We need to care about them so that they may remain in our school, able to support their families, able to support their dreams. Amazingly, several of our staff members were also our students. We have homegrown success; please provide sufficient resources so that our future alumni may also afford to come home to us.

Mahalo for your attention. My granddaughter and I look forward to hearing about your support.

Debbie Matthews, Student Services Coordinator, Pahoa Elementary School

From: [Sam Vaughs](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony for SB 2586 (February 10, 1:15pm)
Date: Monday, February 08, 2016 11:18:58 AM

Thank you for hearing the Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act. As a hardworking educator, I strongly support this bill because I know firsthand how it will boost quality teaching and student learning.

In Hawai'i today, class sizes sometimes exceed forty or fifty students. Classroom temperatures have reached as high as 108 degrees. Curriculum is poisoned by a toxic amount of standardized testing. Arts, vocational, and special education instruction is neglected. Teachers are besieged by a burdensome evaluation system and, in turn, receive the lowest pay in the nation.

We, the teachers, deserve better. Please support professional pay for educators, an end to toxic testing, smaller class sizes, cooler classrooms, funding for arts, vocational and special education, and an end to unfair evaluations. In doing so, you will not only help teachers, but the students who will forge the future of our island home.

Please support this bill.

From: [Fiona Fonoti](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony for SB 2586 (February 10, 1:15pm)
Date: Monday, February 08, 2016 11:12:54 AM

Thank you for hearing the Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act. As a hardworking educator, I strongly support this bill because I know firsthand how it will boost quality teaching and student learning.

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Please support this bill.

Sincerely,
Fiona Fonoti
Highlands Intermediate 7th Grade Teacher

From: [S.M. Yamauchi](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: SB2586 SOKD Act
Date: Monday, February 08, 2016 9:10:24 AM

Honorable Chair Kidani and committee members,

My name is Shirley Yamauchi. I am a teacher at Kapolei Middle School on the island of Oahu. As a teacher of fifteen years in Hawai'i.

I am writing in support of SB2586 The Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act.

Public education in Hawaii has the potential power to democratize and make our society more equal, fair, and just. The teachers in our public schools think that public education policy should accordingly be designed, developed, and assessed in as democratic a fashion as possible. The Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act will support this vision. In this shared preferred future, public schools become a primary site of public investment, and the resources and facilities available for learning in our public schools reflect the high value we place on our keiki and future generations.

The Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act will support...

1. Educating the whole child (by ensuring the arts are provided in every school, along with Hawaiian Studies and cultural and language programs, and P.E and that these subjects are NOT pushed out by over-testing policies)
2. Supporting all students (including resources needed for those students with special needs and English Language Learners)
3. Reducing class sizes (to allow for more responsive

instruction, collaborative learning, individualized, and small group learning experiences for our students)

4. Providing a robust vocational education path to rewarding careers, along with a college path
5. Providing quality facilities (not 90+ degree classrooms!)
6. Properly funding our rural and small schools (these schools should not have to sacrifice their funding to buy paper all year in order to allow a much needed librarian or counselor to be placed at their school),
7. **Attracting and retaining the best and brightest teachers (we pay our teachers the LOWEST in the nation, when you consider the cost of living, this fact is unacceptable. We were short 250 special education teachers this year! We need competitive salaries to achieve this!)**
8. Ending high-stakes standardized testing (we need to stop the test and punish policies)
9. **Supporting public preschools (that our families desperately need)**
10. Putting classroom supplies in teachers hands (Teachers know best what supplies their students need)!

I am especially concerned about #7, here is my personal story:

I have dropped out of two Masters' programs offered by the University of Hawaii at Manoa, unable to afford my continuing education there. I am not eligible for WIC, since I supposedly make too much as a school teacher. Yet, I find myself having to charge all of my groceries at Target, to get to my second teacher paycheck of the month, on the 20th. My aging, widowed mother lives in Japan and I have not been able to see her since May 2005.

Since New Year's Eve 2004 through June 2012, I worked as a cashier and stock girl at a store at the Ala Moana Shopping Center. The store has since closed and I have not been able to find part time work that understands Kapolei Middle School's multi track scheduling, where I have a three week vacation every nine weeks. It is also difficult to have a part time job, with our daily responsibilities of grading papers and other work related preparations, past our contractual 3 pm work day. I also offer free tutorial to all of my students from 730--815 am and first recess, daily. There are days where I am at the school for eleven hours, from 6 am through 5 pm, only to continue on with my work, once I reach my townhome in Makakilo.

I am a registered voter and have worked at the Kapolei High School polling site for both the primary and general elections of 2012. I was paid \$85 for each election. I also eagerly await phone calls from Hawaii 5-0, so that I may pick up a role as an extra on the show. I have been out of a regular part time job since late June 2012.

In the school year of 2011-2012, 14 teachers left Kapolei Middle School, forever. Our administration was forced to locate 14 new hires to replace those who left our school. Parents demands are not being met when teacher vacancies are not filled, substitute teachers are also limited in number.

It is easy for outsiders to quickly suggest moving to the U.S. mainland, to locations such as Las Vegas. Hawaii has always been my home. My paternal grandparents immigrated to the Big Island at the turn of the 20th century. Unfortunately, I have two paternal cousins who were educators, and they have both left for other careers. I have considered leaving Kapolei Middle for South Whidbey School District #206 or Coupeville School District in WA, back in 2013. I chose to stay in my home state of Hawaii instead and continued to persevere at Kapolei Middle School.

Please help the public school educators of Hawaii. Let us have EBT cards or WIC assistance at the very least. There are many healthy, capable citizens of our State who do nothing for our society, yet are able to collect various government subsidies. That is not fair and wrong.

I am equally concerned about # 9, because I am financially supporting my ten month son pretty much alone. I don't know how I am going to put him in preschool in four years with the current teacher salary that I am receiving. I was told by a WIC representative at Kapiolani Hospital, that I "make too much as a school teacher." I attended a Headstart program in 1978, in the Puna district of the Big Island, where my preschool education was completely paid for. My mother, who was an immigrant homemaker volunteered her time in my classroom, in exchange for a free preschool education for me. I am hoping that my son is able to attend a public preschool in the year 2019, here on Oahu.

All of these points are inter-related and support each other in providing the quality public schools that ALL of our keiki deserve.

We hope we may count on you for your support. Our keiki need you!

Thank you for your time,

**Shirley Yamauchi
Gr. 7 wheel teacher, green track**

Kapolei Middle, Leeward District

sm.yamauchi@gmail.com

From: [Renee Wood](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony for SB 2586 (February 10, 1:15pm)
Date: Monday, February 08, 2016 9:06:55 AM

Thank you for hearing the Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act. As a hardworking educator, I strongly support this bill because I know firsthand how it will boost quality teaching and student learning.

In Hawai'i today, class sizes sometimes exceed forty or fifty students. Classroom temperatures have reached as high as 108 degrees. Curriculum is poisoned by a toxic amount of standardized testing. Arts, vocational, and special education instruction is neglected. Teachers are besieged by a burdensome evaluation system and, in turn, receive the lowest pay in the nation.

We, the teachers, deserve better. Please support professional pay for educators, an end to toxic testing, smaller class sizes, cooler classrooms, funding for arts, vocational and special education, and an end to unfair evaluations. In doing so, you will not only help teachers, but the students who will forge the future of our island home.

Please support this bill.

Aloha,
Renee Wood

Testimony for: Support of SB2586
Senate Committee of Education Hearing
Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Honorable Chair Kidani and committee members

I am Bryson Barron, a freshman at Mililani High school, and I support this bill because it is a positive enforcement that will help the education system. Place-based curricula immerses students in culture, history, and heritage of local communities and is needed to provide students with skills necessary to solve community problems. Whole child education would require elementary, and intermediate schools to allocate a certain percent of all student's learning hours in visual arts, music, theatre, dance. Hawaiian and Polynesian studies, Hawaiian language, native Hawaiian traditional and customary practices, and physical education. A 2014 Harvard Graduate School of Education study indicated that an education in music and drama contributes to an increase in verbal achievement and spatial reasoning.

In 2009, I attended Kamalii Elementary School in Maui and was given the opportunity of taking Hawaiian language class, Hawaiian dance, art, and music. I know that some other schools weren't as fortunate as mine, such as Mililani Waena. In 2009, Kahea Aea attended Waena and wasn't given the option to take Hawaiian language. It was only opened to the students when Kahea was in the eighth grade. Every student in elementary and middle school should be able to take classes about the language and culture in Hawaii.

From: [Joanne Thompson](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Re: Our Schools Our Keiki Deserve
Date: Monday, February 08, 2016 8:51:52 AM

Aloha,

Regarding Bill Number SB 2586 and HB 2733

After having taught in Hawaii for over 28 years, I have seen the demise of inappropriate funding for our schools. We are in a crisis to fill special education position, attracting teachers to Hawaii, and having tenured teacher leave the profession far to early. Teachers simply get paid just barely enough to survive living in Hawaii.

Our schools are in shambles. I'm on industrial leave because I ruptured disks in my back due to a leaking roof in our bathroom. The cost to upkeep our schools is probably better than having to pay my workman compensation.

The smaller schools in Hawaii are the ones who get nailed the most. With fewer students, there is much less money because of the student weighted formula.

None of these issues have made sense to me. Our Schools Our Keiki Deserve must be passed if we are to give our students the quality education they deserve. I would love to come there to testify, but guess what? I can't afford to.

Sincerely,
Jo Thompson
National Board Certified Teacher
M.A. Administration & Curriculum Development.

--

"And in the end, the love you take, is equal to the love, you make" Paul
McCartney
Joanna

From: [Rob Harper-O'Connor](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony for SB 2586 (February 10, 1:15pm)
Date: Monday, February 08, 2016 7:40:16 AM

Thank you for hearing the Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act. As a hardworking educator, I strongly support this bill because I know firsthand how it will boost quality teaching and student learning.

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We, the teachers, deserve better. Please support professional pay for educators, an end to toxic testing, smaller class sizes, cooler classrooms, funding for arts, vocational and special education, and an end to unfair evaluations. In doing so, you will not only help teachers, but the students who will forge the future of our island home.

Please support this bill.

Sent from my Sprint Samsung Galaxy® Note Edge.

From: [Jocelyn Olegario](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#); [EDNtestimony](#)
Subject: For EDUtestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov: Testimony for SB 2586 (February 10, 1:15pm)
Date: Monday, February 08, 2016 6:39:00 AM

Thank you for hearing the Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act.

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Please support this bill,
Jocelyn Olegario
EMMS

--

Jocelyn Olegario
AVID Elective Teacher
Ewa Makai Middle School

From: [David Manring](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony for SB 2586 (February 10, 1:15pm)
Date: Monday, February 08, 2016 6:14:00 AM

Thank you for hearing the Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act. As a hardworking educator, I strongly support this bill because I know firsthand how it will boost quality teaching and student learning.

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Please support this bill.

Sincerely,

David Manring

--

dbmanring@gmail.com
808 741 4677

To: Education Committee
From: Debbie Anderson, Waiakea Intermediate School
Date: February 5, 2016

RE: SB2586/HB 2733 Education Omnibus Bill; "Schools Our Keiki Deserve (SOKD)"

Please support the Omnibus Education bill (SB2586) and any related bills pertaining to HSTA's Schools Our Keiki Deserve campaign. Our keiki are our most precious asset. I believe that increasing school funding invests in a better future, particularly increasing expenditures at the school level.

In order for children to access a quality education today, we need to improve school **facilities**, particularly heat abatement. **Class sizes** of over 50 are untenable, when we know that a teacher to student ratio such as even 1:20 makes a significant difference for personalizing learning. Universal access to **pre-school** is agreed widely to be one of the best investment choices. As co-chair of Hawaii's Senior Project, I see first-hand the value of increasing secondary options and choices for **vocational education**.

We want every child to become a productive citizen, because alternatives are much less tolerable. Wasting time and money on **standardized tests** which reflect socio-economic status isn't helping. We need to take advantage of the December 10, 2015 "Every Student Succeeds Act" reauthorization of the *War on Poverty's* 50th anniversary to empower teaching **professionals with local decision-making** on curriculum and resources. We need to invest in "**whole children**," with stronger health and physical education, deeper cultural and linguistic community building, and the Arts which broaden our spirits.

My name is Debbie Anderson, NBCT, a teacher of a quarter of a century. I've taught on Windward O'ahu, and on the Big Island in Hamakua and Hilo. Now I teach at Waiakea Intermediate School. A Weighted Student Formula (WSF) benefits more populated areas, though we know that larger schools are NOT BETTER necessarily. We need balanced investment in **small rural schools** to strengthen our most remote communities. Just as Finland tops international rankings with their cooperative priorities, we promote EQUITY for all keiki, so every school has basic personnel such as counselors, nurses and librarians. A clear research-based investment to fight illiteracy is a school library (Lance & Loertscher). We urge a greater public investment in our **keiki with the highest needs**,

- homeless or living in poverty (over 50%),
- balancing world language assets with English language learning (Krashen, Stephen).
- Special Education needs

Our Omnibus Education bill is important because I know we can make a difference together. I've seen too many teachers forced to leave our **underpaid profession** because they can't afford our cost of living, or work 2-3 jobs to make ends meet. Teachers create all the other professions, and deserve better, too! Over the last 25 years, I've coached the world's greatest athlete Bryan Clay, and I've been heartbroken to lose too many like Daiki. Our keiki need to see us make pono choices, be responsible for "other people's children" (Delpit, Lisa), because they are ALL OUR children! Children are worth it incalculably!

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Deborah V. Anderson, M.Ed., M.L.I.S., NBCT

From: [lisa chang](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony for SB 2586 (February 10, 1:15pm)
Date: Monday, February 08, 2016 12:35:17 AM

Mahalo for hearing the Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act. As an 18 year-veteran teacher in the Hawaii DOE, I strongly support this bill because I know firsthand how it will raise the quality of our schools, teaching and student learning.

Last year, I taught 5 classes of 7th grade English where the class sizes averaged 33-35 students per class . How many of you have experience raising a few 12 -13 year-olds at one time? Easy? Try managing and teaching 35 of them. And then multiply that by 5.

Because of the large class sizes, I felt like school had become a factory, and found myself becoming more of a class manager than an inspiring educator that develops healthy school relations with my students. There was no time for getting to know my students, there was no time to differentiate because managing the class became the business of the day. And grading homework? Do the math: 34 students x 5 classes equals 170 students. Spending 5 minutes per 170 students, assessing their homework equals 850 minutes = 14 hours. 14 hours to spend 5 minutes on grading one assignment. Can you see the reality? Teachers don't live at school, they have families, they help their own children with homework, cook, clean, coach, surf etc. They chill when needed, big time. They're your neighbor, your relatives, your siblings, and they are realizing they have skills that most organizations would appreciate, big time.

Last year 4th quarter, I spent 10 days teaching my regular curriculum. The rest of the days were spent on practice tests for the SBAC. While following my principal's guidance re: SBAC, I saw myself and most of my students disheartened, frustrated, and sadly apathetic about learning. My principal told us that the company line is we support SBAC, even if deep down, personally we did not.

Long story short, I decided to leave the full-time teaching and now am in a 1/2 time position at a rural school as support personnel for teachers. I couldn't be happier despite the loss of earnings, and will see how long I can manage this level of income before I do something else like maybe run for office or write a play about teaching in the DOE, and see if I can make a difference that way.

My opinion of the teacher evaluations system? It hasn't improved my teaching at all, let alone my colleagues' patterns also. It isn't worth the money and time to find the 2% or so of sub-standard teachers. It's much cheaper to target those struggling teachers and have them team teach with inspiring teachers who are getting a stipend to help the sub-standards to improve, and change their in-denial ways.

So in essence, please support the Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act. It's the result of an organized thoughtful process. Be a risk taker and see the balance and logic in this Act. It carries all the qualities of a solid education for a well-balanced child, ready to take on what the flexible future unfurls for them.

Mahalo for all you do,
Lisa Chang
Hau'ula Elementary School
National Board Certified Teacher
J.D. UCLA Law
M.I. M. Thunderbird School of Global Management

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Cc: foodsovereigntytnow@gmail.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for SB2586 on Feb 10, 2016 13:15PM*
Date: Sunday, February 07, 2016 11:58:06 PM

SB2586

Submitted on: 2/7/2016

Testimony for EDU on Feb 10, 2016 13:15PM in Conference Room 229

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Mitsuko Hayakawa	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

Do not reply to this email. This inbox is not monitored. For assistance please email webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov

From: [Laverne Moore](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2586
Date: Sunday, February 07, 2016 10:34:28 PM

Honorable Chairperson Kidani and Members of the Education Committee: My name is Laverne Moore and I am a special education teacher at McKinley High School. I am in support of SB2586 The Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act which addresses the major needs impacting our students in Hawaii. As a special education teachers, my students would fair better with vocational programs that meets the math requirements for graduation and prepare them for jobs that they can enter following high school. Your support for this bill is appreciated. Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony, Laverne Moore

From: [RAB](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Fwd: Testimony for SB 2586 (February 10, 1:15pm)
Date: Sunday, February 07, 2016 10:12:51 PM

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **RAB** <robertallenbeckvall@gmail.com>
Date: Sun, Feb 7, 2016 at 10:08 PM
Subject: Testimony for SB 2586 (February 10, 1:15pm)
To: EDUtestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov
Cc: tlau@hsta.org

Together, we can achieve better pay for teachers, an end to toxic testing, smaller class sizes, cooler classrooms, and an end to unfair evaluations. Thank you for standing with HSTA, your colleagues, and our students who will forge the future of our islands.

Thank you for hearing the Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act. As a hardworking educator, I strongly support this bill because I know firsthand how it will boost quality teaching and student learning.

In Hawai'i today, class sizes sometimes exceed forty or fifty students. Classroom temperatures have reached as high as 108 degrees. Curriculum is poisoned by a toxic amount of standardized testing. Arts, vocational, and special education instruction is neglected. Teachers are besieged by a burdensome evaluation system and, in turn, receive the lowest pay in the nation.

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Please support this bill.

--

Build character in the classrooms & on the courts.
Robert Allen Beckvall

"The greatest compliment that was ever paid me was when someone asked me what I thought, and attended to my answer."

— **Henry David Thoreau**

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Build character in the classrooms & on the courts.
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“The greatest compliment that was ever paid me was when someone asked me what I thought, and attended to my answer.”

— **Henry David Thoreau**

From: [Mike Landes](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony for SB 2586 (February 10, 1:15pm)
Date: Sunday, February 07, 2016 10:04:14 PM

Mahalo for hearing the Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act! As a public school teacher, I strongly support this bill, because I know firsthand how it will boost quality teaching and student learning. And as a parent of an elementary student in our public school system, I am specifically concerned about the amount of educational time that is being wasted on standardized testing. The tests themselves, along with the monthly practice tests, interim/mid-year tests, and endless test preparation are destroying our children's educational opportunities.

In Hawai'i today, class sizes sometimes exceed forty or fifty students. Classroom temperatures have reached as high as 108 degrees. Curriculum is poisoned by a toxic amount of standardized testing. Arts, vocational, and special education instruction is neglected. Teachers are besieged by a burdensome evaluation system and, in turn, receive the lowest pay in the nation.

Teachers, students, and parents deserve better. Please support professional pay for educators, an end to toxic testing, smaller class sizes, cooler classrooms, funding for arts, vocational and special education, and an end to unfair evaluations. In doing so, you will not only help teachers, but the students who will forge the future of our island home.

Please support this bill!

- Mike Landes
Kihei, HI

From: [Lindsay Fassett](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony for SB 2586 (February 10, 1:15pm)
Date: Sunday, February 07, 2016 9:53:57 PM

Aloha,

Thank you for hearing the Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act. As a hardworking educator, I strongly support this bill because I know firsthand how it will boost quality teaching and student learning.

In Hawai'i today, class sizes sometimes exceed forty or fifty students. Classroom temperatures have reached as high as 108 degrees. As a teacher at James Campbell High School in Ewa Beach, I am aware of a math class that consists of over 52 students, and have experienced firsthand how hard it is to function in a room with a temperature of over 100 degrees. Curriculum is poisoned by a toxic amount of standardized testing. Arts, vocational, students, and special education instruction is neglected. Teachers are besieged by a burdensome evaluation system and, in turn, receive the lowest pay in the nation.

Please ask yourself how you would feel as a licensed professional to have to prove your worthiness over and over again, even though you hold an advanced degree and have gone through the process of proving your worth by becoming licensed. Please consider how you would feel if you spent your own money on students at the expense of your own children. These two things, among many others, are what I experience year after year. Yet I know that my students, the future of Hawai'i, need a teacher like me who believes in them and sees THEIR worth, while the system that employs me and entrusts me, fails to see MINE.

We, the teachers, deserve better, because the students of Hawai'i deserve the BEST. Please support professional pay for educators, an end to toxic testing, smaller class sizes, cooler classrooms, funding for arts, vocational and special education, and an end to unfair evaluations. In doing so, you will not only help teachers, but the students who will forge the future of our island home.

Please support this bill.

Sincerely,

Lindsay Fassett
Teacher
James Campbell High School

From: [Charyse Iseri](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony for SB 2586 (February 10, 1:15pm)
Date: Sunday, February 07, 2016 9:36:54 PM

Thank you for hearing the Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act. As a hardworking educator, I strongly support this bill because I know firsthand how it will boost quality teaching and student learning.

In Hawai'i today, class sizes sometimes exceed forty or fifty students. Classroom temperatures have reached as high as 108 degrees. Curriculum is poisoned by a toxic amount of standardized testing. Arts, vocational, and special education instruction is neglected. Teachers are besieged by a burdensome evaluation system and, in turn, receive the lowest pay in the nation.

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Please support this bill.

Charyse Iseri

From: [Claire / Kalaunuola](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony for SB 2586 (February 10, 1:15pm)
Date: Sunday, February 07, 2016 9:34:32 PM

Thank you for hearing the Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act. As a hardworking educator, I strongly support this bill because I know firsthand how it will boost quality teaching and student learning. In Hawai'i today, class sizes sometimes exceed forty or fifty students. Classroom temperatures have reached as high as 108 degrees. Curriculum is poisoned by a toxic amount of standardized testing. Arts, vocational, and special education instruction is neglected. Teachers are besieged by a burdensome evaluation system and, in turn, receive the lowest pay in the nation. We, the teachers, deserve better. Please support professional pay for educators, an end to toxic testing, smaller class sizes, cooler classrooms, funding for arts, vocational and special education, and an end to unfair evaluations. In doing so, you will not only help teachers, but the students who will forge the future of our island home. Please support this bill.

Claire Ann A. M. "Kalaunuola" Domingo
Kumu Papa Malaa'o ma Ke Kula 'o Samuel M. Kamakau LPCS

From: [Ann Anusewicz](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB 2586, February 10, 2016, 1:15 PM
Date: Sunday, February 07, 2016 9:13:00 PM

Testimony for Senate Education Committee Hearing
February 10, 2016
1:15 PM

My name is Ann Anusewicz. I am writing to urge you to support SB 2586.

The Schools Our Keiki Deserve bill contains research-based proposals to strengthen education in Hawaii public schools. This is my 30th year as a public school teacher in Hawaii, so I know firsthand how this bill can create the public schools our students need. It will provide for positive learning environments for our students by reducing class size, improving facilities, ending over-testing, and expanding vocational and career pathway programs.

The Schools Our Keiki Deserve bill will also help to recruit and retain highly qualified teachers by providing for professional pay for educators, and ending unfair evaluations.

The Schools Our Keiki Deserve bill will also strengthen early childhood education. As a Kindergarten teacher at Kihei Elementary School, I understand the importance of preschool education. Preschool is a means to get our students on the road to academic and social success. The Junior Kindergarten program is no longer available for our students. It's time to give children access to preschool regardless of socio-economic background. Let's support public prekindergarten for all children.

Please support SB 2586 . Thank you for your time.

Ann Anusewicz

From: [Joy](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony for SB 2586 (February 10, 1:15pm)
Date: Sunday, February 07, 2016 8:38:18 PM

Thank you for hearing the Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act. As a hardworking educator, I strongly support this bill because I know firsthand how it will boost quality teaching and student learning.

In Hawai'i today, class sizes sometimes exceed forty or fifty students. Classroom temperatures have reached as high as 108 degrees. Curriculum is poisoned by a toxic amount of standardized testing. Arts, vocational, and special education instruction is neglected. Teachers are besieged by a burdensome evaluation system and, in turn, receive the lowest pay in the nation.

We, the teachers, deserve better. Please support professional pay for educators, an end to toxic testing, smaller class sizes, cooler classrooms, funding for arts, vocational and special education, and an end to unfair evaluations. In doing so, you will not only help teachers, but the students who will forge the future of our island home.

Please support this bill.

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Allan Silva](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony for SB 2586 (February 10, 1:15pm)
Date: Sunday, February 07, 2016 8:38:04 PM

Thank you for hearing the Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act. As a hardworking educator, I strongly support this bill because I know firsthand how it will boost quality teaching and student learning.

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Please support this bill.

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Roy & Sharon Inouye](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony for SB 2586 (February 10, 1:15pm)
Date: Sunday, February 07, 2016 8:26:53 PM

Thank you for hearing the Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act. As a hardworking educator, I strongly support this bill because I know firsthand how it will boost quality teaching and student learning.

In Hawaii today, class sizes sometimes exceed forty or fifty students. Classroom temperatures have reached as high as 108 degrees. Curriculum is poisoned by a toxic amount of standardized testing. Arts, vocational, and special education instruction is neglected. Teachers are besieged by a burdensome evaluation system and, in turn, receive the lowest pay in the nation.

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Please support this bill.

Mrs. Sharon Inouye
98-2051 D Kaahumanu Street
Aiea, HI 96701

From: [Tracy Monroe](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony for SB 2586 (February 10, 1:15pm)
Date: Sunday, February 07, 2016 8:00:13 PM

Thank you for hearing the Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act. As a hardworking educator, I strongly support this bill because I know firsthand how it will boost quality teaching and student learning.

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Please support this bill.

Mahalo,

Tracy Monroe

256-3702

Teacher, Ilima Intermediate School

16 years in education

2009 Middle School Educator of the Year

From: [Avi Yerlick](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony for SB 2586 (February 10, 1:15pm)
Date: Sunday, February 07, 2016 7:06:53 PM

Thank you for hearing the Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act. As a hardworking educator, I strongly support this bill because I know firsthand how it will boost quality teaching and student learning.

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Please support this bill!

Avidan Yerlick

From: [Tasha Firestone](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony for SB 2586 (February 10, 1:15pm)
Date: Sunday, February 07, 2016 6:28:18 PM

Thank you for hearing the Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act. As a hardworking educator, I strongly support this bill because I know firsthand how it will boost quality teaching and student learning.

In Hawai'i today, class sizes sometimes exceed forty or fifty students. Classroom temperatures have reached as high as 108 degrees. Curriculum is poisoned by a toxic amount of standardized testing. Arts, vocational, and special education instruction is neglected. Teachers are besieged by a burdensome evaluation system and, in turn, receive the lowest pay in the nation.

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Please support this bill.

From: Jaclyn_96792@yahoo.com
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony for SB 2586 (February 10, 1:15pm)
Date: Sunday, February 07, 2016 5:26:46 PM

Thank you for hearing the Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act. As a hardworking educator, I strongly support this bill because I know firsthand how it will boost quality teaching and student learning.

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Please support this bill.

Sent from my iPhone

From: roeleno@juno.com
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Re: SB 2586
Date: Sunday, February 07, 2016 4:52:35 PM

Thank you for hearing the Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act. As a hard-working educator for the past 20 years, I find myself struggling financially on my salary. Teachers deserve to get a pay increase to keep up with the cost of living here in Hawaii. Working at a K-12 school on Lanai, we need a lot of funding to successfully run a school efficiently just like any other school on Oahu; therefore, I'd like your support on Act 51. In addition, we need to get rid of toxic testing so that students can concentrate on getting a well-rounded education as well as getting rid of teacher evaluation which is unfair and demoralizing.

Please support this bill for the betterment of both students and teachers,

Sincerely,
Romeo Eleno
Lanai High & Elementary School

From: [rexann dubiel](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony for SB 2586 (February 10, 1:15pm)
Date: Sunday, February 07, 2016 2:42:08 PM

You get what you pay for.
Children in Hawaii deserve better.
Do your civic duty and provide for those students who have parents unable to afford private school, unlike YOUR Children.

Rexann Dubiel
Veteran 3rd Grade Teacher
Sunset Beach Elem.

Thank you for hearing the Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act. As a hardworking educator, I strongly support this bill because I know firsthand how it will boost quality teaching and student learning.

In Hawai'i today, class sizes sometimes exceed forty or fifty students. Classroom temperatures have reached as high as 108 degrees. Curriculum is poisoned by a toxic amount of standardized testing. Arts, vocational, and special education instruction is neglected. Teachers are besieged by a burdensome evaluation system and, in turn, receive the lowest pay in the nation.

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Please support this bill.

Sent from my T-Mobile 4G LTE Device

From: [Carolyn Michaels](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony for SB 2586 (February 10, 1:15pm)
Date: Sunday, February 07, 2016 12:46:41 PM

Thank you for hearing the Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act. As a hardworking educator, I strongly support this bill because I know firsthand how it will boost quality teaching and student learning.

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Please support this bill.
Carolyn Michaels

Testimony for: Support of SB2586
Committee on Education Hearing
Wednesday, February 10, 2016 1:15PM

Honorable Chair Kidani and committee members

We, freshmen of Mililani High School, support this bill because it will help to expand our education opportunities. This bill will provide more fundings for schools, allowing us to provide some classrooms air conditioning when needed, with this, it will also allow schools to save more money since the state will provide schools with the AC's. With this bill, it was also decrease class sizes. With the big class sizes we have right now, it's harder for us to get help and serves as a big distraction which will affects our learning abilities. With this bill it will improve our learning environment, it will help us get the one on one help we need. Without this bill, children who don't go to preschool will have difficulties in comprehending what they will learn in kindergarten, however, if we go on with this bill, then all the kids will be able to to learn better.

This bill supports all of us because, it will provide more funding for special education teachers. It also changes the evaluation program for teachers and education officers allowing teachers to help students learn better. It will also get rid of evaluating students and teachers by their standardized testing scores. This bill would help create better education, expanding our learning abilities, expanding our education opportunities, creating a better nation.

Sincerely,
Mackenzie Reed and Sofia Ana G. Balinbin

Testimony for: Support of SB2586
Committee on Education Hearing
Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Honorable Chair Kidani and committee members,

My name is Racyn Komata and I am a student attending Mililani High School and I'd like to show my support regarding the bill SB2586 because it addresses the problems of education and what I believe is an important issue, the size of a classroom being too large. Some of my classes, the teachers just show videos and give worksheets. This bill will allow teachers to continue their lesson plans, but can also give more focus onto their students instead of trying to teach a large class.

In accordance to this statement in the bill, "...reduced class size has particularly positive effects on secondary students who are performing at lower levels. If placed in larger class sizes, these lower achieving students continue to perform at low levels and their achievement levels actually decline in larger class settings." I believe that small classroom sizes can help students of any origin perform better in school. Smaller classroom sizes will allow students to get more help in class as they don't have to 'fight' for the teacher's attention.

Sincerely,
Racyn Komata

Testimony for: Support of SB2586
Committee on Education Hearing
Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Honorable Chair Kidani and committee members,

We support the bill due mainly to the fact that it ends high-stakes testing. The atrocity that is high-stakes testing is something that *every* student has poor experience with, no matter their academic ability. Ask any student and we assure that they will tell you the same thing; High-stakes testing only puts unnecessary stress on students, and prevents them from learning things that aren't strictly for test preparation. Educators should be working on easing the pressure on students and making their learning environments more student friendly, but their solutions to that is to just put *more* pressure on the students by adding onto the tests, creating a year's worth of preparation, and preventing a variety of learning topics from coming into school.

Personally, and like every other student, we have had poor experiences with standardized tests. Walking into the classroom on 'test day' is an *experience* in itself. Being told to sit down, shut up and listen to the teacher's instructions before embarking on a anxiety-ridden, multiple choice journey is probably one of the worst things we have been through in school. Those days, and the months before have filled students with dread for ages now. Though it isn't supposed to greatly affect your average grade, we have probably all been punished for a poor grade on a high-stakes test, whether that be mental, emotional or even physical. Overall, I think this is something we can all agree on, and that standardized testing is not a necessary part of any student's education.

Sincerely,
Annalise Conner and Rylie Olinger

Testimony for: Support of SB2586
Committee on Education Hearing
Wednesday, February 10, 2016

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Sincerely,
Annalise Conner and Rylie Olinger

Testimony for : Support of SB2586

Committee on Education Hearing

Wednesday, February 10, 2016 1:15pm

Honorable Chair Kidani and committee members,

My name is Tabitha Hiyane and I am currently a 9th grade student at Mililani High School. I support Senate Bill 2586 because it provides for the establishment of a long-awaited “whole child education”. A whole child education consolidates a social-emotional approach to learning core topics such as math/engineering, literacy, the sciences, music, and language. Between the ages of 2 and 6, the child’s brain goes through a major milestone of development in which brain connections are either formed or discarded according to the stimulation/exposure that the child does or does not receive. Through the implementation of a whole child curriculum and mandatory preschool, the child is exposed (early on) to different activities and different interests. These opportunities serve as a chance to appeal to our keiki and encourage them to be more intimately involved, creating more social connections. Our schools currently stress the fundamental education core requirements, but if our keiki grow up with just math, science, and writing, the previous curiosity and creativity flourishing in their youth, will vanish. Through a whole curriculum, students will be nourished and exposed to outside activities that can spark their creative sense. These activities will inspire and influence the growth of their humanity and knowledge of the world around them. If this is the role we want our keiki to grow into, we must take direct action now and allow them the opportunities of a richer educational experience through different perspectives and activities. Through the implementation of a solid whole child education, Hawaii’s keiki can grow to become well-rounded scholars that can properly lead our future.

Through my own personal experience, the addition of a music class in school was able to open a whole new world to me. This world of music helped me to develop as a person - it taught me consistency in practicing, being on time, being sensitive to those around me, and being more comfortable with expressing myself. This experience was offered through the music department at my school and I believe that every student should feel, in their school life, a sense of place and belonging. Along with the strenuous academic expectations that are put upon our keiki, we must take into consideration their creative and artistic sense. We must appeal to their humanity and encourage activities that make their hearts race. Establishing a sense of individuality among each student is extremely important because it results in active involvement later on. I strongly

believe that the implementation of the “whole child education” is important to Hawaii’s future, and that is why I am in support of Senate Bill 2586.

Testimony for: SB2586

Ryan Domingo
John Kalani

Committee on Education Hearing

Wednesday, February 10, 2016 1:15pm

Honorable Chair Kidani and committee members,

As freshmen at Mililani High School, we support bill SB2586 because it addresses the problem of class size. We believe that the problems addressed by this bill is beneficial to struggling students that want to be able to learn and be successful.

The problem is larger class sizes allow for teachers to be unaware if a student needs help. For students it would be hard to get the help needed if they're struggling. If class sizes were reduced it would allow more one-on-one time with students and give teachers the ability to address any questions and concerns students have on assignments. Studies have shown smaller class sizes have higher academic achievement, receive better grades, and exhibit improved attendance. A study was authorized by the U.S Department of Education to analyze the achievement of students in 2,561 schools across the nation by their performance on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) exams. After the exams were analyzed the only corresponding factor to higher test scores was class size. In Hawaii after grades K-2 there is no clear limit to class sizes. For example, at Campbell High School, often classes of core academic subjects have 40 or more students in each class.

Here at Mililani High School, class sizes vary from class to class and subject to subject. Here in our Pre-AP History class we have a total of 35 students in this one class. Smaller class sizes will not only benefit our learning but the entire school/state. Big classes can sometimes be overwhelming to some students, in this class, we struggle and can't always receive the help needed because of the substantial class size. Smaller classes give more opportunities for students to speak up, ask questions, and contribute to class discussion. At Mililani High, student contributions are required in many classes, but due to the different class sizes not all students participate due to their nervousness. We agreed that smaller class sizes create stronger bonds between peers and students. This bond will allow students to be comfortable in class and allow them to ask for the help they need. That is why we support this bill, because it will benefit us in the classroom, providing us better learning conditions, improved education and student involvement.

Sincerely,
Ryan James Domingo & John Kalani

Testimony for: Support of SB2586
Committee on Education Hearing
Wednesday, February 10, 2016 1:15pm

Honorable Chair Kidani and committee members,

We, freshman of Mililani High School, support the decision to limit participation in standardized tests and allow students to opt-out of the testing because those standardized tests cause stress for students and affect teachers' morale and teaching. The standardized tests tend to stress many out because they all strive for a good test score. Some students athletes and other students who have extracurricular activities are stuck studying until late on the night before the test. Since those students are up very late, they don't get enough sleep, which may cause them to get a worse test score. Many other students may decide not to study because they just assume that the standardized tests aren't very important. Those students won't be ready for the standardized tests, which may cause false test results. When all the test results are sent back to the students and their families, they may feel that they are stupid because their results are bad. Instead of causing them to want to improve their scores and work harder, it causes a negative impact on students and may cause them to fall back on their studies.

Test scores not only affect students, but also teachers. In most schools, teachers are assessed on how well their teaching and lessons has helped students to get good test scores on the standardized tests. If some students aren't trying their hardest or were staying up studying, then teachers aren't being truthfully assessed. Teachers realize that they aren't being assessed truthfully and want to change that. However, many teachers don't know how to change the system and therefore will become an endless loop of unfairly assessed teachers and procrastinating students. Some public schools are trying to change this by having teachers spend their time preparing the students for the standardized tests instead of teaching students more in-depth lessons. All teachers are focused on are making sure that students are making the narrow goal of achieving a desired test score. If the students' test scores turn out to be below the desired score, teacher morale may drop, possibly affecting the quality of the lessons they teach students.

Personally, as high school students, we take these standardized tests. These tests tend to stress us out before and after taking the tests, along with many other students. Students like us usually stress and dread about it before, and while we take it. Most of the time, we tend to procrastinate and wait until the night before to start studying, sometimes we don't bother to even study and just wing it, not really trying to do our best. Many of us wonder what the point of taking these standardized tests if no one bothers to try their best, killing our morale while piling more stress onto the stress we already get from our regular classes. We already have to do loads

of homework from the many classes we have, why should we have to worry about standardized tests and studying for them? How does it benefit us? Why should we take these tests if we don't know the benefits? Why should we have to take tests that do nothing for us? That is why we agree with them allowing us and other students to opt-out of these standardized tests. We can avoid all the stress that comes from them and just focus on their current grades in normal classes and won't have to worry about our test scores or worry about others teasing us if we get bad scores. We will still have the option to take the test and see where we are in that specific study. We won't have to be stuck learning about how we should take the test and just learn the basics of what is on the tests. We can go more in-depth in our studies and learn more.

Sincerely, Carly Hera and Mio Istvan

Testimony for: Support of SB2586 2733
Committee on Education Hearing
Wednesday, February 10, 2016 1:15pm

Honorable Chair Kidani and committee members

My name is Jenna Nakanishi, a freshman at Mililani High School, and I support this bill because I believe it is a crucial factor in how our schools function and the education that students are receiving. This first part explains how the students who attend private schools in our state, such as Punahou and 'Iolani, have much more educational tools at their disposal. In addition, their curriculum is a lot richer and more varied, covering more subjects than the education currently in place at most public high schools. Their students are given more opportunities to explore and develop the subjects that interest each separate individual, and work more hands on. They teach in depth core classes, such as language arts, science, mathematics, and social studies, but they also cover classes about art, music, technology, and outdoor activities. While similar classes are offered as electives at public schools, the preparations for standardized tests center solely on mathematics and language arts. Being fully prepared for tests for all subjects is a key to success in our academic careers.

I feel that all students should receive a quality education, regardless of nationality or financial background. Some families may have capable students, but are not able to afford a higher education. Many students attending public high school are ethnically diverse, so integrating an education that is focused on different cultures is also an important aspect of this bill. A student of diversity should be given the opportunity to learn about their background and heritage, which may lead younger people to gain better insight into who they are. Learning about their culture may help some of them establish an identity for themselves and discover their origins. Private schools are able to integrate this into their curriculum because of the added funds they receive from tuition; however, it is understandable that people who are financially struggling would not be able to afford this. So while public schools may not be able to go as in depth into these topics than private school, having it at all is better than nothing. Preparations for tests should be expanded to try to accommodate everything, and prepare students for what lies ahead, both in their academic careers and challenges they may encounter later in life. While not everyone attends a private school and has access to all of their educational tools, at least some of them should try to be put into effect at public schools.

Sincerely,
Jenna Nakanishi

Testimony for: Non-Support of SB2586

Committee on Education Hearing

Wednesday, February 10, 2016 at 1:15pm

Honorable Chair Kidani and committee members

We, freshmen from Mililani High School, do not support this bill because it states that it wants to make classes smaller, add air conditioning to certain classrooms, and add tests for evaluation purposes to improve the learning experience for public school students. If the bill is not stopped the consequences may be too much for Hawaii to handle.

Making classes smaller will create the need to build more classrooms. This will raise taxes to build the classrooms, as well as buying the supplies for the class. This could possibly raise the amount of homelessness because of how expensive it is to live here. With the sizes that classes are currently at, there are more students who can give their input on certain topics and make a bigger picture. Although making classes smaller will create more jobs as a teacher or educational officers, there are not many people who are qualified for those positions, and we already don't have enough qualified people who are willing to take the job. More evaluation tests are not needed. There are already multiple tests, such as the Renaissance test, to evaluate how we are doing in school. With more tests, teachers will become more focused on teaching students standards that will be on the test instead of teaching students tools that will be needed to help and prepare for life.

Sincerely,

Lindsay Shiroma
Gracelynn Maguire

Testimony for: Support of SB2586

Committee of Education Hearing

Wednesday, February 10, 2016 1:15

Honorable Chief Kidani and committee members,

I support this bill SB2586 because it relates to the problems that we go through here in the state of Hawaii. We think that one of the issues here in the Hawaii schools are air quality. Some air quality issues we face here are things like vog and pollution, and because of the poor air conditioning, these things are circulating in our classrooms and creating an uncomfortable learning environment. Basic things like taking tests or paying attention in class can be difficult with the wrong conditions. I know people that are allergic to vog and it causes them to cough and sneeze badly, I can only imagine how hard it is to focus in class while trying not to sneeze or cough on someone. Here in Hawaii, it is hot most of the year. Adults seek air conditioned rooms to help beat the heat, but expect us students to be able to manage it and pay attention in class.

Through my personal experiences I can relate to what other students around the state are going through. Not all classrooms here are air conditioned, but i feel lucky to even have a few, this is because in those few classes with air conditioning, I am able to cool off. Although there are other schools that have no air conditioning in any classrooms. It is hard to imagine what they go through. Also they are expected to keep up their grades and do good on all of their tests, when they don't have the correct environment to help them thrive in the classroom. Going through conditions like that for 7 hours could be hard to endure and some of them don't even have air conditioning at their home. This is why i strongly support the bill SB2586.

Sincerely,

Cole Akamu and Franklin Orego

Testimony for: support of SB2586
Committee on Education Hearing
Wednesday, February 10, 2016 1:15pm

Honorable Chair Kidani and committee members,

I am a freshman at Mililani High School and I support this bill because throughout this bill you address issues that I believe are important for younger generations' future. Class size and support for all of our students is something that should really be focused on. When being in a smaller classroom students are able to receive a more in depth comment or critique on their assignments. Also, lower achieving students who are placed in smaller classes have their academic progress dramatically increase while being in that class. If it is proven that smaller class sizes help academic improvement then why do some classes still have larger classes? For example, Campbell High school academic subject classes has 40 or more students in a class. How is one teacher supposed to help give specific comments for each student?

This whole bill is basically about the students and for future generations which is very important. The younger generation, including us, are expected to solve all of society's problems. Making our education environment better and providing passionate and respected teachers may be the first step. My personal experience with class sizes is that I felt that my understanding of that particular lesson was better in a smaller class, rather than in a larger one. I feel like in a smaller class the teacher is able to focus her energy on a specific student rather than having her to spread herself out with multiple students. In my opinion students I feel more confident with smaller classes because of that connection I am able to have with the teacher. My main idea that I am trying to get here is that I support this bill in hopes of it helping this generations and future generations.

-Sincerely,
Janice Alegre

Testimony for: Support of SB 25878
Committee on Education Hearing
Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Honorable Chair Kidani and committee members,

My name is John de los Reyes, and I am a student attending Mililani High School and I am writing to show my support regarding the Senate Bill 2586. This bill addresses lots of fixing having to do with Hawaii's educational system. One part of the bill I strongly support is Whole Child Education. I support this part because in my experience, and what I have been taught is that education can be the greatest equalizer in life. Subjects like math, science, and language arts are very important to know when getting into any line of work. However, acting, performances, and music also would benefit a lot of students. I myself used to play the saxophone and I can personally say I have benefitted from that experience. I especially support this aspect of learning for everyone. SB 2587 helps with any lackings with our education and I show full support for it.

If this bill is passed, it will benefit everyone on Hawaii because what this bill does, is that it makes our futures look more solid and more stable due to the many improvements being implemented in our educational system. The bill talks about making smaller classes, and from what I know, teachers can take a more personalized approach to students with less being in the class. When students get better teaching they tend to learn more, and benefit more. This makes the future workforce of this generation look more brighter.

Sincerely,
John de los Reyes

Testimony for: Support of SB2586
Committee on Education Hearing
Wednesday, February 10, 2016 1:15 pm

Honorable Chair Kidani and committee members,

Our names are Isabelle Rice and Alanis Santiago-Rodriguez and we are concerned students of Mililani High School. We are testifying in support of S.B. 2586.

This bill will help the children of Hawaii for the following reasons: our schools need air conditioning and smaller class sizes.

Over the past year, Honolulu experienced record high temperatures at least 25 times; and for decades, Hawaii's cooling trade winds have been declining. This weather makes it very hard for children to remain focused in school, especially when 94% of schools in Hawaii do not have access to air conditioning. Studies have shown that air conditioned classrooms help students remain focused. Also, if schools are not equipped with AC, there could be dangerous consequences; kids are susceptible to heat exhaustion, due to their small size. According to a Huffington Post article, there have already been many students who have shown signs of heat exhaustion, and have had to go to the school nurse. If AC were provided in classrooms, there would not have to be "heat days" and, no [preventable] missed school days. Another issue that is of our concern, is the size of our classrooms. Our class size can usually range from 30 to 40 students. We are aware that class size does not correspond with our success in later life, however, it is difficult to learn where there are not enough chairs and equipment available. Also, it is burdensome when 30 kids are trying to fight for a seat next to a fan.

This is the first school that we have ever attended that does not have air conditioning in all classrooms. Mililani High School is said to be the best public school in the state, and we have only have selected rooms with air conditioning. Not only that our class sizes are fairly large, compared to those on the mainland. We are in support of this bill because no student should have to be distracted by heat so badly that it affects his or her education. We are in support of this bill because every student shouldn't have to fight over a seat because class sizes are too large. We are in support of this bill because other students, our future students of Hawaii deserve this.

Sincerely,
Isabelle Rice & Alanis Santiago-Rodriguez

Testimony for: Support of SB2586
Committee on Education Hearing
Wednesday, February 10, 2019 1:15pm

Honorable Chair Kidani and committee members,

Our names are Jade Brooks and Kaitlyn French and we are students at Mililani High School concerned about the quality of education at schools around the islands. We are testifying in support of Senate Bill 2586 because it will resolve many issues in public education. Some issues that are addressed in SB2586 are air conditioning, supplies, salaries, class size, and special funding. It is imperative to solve these complications in public education because in all of our classes, there are more than 30 students. This isn't the only issue in public education. In addition to the number of children in each class, on average, a teacher's salary in Hawaii is \$55,000 per year. Teachers in Hawaii are the lowest paid in all of the United States. This combines with the cost of living in Hawaii and the number of children an average teacher has to teach, makes it very clear that teachers in Hawaii deserve a higher salary.

This bill pertained to vocational education. Part IV of SB2586 impacts me directly because, I Kaitlyn am currently enrolled in a class called Public and Human Services Career Pathway Core, as well as Business Core, which is a vocational

education class. I noticed that not every student is required or gets the opportunity to participate in this type of curriculum, and I believe that EVERY student should experience this opportunity because, for example in Public and Human Services Career Pathway Core, I am learning culinary skills, the importance of education, hospitality, and community awareness. In Business Core, I am learning how to write checks and balance finances, interview skills, the application process, and also customer service skills. All of skills are necessary to live a successful life.

Testimony for: Support of SB 2586

Committee on Education Hearing

Wednesday, February 10, 2016 1:15pm

Hello Chair Kidani and Committee Members,

We, Cindy Tsou and Anika Ramos, freshman students of Mililani High School, support and acknowledge Part Two of The Whole Child Education of the bill SB 2586. We agree that students in Hawaii, elementary through high school should be exposed to cultural, literary, and performing arts. Such as music, theatre, Hawaiian studies, etc. According to Champions of Change: The Impact of the Arts on Learning (Fiske, 1999), learning performing, visual and cultural arts increases the percent of math scores. students that scored higher in math, "Twenty-one percent of students of low socioeconomic status who had studied music scored higher in math versus just eleven percent of those who had not." The definition of "Whole Child Education" is to make sure that each student is educated to be a healthy learner and engage in supportive and comfortable environment. According to the 2016 Omnibus Bill; "Schools our Keiki Deserve", it stated, "Taken together, students of Hawaiian, Filipino, and other Pacific Islander descent make up...55%, of our public school students..." Having Hawaiian studies starting in early elementary schools will make a big impact on the Hawaiians, Filipino, and other Pacific Islands as well as contribute to the future Hawaii's resident the importance of this Island and it's history.

I, Cindy Tsou, support the implementation of arts, crafts, and cultural studies in elementary education. My reason for supporting an early exposure of performing, visual and cultural acts is in result to personal experience that I have in California and Hawaii in regards to the fine arts and culture. In 4th grade, as I attended elementary school in Walnut, California in 4th grade, there was a music class, where I learned to play the recorder and learned music theory. Most importantly, I developed my love for music and fine arts as well as beginning to become a self-directed learner, a valuable skill in which I apply to my later school years and life. For this reason, I agree that arts, cultural as well as visual arts should be implemented in elementary education. As a art students, art club member and a engaged cultural studies student in elementary, middle and high school, I strongly agree that having this skill learned early on in elementary school is crucial in the development of a well-rounded person.

I, Anika, support whole child education because growing up in a public elementary school back on Dededo, Guam I was exposed to an education filled with art and the Chamorro culture. Looking back on my elementary days, I'm grateful to have learned in an environment where teachers cared about their culture and didn't ignore it. Learning about the Chamorro culture was not an "if you want to class", but a required class. We learned the Chamorro Anthem(in Chamorro), vocab words, and dances. I feel that if Hawaiian studies was a class in school students would be grateful to be living on this beautiful island that has an equally interesting history. Also learning about Hawaii's performing arts area could help students become in tune with their artistic personality and emotions. Personally I have limited knowledge about Hawaiian culture and I wish that it was a class because it is important to know about the place you live on.

Thank you-

Anika Ramos and Cindy Tsou

Testimony for: Support of SB 2586

Dear Honorable Chair Members,

My name is Kyana Iida, and I support this bill wholeheartedly because it allows the future generation to have a chance at a better education, so that later on in life, they'll have better opportunities available. Corey Rosenlee said, "It is an investment in our future and the responsible thing to do." The upcoming generation is the future, so I believe that public schools should be funded with more money, so that there are greater things that can be accomplished. Education is the most important thing for us adolescents, because it is the foundation for the rest of our lives. More opportunities expanding "vocational, technical, and career pathway programs" will give students a variety of experiences, which opens up opportunities for them in the long run. "It's time to make education a priority in Hawai'i," said HSTA President Corey Rosenlee. Hawai'i isn't known for having the best education, and this act will allow Hawai'i to improve its public education system. Education is an important role in every child's life, and this act will definitely change it for the better.

This act has affected me personally because I have a passion for school. I am a freshman at Mililani High School, and I've been in the public education system for my whole life. I've seen growth, since evolving from "Furlough Fridays". I believe that education is the most important thing because it shapes your career. I've been known in school to always try hard and a lot of people always ask why I do so. It's because I have goals in mind and I know what I'm striving for. The school education system is decent now, but if it was improved, the education system would be really solid. It'll honestly give others a better chance at going to college and pursuing what they want for the future generation. I believe that this is the key Act for the future generations to allow them to have a better education. Education is super important to me, and although I feel like I'm sometimes out of place because I am obsessed with my grades and school, I still believe that the education system can be improved. This is such an amazing act.

Sincerely,
Kyana

Testimony for: Support of SB2586
Committee on Education Hearing
Wednesday, February 10, 2016 1:15pm

Honorable Chair Kidani and committee members,

My name is Cairo Kahakua and I am a student at Mililani High School. I believe SB2586 is a great bill and I support it. This would give the students a more comfortable and better work place because of the air conditioning and smaller class sizes. Studies show that the lack of a comfortable classroom will make it harder for students to pay attention, concentrate, learn, and they become more irritable in a non-comfortable environment. Air conditioning also has good effects as it helps the students work, "Research indicates that lowering the temperature and increasing ventilation in classrooms increases student performance by 10 to 20 percent. The students' performance improved mainly in terms of how quickly they worked and also how many errors were made." To make the classrooms even better, this bill proposes that we should make the classes with less kids, so the teachers could teach some of the kids more personally than a class with more students. Less students could also help the special education or disadvantaged children, since they sometimes need more attention from the teacher to learn how to do the lessons we are being taught.

This bill also affects me personally, because in my school only the new or recently renovated buildings have air conditioning, and some my friends do not have a single air conditioned classroom. This could affect their learning and it could make it harder for them to graduate. Another thing is that in one of my classes, we do not have enough laptops for every student, so we would have to share with someone else. If we had a smaller class size, then there

would be enough laptops for everyone. This also make me think of the schools who don't have enough chairs or desks for everyone or if they even have laptops in the first place. All in all I believe this bill could help schools become better than they are now and it could help the students graduate from high school easier.

Sincerely,

Cairo Kahakua

Testimony for: Support of SB2586
Committee on Education Hearing
Wednesday, February 10, 2016 1:15 pm

Honorable Chair Kidani and Senate committee members,

We are freshmen from Mililani High School and we are supporting the Part I of SB2586 Whole Child Education. We feel that this is a very important issue that should be addressed because students should be provided the right to learn other things that they want to learn about to help their learning ability. We need to help the students in Hawaii, especially our public schools to give them opportunities to be more aware of events that associate to communities all around the world and right here in our very islands. 52% of the student population in Hawaii public schools come from 'economically disadvantaged' households Hawaii's private schools have been given the benefits of curriculums that a wide variety of students can enjoy such as global languages, music, technology, science, etc. On the other hand, Hawaii's public schools don't offer some of these because some schools aren't providing the best education. Public schools such as Wai'anae are less fortunate to enjoy the benefits that private schools like Punahou get to have because they aren't constrained by the same 'accountability'. Not only do we need to expand curriculums to other public schools but we also need to be willing to put in the effort to helping students that face struggles.

We feel this particular part of this bill is important to us because it will affect our future of Hawaii. Students need creative thinking, self-directed learning, and cultural understanding by requiring public schools to receive whole child education. We should take in account of what the students want in schools that will help them broaden their knowledge, whether it be music, a language or sports. We believe that in order for students to become the things they want to become and have more opportunities, we think this issue should not be overlooked and be put into action. We have to teach other skills required for students after college to find a job. It is important that we don't fall even more behind than we are now. That is why some schools cut out other classes to try to help them and it isn't working. We have to continue with these other classes to prepare for jobs in the future, not take it away. We just need to figure out other ways to help struggling students so we can be balanced so our future can still be good.

Sincerely,
Hailey Tachibana and Kana Morita

Testimony for: support of SB2586

Wednesday, February 10, 2016 1:15pm

Committee on Education Hearing

Honorable Chair Kidani and committee members,

Hi we are Ryan Castillo and Evan Kurashige, and we are freshman students from Mililani High School. We would like to voice our opinion about SB2586. Senate Bill 2586 is a very good bill, we have looked over the bill and agree with its contents. Students should get more rights within the school. Teachers, principals, and even students will find that learning will be more productive and enjoyable with better privileges, and more legroom. According to multiple sources, students learn better with less kids, which means that class sizes should be smaller, instead of packing tons of students into one classroom, making conditions uncomfortable.

“Researchers generally agree that lower class sizes, at least in the earliest grades, are linked to positive educational benefits such as better test scores, fewer dropouts and higher graduation rates, especially for disadvantaged children”. Smaller class sizes also decrease the ratio of too many teachers to one or two teacher(s). “The most obvious explanation for why reducing class size works — that teachers give students better, more-tailored instruction in smaller classes — probably isn’t the reason why achievement goes up. Teachers for the most part don’t change their practices automatically when their classes have fewer students. Students behave better and pay more attention in smaller groups, and this may account at least initially for the gains. For example, it’s harder for a couple of troublemakers in the back of the room to derail the class when they can’t hide in a crowd.” Having smaller class sizes is very beneficial to the ordinary child so that they can succeed, and be destined for success.

We are very concerned about this bill, and we hope it passes. Students in Hawaii deserve better learning environments and facilities, because we are the future of Hawaii. Without adequate facilities, teaching us would be kind of pointless. Do people really think that students can remember the material they are taught, when the scorching classroom heat is affecting their concentration? I don't think so. The students of schools with lower budgets and rural areas deserve better. They deserve to have proper teaching environments, so they can learn, and retain what they learn. After all, we are the next generation, and the future rests in our hands, and we deserve the necessary tools to make sure our future is bright.

Thank you,

Ryan Castillo and Evan Kurashige

Mililani High School

Testimony for: Support of SB2586

Committee on Education Hearing

Wednesday, February 10, 2016 1:15 pm

Aloha, legislators! I am Isabel Camacho, a student at Mililani High School, and I strongly support this bill. In particular, I would be pleased if the PART V. QUALITY SCHOOL FACILITIES became reality. Concerning Hawaii's school facilities, I would like to focus upon the issue of installing air conditioning and cooling systems for our public schools.

94% of Hawaii's public schools lack air conditioning throughout their entire school, according to an official count. Schools will have more trouble with this as we move into warmer times- there's the fact that Honolulu is making record high temperatures, which has happened at least 25 times in the last year or so, not to mention that experts say our cooling trade winds have been declining. This may not seem terribly urgent, but the majority of these schools are already in warmer areas like Ewa Beach, where a Campbell High School teacher measured her classroom and found it was 96 degrees fahrenheit- this is like a humid Hawaiian day with no wind, but worse. Studies show that anywhere over 75 degrees makes it hard to focus, so this is clearly not the ideal environment for learning. Another Ewa Beach teacher left her work for the emergency room, experiencing intense heat exhaustion; she was later told she nearly had a heat stroke. Heat strokes are a deadly medical emergency, as the possible loss of consciousness and the damage done to organs, including the brain, is in some cases fatal. Considering kids are more vulnerable to heat exhaustion from not being fully developed, this issue is actually very urgent.

From personal experience, I know air conditioned classrooms are preferable since they are significantly easier to focus in. It is simply miserable in that type of a learning environment- being stuck in a small, steaming room with 35 sweaty kids in it, you couldn't *possibly* be expected to learn, or to even pretend to pay attention. Yet, even though I think I have it bad in my classes without AC, and I go to the highest-ranking and nicest public high school in Hawaii, in one of the *cooler* parts of

Oahu, so to think that the majority of Hawaiian kids are facing much worse is to say the least upsetting.

Thus, it is so very pressing that this bill is accepted, for just this one small segment of the bill will do so much for our community. Thanks for your time.

Name: Matthew Fera, Justice Rosario

Period: 6

Date: February 8, 2016

Testimony for: Support of SB2586

Committee on Education Hearing

Wednesday, February 10, 2016 1:15pm

Honorable Chair Kidani and committee members, we juniors at Mililani High School support bill SB2586 because Hawaii needs it. Needs it to keep up in the world. Needs it to improve the community. Needs it to improve our students future. The islands are behind, Hawaii is last in the country concerning the spending on students, due to cost of living. This bill will allow the state to catch up to the rest of the world, building a better future for our students.

To begin, the weighted student formula is an important way for schools to improve staffing and funding equity. This is important not only for the staff, but for the students as well. The students will be able to reach their greatest potential since the formula allows for more money per student depending on the type of class they're taking; such as honors or AP. This allows for money to be allocated in important classes and avoid wasting any extra money for students that aren't in rigorous courses. The other schools that aren't as fortunate as our own could benefit greatly from such programs, especially since this state needs more schools like ours.

This affects students such as ourselves who also seek ambitious futures, since the money will allow for AP courses to get the more money across the state. Especially for students in other

schools who have the same academic potential as us, the additional money will allow them to achieve their full potential. Also, classroom size will be greatly helped; even Mililani has had instances where too many students are in one classroom, to the point that there aren't even enough chairs or laptops. If the weighted student formula were to be continued across the state, many more students would be able to pursue better careers because they will have better learning environments. This will create more jobs, a better economy, and prevent students becoming homeless in the future because of better opportunities. So why shouldn't we invest in the future?

Sincerely,

Matthew Feria and Justice Rosario

Testimony for: Support SB2586

Committee on Education Hearing

Wednesday, February 10, 2016 1:15pm

Honorable Chair Kidani and committee members,

Many freshman at Mililani High School including myself, Maxine Gelacio are concerned not only about our education but the learning environment we are in. I fully support this bill, *Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act* because it explains the importance of kids getting the education they deserve. Among many other concerns and suggestions this act provides.

To begin with, among many other concerns and suggestions this act provides, the section that caught my attention was Section 11. Section 11 explained climate controls in the classroom and how if the classroom exceeds around 86 degrees the certain health precautions should be taken accountable. Meaning, if students were exposed to a classroom in this heat, plus the heat from the bodies around them may cause heat strokes or heat cramps. Having AC isn't only a major privilege but, having it can create a good education environment. One of the classes that I am in right now does not have AC we only have fans set up around the room to cool us down. Unfortunately, we can't always keep them on because of the noise they may make, so the teacher may turn it off during presentations or videos. The reason this is done is so our teacher can insure that we hear what is being said. Instead of turning the volume up because it may be a distraction to the classes next to us, we turn off the fans. This creates an uncomfortable environment because without the flowing air it tends to get muggy and very hot in the room. The result of the stagnate air, some students like myself start to feel fatigue due to the heat. This makes others and I unfocused because as we try to find comfort in the situation we are in, instead of focusing on the lesson that is being taught. My mind is no longer engaged with the lesson, but now engaged on trying to find a way to cope with the hot room I am in.

Sincerely,
Maxine Gelacio

Testimony for: Support of SB2586
Committee on Education Hearing
Wednesday, February 10, 2016 1:15pm

Honorable Chair Kidani and committee members,

We, freshman at Mililani High School, agree with SB 2586 with regards of whole child education. Other courses besides required core classes are essential to enhancing student skills, and are very beneficial in preparing students for the real world after high school. Whole child education is very essential in finding the things that students like and desire to be. The public school system cannot do this if we only spent about \$8000 a student. The students of today are the world leaders of tomorrow, and students cannot be world leaders if they only learn the basic subjects every single day. For example, the culture and lifestyle found in Hawai'i is one of the most unique and exciting cultures around. We need to emphasize this to be better thinkers and explores in order to continue these excellent traditions, but this won't happen if the educational curriculum is very scripted and basic. Rather than just focusing on whether or not the answer to your math problem is correct or if the students know where to put their commas, we should be looking for authentic learning experiences. Life isn't just an assembly line of generations. It is an experience that should be cherished throughout their educational life.

Personally, we are both athletes and musicians. At our school we enjoy the athletics and extracurricular activities that are provided, and feel that they have greatly increased our academic success as well as our life skills that will be needed in adulthood. Our school is one of the few public schools in the state that is fortunate enough to be provided with the materials and resources that are required for whole child education. However, there are schools that are less fortunate than us such as Waianae and Nanakuli. These schools deserve the same educational resources that we do. We're sure that it is not the state's goal to have schools without a band room or a basketball court. These venues will allow students to explore what they love to do, rather than just focus on the basic courses that is required and sometimes boring to some students. In conclusion, more efforts should be made to emphasize other classes besides core classes that are considered to be the only 'necessary' courses.

Respectfully,

Josh Thorley & Jake Simpson

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Cc: 2019pagee@mililanihs.k12.hi.us
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB2586 on Feb 10, 2016 13:15PM
Date: Monday, February 08, 2016 2:24:18 PM

SB2586

Submitted on: 2/8/2016

Testimony for EDU on Feb 10, 2016 13:15PM in Conference Room 229

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Elise Page	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Testimony for: Support of SB2586 Senate Committee on Education Hearing Wednesday, February 10, 2016 Honorary Chair Kidani and committee members, My name is Elise Page, a freshman at Mililani High School. I believe that it is absolutely important to encourage students to do well in school and try their best, however, many of our public schools in Hawaii are lacking in basic necessities such as air conditioning. Coming from Mililani, I understand that I am very fortunate, I have smaller classes and air conditioning in most of them. Campbell on the other hand is not so lucky. They have very large classes without air conditioning and some students don't even have chairs. I spoke to one of the students there and he said that air conditioning and class size are the top issues for students there, so I'm here to speak for them. Now tell me this; how do we expect children to learn and pay attention when they are in an uncomfortable environment? Having a smaller class and air conditioning rather than sitting in a stuffy classroom can improve moods of students and teachers, which can help to improve the grades of students in the long run. If the state of Hawaii is ever going to improve our test scores, making sure that the students are able to focus is important and necessary. Personally, air conditioning makes a big difference in how I focus on my class work, I'm not worrying about other things like constantly eyeing the clock eager to get out of the stifling classroom. Many of my classes only have large fans that make a lot of noise, so we are forced to turn it off to be able to hear our teacher. When the fan is turned off, I try to distract myself from the heat, causing me to lose focus of the material we are learning. Imagine this for students in classrooms with temperatures around 90 degrees. I would like to raise the test scores and grade point average for Hawaii and I feel that improving the classrooms is the first step to achieving that goal. I want Hawaii to be proud of their students. Thank you, Elise Page

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Testimony for: Support of SB2586

Committee on Education Hearing

Wednesday, February 10, 2016 1:15pm

Honorable Chair Kidani and committee members,

As freshmen at Mililani High School, we highly support the SB2586, part two whole child education which is a really important matter. Kids in Hawaii come to school with various kinds of talents, interests, questions, and have a great expanse of knowledge. These kids should have the opportunity to pick from a wide range of extracurricular activities that could help benefit their community, themselves, and their future. They should have the capability to engage themselves in challenging learning environments, that interests them and should have the support they need from their families, educators, and community. But then again, there's always an issue about not having enough money or monies being limited. Money is always being spent on other occurrences, such as murals to beautify the campus, but rarely on education. You need to envision how whole education could have a positive influence on our youth. Whole child education would help answer questions that kids are uncertain about. This would allow them to gain more knowledge about what they want to do in the future. By allowing whole child education it would improve academic achievement.

We have had experiences from a student's perspective and would like to mention them to you. As students at Mililani High School, we are actually pretty privileged. I, Lynn Uehara, am in the band in the high school and creativity is a big part of playing your instrument. You need to figure out how you can connect your emotions to the music to make it more moving and to connect to your audience. I really can not imagine my life without the music department that we have. I have learned so much about music, history, emotions and have slowly unlocked traits of mine I didn't know I had. If that was taken away from me, I wouldn't be who I am today. Some schools don't even know what an orchestra is and that is basic music terminology. You can learn so much through music and I have learned that. It is like math and art combined; you actually have to think and comprehend what is on that piece of paper. You think that music is so simple and that is has nothing to do with your lives. But imagine a world with no music, no rhythm, no beat and no feelings. Music is so much deeper than you think and people don't have the opportunity to learn that.

I, Elisha Lin Hopeau, am in an arts and craft elective and have been in arts and craft electives since sixth grade. Imagination and vision plays a huge role in art. You have to imagine that what you are drawing is real. You have to know how to add value, contrast, and a variety of other techniques that will help you to accomplish that. You have to have a vision of what you want your creation to mean and how you can touch each and every person with it. I know it may seem like art isn't a big deal, but for the artist it is. That is how they express what they are feeling because sometimes they don't know any other way to express themselves. Like they say a picture equals a 1,000 words because it describes so much in a simple or even a complex drawing. Other schools may not have the opportunity to do any other types of electives that would suit them and help them find out who they are and who they want to be. Don't be that wall, blocking them from what they want to achieve in school. Yes, they can do these kinds of things on their own, but when you have peers with you, going through what you are

doing, it helps so much to receive the support that you need to be confident enough to continue pursuing what you want to do.

Sincerely,
Elisha Lin Hopeau and Lynn Uehara

Testimony for: Support of SB2586

Committee on Education Hearing

Wednesday, February 10, 2016 1:15pm

Honorable Chair Kidani and committee members,

As freshmen at Mililani High School, we highly support the SB2586, part two whole child education which is a really important matter. Kids in Hawaii come to school with various kinds of talents, interests, questions, and have a great expanse of knowledge. These kids should have the opportunity to pick from a wide range of extracurricular activities that could help benefit their community, themselves, and their future. They should have the capability to engage themselves in challenging learning environments, that interests them and should have the support they need from their families, educators, and community. But then again, there's always an issue about not having enough money or monies being limited. Money is always being spent on other occurrences, such as murals to beautify the campus, but rarely on education. You need to envision how whole education could have a positive influence on our youth. Whole child education would help answer questions that kids are uncertain about. This would allow them to gain more knowledge about what they want to do in the future. By allowing whole child education it would improve academic achievement.

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doing, it helps so much to receive the support that you need to be confident enough to continue pursuing what you want to do.

Sincerely,
Elisha Lin Hopeau and Lynn Uehara

Testimony for: Support of SB2586
Committee on Education Hearing
Wednesday, February 10, 2016 1:15 pm

Honorable Chair Kidani and committee members,

Our names are Isabelle Rice and Alanis Santiago-Rodriguez and we are concerned students of Mililani High School. We are testifying in support of S.B. 2586.

This bill will help the children of Hawaii for the following reasons: our schools need air conditioning and smaller class sizes.

Over the past year, Honolulu experienced record high temperatures at least 25 times; and for decades, Hawaii's cooling trade winds have been declining. This weather makes it very hard for children to remain focused in school, especially when 94% of schools in Hawaii do not have access to air conditioning. Studies have shown that air conditioned classrooms help students remain focused. Also, if schools are not equipped with AC, there could be dangerous consequences; kids are susceptible to heat exhaustion, due to their small size. According to a Huffington Post article, there have already been many students who have shown signs of heat exhaustion, and have had to go to the school nurse. If AC were provided in classrooms, there would not have to be "heat days" and, no [preventable] missed school days. Another issue that is of our concern, is the size of our classrooms. Our class size can usually range from 30 to 40 students. We are aware that class size does not correspond with our success in later life, however, it is difficult to learn where there are not enough chairs and equipment available. Also, it is burdensome when 30 kids are trying to fight for a seat next to a fan.

This is the first school that we have ever attended that does not have air conditioning in all classrooms. Mililani High School is said to be the best public school in the state, and we have only have selected rooms with air conditioning. Not only that our class sizes are fairly large, compared to those on the mainland. We are in support of this bill because no student should have to be distracted by heat so badly that it affects his or her education. We are in support of this bill because every student shouldn't have to fight over a seat because class sizes are too large. We are in support of this bill because other students, our future students of Hawaii deserve this.

Sincerely,

Isabelle Rice & Alanis Santiago-Rodriguez

Testimony for: Support of SB2586
Committee on Education Hearing
Wednesday, February 10, 2016 1:15 P.M

Honorable Chair Kidani and committee members,

We are writing this in regards to Senate Bill 2586, "Schools Our Keiki Deserve." The bill "Limits participation in standardized tests, prohibits the use of standardized test scores for evaluation purposes, authorizes standardized testing exemptions, and requires the board of education to provide notice of the right to opt-out of standardized testing." We agree with this section of the bill because one test score cannot determine a student's intelligence or lack thereof. The student may simply get an unsatisfactory score due to many different variables. Perhaps they lacked sleep, or motivation. But that doesn't necessarily mean they lack intelligence. On the other hand, the student could have guessed the correct answers, thus giving the illusion of "knowledge."

We personally have not been affected by this but our friends have. We have seen friends who weren't feeling good on test day and because of this, they were placed into lower tier classes instead of the classes that they deserved. We have also seen the inverse of this, people who do good on the test but they struggle on all of the high level classes that they are put in because they were lucky on the test. Because of this, these kids fall far behind their skill capacity because they are overworked and can't process anything or they are underworked and the information comes so slowly that they cannot make any strong progress. As a result, some may see their grades dip below what they're used to, further inducing their stress. Others learn then forget because of the slow pace. Please make further efforts to enact this bill.

Thank you for your consideration,
Ian Eshelman and Jacob Yuruki
Mililani High School
Class of 2019

Testimony for: Support of SB2586

Committee on Education Hearing

Wednesday, February 10, 2016 1:15 pm

Honorable Chair Kidani and Committee members,

We support the bill for providing air conditioning. One, Mililani is hot, but nothing is compared to what schools like Campbell and Waianae. For example, these places have got to be one of the hottest and it shows in the student's health and education. The problem is this heat wave at James Campbell High that really know one hardly is really notices, all they care about is how much money it's going to cost into putting these air conditionings. Back in 2015, teachers at Campbell High were thrilled to get new air conditionings installed in 12 classrooms, but this still did not solve the problem that these students face. Still schools officials tell us about 80 percent of the Ewa Beach School's classrooms are not conditioned, this alone is a huge problem, but at least it's being done and taken care of little by little. With air conditioned offices for the staff the next step would be providing air for the students as well. With Campbell as one of the largest public schools on the island by creating healthier work environments we will be benefiting a lot of students. We believe that by solving the issue at Campbell we could then work down the line to the next hottest school, taking care of the places that need it most as the top priority. Supporting this bill definitely stop the health and education problems that these students face against the heat wave.

Personally, we have never experienced a heat wave or a source of heat in classroom that goes up to 90 degrees or even 100 degrees. Being in a room temperature classroom or classroom that is kind of hot, we complain and say it's too hot. Having friends who go to Campbell ans asking them about it, many of them complain as the heat as a major learning disturbance. Going to Mililani we have many air conditioning classes, we can only imagine what they go through with heat that fries their brain to death. Few of them had to go to the school nurse for having really bad headaches and also dehydration. Dehydration for students, especially athletes isn't a good thing at all. Along with heating this has left an issue of health. We care especially about issues like this because it could increase the level of high school dropouts, academic performance drops significantly, or the risk of health problems. By adding these air conditioners in schools that reach extreme heat we may be able to see a greater increase in Hawaii's education level as a nation and students individually. So in supporting this bill we think all schools in the Ewa beach district deserve air conditioning.

Sincerely Merilis Rivera and Mira Chloe Prickett

Testimony for Support of SB2586
Committee in Education Hearing
Wednesday, February 10, 2016 1:15pm
Honorable Chair Kidani and committee members

My name is Niko Sagaysay, I am a junior at Mililani High School and I support Senate Bill 2586. I support this bill because I believe that schools do not focus enough on preparing students for the world after high school. Schools are pushing to educate kids in a way that makes the “college and career ready” but this is quite an ambiguous term. Majority of kids do not go on to college. 72% of projected jobs in 2022 will only require a high school education. More students need to be prepared to join the workforce. Nation wide, high schools are pushing kids to go to college so that they can boost their college attendance rates. However, this may not be the smartest decision because it does not consider the field of work that the student may want to pursue in their future. This may cause students to accumulate debt. These students may then go into jobs that don’t pay as much as they need to make up their debt, putting them in a tough financial position. Had these people been pushed to a CTE track of their choice, they would be prepared for their job and not have accumulated debt. This would then improve our economy for the future.

I am currently enrolled in CTE classes and I strongly believe that it helps prepare me for the area of work that I would like to pursue. I am a part of SkillsUSA which is a CTE vocational leadership club that is dedicated to creating a skilled workforce for America. I am also in VEX robotics. Here I learn to build and program a robot to complete a set task given to us. We then compete against teams from all around the world. This prepares me and my peers for a wide range of technological and engineering type careers. These jobs types of jobs are becoming more and more available and need to be filled due to the progression of technology. If we had more educational opportunities like this then I think we would have a great future workforce.

Sincerely,
Niko Sagaysay

Testimony for: Support of SB2586

Committee on Education Hearing

Wednesday, February 10, 2016 1:15pm

Honorable Chair Kidani and committee members,

As a student at Mililani High School, I support this bill, SB2586. More specifically, **Part I. Whole Child Education**, because I believe that students should be able to learn as much as they can in **all** subjects. This includes math, language arts, social studies, and science, as well as fine arts and physical education/health. I've had quite the experience in these subjects and I personally enjoyed each and every one of them. My thoughts on "regular classes" (math, language arts, social studies, and science) are that yes, they are all very important because we need an academic education. But on the other hand, we need to emphasize the importance of music, art, and sports. This is coming from someone who loves music and performing arts deeply because they're not just fun, but really enjoyable and amazing things to learn. I'm merely a freshman in high school at the moment and I've taken many fine arts classes, and also physical education. To me, they were all very helpful and I plan on taking more next year.

Looking at the big picture, all students should experience what I have in my past years. All subjects should be as important as math, language arts, social studies, and science because students deserve to learn as much as possible. If you think about it, there are students out there that want to pursue a career as a music teacher, or perhaps a professional athlete. There **are** musicians and athletes out there in the world, right? Some students want to carry on what they do and including classes that teach fine arts and athletics will help guide them. They deserve to learn about the subjects to help them achieve their goals. Students should be interested in school and they should know about the different arts of the world because it will help them reach their goals in life.

Sincerely,
Anika Jiang

Testimony for: Support of SB2586

Committee on Education Hearing

Wednesday, February 10, 2016 1:15pm

Honorable Chair Kidani and committee members,

We are freshman from Mililani High School and we are supportive of the “Schools our Keiki Deserve” Senate Bill. We are for this Act because it will give schools more funding and will provide air conditioning in certain classrooms which is what everyone wants. It will also save money for the schools because they won’t have to spend a lot of money on ACs for every room, giving more money to learning instead. It will also decrease class sizes making classes more controllable and this will help the class learn more quickly, it will give the teachers to focus on the students more clearly with a decrease class size. It’s also a good bill because all preschool children will go to public preschool, and this is good because children who go to preschool gets more learning experiences with other kids their age instead of being nervous when they don’t go preschool.

We also support this bill because with the passage of the bill the school’s will have more funding for special education teachers. It also amends the evaluation program for teachers and education officers. This way we have teachers that will help students learn better. This will also make standardized testing not an evaluation process, which will be good because kids won’t be judged on how smart they are just by taking a test. This bill sounds like an excellent idea, which would help make better education making smarter students, which would make a better community and nation.

Sincerely,
Elijah Banks and Drake Nun

From:
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony for SB 2586 (February 10, 1:15pm)
Date: Monday, February 08, 2016 11:58:44 AM

Thank you for hearing the Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act. As a hardworking educator, I strongly support this bill because I know firsthand how it will boost quality teaching and student learning.

In Hawai'i today, class sizes sometimes exceed forty or fifty students. Classroom temperatures have reached as high as 108 degrees. Curriculum is poisoned by a toxic amount of standardized testing. Arts, vocational, and special education instruction is neglected. Teachers are besieged by a burdensome evaluation system and, in turn, receive the lowest pay in the nation.

We, the teachers, deserve better. Please support professional pay for educators, an end to toxic testing, smaller class sizes, cooler classrooms, funding for arts, vocational and special education, and an end to unfair evaluations. In doing so, you will not only help teachers, but the students who will forge the future of our island home.

Please support this bill.

Testimony for: Support of SB2586
Committee on Education Hearing
Wednesday, February 10, 2016 1:15 P.M

Honorable Chair Kidani and committee members,

We are writing this in regards to Senate Bill 2586, "Schools Our Keiki Deserve." The bill "Limits participation in standardized tests, prohibits the use of standardized test scores for evaluation purposes, authorizes standardized testing exemptions, and requires the board of education to provide notice of the right to opt-out of standardized testing." We agree with this section of the bill because one test score cannot determine a student's intelligence or lack thereof. The student may simply get an unsatisfactory score due to many different variables. Perhaps they lacked sleep, or motivation. But that doesn't necessarily mean they lack intelligence. On the other hand, the student could have guessed the correct answers, thus giving the illusion of "knowledge."

We personally have not been affected by this but our friends have. We have seen friends who weren't feeling good on test day and because of this, they were placed into lower tier classes instead of the classes that they deserved. We have also seen the inverse of this, people who do good on the test but they struggle on all of the high level classes that they are put in because they were lucky on the test. Because of this, these kids fall far behind their skill capacity because they are overworked and can't process anything or they are underworked and the information comes so slowly that they cannot make any strong progress. As a result, some may see their grades dip below what they're used to, further inducing their stress. Others learn then forget because of the slow pace. Please make further efforts to enact this bill.

Thank you for your consideration,
Ian Eshelman and Jacob Yuruki
Mililani High School
Class of 2019

From: [Melissah](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony for SB 2586 (February 10, 1:15pm)
Date: Sunday, February 07, 2016 12:46:13 PM

Thank you for hearing the Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act. As a hardworking educator, I strongly support this bill because I know firsthand how it will boost quality teaching and student learning.

In Hawai'i today, class sizes sometimes exceed forty or fifty students. Classroom temperatures have reached as high as 108 degrees. Curriculum is poisoned by a toxic amount of standardized testing. Arts, vocational, and special education instruction is neglected. Teachers are besieged by a burdensome evaluation system and, in turn, receive the lowest pay in the nation.

We, the teachers, deserve better. Please support professional pay for educators, an end to toxic testing, smaller class sizes, cooler classrooms, funding for arts, vocational and special education, and an end to unfair evaluations. In doing so, you will not only help teachers, but the students who will forge the future of our island home.

Please support this bill.

Melissah Vannatta
Shafter Elementary School

From: [Aaron Kubo](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony for SB 2586 (February 10, 1:15pm)
Date: Sunday, February 07, 2016 12:44:21 PM

To Whom It May Concern,

Thank you for hearing the Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act. As a hardworking educator, I strongly support this bill because I know firsthand how it will boost quality teaching and student learning.

My current class sizes are over thirty teenage students in a room. The building in Hilo was built in the 1920's and designed for students many generations ago. Our school is currently on the list again, for the third time, to have a new building built. Architects and engineers come in, have conversations, create plans and nothing ever happens. It has been thirty years of this same cycle. They condemn the second floor of the main building but because of the need for more classrooms they reopen it. The way the building is oriented 95% of the building does not feel any of the trade winds and many roast in the afternoon sun. As part of an interdisciplinary science and social studies experiment students measured and came up with cooling alternatives. They then converted that information into a letter to our state legislators. Classroom temperatures around the school from July to December of 2015 were in the mid to high 80's and for 30 school days reached into the low to mid 90's. No amount of fans can make learning tolerable let alone enjoyable or meaningful.

Curriculum is poisoned by a toxic amount of standardized testing. The sheer number of exams that students are taking, especially at the secondary level, takes away time, creativity and enjoyment of learning. Over testing students creates an atmosphere of dread and adversely affects their view of school in a negative way.

Arts, vocational, and special education instruction is neglected. Teachers are besieged by a burdensome evaluation system and, in turn, receive the lowest pay in the nation. We have had the current pay scale since the 90's and a class VII from at least 1975. It is

time that the legislature compensate teachers and pay them a fair wage adjusting for inflation especially considering Hawaii's high cost of living. Not only should teachers be adequately compensated but schools themselves also need to be fully funded. Many teachers pay for school supplies out of their own pockets. I have spent over \$1500 in this school year alone. My school is 90% free and reduced, the students cannot always afford the basic supplies. Do we ask police officers to purchase their own guns and bullets? Ask firefighters to purchase their own axes? Does the paramedic ask the rider if they brought their own saline solution? The answer is a resounding no, so why is it okay for teachers in Hawaii to buy their own supplies? For society to flourish the needs of the whole child must be addressed, in a school that is designed for this century and where everyone is adequately funded.

We, the teachers, deserve better. Please support professional pay for educators, an end to toxic testing, smaller class sizes, cooler classrooms, funding for arts, vocational and special education, and an end to unfair evaluations. In doing so, you will not only help teachers, but the students who will forge the future of our island home.

Please support this bill.

Sincerely,

Aaron Kubo

Testimony for support of SB2586
Committee on Education Hearing
Wednesday, February 10, 1:15p.m.

Honorable Chair Kidani and Committee Members,

First of all, I want to say that every aspect of this bill is important, and would be very beneficial for our often neglected public school system here in Hawaii, but the part of the bill that stood out to me the most was Part I: Whole Child Education. One of the numerous flaws in our education system is the sole and devoted focus on academic success, particularly when it comes to test scores. These kind of intensive lessons, without full relevance context explained, causes school-aged kids to lose focus and motivation to learn, and ultimately leave them either bored or overwhelmed,, causing the spark of curiosity to diminish or fade out. But, with whole child education, including fitness, practical skills, cultural and global education, and the arts, our students brains' would be stimulated in a multitude of different subject areas, causing a revitalized interest in academic subjects, and improving critical thinking skills by taking into account all of these different aspects of "life", rather than *only* academics.

Speaking from personal experience, multiple outlets was always necessary for me to be interested in an academic topic. My performance in school greatly increased once I gained access to a creative outlet and a community with similar creative expression. Creative Writing and poetry gave me, as a student, a sense that I could create something that would have a lasting effect on other people, that I actually have the power to initiate change in my community (be it just a group of friends, or something larger) via articulation of thoughts and feelings. This gave me, and other students like me, a tremendous boost in confidence, which, in turn, improved my public speaking skills and "resparked" interest in academics. Having multiple outlets for expression broadens students' worldviews and helps them to see the topics that they are studying in the context of the real world, rather than in the context of pages in a textbook.

Sincerely,
Maddie Smith
(Concerned Student, Mililani High School)

From: [Tomonori Hayamichi](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony for SB 2586 (February 10, 1:15pm)
Date: Sunday, February 07, 2016 12:31:29 PM

Thank you for hearing the Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act. As a hardworking educator, I strongly support this bill because I know firsthand how it will boost quality teaching and student learning.

In Hawai'i today, class sizes sometimes exceed forty or fifty students. Classroom temperatures have reached as high as 108 degrees. Curriculum is poisoned by a toxic amount of standardized testing. Arts, vocational, and special education instruction is neglected. Teachers are besieged by a burdensome evaluation system and, in turn, receive the lowest pay in the nation.

We, the teachers, deserve better. Please support professional pay for educators, an end to toxic testing, smaller class sizes, cooler classrooms, funding for arts, vocational and special education, and an end to unfair evaluations. In doing so, you will not only help teachers, but the students who will forge the future of our island home.

Please support this bill.
Tomonori HAYAMICHI

From: [Patty Durel](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony for SB 2586 (February 10, 1:15pm)
Date: Sunday, February 07, 2016 12:24:36 PM

Thank you for hearing the Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act. As a hardworking educator, I strongly support this bill because I know firsthand how it will boost quality teaching and student learning. In Hawai'i today, class sizes sometimes exceed forty or fifty students. Classroom temperatures have reached as high as 108 degrees. Curriculum is poisoned by a toxic amount of standardized testing. Arts, vocational, and special education instruction is neglected. Teachers are besieged by a burdensome evaluation system and, in turn, receive the lowest pay in the nation. We, the teachers, deserve better. Please support professional pay for educators, an end to toxic testing, smaller class sizes, cooler classrooms, funding for arts, vocational and special education, and an end to unfair evaluations. In doing so, you will not only help teachers, but the students who will forge the future of our island home. Please support this bill.

Thank you,

Mary Durel

From: [Renee Kaahaaina](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony for SB 2586
Date: Sunday, February 07, 2016 12:10:10 PM

Testimony for SB 2586 ([February 10, 1:15pm](#))

Thank you for hearing the Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act. As a hardworking educator, I strongly support this bill because I know firsthand how it will boost quality teaching and student learning.

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Please support this bill.

Sincerely ,

Renee Kaahaaina

From: [Paige Dzialo](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony for SB 2586 (February 10, 1:15pm)
Date: Sunday, February 07, 2016 11:25:07 AM

Thank you for hearing the Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act. As a hardworking educator, I strongly support this bill because I know firsthand how it will boost quality teaching and student learning.

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Please support this bill.

Paige Dzialo

From: [Lisa Finch](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony for SB 2586 (February 10, 1:15pm)
Date: Sunday, February 07, 2016 11:12:44 AM

Thank you for hearing the Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act. As a hardworking educator, I strongly support this bill because I know firsthand how it will boost quality teaching and student learning.

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Please support this bill.

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Dennis Tynan](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: SB 2586 (Feb 10 Committee Meeting at 1:15pm)
Date: Sunday, February 07, 2016 10:45:34 AM

Thank you for hearing the Schools Our Keiki Deserve Bill.
As a hardworking educator, I strongly support this bill because I know firsthand how it will boost quality teaching and student learning.

In Hawaii today, class sizes sometimes exceed forty or fifty students.
Classroom temperatures have reached as high as 108 degrees.
Curriculum is poisoned by a toxic amount of standardized testing.
Arts, vocational, and special education instruction is neglected.
Teachers are besieged by a burdensome evaluation system and, in turn, receive the lowest pay in the nation.
FINALLY, it is illogical to base teacher salary on tests that do not matter to students. Period.

We, the teachers, deserve better.
Please support professional pay for educators, an end to toxic testing, smaller class sizes, cooler classrooms, funding for arts, vocational and special education, and an end to unfair evaluations.
In doing so, you will not only help teachers, but the students who will forge the future of our island home.

Please support this bill.
Mahalo,
Dennis M. Tynan
Makaha, Hawaii

From: [Amelia Echeverria](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony for SB 2586 (February 10, 1:15pm)
Date: Sunday, February 07, 2016 10:35:12 AM

Thank you for hearing the Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act. As a hardworking educator, I strongly support this bill because I know firsthand how it will boost quality teaching and student learning. In Hawai'i today, class sizes sometimes exceed forty or fifty students. Classroom temperatures have reached as high as 108 degrees. Curriculum is poisoned by a toxic amount of standardized testing. Arts, vocational, and special education instruction is neglected. Teachers are besieged by a burdensome evaluation system and, in turn, receive the lowest pay in the nation. We, the teachers, deserve better. Please support professional pay for educators, an end to toxic testing, smaller class sizes, cooler classrooms, funding for arts, vocational and special education, and an end to unfair evaluations. In doing so, you will not only help teachers, but the students who will forge the future of our island home. Please support this bill.

Amelia E.

From: [Dawna Casebier](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony for SB 2586 (February 10, 1:15pm)
Date: Sunday, February 07, 2016 10:30:51 AM

Thank you for hearing the Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act. As a hardworking educator, I strongly support this bill because I know firsthand how it will boost quality teaching and student learning.

In Hawai'i today, class sizes sometimes exceed forty or fifty students. Classroom temperatures have reached as high as 108 degrees. Curriculum is poisoned by a toxic amount of standardized testing. Arts, vocational, and special education instruction is neglected. Teachers are besieged by a burdensome evaluation system and, in turn, receive the lowest pay in the nation.

We, the teachers, deserve better. Please support professional pay for educators, an end to toxic testing, smaller class sizes, cooler classrooms, funding for arts, vocational and special education, and an end to unfair evaluations. In doing so, you will not only help teachers, but the students who will forge the future of our island home.

Please support this bill.

Sent from my iPhone

From: [A. McKnight](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: For EDUtestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov: Testimony for SB 2586 (February 10, 1:15pm)
Date: Sunday, February 07, 2016 10:30:19 AM

Thank you for hearing the Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act. As a hardworking educator, I strongly support this bill because I know firsthand how it will boost quality teaching and student learning.

In Hawai'i today, class sizes sometimes exceed forty or fifty students. Classroom temperatures have reached as high as 108 degrees. Students and teachers both have been sent home ill due to heat stress. Curriculum is poisoned by a toxic amount of standardized testing - students can't **learn** materials if they spend all their classroom hours taking tests. Arts, vocational, and special education instruction is neglected - sapping our students interest in learning. Teachers are besieged by a burdensome time consuming evaluation system and, in turn, receive the lowest pay in the nation.

We, the teachers, deserve better. Please support professional pay for educators and an end to unfair evaluations. The keiki of Hawaii deserve better. Please put an end to toxic testing, while building smaller class sizes, cooler classrooms, funding for arts, vocational and special education. In doing so, you will not only help teachers, but the students who will forge the future of our island home.

Please support this bill.

Thank you so very much,

Anne McKnight

Washington Middle School

1633 S. King St

Honolulu, HI 96816

From: [SARAH](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony for SB 2586 (February 10, 1:15pm)
Date: Sunday, February 07, 2016 10:26:47 AM

Thank you for hearing the Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act. As a hardworking educator, I strongly support this bill because I know firsthand how it will boost quality teaching and student learning.

In Hawai'i today, class sizes sometimes exceed forty or fifty students. Classroom temperatures have reached as high as 108 degrees. Curriculum is poisoned by a toxic amount of standardized testing. Arts, vocational, and special education instruction is neglected. Teachers are besieged by a burdensome evaluation system and, in turn, receive the lowest pay in the nation.

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Please support this bill.

Sally Bond Special Education Preschool teacher

From: [Victoria Gonder](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony for SB 2586 (February 10, 1:15pm)
Date: Sunday, February 07, 2016 10:26:18 AM

Thank you for hearing the Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act. As a hardworking educator, I strongly support this bill because I know firsthand how it will boost quality teaching and student learning.

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Please support this bill.

Thank you,

Victoria Gonder
BS Integrated Science/Math
MA Science Education -Chemistry-Physics
Lahainaluna High School
Maui

Sent via the Samsung Galaxy Note® Edge, an AT&T 4G LTE smartphone

From: [Crystal-Marie Alpiche-Kanae](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony for SB 2586
Date: Sunday, February 07, 2016 10:13:35 AM

Thank you for hearing the Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act. As a hardworking educator, I strongly support this bill because I know firsthand how it will boost quality teaching and student learning.

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We, the teachers, deserve better. Please support professional pay for educators, an end to toxic testing, smaller class sizes, cooler classrooms, funding for arts, vocational and special education, and an end to unfair evaluations. In doing so, you will not only help teachers, but the students who will forge the future of our island home.

Please support this bill.

Thank you,

Crystal-Marie Alpiche-Kanae

English Teacher

Mililani High School

From: [Judy Waite](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony for SB 2586 (February 10, 1:15pm)
Date: Sunday, February 07, 2016 10:07:38 AM

Thank you for hearing the Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act. As a hardworking educator, I strongly support this bill because I know firsthand how it will boost quality teaching and student learning.

In Hawai'i today, class sizes sometimes exceed forty or fifty students. Classroom temperatures have reached as high as 108 degrees. Curriculum is poisoned by a toxic amount of standardized testing. Arts, vocational, and special education instruction is neglected. Teachers are besieged by a burdensome evaluation system and, in turn, receive the lowest pay in the nation.

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Please support this bill.

Judy Waite NBCT
6th Grade Teacher
Kilauea School

From:
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony for SB 2586
Date: Sunday, February 07, 2016 8:58:00 AM

Thank you for hearing the Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act. As a hardworking educator, I strongly support this bill because I know firsthand how it will boost quality teaching and student learning.

In Hawai'i today, class sizes sometimes exceed forty or fifty students. Classroom temperatures have reached as high as 108 degrees. Curriculum is poisoned by a toxic amount of standardized testing. Arts, vocational, and special education instruction is neglected. Teachers are besieged by a burdensome evaluation system and, in turn, receive the lowest pay in the nation.

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Kris Kositwongsakul

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If you feel that this message is in any way offensive, please forward the entire message to abuse@waialuahigh.com <//abuse@waialuahigh.com>

From: [atyndzik.](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony for SB 2586 (February 10, 1:15pm)
Date: Sunday, February 07, 2016 8:28:55 AM

Aloha,

Thank you for hearing the Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act. As a hardworking educator, I strongly support this bill because I know firsthand how it will boost quality teaching and student learning.

In Hawai'i today, class sizes sometimes exceed forty or fifty students. Classroom temperatures have reached as high as 108 degrees. Curriculum is poisoned by a toxic amount of standardized testing. Arts, vocational, and special education instruction is neglected. Teachers are besieged by a burdensome evaluation system and, in turn, receive the lowest pay in the nation.

We, the teachers, deserve better. The keiki, deserve better. Please support professional pay for educators, an end to toxic testing, smaller class sizes, cooler classrooms, funding for arts, vocational and special education, and an end to unfair evaluations. In doing so, you will not only help teachers, but the students who will forge the future of our island home.

Please support this bill,

Amber Tyndzik

From: [Amanda Seymore](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony for SB 2586 (February 10, 1:15pm)
Date: Saturday, February 06, 2016 12:24:24 PM

Aloha,

Thank you for taking the time to read my personal testimony. I am in my 5th year teaching and 5th year living on the beautiful island of O'ahu. I am currently teaching at Aliamanu Middle School in the Central District, Radford Complex. I am a Special Education Math Resource Teacher and I teach a total of 35 students and I am the Department Chairperson for the Special Education Department. Being the Chairperson doesn't only put me in charge of my teachers but it is my responsibility to ensure that the students with special needs are receiving the best education that my teachers are able to provide.

Educating the whole child is particular important to me. I believe that if the nation, the NATION, is trying to push for healthy lunches and the PLAY 60 initiative, that our schools in the state of Hawai'i should all have a physical education department. Our students need to be able to be given the time to go outside and exercise. Students with special needs, many of them have an extensive amount of energy that needs to be released in a healthy way.

In December, my school made the news because my principal said that the PE department would be cut. The teachers at my school, including myself, was extremely upset that a decision to that magnitude was made without going through the School Community Council. When our students found out, one of them went to the media to bring it to the public's attention. Because of her bravery and love to become a Physical Education Teacher, the decision has been revoked. However, we are one of the few schools that has physical education for our students.

The Keiki that live in the state of Hawai'i need and deserve to have physical education in their schools. Please support the omnibus bill, the Schools our Keiki Deserve to support the keiki that is our future.

Mahalo,
Amanda Seymore
Aliamanu Middle
Special Education Teacher

From: [Felicia Villalobos](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#); [EDNtestimony](#)
Subject: Support SB2586 and HB2733
Date: Saturday, February 06, 2016 11:47:28 AM

Aloha,

My name is Felicia Villalobos and I'm a First grade teacher at Wilcox Elementary School on the island of Kaua'i.

Thank you for hearing the Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act. As a hardworking educator, I strongly support this bill because I know firsthand how it will boost quality teaching and student learning.

In Hawai'i today, class sizes sometimes exceed forty or fifty students. Classroom temperatures have reached as high as 108 degrees. Curriculum is poisoned by a toxic amount of standardized testing. Arts, vocational, and special education instruction is neglected. Teachers are besieged by a burdensome evaluation system and, in turn, receive the lowest pay in the nation.

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Please support this bill.

Mahalo for your time,

Felicia Villalobos

1st grade teacher
Wilcox Elementary School
Island of Kaua'i
felicia_lobos@yahoo.com

All messages are sent with Love from Felicia's iPhone

From: [Sean Robinson](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony for SB 2586 (February 10, 1:15pm)
Date: Saturday, February 06, 2016 11:33:52 AM

Thank you for hearing the Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act. As a hardworking educator, I strongly support this bill because I know firsthand how it will boost quality teaching and student learning.

In Hawai'i today, class sizes sometimes exceed forty or fifty students. Classroom temperatures have reached as high as 108 degrees. Curriculum is poisoned by a toxic amount of standardized testing. Arts, vocational, and special education instruction is neglected. Teachers are besieged by a burdensome evaluation system and, in turn, receive the lowest pay in the nation.

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Please support this bill,

Sean Robinson

From: [Sharon](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SB2586
Date: Saturday, February 06, 2016 11:18:00 AM

Honorable Chair Kidani and committee members,

My name is Sharon Saronitman . I am a teacher at Wilcox Elementary school on the island of Kaua'i. As a teacher of 19 years in Hawai'i.

I am writing in support of SB2586 The Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act.

Public education in Hawaii has the potential power to democratize and make our society more equal, fair, and just. The teachers in our public schools think that public education policy should accordingly be designed, developed, and assessed in as democratic a fashion as possible. The Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act will support this vision. In this shared preferred future, public schools become a primary site of public investment, and the resources and facilities available for learning in our public schools reflect the high value we place on our keiki and future generations.

The Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act will support...

1. Educating the whole child (by ensuring the arts are provided in every school, along with Hawaiian Studies and cultural and language programs, and P.E and that these subjects are NOT pushed out by over-testing policies)
2. Supporting all students (including resources needed for those students with special needs and English Language Learners)
3. Reducing class sizes (to allow for more responsive instruction, collaborative learning, individualized, and small group learning experiences for our students)
4. Providing a robust vocational education path to rewarding careers, along with a college path
5. Providing quality facilities (not 90+ degree classrooms!)
6. Properly funding our rural and small schools (these schools should not have to sacrifice their funding to buy paper all year in order to allow a much needed librarian or counselor to be placed at their school),
7. Attracting and retaining the best and brightest teachers (we pay our teachers the LOWEST in the nation, when you consider the cost of living, this fact is unacceptable. We were short 250 special education teachers this year! We need competitive salaries to achieve this!)
8. Ending high-stakes standardized testing (we need to stop the test and punish policies)
9. Supporting public preschools (that our families desperately need)
10. Putting classroom supplies in teachers hands (Teachers know best what supplies their students need).

All of these points are inter-related and support each other in providing the quality public

schools that ALL of our keiki deserve.
We hope we may count on you for your support. Our keiki need you!

Thank you for your time,

Sharon Saronitman

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Cc: carl@votecampagna.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB2586 on Feb 10, 2016 13:15PM
Date: Friday, February 05, 2016 7:42:42 PM

SB2586

Submitted on: 2/5/2016

Testimony for EDU on Feb 10, 2016 13:15PM in Conference Room 229

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Carl Campagna	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony on this bill. It is a very important issue. I am in support of this measure. Our keiki are the priority and deserve every chance to thrive. Many of our public schools suffer from deferred maintenance, sub-standard infrastructure and lack of updated technology. We all agree that our keiki are the priority. As a family man with four school age children, I am very concerned about the cost and quality of education. Many people believe that education is the silver bullet or the lynch pin that can help solve homelessness, drug addiction, social division, and income inequality. And in Hawaii, of all places, where our many, intertwined cultures all cherish our keiki and do all we can to open doors for their successes, would we not expect that we place a high priority on having a world class educational system? Including quality facilities and infrastructure, cool rooms, and appropriately valued teachers and administrative staff?

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

Do not reply to this email. This inbox is not monitored. For assistance please email webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov

From: [Jennifer Zickuhr](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: SB2586
Date: Sunday, February 07, 2016 8:39:50 AM

Jennifer Zickuhr
Sent from my iPhone

Thank you for hearing the Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act. As a hardworking educator, I strongly support this bill because I know firsthand how it will boost quality teaching and student learning.

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We, the teachers, deserve better. Please support professional pay for educators, an end to toxic testing, smaller class sizes, cooler classrooms, funding for arts, vocational and special education, and an end to unfair evaluations. In doing so, you will not only help teachers, but the students who will forge the future of our island home.

Please support this bill,

From: [Torey Knight](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony for SB 2586 (February 10, 1:15pm)
Date: Monday, February 08, 2016 3:30:37 PM

Thank you for hearing the Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act. As a hardworking educator, I strongly support this bill because I know firsthand how it will boost quality teaching and student learning.

In Hawai'i today, class sizes sometimes exceed forty or fifty students. Classroom temperatures have reached as high as 108 degrees. Curriculum is poisoned by a toxic amount of standardized testing. Arts, vocational, and special education instruction is neglected. Teachers are besieged by a burdensome evaluation system and, in turn, receive the lowest pay in the nation.

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Please support this bill.

Torey Knight
3rd grade teacher
Sent from my iPhone

From: [Larry Denis III](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony for SB 2586 (February 10, 1:15pm)
Date: Monday, February 08, 2016 3:06:30 PM

My name is Lawrence Denis and I am a computer teacher at Waikoloa Elementary & Middle School.

Thank you for hearing the Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act. As a hardworking educator, I strongly support this bill because I know firsthand how it will boost quality teaching and student learning.

In Hawai'i today, class sizes sometimes exceed forty or fifty students. Classroom temperatures have reached as high as 108 degrees. Curriculum is poisoned by a toxic amount of standardized testing. Arts, vocational, and special education instruction is neglected. Teachers are besieged by a burdensome evaluation system and, in turn, receive the lowest pay in the nation.

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Please support this bill.

Mahalo!

February 9, 2016

re: **SB2586** – EDU Hearing February 10, 2016

Aloha Members of the EDU Committee,

I support the objectives of SB2586. I oppose the funding mechanism.

All of the proposals for improving public education described in SB2586 are desirable.

I oppose an increase in the General Excise tax to fund these improvements.

Hawai'i's citizens are already overburdened by consumption taxes. They are the highest in the nation. Please see the charts on pages 3 and 4. When we have so many problems due to the high cost of living in Hawai'i, an increase in a regressive tax is unconscionable.

It makes much more sense for the legislature to do the work necessary to change Hawai'i's constitution so that the state can collect property taxes to support the state-run public education system. Throughout the rest of the nation, property taxes support public schools, but Hawai'i is different because it is the only state-run public education system in the nation. However, there is no reason that we cannot change this. There are other states that do collect property taxes, and Hawai'i has an even greater reason to do so because the public schools are funded by the state.

I know that changing the Constitution to allow for state property taxes is harder to do than passing yet another increase in the GE tax. Doing the right thing is often not easy, but it is our responsibility to do the best that we can for future generations.

Based on budget reports for all four counties, I have come up with the following analysis.

County	2014 Total Collections	Report location
Honolulu	\$838,733,000	http://www.honolulu.gov/rep/site/bfs/bfs_docs/CAFRFY2014.pdf
Hawai'i	\$211,711,407	http://records.co.hawaii.hi.us/Weblink8/1/doc/71683/Electronic.aspx
Maui	\$224,055,000	http://www.co.maui.hi.us/DocumentCenter/View/96404
Kauai	\$90,317,284	http://www.kauai.gov/Portals/0/County_Auditor/County%20of%20Kauai%202014%20CAFR.pdf?ver=2015-05-27-162730-580
Total Property Tax:	\$1,364,816,691	

% Increase in tax	Education Revenue
5%	\$68,240,835
10%	\$136,481,669
15%	\$204,722,504
20%	\$272,963,338

By assessing a state tax that is a percentage of local property tax, the state education system could have generated over \$200 million of tax revenue for State of Hawai'i public schools.

IT IS TIME TO REVISE HAWAI‘I’S TAX STRUCTURE to fund public schools adequately, and stop increasing taxes on the poor by increasing the GE consumption tax. A gallon of milk is almost \$5, Hawai‘i has the highest consumption taxes in the nation, and depending on the GE tax as a source of much needed public education funding is crazy!!!

I strongly suggest that you read the primer on trade-offs among tax instruments published by the Mercatus Center at George Mason University in 2014. This is an excellent treatise on tax policy, and easily understandable by the layman and typical legislator. The charts included here on pages 3 and 4 of this document are from this Mercatus Center document.

A PRIMER ON STATE AND LOCAL TAX POLICY
Trade-Offs among Tax Instruments

Justin M. Ross



You can read the document in its entirety here:

http://mercatus.org/sites/default/files/Ross_PrimerTaxPolicy_v2.pdf

Therefore, **I support SB2586** except that **I STRONGLY oppose a rise in the GE tax.**

I support a change to the Hawai‘i State Constitution to allow for a state tax to provide additional funds to build a world-class public education system in Hawai‘i.

Mahalo for Your Consideration.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Vanessa Ott'.

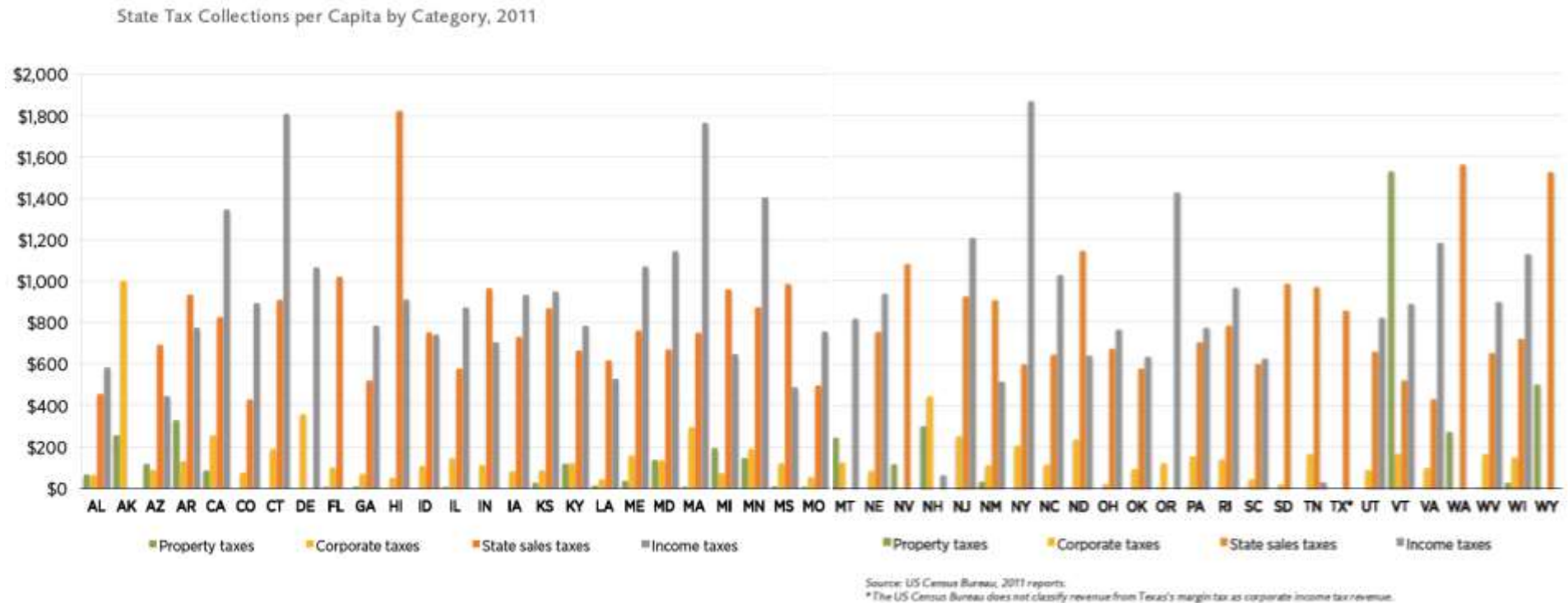
Vanessa Ott

Tables from: http://mercatus.org/sites/default/files/Ross_PrimerTaxPolicy_v2.pdf
 Copyright © 2014 by Justin M. Ross and the Mercatus Center at George Mason University

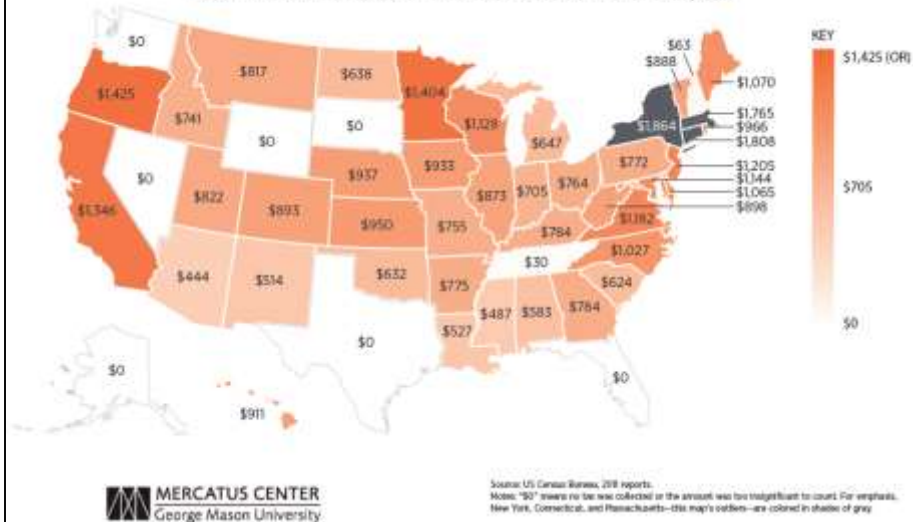
A PRIMER ON STATE AND LOCAL TAX POLICY

Trade-Offs among Tax Instruments

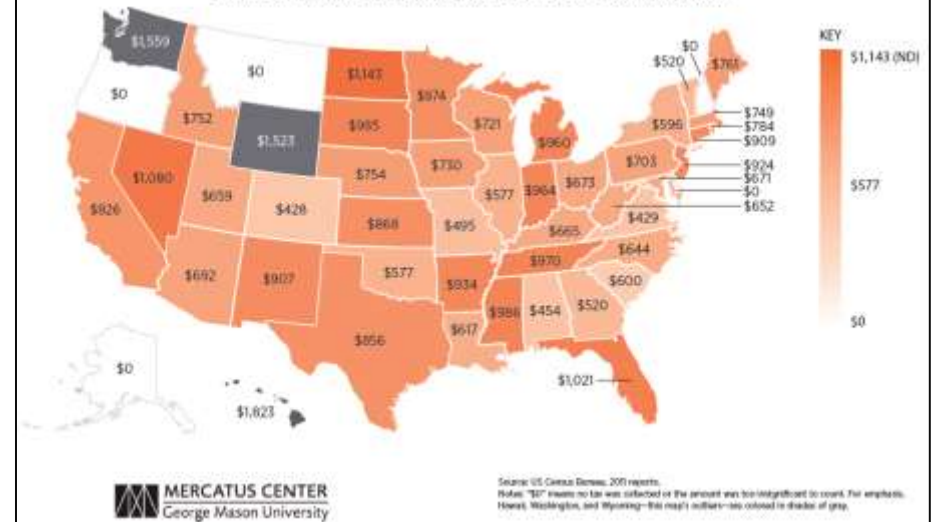
by Justin M. Ross



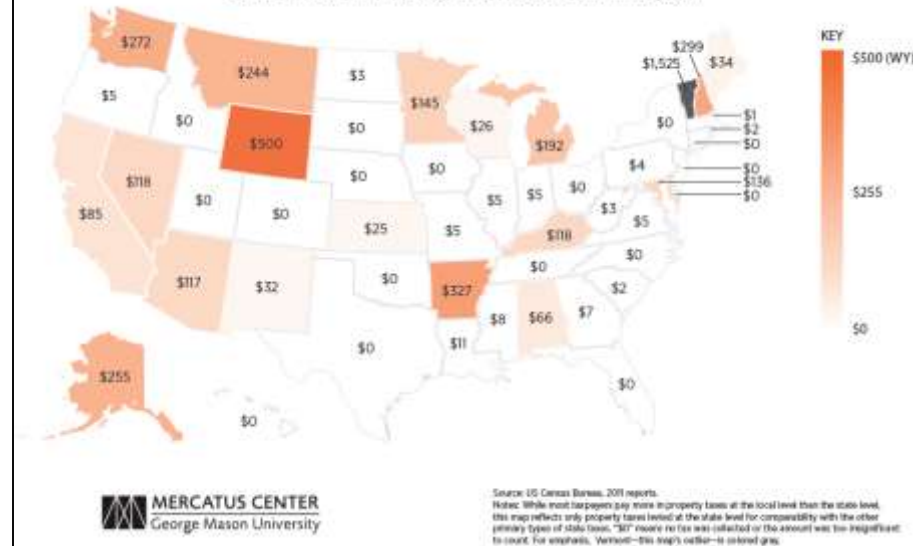
STATE INDIVIDUAL INCOME TAX COLLECTIONS PER CAPITA, 2011



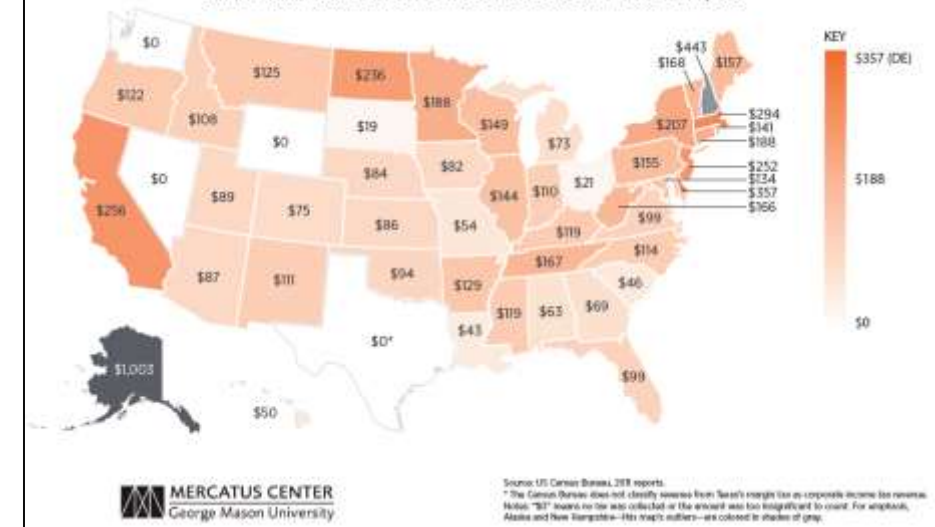
STATE GENERAL SALES TAX COLLECTIONS PER CAPITA, 2011



STATE PROPERTY TAX COLLECTIONS PER CAPITA, 2011



STATE CORPORATE INCOME TAX COLLECTIONS PER CAPITA, 2011



Testimony : SB 2586 for Education hearing on Part IV.

Honor Chair Kidani and committee members.

My name is Andrew Monfort and I am a freshman from Mililani High School. I support this legislation because Part IV support the ways in which vocational, technical and career pathway provides skills for all public high school for all secondary students. The purpose of this part is to “expand vocational, technical, and career pathway programs by ensuring that all public high schools provide secondary school students with access to vocational, technical, and career pathway programs.” This bill gives the important skills for the students to use throughout their life.

Mililani High School has allowed me to be in one of these Vocational programs, IET pathcore which gives everyone in the class the skills to use tools to create a objects. All students should have the chance of obtaining the important skills that s/he could use in their life to use a certain tool such as a drill, saw, screwdrivers and many other tools. All Public High schools should provide secondary students with the opportunity to participate in a vocational, technical, and career pathway program to obtain all skills that are teached in the program for them to obtain a stronger education.

Sincerely,
Andrew Monfort

Testimony for: Support for SB2568
Committee on Education Hearing
Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Honorable Chair Kidani and committee members,

My name is Kylie Jones, I am a freshman in Highschool, and I support bill SB2568. I agree with this bill, as a student in Mililani High School. The classrooms we learn in are being neglected, and as a result, we are working in 65 year old classrooms. Section V is about the facilities in our schools, and the monumental need for modernization of our classrooms. Many classrooms fail to have proper air conditioning, so student have to try to learn in classrooms that can reach and sustain 100 degrees. At this point, the cost of installing AC in all of the schools, and updating the infrastructure is \$140,000,000. I support this legislation because in classrooms all around Hawaii, student learning is being negatively affected because of the lack of modern facilities.

In my own classrooms, I have felt my clothing cling to my body and I have heard the violent buzzing of more than 5 fans attempt to cut the heat in my classroom. This Hell was in the 7th grade. Now that I am a freshman, I have seen very little change since then. I am lucky enough to have my PE and my Civics classroom air conditioned, however, I still have to spend hot days suffering in every other class that I have. A few years back, I visited Punahou High School, and experienced what I thought was a luxury. Well kept facilities, air conditioning, and open classrooms, things that are actually normal in other states. Our classrooms will never get better unless something is done, we are no longer living in the past, let's act like it. Please support this bill for our schools, for our education, and for our students.

Sincerely,
Kylie Jones

Testimony for Support of SB 2586

Committee on Education

Honorable Chair Kidani and committee members,

My name is Noah Fujita. I am a freshman student at Mililani High School and I do support Part IX of Senate Bill 2586. When teachers do not stay as teachers it is not good for the schools, or the kids.

Part IX is about teacher recruitment and retention, or basically that more than half of new teachers leave or quit before the completion of five years of service. And only 50%-60% stay in their schools each year, and kids have to deal with substitutes until another permanent teacher fills in their spot. Also, that teachers should get a raise for every year's service as a teacher because Hawaii ranks 51st out of 50 states in teachers median salary, which is bad. A teacher who worked at Waipahu High School moved to Oregon, and "At the Oregon public school where he got hired, his salary is \$5,000 more per year than it was in the islands — and it goes a lot further." Also, another teacher was impoverished when he moved to D.C. and "This year he is teaching in a Washington, D.C.-area school district where he makes about 30 percent more than he did in Hawaii" (Wong 2013).

I never had any personal experiences with teachers moving around, people leaving all the time. But without people who stayed for me I would never have anything good, the clubs I am in (Interact Club, and Marching Band) are all from people who stayed. All the things that Mililani High School has is because people stayed, the Marching Band is from when the school was created, and people stayed and stayed, and now it is one of the best in the state. I may have never had any experiences with teachers leaving me, but I know what good things can come out of it if teachers do stay. This is why with this bill, the schools, and children will be better with the more experienced teachers if they stay.

Sincerely,

Noah Fujita

Testimony For: Support of Section III, SB2586

Senate on Education Hearing

Wednesday, Friday 10, 2016

Honorable Chair Kidani and committee members,

As a sophomore at Mililani High School, I find it hard to believe that the hard working special education teachers have to deal with meeting federal requirements as well as taking care of their students. Due to the lack of funding in the special education system, teachers are left in the dust trying to maintain a decent environment for the kids with special needs to learn.

As a state, we are slowly slipping through the cracks when it comes to meeting federal requirements. In 2005, Hawaii went from being in the top nine for meeting federal requirements then dropped to the 27 ranked as “needs improvement” two years in a row. Hawaii teachers are ‘highly qualified’ but, we are still failing to meet the requirements from the government.

Special education students were tested in 2004-05 and on average they were 21% lower than general education students then, in 2015-16 special education students averaged 48.8% lower on tests. Special Education students should not be tested in comparison to general education students. You are asking those who are mentally incapable of completing simple tasks to do proficient on a test that some general education students struggle to exceed on. Then, you use those statistics to determine if the special needs teachers are meeting requirements. The real problem is not funding, it is how you evaluate the children.

In 8th grade, I had a special needs student in one of my science classes. Seeing how they struggled to pick up on the material really broke my heart. The teacher did her best to slow down the pace of class for that one specific student but, then it hurt the other children’s learning because they were trying to learn new material. The teachers did their best to work with this student on the side but, she still did not understand it. She began to get frustrated and she eventually broke down. Putting so much pressure on the special needs kids often have a bitter outcome. Funding is only the beginning of the problem. There are still other issues that need to be addressed.

More funding for special needs students should not stop. We just need to understand that funding is not the only problem that needs to be solved.

Sincerely,
Sydney K. Aea

Testimony for: Support of SB 2586

Committee on Education Hearing

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Honorable Chair Kidani and Committee members,

My name is Gavin Lee. I am a freshman at Mililani High School and I do support part VII of SB 2586. The standardized tests in the public school system is a waste of resources. Students should opt out of these tests. Teachers are spending more time on test prep then teaching their subjects. Huge companies make tons of money selling the tests and test supplies. The DOE has stated that it "More complex problems and challenge them to support their answers with explanations and evidence." In Hawaii it's called the SBAC. Its part of the common core standard, a way for kids all over the USA to learn the same educational topics. It doesn't help us in any way.

Since being in public school we've have multiple tests in the past years. Examples of these test are HSA, SBAC, and the Renaissance test. These tests were challenging because we had to use everything we learned to solve the test. But tests like SBAC is unfair because we don't know what some things are because we didn't learn them at the time. The HSA was good because it tested the actual things we learned in that school. I was privileged to have good elementary school, Mililani Mauka. We learned to take notes and solve work. Thanks to the testing of the SBAC the DOE has made school that much harder.

Sincerely,
Gavin Lee

From:
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony for SB 2586 (February 10, 1:15pm)
Date: Tuesday, February 09, 2016 7:47:01 AM

To those who care about educating our Keiki,

Thank you for hearing the Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act. As a hardworking educator, I strongly support this bill because I know firsthand how it will boost quality teaching and student learning.

In Hawai'i today, class sizes sometimes exceed forty or fifty students. Classroom temperatures have reached as high as 108 degrees. Curriculum is poisoned by a toxic amount of standardized testing. Arts, vocational, and special education instruction is neglected. Teachers are besieged by a burdensome evaluation system and, in turn, receive the lowest pay in the nation.

We, the teachers, deserve better. Please support professional pay for educators, an end to toxic testing, smaller class sizes, cooler classrooms, funding for arts, vocational and special education, and an end to unfair evaluations. In doing so, you will not only help teachers, but the students who will forge the future of our island home.

Please support this bill.

Mahalo,
Elementary School teacher from Sunset Beach

From: [Esther Byun](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony for SB 2586 (February 10, 1:15pm)
Date: Tuesday, February 09, 2016 7:01:39 AM

Thank you for hearing the Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act. As a hardworking educator, I strongly support this bill because I know firsthand how it will boost quality teaching and student learning.

We, the teachers, deserve better. Please support professional pay for educators, an end to toxic testing, smaller class sizes, cooler classrooms, funding for arts, vocational and special education, and an end to unfair evaluations. In doing so, you will not only help teachers, but the students who will forge the future of our island home.

Please support this bill.

Sincerely,

Esther Byun

2nd Grade Teacher, Canoe Complex

From: [Mireille Ellsworth](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony for SB2586 Hearing on February 10, 2016 at 1:15 pm
Date: Tuesday, February 09, 2016 6:45:54 AM

FROM: Mireille Ellsworth, English and Drama Teacher at Waiakea High School

February 9, 2016

RE: SB2586 Education Ominbus Bill; Schools Our Keiki Deserve

Honorable Chair Kidani and committee members,

My name is Mireille Ellsworth, and I have been a teacher at Waiakea High School in Hilo for the past 11 1/2 years. I urge you to support this historical bill which will virtually transform the quality of education in our state moving toward the type of education that will benefit not only our students but our community as a whole!

My students are suffering under a competitive model of education which does not take into consideration the needs of each child. I have seen decreasing motivation in my students with each passing year as well as lower skills compared to students in previous years. It is evident that the effects of damaging decisions made to cut funding to education in recent years are taking their toll on our upcoming generations. Some of the culprits are rooted in neglect to fund education. Examples are Furlough Fridays which cheated students out of weeks of classroom instruction and not maintaining teacher salaries to match the cost of living driving teachers to leave their jobs and go elsewhere leaving students with full-time substitute teachers or emergency hires just to have an adult in the classroom.

The only major infusion of funding to education in the past few years has been the \$75 million from the U.S. Department of Education through the Race to the Top grant. That money was spent to implement changes that were not research-based, rather it resulted in profits for consultants and textbook companies that gauge the quality of education on standardized tests which have never been vetted by valid and reliable educational research practices.

Students and parents are being lied to that the Common Core standards are increasing critical thinking. In high school English, we have had to eliminate requiring a MLA research paper at each grade level, to make time for the new course requirements and prescribed curriculum. Research paper writing is a crucial skill for college success, but we actually don't have time for it now. We have had to remove complex literature from the curriculum that demanded students use higher-level thinking skills, like inference best taught through novels. We have had to get rid of poetry units in place of units focused on non-fiction reading which is more straightforward than poetry. Instead of deciphering a metaphor or realizing an author is expressing something through personification, students are asked to find "textual evidence" which is basically "finding the answer in the book," not "reading between the lines," which requires way more complex thought processes. This is all because of the focus on teachers and schools trying to prove themselves through test scores instead of nurturing the whole child through various modes of learning, through art, music, and science. My colleagues in the content areas are shocked at how little students know about science and social studies entering high school. Imagine, students are lacking in social studies, the very foundation of citizenship! Wrongly, it's all about the reading, writing, and math scores. We must end high-staking testing and get back to what educational research tells us instead of cheating our children because of what a textbook company's salesperson is pitching!

The mantra so heavily publicized for all students to be college AND career ready is propaganda. We have lost vocational programs in this state and students who are not geared to academic-oriented careers are either leaving high-school without any marketable skills or going to college without a goal and not finishing either because it's too expensive or they were aimless and not motivated to finish. Then they have student loans to pay and are in crippling debt that will further discourage them from trying to build a secure life for themselves. I worry about my students' future because they have been given a cheap

version of education that does not serve them well.

In order to "fix" education, teachers are told to "step it up" and improve what they are doing with less resources for the classroom and less means to support themselves because of rising costs of living sometimes resulting in needing to take on a second job. Furthermore, teachers are being pressured to jump through the hoops of a new teacher evaluation system which are insulting, not helping them improve their practice, and sucking valuable time from their day which is needed to focus on classroom instruction (and holding down a second job, in some cases). This is why toxic, high-stakes testing is making teachers leave the classroom causing a greater shortage of experienced, qualified teachers rooted in Hawaii.

Students suffer under these tests as well. Because test scores are tied to teachers' pay, they are not allowed to see the test; and therefore, do not fully know how to prepare students for them except to follow the prescribed curriculum. However, students share their frustrations with their teachers. My students told me they couldn't sustain attention to read all of the lengthy articles on the test from which they were supposed to quote and synthesize into an argumentative essay. We had been practicing this in class but reading and discussing the articles in class and absorbing the topic over time so that when they started to write, they had a deeper understanding about the topic beyond the printed page. Completing an argumentative essay in one sitting on a topic you have never thought about before is unrealistic and NOT even what college courses are like! Students told me they just faked their way through the test and felt bad about themselves for not doing better. They say, "I probably failed." When the results finally come out, teachers don't have those students anymore and cannot address the issues. Even if scores were reported sooner, they don't show students or the teacher specifically what students need to improve, and in many cases, students don't care about the scores because they know they didn't try their best. After all, the test doesn't count on their grades. (Lucky thing since it is an unrealistic task that the test asks them to do.)

So why would the funding and shift in focus to whole child education and away from high-stakes testing matter? If we give our students a head start to develop as social beings in public preschools, they will be much more adjusted to being around their peers and understanding that school is a place to play and explore. A young child's work is play, and students will have a whole extra year to gear up for the foundations of academic learning in first grade.

If we shift away from the competitive and punitive model of education and fund a well-rounded education, like what parents expect from private schools, we will enrich the whole society in which our children will live in the future. High-quality public schools should preclude the need for private schools, unless a parent wants a religious education for his or her child. Vocational counseling in high schools should be so excellent that a student who wants to go to college will have a trade in order to work his or her way through college instead of accumulating debt. Students who love what they do in the trades will be more proficient in their trade so that when we the public need our car fixed, our house built, or our plumbing repaired, we will have highly-qualified people serving the needs of our modern society.

Anyone who feels that there is something more important to fund than education is short-sighted. All the social ills we are trying to solve can be prevented by young people having a wonderful childhood and fabulous opportunities in their lives as young adults. Even problems with the environment can be solved by students while still attending school if they are fully supported and nurtured in creative problem-solving instead of passing a test!

A 1% rise in the General Excise Tax is such a small price to pay when we are uplifting our whole state through this initiative. It's time we stop mouthing how important our children are and give them the support they deserve for the hope of a secure future.

Please support the SB2586 and be part of the legacy to create a better state for our keiki!

Thank you,

Mireille Ellsworth,
Teacher and agent of hope

Feb. 8, 2016

Testimony in Support of SB2586

Public hearing, 02-10-16, 1:15PM in conference room 229.

To: Honorable Chair Kidani and Members of the Committee

First, thank you for hearing this bill!

Hawaii is in an educational crisis! When I first started to teach in Hawaii, the third-grade wing of my school had holes in the ceiling and the tiles, as well as the rain, was falling on kids in the classroom. After I found out that then-Gov. Linda Lingle was not releasing the funding allocated for the roof, I decided to go to the newspaper. The roof was finally fixed, but it shouldn't have taken a new teacher putting his neck out on the line in order to get it done.

When I go to the mainland now, the culture shock for me is walking into other public schools. I feel I am walking into research facilities compared to our shameful school facilities in Hawaii.

The community and legislators I have spoken with really don't argue about the need for the majority of items in this omnibus bill. The most controversial part of this bill is raising the General Excise Tax. Some people are saying we shouldn't raise our taxes JUST for our public schools. This is a classic divide and conquer strategy! The G E T has not been raised since 1965.

Over the past decade, I have lobbied legislators to improve the disgraceful conditions of our public schools. They always have responded by asking me, how do you fund it? Our public schools are funded by lump-sum funding from the legislature (crossing your fingers annually on the amount of tourists who can afford to spend their discretionary funds on vacationing here). Unlike the mainland, there is no dedicated funding source for our public schools. The result is...

- Hawaii is LAST in per pupil spending (when adjusted for cost of living);
- Hawaii is LAST in teacher salaries (when adjusted for cost of living);
- Hawaii is LAST in money for facilities per student;
- Hawaii is LAST in the percentage of taxation to public schools!

I believe that most of the people who are in a position to change this, don't, because their kids attend private school. Democrats have always supported the idea that EVERY child deserves a QUALITY public education. The wealthy have great private school options while the poor are not given the same opportunity! Truth is, our public schools are in a CRISIS, and this bill is the remedy.

Please pass this out of committee. Our keiki deserve passage of this bill. Our community needs more time to continue this conversation about the best way for Hawaii to be able to offer a QUALITY public education for EVERY child!

Respectfully,

Justin Hughey
2nd Grade Special Education Teacher
King Kamehameha III Elementary

From: [K. Raina Whiting](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony for SB 2586 (February 10, 1:15pm)
Date: Monday, February 08, 2016 9:51:22 PM

Dear Honorable Chair Kidani and committee members:

Thank you for hearing the Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act. As a hardworking educator, I strongly support this bill because I know firsthand how it will boost quality teaching and student learning.

In Hawai'i today, class sizes sometimes exceed forty or fifty students. Classroom temperatures have reached as high as 108 degrees. Curriculum is poisoned by a toxic amount of standardized testing. Arts, vocational, and special education instruction is neglected. Teachers are besieged by a burdensome evaluation system and, in turn, receive the lowest pay in the nation.

We, the teachers, deserve better. Please support professional pay for educators, an end to toxic testing, smaller class sizes, cooler classrooms, funding for arts, vocational and special education, and an end to unfair evaluations. In doing so, you will not only help teachers, but the students who will forge the future of our island home.

Please support this bill.

K. Raina Whiting

Testimony for: Support of SB 2586

Committee on Education Hearing

Wednesday, February 10, 2016 1:15pm

Honorable Chair Kidani and committee members,

I am a ninth grader at Mililani High School and I believe that this bill should be passed. Students should have the ability to have a well-rounded and better quality education. This could help children have the opportunity to advance in creativity and develop better learning skills. Classes such as art, music, and extracurricular are not as valued as core classes like math, English, etc. According to the National Education Longitudinal Study (NELS), proves that extra activities prevent dropouts and success in school. Other than school advantages, getting kids into extracurricular could help kids become better at time management and prevent addictive bad habits. Instead of kids being uninterested in their work, they could be more motivated to come to school and do something that they can enjoy.

Other than adding more classes to our school, we should put more teacher assistants into classrooms since many children struggle with their academics. Since many classes are overpopulated with other kids, many are unable to receive the proper help. If students had more attention, test grades would go up. According to Michael Hansen, excellent eighth-grade teachers in the United States were responsible for six or twelve more students per class. This means the smaller the class, the better the education the child receives. More teachers could help students advance in their education, which could help kids be successful in the future. Possibly, we could find a cure for cancer but we need to start with providing kids with better education.

Sincerely,
Allena Wong

From:
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony for SB 2586 (February 10, 1:15pm)
Date: Monday, February 08, 2016 8:53:53 PM

Thank you for hearing the Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act. As a hardworking educator, I strongly support this bill because I know firsthand how it will boost quality teaching and student learning.

In Hawai'i today, class sizes sometimes exceed forty or fifty students. Classroom temperatures have reached as high as 108 degrees. Curriculum is poisoned by a toxic amount of standardized testing. Arts, vocational, and special education instruction is neglected. Teachers are besieged by a burdensome evaluation system and, in turn, receive the lowest pay in the nation.

We, the teachers, deserve better. Please support professional pay for educators, an end to toxic testing, smaller class sizes, cooler classrooms, funding for arts, vocational and special education, and an end to unfair evaluations. In doing so, you will not only help teachers, but the students who will forge the future of our island home.

Please support this bill.

Aloha,
Michelle Hatami

From: [Kellee Kelly](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: SB2586 Schools Our Keiki Deserve
Date: Monday, February 08, 2016 8:43:19 PM

Honorable Chair Kidani and committee members,

My name is Kellee Kelly from Kea'au elementary on the island of Hawaii. I am a Special Education teacher and have been teaching now for 7 years. I am writing in support of SB2586 "The Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act."

As a Special Education teacher and mother of public education students, I have become more and more heartbroken by the requirements placed on students and teachers.

Education today has become a very sterile and joyless process for many reasons, here are a few.

Teachers are mandated to use with fidelity a universal curriculum which is an insult to creative teacher leaders who are passionate about particular subjects. I have had over 500 hours of post graduate professional development and I am not allowed to use any of it. Instead, I spend my days counting minutes, reading out of a book, and rushing kids to the next thing whether they get it or not.

More so, a disproportionate amount of focus is placed on reading and math with disregard to all other subject areas. In my school, 30 of the lowest students in my grade level are receiving what they call "triple dosing" in ELA. They receive their regular instruction in the morning for 90 minutes, then they are pulled out from all social studies, science, guidance, PE, art to attend another 90 minute block of remedial fluency lessons, finally for the triple dose, they receive the third and final dose of remedial reading for an additional 45 minutes. They do this three times a week, and parents were not informed. These kids may be able to read, but that's just about it.

Schools Our Keiki Deserves Act addresses the whole child. Voting yes would require elementary schools to allocate 20% of the school day towards extra curricular subjects like art, PE, and guidance.

I'd like to add another layer to this picture. Assessing for assessment sake. Students in my school take end of the week assessments in language arts and math some of Thursday and all of ELA and math block every Friday. Every week. Not to mention the twice a month fluency assessments, the twice a month CFA assessments, Iready diagnostic assessments, and end of the unit assessments. On top of all this we are required to formally assess students on the high stakes test, Smarter Balance Assessment. Next week, we will be stopping extra curricular classes for all students for the rest of the month of February to teach a SBA interim test meant to prepare students to take the actual test in the Spring. We spend a great amount of time testing and preparing for testing when we could be using that time to actually teach. Schools Our Keiki Deserves Act states that standardized testing is counterproductive. It asks that there would be a limit to how much standardized testing a student would engage in. It asks that Special education students be excused from standardized testing, and that parents could have the option of opting out all together.

Because I am a Special Education teacher, I would like to speak to the special education language in the act. Special Education students have unique needs and learning styles. Not only are they disadvantaged, they are also asked to do the same thing as everybody else. I watch helplessly as my students become more and more frustrated, doubtful, and insecure about their place in this world. As well, at my school alone, SpEd teacher positions are being cut. The cuts will increase caseloads which equal a massive amounts of paperwork. Meetings for students run late into the afternoon, leaving the SpEd teacher no time to prepare.

Schools Our Keiki Deserves Act believes that Special Education is a specialized field. The act asks for increased funding to purchase specialized materials, reduce case loads and class sizes so SpEd teachers have time and attention to individualize each student plan, and additional preparation time to complete the necessary paperwork.

I want all of you to know how important Schools Our Keiki Deserves Act is. This act is a product of multiple surveys and listening tours by Hawaii State Teachers Union. This act was created by the teachers. We as leaders in our profession are telling you, politicians, what we need. This is a opportunity for Hawaii to set precedence to say, we honor teachers as leaders, and we place priority in every student no matter who they are or what their cultural or socioeconomic status is.

Its time for us to say that we honor the whole child, we recognize that testing is not the answer to everything, that special need students have special needs, and that we honor teachers as our leaders among many other equally important concerns.

My name is Kellee Kelly from Kea'au Elementary and I am asking you to vote in favor of SB2586 "The Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act." Thank You.

Kellee Kelly

From: [vijay.thangaraj](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony for SB 2586 (February 10, 1:15pm)
Date: Monday, February 08, 2016 8:21:55 PM

Thank you for hearing the Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act. As a hardworking educator, I strongly support this bill because I know firsthand how it will boost quality teaching and student learning.

In Hawai'i today, class sizes sometimes exceed forty or fifty students. Classroom temperatures have reached as high as 108 degrees. Curriculum is poisoned by a toxic amount of standardized testing. Arts, vocational, and special education instruction is neglected. Teachers are besieged by a burdensome evaluation system and, in turn, receive the lowest pay in the nation.

We, the teachers, deserve better. Please support professional pay for educators, an end to toxic testing, smaller class sizes, cooler classrooms, funding for arts, vocational and special education, and an end to unfair evaluations. In doing so, you will not only help teachers, but the students who will forge the future of our island home.

Please support this bill.

Sent from my iPad

From: Mrs.MommyY@aol.com
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony for SB 2586 (February 10, 1:15pm)
Date: Sunday, February 07, 2016 3:55:25 PM

Thank you for hearing the Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act. I have been a public school educator for over 25 years and this bill will make a difference in future education and teaching. With the pressures of high test scores, exceeding the recommended class size of 26-currently at 32, and living pay check to pay check, how can I honestly promote education in our youth?

We, the teachers, deserve better. Please support professional pay for educators, an end to toxic testing, smaller class sizes, cooler classrooms, funding for arts, vocational and special education, and an end to unfair evaluations. In doing so, you will not only help teachers, but the students who will forge the future of our island home.

Please support this bill.

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Troi Orias](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony for SB 2586 (February 10, 1:15pm)
Date: Monday, February 08, 2016 6:08:19 PM

Aloha,

I am a special education teacher at Ewa Beach Elementary in support for the Schools Our Keiki Deserve SB2586. I have a class for medically fragile students ranging from 5-13 years old. All of them are non-verbal, in wheelchairs, and in diapers. Some have vision and hearing impairments. Half live at a nearby residential hospital with some of their parents living off the island and out of state. These students have some of the most severe adaptive, motor, communication, and cognitive needs. As such, teaching my class is one of the most unique and challenging endeavors.

There are no textbooks that will work for my class. I have to create the curriculum and then modify it to meet their specific goals and skill levels. With students that cannot even hold a pencil, we have to build and create adaptive tools to help them draw, paint, and interact with items. All of this comes with a price on time and money. I am at work at 6 AM and usually leave after 4 PM. I spend roughly a minimum of \$150 a month to buy the supplies I need to provide the students with activities and lessons that engage all their senses. How do you read a book on green eggs and ham to a child who doesn't know what is ham or an egg, let alone has never seen the color green? We create these bridges of experience every day in my class but at a price. Every month, I also purchase cleaning supplies such as laundry detergent, dish-washing soap, hand sanitizer, and disinfectant to ensure that we meet their medical needs. I collect recyclables to come up with spare money to afford these necessities.

Despite the severity of my students' needs, I am mandated to put them through state-wide testing. Even the "alternate" assessments that are afforded my students are beyond their level. They are required to sit through hours as I try to assess them by making choices on an iPad even if they cannot see, hear, or touch the iPad independently.

Next door to my class is another fully self-contained class for students with behavioral and cognitive needs that are symptomatic with Autism or Intellectual Disability. That class has had 5 different teachers in the past 2 years. Some teachers didn't even last one semester (90 days) with one quitting this past month. As a result of teacher vacancy, I am pressured to increase my workload to help cover for the missing teacher.

Another class next to me has had over 24 preschool (ages 3-5) students with behavioral, medical, communication, adaptive, and learning needs in one roughly 400 sq. foot room with 3 teachers and support staff. Most people have enough trouble handling one 3-5 year old let alone 24 in one room and be expected to deliver standards-based instruction. Everyone in that room is literally tripping over each other.

My story may sound unique but there are similar stories throughout every classroom in Hawaii. Teachers are forced to implement mandates that do not teach the whole child and focus on testing. Teachers are forced to make do with little to no supplies and have to spend their own money. Teachers are overworked. Teachers are leaving.

Teachers are expected to provide quality educational experiences but are not given the

adequate tools to do the job. Worse yet, some teachers don't even have a functional facilities! We need your help now! Education in Hawaii is given a lot of lip-service but at the end, the students and teachers are ignored. How long must we wait for someone to "Fix the DOE" or find other ways to come up with the money needed to do what must be done? Please support this bill.

Respectfully,
Troi Orias

From: sheilacyboron@hawaii.rr.com
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony for SB2586
Date: Sunday, February 07, 2016 11:36:22 AM

Thank you for hearing the Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act. As a hardworking veteran educator, I strongly support this bill because I know firsthand how it would positively impact quality teaching and student learning.

In Hawai'i today, class sizes sometimes exceed forty students. Classroom temperatures have reached as high as 108 degrees. Meaningful curriculum is poisoned by a toxic amount of standardized testing. Arts, vocational, and physical education instruction is neglected. Huge chunks of teachers' time are preempted by a burdensome evaluation system and yet we receive the lowest pay in the nation relative to our cost of living.

We, the teachers and the students whose future is at stake, deserve better. Please support professional pay for educators, an end to toxic testing, smaller class sizes, cooler classrooms, funding for arts, vocational and special education, and an end to unfair evaluations.

I ask you to please support this bill.

From: [Ashley Olson](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: PLEASE SUPPORT SB 2586: Schools Our Keiki Deserve!
Date: Monday, February 08, 2016 5:13:20 PM

Thank you for hearing the Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act. I teach at Lahainaluna High School- the oldest school west of the Mississippi- and I strongly support this bill because I know that it will boost quality teaching and student learning for families who cannot afford \$20,000 or more for tuition to send their children to private school.

In Hawai'i today, class sizes sometimes exceed forty or fifty students. Classroom temperatures have reached as high as 108 degrees. Curriculum is poisoned and time AND MONEY are wasted by a toxic amount of standardized testing. Arts, vocational, and special education instruction is neglected. Teachers are besieged by a poorly designed and executed evaluation system and, in turn, receive the lowest pay in the nation when adjusted for the cost of living.

We, the teachers, AND OUR STUDENTS deserve better. Please support professional pay for educators, an end to toxic testing, smaller class sizes, cooler classrooms, funding for arts, vocational and special education, and an end to unfair and largely invalid evaluations. In doing so, you will not only help teachers, but the students who will forge the future of our island home.

Please support this bill.

Thank you-

Ashley Olson
Lahainaluna High School French and Spanish Teacher

Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 2586
Senate Committee on Education Hearing
Wednesday, February 10, 2016, 1:15 p.m.

Honorable Chair Kidani and Committee Members,

We, Harlan Rose and Skyler Robinson, seniors in AP Government at Mililani High School, are in strong support of the legislation. We are both military dependent children and, as such, we have been enrolled in multiple schools across the country. With this background, we feel as though it is important to give testimony about the quality of school facilities in Hawaii. Both of our middle schools on the mainland were more well-kept than the school buildings here in the islands. Whenever facilities were broken or out-of-order, every effort was taken to ensure that they were repaired as soon as possible. This includes, but was not limited to, air conditioning and heating units. We believe that properly maintained school facilities provided for a positive learning environment because classrooms were kept at a comfortable temperature and other facilities were always functional.

In public schools in Hawaii, temperatures are high year-round, which results in unreasonably hot and humid classrooms. Some classroom temperatures have been known to exceed 100 degrees. This results in an undesirable learning atmosphere, which discourages students from learning to their full potential. In fact, it has inspired absenteeism, which is causing attendance rates in public schools to drop. School facilities that are in such poor shape that students do not want to come to school is an embarrassment. As such, we need to work to establish more comfortable classroom conditions in Hawaii public schools. If we cannot add air conditioners to every classroom, we should, at the very least, add fans to every classroom at every campus. It is the responsibility of the legislature to fix these issues, and lack of action only proves our legislator's blatant disregard for Hawaii's children. Therefore, we need to take action, improve classroom conditions, and inspire a desire for a better education.

Sincerely,
Skyler Robinson
Harlan Rose

Testimony in Support of/Opposition to Senate Bill 2586
Senate Committee on Education Hearing
Wednesday, February 10, 2016. 1:15 p.m.

Honorable Chair Kidani and Committee Members,

We, Hamilton Howard and Kennidy Rellin, students of Mililani High School, strongly support Part XI: Critical Need For Funding, of Senate Bill 2586. Hawaii is the worst funded school district in the nation. As time goes on, we are falling further and further behind the rest of the nation. In order to receive a well funded education here, you must go to private schools that cost thousands to attend each year. Funding for students is far behind that of mainland schools. Our funding increases only 20% of what mainland schools get each year. When taking cost of living into account, teacher pay is also lowest in the nation.

As a student who has experienced many different high schools, here and the mainland, I can see a huge disparity in the amount of funding the schools have. In my mainland school in North Carolina, every student had their own personal computer and full AC throughout the school. The classrooms were also much cleaner and the campus as a whole was more put together than it is here. This created a comfortable learning environment that felt good to learn in. Here in Hawaii, you can clearly see how the funding for the schools is almost non-existent. The students deserve more out of their education and should have more opportunities to expand their learning.

Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 2586
Senate Committee of the Education Hearing
Wednesday, February 10, 2016, 1:15 p.m.

Honorable Chair Kidani and Committee Members, We, David Wilmarth and Ryan Williams, Students attending Mililani High School would like to show our support for the Proposed Bill with specific support to the option for parents to allow their children to opt out of standardized testing, as well as the negative consequences of standardized testing to both students and teachers.

Since the creation of the common core in 2010, the focus of teachers has been remodeled into "teaching to the test." This mindset is forced upon the teachers, who are critiqued on their students ratings of standardized tests, and are evaluated based on these ratings. Studies have proven that teachers have minimal influence on the test scores, and yet, teachers depend on satisfactory ratings for raises or job continuance. This transition fails the teachers and the students. Students are only learning test material, losing the rich and meaningful instruction that was once offered. Teachers have lost their sense of professionalism in the classroom as well, since they are unable to teach anything unique without risking repercussions from the test scores. Especially in Hawaii, where the occasional teacher already can't afford a house to live in, teachers are being forced to sacrifice the integrity of education for job security.

Opting out will hold no penalty from the Federal Government in the form of reduced funding or any other methods, in fact recent federal Acts such as the Every Student Succeeds Act with specifically allows parents to opt out from standardized testing. As stated by FairTest.org, the Act does require 95% of students to take the test, however states hold the power to decide what actions to take if too few students take the tests. Even under the 2001 No Child Left Behind Act, the Federal Government took no action to punish schools who a high level of test refusals. The Department of Education also acknowledge it had no plans to penalize districts or school by withholding funds. In fact, six states: California, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Utah, Washington, and Oregon have laws that that specifically allow parents to opt their children out of standardized tests and none of those states have been sanctioned or punished for this. In 2014, Oregon signed House Bill 2566 into law making it easier for students to opt out, I see why our state can not do the same for the benefit of the quality of education of our students. For the sake of our keiki and the future of our state, pass Senate Bill 2586.

Testimony In Support of Senate Bill 2586
Senate Committee on Education
Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Dear Honorable Chair Kidani and committee members,

My name is Amy Perruso, and as veteran public school teacher and parent of a public elementary school child, I have committed myself to the improvement of public education in Hawai'i. I am convinced, given the opening for change provided the passage of ESSA and new state leadership, that we have a unique and historic opportunity to do something that has never been done in Hawai'i. We could create the schools our keiki deserve.

Public education in Hawai'i has the potential power to democratize and make our society more equal, fair, and just. Public education policy should accordingly be designed, developed, and assessed in as democratic a fashion as possible. The act entitled "Schools Our Keiki Deserve" emerged from conversations and forums with public school teachers in every chapter and on every island of the state of Hawai'i, and represents the contribution of teachers to the public conversation about public education. We seek to raise awareness about what is happening in our schools and to advocate changes that will restore *ola* (well-being), *lōkahi* (balance), *pono* (fairness), and *aloha* (care) to state education policy in Hawai'i.

This legislation is a result of a long process of continuing internal dialogue within our association. In member-to-member forums facilitated through a statewide "listening tour," teachers engaged in a common process to move from a 'language of critique' to a 'language of hope' and possibility. In these forums, teacher participants engaged in extended discussion of the problems facing public education, the exacerbation of these issues by the recent education 'reform' policies (i.e. *No Child Left Behind* and *Race to the Top*), and the possibilities for change presently available. They considered major continuing trends, novel emerging issues, and significant continuities from the past. Teacher participants used this analysis to 'envision their preferred futures,' and provided feedback that the state leadership used to develop the shared vision of the association and to determine the most effective strategy to move towards our shared preferred future.

The most important concepts informing this shared vision for our preferred future for public education in Hawai'i are *ola* (well-being), *lōkahi* (balance), *pono* (fairness), and *aloha* (care). Teachers want schools to promote the development and well-being of the whole student, intellectually, physically, spiritually, and socially (*ola*). They think that educational policy should be designed around recognition of the vital interdependence and need for balance of all of these aspects of development, within each student and the community as whole (*lōkahi*). They argued that public education policy should cultivate the individual talents and potential of all students, whatever their circumstances, and respect the roles and responsibilities of those who work with them (*pono*). And, most importantly, they argued that sound public education policy should create optimal conditions for students' development, based on compassion, experience, and practical wisdom (*aloha/malama*). The "Schools Our Keiki Deserve" campaign is our first step in the effort to realize this vision.

In this shared preferred future, public schools become a primary site of public investment structured around visions of *equity* and *excellence*, and the resources and facilities available for learning reflect the high value accorded to the knowledge shared with future generations. There were four main purposes of public education identified by teacher participants in the groups in which I participated: economic, cultural, social, and personal. Educators recognized the importance of enabling students to become economically responsible and independent. Teachers also emphasized the role of public education in helping students understand and appreciate their own cultures and respect the diversity of others. The social function of public education, teachers argued, is to support students in becoming active and compassionate citizens. And public education should have a personal impact: it should serve the students themselves, to contribute not simply to their ‘happiness’ but ultimately, to student ‘flourishing’. This redefinition of the purposes of education centers the process on “opening the world to more questions, to deeper uncertainties, to shared and contested meanings, to community engagement, to imagination, action and joy.”[1]

Public schools play a critical role in any kind of democratic political system and should serve as centers of community and collaborative learning. The first implication of this renewed emphasis on the public schools as centers for community building is a shift in the understanding of the purposes of public goods and resources. The purpose of education is to provide opportunities for young people to explore what it means to be fully human. Young people need support and guidance in discovering who they are, as humans, in relation to others, and in exploring different ways of expressing themselves and developing meaningful relationships with the world around them. Young people should be given opportunities to acquire a wider rather than narrower range of skills, because all members of society need a range of knowledge and capacities, broad and deep enough to know how to further that knowledge should they so desire. Public schools in Hawai‘i should educate children so that they can be effective and reasonable participants in public decision-making, and, perhaps most importantly, so that they understand the *intrinsic* value of intellectual pursuits to serve the ends of life-enhancement.

When the primary desired social good or outcome is the development of human potential rather than economic growth, the entire design of education is transformed. There is a shift in two main areas, the first of which is the desire to learn and willingness to be creatively challenged. With a focus on embracing challenges, students and educators alike build upon their areas of strength and welcome the opportunity to explore areas in which they might not feel as comfortable. As adults, students will need to be able to critically and creatively grapple with overlapping ecological, economic and political crises. A second important capacity that will be developed as a result of this shift is the willingness to use political participation through legal channels to raise questions about social problems and to achieve justice. This is critical as we move towards shared challenges: students need to develop the ability to engage in public reasoning in a spirit of mutual respect and willingness to listen.

I hope that legislators can work with public school teachers of Hawai‘i seek to reclaim public education for public purposes. Teachers have been trying, even against the challenges of having BOE and DOE hearings largely held during teaching hours, to raise awareness about what is happening in our schools and to advocate changes that will

restore *ola* (well-being), *lōkahi* (balance), *pono* (fairness), and *aloha* (care) to state education policy in Hawai‘i. Teachers are and have always been powerful advocates on behalf of the young people of our communities and partners with their families. We look forward to continuing to build relationships with our communities to strengthen our public school, to help create the schools our keiki deserve.

Sincerely,

Amy Perruso, Ph.D
Mililani High School
Advanced Placement Social Studies
NBCT

[1] Jones, Denisha. "Another Casualty in the Fight to Save Public Education: An Interview with Barbara Madeloni." *EmPower Magazine*. EmPower, 13 June 2012. Web. 14 Jan. 2016.

Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 2556
Senate Committee on Education Hearing
Wednesday, February 9, 2016, 1:15pm

Honorable Chair Kidani and Committee,

We, David Holloway, and Yumena Kawasaki of the Mililani High School AP Government class support this legislation because we deserve quality school facilities for a healthy and safe learning environment. Our schools should have “adequate lighting, clean air, comfortable heating and cooling, properly-insulated windows that open and close, roofs that do not leak, library media centers, functioning plumbing in bathrooms, science labs” just to name a few. The lack of these facilities hinders a student’s learning process as seen through gathered research. Poor air quality, weak lighting, and a lack of air conditioning in extreme island temperatures have been associated with increased absences, less productivity, unhappiness, sickness, and poor education performance. Hawai‘i ranks last in the nation in capital improvement investment per student and we rank low in the nation for SAT scores. An research done by the The Global Report Card for America’s schools (GRC) showed that Hawaii drops to a 20 percent in math and 28 percent in reading compared to Canada and other countries. This is undoubtedly correlated to our environmental learning conditions.

This should be first priority, to get air conditioning in all the public schools, because the environment of learning directly affects the students. How can you expect a student to focus in a hot, humid, claustrophobic room? They can’t. When your clothes are drenched in sweat and it’s dripping on to the paper, how can it be expected that a student should be completely focused and not distracted? In my transfer to Mililani High School from Kapolei, that’s one of the first things I noticed in the beginning of the school year. Although it’s winter and it has cooled down, there are still those days when I feel so distracted by the heat that I can’t even focus to the teacher because I’m so hot and sweaty, trying to get cool.

Also with AC the air quality would improve due to filtration of the vog and pollutants from pesticides. This would also fix the poor ventilation that traps the irritants and pollutants in the classroom. or kept out by eliminating all airflow in classrooms without air conditioning, creating a stifflingly hot and toxic environment for the students.

Thank you for listening.

Testimony in Support of the Senate Bill 2586
Senate Committee on Education Hearing
Wednesday, February 10, 2016 1:15 pm

Honorable Chair Kidani and Committee Members,

We are Anna Davide and Emma Ormond, students under Dr. Amy Perruso at Mililani High School. We are in strong support of S.B. 2586 because of Part II, Section 2 regarding "Whole Child Education." People are products of their culture and place of origin. We believe that place-based education would increase student engagement and inclination to learn. Content relatable to the student would provide them the opportunity to practice critical thinking and civil engagement when parallels can be drawn between what is taught and school and what they see in the community. Curriculum which promotes the humanities are often undermined in light of the increased focus on test-prep towards harsh math and reading standards. Instruction in performing and visual arts, cultural history, and physical education benefits student health and enhances their skill set which can be drawn upon during adult life.

The ambition to integrate holistic education is not merely idealistic in its benefits, but has been proven effective in alternative school settings. Anna Davide's perspective derives her experience attending the private school, Assets School to her transition to the public school system. Moving to a public school, felt as if elements of certain academic freedoms, such as time and encouragement to develop personal interests were lost in order to devote time to become successful in a new context. It was also observed that teachers lost the courage to express their own ingenuity in their lesson plans, in order to adhere to state benchmarks and standards. Creative education creates creative citizens. Students deserve the opportunity to explore new interests and their teachers shouldn't sacrifice their own potential to conform to stringent standards.

Testimony in Support to Senate Bill 2586
Senate Committee on Education Hearing
Wednesday, February 10, 2016, 1:15 pm

Honorable Chair Kidani and Committee Members,

We, Tyler Villegas and Jacob Olarti, seniors at Mililani High School, strongly support part 8 of this omnibus bill. As high school students we have suffered through the pointless standardized testing that means nothing to us. Testing causes nothing but stress to both the prepared and the not as it is a means of supposedly deciding our future.

We have both suffered through the struggles and frustrations of standardized testing. I, Jacob, have always done well on test however I believe that I've only been taught how to take test and not how to function as a human being in regular society, I have no life skills except formulas and proper essay structure. I, Tyler, have personally benefitted from standardized testing. I am naturally able to stand at the top of the curve: when I took the SBAC testing last year, I finished the English portion of the testing within 15 minutes of starting. I received over a 400 as my score without even trying. Although it is nice getting high scores in tests that the DOE mandates, by doing so, I am removed from my vital classes and my education is thus obstructed. I was forced to take time out of my AP Physics and AP Calculus classes last year to take the SBAC test, which in no way benefitted my education. In freshman year, my Algebra 2 teacher had halted his curriculum on logarithmic and parabolic functions because that was all that the class's "End of Course" exam addressed. Standardized testing hinders the class atmosphere by compelling teachers to focus on the mandated testing, rather than the education of their students.

Sincerely,
Jacob Olarti
Tyler Villegas

I completely support this bill. There is no downside to this bill. Using waste to create fertilizer which in turn will grow food and help us be more self sustaining rather than add more methane into the environment seems like a no-brainer. Please pass this bill.



46-063 Emepela Pl. #U101 Kaneohe, HI 96744 · (808) 679-7454 · Kris Coffield · Co-founder/Executive Director

TESTIMONY FOR SENATE BILL 2586, RELATING TO EDUCATION

**Senate Committee on Education
Hon. Michelle N. Kidani, Chair
Hon. Breene Harimoto, Vice Chair**

**Wednesday, February 10, 2016, 1:15 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 229**

Honorable Chair Kidani and committee members:

I am Kris Coffield, representing IMUAlliance, a nonpartisan political advocacy organization that currently boasts over 350 members. On behalf of our members, we offer this testimony in strong support of Senate Bill 2586, relating to education.

Learning matters, as Sen. Jill Tokuda once proclaimed from the Senate floor, after her colleagues voted to recommit a bill mandating high-stakes teacher evaluations. She was right. Yet, judging by the disconnect between the Hawaii State Department of Education and local teachers, the state and its educators remain sharply divided on what “matters” means.

For the state, what matters is demonstrable improvement in student achievement. Compelled by federal standardization initiatives, like the recently lapsed Race to the Top program, local education officials seek reforms that will immediately boost learning growth. By many metrics, Hawai'i students are struggling. In 2015, they scored last in the nation on ACT scores, 48th on the 8th grade NAEP reading test, and 46th on the 4th grade NAEP reading test. In 2009, the last time NAEP tested science, Hawai'i scored third worst in the country, lagging well below national averages.

Teachers and their union, the Hawaii State Teachers Association, on the other hand, are skeptical of reform efforts that impugn working conditions and collective bargaining. Just a few years removed from a unilaterally imposed “last, best, final offer,” teachers are justifiably worried that their professional input is being marginalized. Moreover, many educators feel that Hawaii's \$75 million Race

to the Top grant was overhyped, since approximately \$35 million of RTTT funds are targeted for design and implementation of a new “educator effectiveness system” that, in practice ties teacher pay and reemployment rights to toxic levels of standardized testing.

Conversations about education policy, at this point, should turn from what's been done to what happens next. Rather than rehash old debates, stakeholders should ask themselves the following question: How can we overcome political intransigence to build a better school system? The Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act and its accompanying legislative package is a comprehensive and sensible answer to that question. Drafted after HSTA leaders went on a “listening tour” to hear teachers’ concerns, these bills attempt nothing less than an education revolution, in which schools are fully funded, classrooms are cooled, teachers are compensated competitively, arts and cultural lessons amplify core content, class sizes are lowered to manageable levels, early childhood education is offered statewide, toxic testing is minimized, evaluations are made fair, fiscal equity is established, vocational and career pathway programming is advanced to combat a lack of college affordability, special education teachers supported, and professional respect is restored.

We are especially supportive of SOKD’s following objectives:

End toxic testing: The overuse of standardized tests in Hawai'i's schools has become an epidemic. Rather than focus on student learning, our schools devote increasing amounts of time to “test and punish” frameworks, in which critical thinking and applied knowledge are replaced with rote test-taking skills that adversely impact a teacher's or schools statistical assessment. According to the American Federation of Teachers report “Testing More, Teaching Less: What America's Obsession with Student Testing Costs in Money and Lost Instructional Time,” test preparation and testing in heavily tested districts can absorb up to a month and a half of school time. The grade-by-grade analysis found that students spend from 60 to more than 110 hours per year on test preparation, at an estimated cost per pupil of \$700 to \$1,000 in heavily tested grades. At the same time, abandoning so-called “toxic testing” could add 20 to 40 minutes of daily instructional time to secondary school grades, according to the report, with hundreds of dollars per student—and millions of dollars overall—reallocated to the purchase of instructional programs, school technology, infrastructure upgrades, and teacher pay increases.

Make no mistake, when we discuss standardized tests, we're talking about the Common Core (porat)e State Standards Initiative, a set of corporatized standards

that were foisted upon teachers and children across the nation without prior field testing. Developed by an organization called Achieve and the National Governors Association, and funded by the Gates Foundation, the standards were crafted with minimal public input. Under the Obama Administration's Race to the Top grant program, states were effectively told that if they did not adopt the Common Core, they would not be eligible to receive a portion of the program's \$4.35 billion in grant money. As education policy expert Diane Ravitch has said, "Federal law prohibits the U.S. Department of Education from prescribing curriculum, but in this case the Department figured out a clever way to avoid the letter of the law." The result? A precipitous decline in test scores based on Common Core's arbitrary cut scores, a lack of critical thinking development based on Common Core's arbitrary pedagogical instructional time ratios, disproportionate harm caused to English Language Learners and low-income students, further elimination of arts education, and parents and students across the nation joining the United Opt Out movement against the Smarter Balanced Assessment associated with Common Core, with students—including those in Hawai'i—literally "opting out" of toxic high-stakes tests. Even the Gates Foundation, the alchemists responsible for the Common Core monstrosity, are backpedaling on their Frankensteinian experiment, calling for a two-year moratorium on linking Common Core to teacher evaluations and their related "value-added method" of measuring performance.

Fully fund our schools: In comparison to school districts of similar size and demographic composition, Hawai'i, ranks 227th in per-pupil funding *before* adjusting for cost of living, at \$11,823 per child. Washington D.C., New York City, Boston, Pittsburgh, and Cincinnati school districts, for example, spend nearly twice as much as Hawai'i per pupil, at well over \$22,000 to over \$26,000 per student. Similarly, local private schools, discounting Catholic institutions, spend nearly \$19,173 dollars per student, with Punahou President Jim Scott revealing, in 2014, "The real cost of our education per student is \$26,000," owing to the school's then-total endowment of \$235 million and fundraising operations of \$12-\$15 million annually.

Raising the general excise tax by one percent and dedicating generated revenue wholly to education makes sense. A one-percent GET hike would garner over \$750 million each year for local schools, which could be used to fund public preschool (\$125 million per year), provide comprehensive classroom cooling (\$100 million or less in total, per the most recent departmental estimates), "true up" teacher step raises with earned classification (approximately \$73 million in total), provide class materials to special education teachers (\$3,750,000 annually), give

debit cards for supplies to educators statewide (\$6,500,000 per year), expand arts and vocational education, lower class sizes, and, at long last, pay teachers the salaries they deserve. According to a WalletHub study, Hawai'i ranked 51st out of fifty states and the District of Columbia for starting and median teacher pay adjusted for cost of living. When teachers clamor for better pay, they're not being greedy. On the contrary, they're fighting for the professional stability necessary to retain highly effective educators and recruit new teachers into chronically understaffed schools. If teachers are the most important factor in determining scholastic success, then the state should compensate them accordingly, competitively, and professionally.

Eliminate high stakes evaluations: As a condition of receiving RTTT funds, Hawai'i agreed to implement high-stakes teacher evaluations, in which teachers' "effectiveness" would be tied to student learning growth and, in turn, used to determine pay raises and reemployment rights. In practice, however, the DOE's "educator effectiveness system" has been devastating. Year after year, HSTA polling shows that a large majority of teachers feel that their work time is besieged by the evaluation system, which they find inadequately explained, lacking administrative support, and unfair. Moreover, 50 percent of the "student growth percentile" score used in EES ratings is based on standardized test scores, marrying instruction to toxic levels of standardized that undermine critical thinking and are academically inconsequential for students.

Evaluations are also subjective and overburdening for school administrators, as demonstrated by the number of teachers appealing their results. Appeals are most commonly made on procedural grounds, as administrators frequently fail to perform evaluation component or, in some, complete the evaluations at all (notably, some administrators have attempted to withhold pay increases for teachers whose evaluations they failed to complete, in violation of state law and the HSTA-BOE Master Agreement). While the evaluation system has been "improved" through annual discussions among stakeholders—for instance, by eliminating student survey data as a high-stakes evaluation component and allowing "effective" teachers to skip some components during the following school year—the classroom climate produced by test-driven evaluations continues to erode teacher morale and academic freedom, replacing educator flexibility with profitmaking education consulting "expertise."

Lowering class sizes: Class size is a social justice issue. Research conducted by the Institute of Education Sciences, within the U.S. Department of Education, concluded that “class size reduction is one of only four evidence-based reforms that have been proven to increase student achievement.” Experiments in Tennessee, Wisconsin, and other states, moreover, have demonstrated that students in smaller classes have higher academic achievement, receive better grades, and exhibit improved attendance. Students benefiting most from smaller class sizes are from poor and minority backgrounds, experiencing twice the achievement gains of their peers. A study commissioned by the U.S. Department of Education analyzed the achievement of students in 2,561 schools across the nation by their performance on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) exams. After controlling for student background, the only objective factor that correlated with higher test scores was class size.

Smaller class sizes allow for individualized instruction, while also improving student engagement. Additionally, we note that the DOE’s student-teacher ratios reflect the *total* number of students enrolled at a school divided by the *total* number of teachers employed, including non-classroom “resource teachers,” registrars, librarians, curriculum coordinators, curriculum coaches, counselors, communications specialists, technology coordinators, and more. Although Board of Education Policy 2237 establishes a class size limit for grades K-2 of 25 students in Hawai’i, there is no clear limit established for higher grade levels. Teachers can often be found with rosters that include 40-50 students, therefore, with some total secondary school workloads exceeding 200 students (particularly at schools where teachers manage six periods). The class size limits suggested in this bill follow the recommended class sizes outlined in BOE Policy 2237, with the lower limits for special needs students and English language learners following best educational practices nationwide. Reducing class size will boost achievement, improve attendance, and foster a sense of community, and reduce unproductive behaviors, providing students and teachers alike with a better learning environment.

At the end of the day, this bill isn’t about one idea. It isn’t about money. It’s about respect for the teachers who provide the sign and signal of our society’s audacious future. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in strong support of this bill.

Sincerely,
Kris Coffield
Executive Director
IMUAlliance

Honorable Chair Kidani and committee members,

My name is Michał Nowicki. This is my 8th year as a public school teacher in Hawaii. I teach mathematics and computer science to 6th and 12th graders at University Laboratory School in Honolulu. I have also taught French language at Waipahu High School in the past, and have taught education classes to preservice teachers at UH West Oahu. I hold a Master's degree in Education and have been actively involved in professional development and training of teachers.

I am writing testimony to urge you to support SB 2586 and HB 2733.

Having devoted the last eight years of my life to public education in Hawaii, I have seen first hand how great our keiki are, no matter where they come from. The intellectual wealth and promise that our children bring is unfortunately sharply contrasted by the many shortcomings of our public education system. Our schools do not have the necessary means to offer our students the learning environment, teachers, and education they deserve.

Over the years, I have worked in classrooms that are unsafe and too hot for students to focus. These conditions would be unacceptable in ANY OTHER setting, yet somehow we say it is okay for our students and teachers. When Air Condition failed at UHWO, the Dean of the University apologized to everybody and thanked us profoundly for our patience. The story made the news. The entire time, I could only think of the nearby public schools in Ewa Beach that had to deal with no air-conditioning year round. No one has ever issued an apology to them. No one has ever thanked the students or teachers for working in inhumane conditions.

Over the years, I have seen some of the smartest and most beloved teachers leave public school classrooms to move on to a different career. My friend and former coworker, Andrew, after having worked for 9 years at Waipahu High School, left his classroom to work at one of the best law offices in Honolulu. Daniel, our orchestra teacher, has left last year to join the same law firm. Two of my friends, have left public schools last year to teach at I'olani. Countless other young, driven, and talented individuals are leaving public education every year.

All of the teachers I mentioned have fantastic pedigrees and are excellent educators. They were all very well liked by their students. They were the kind of teachers our keiki deserve. However, with pay that ranks us as the worst-paid teachers in the nation, with limited growth opportunities, how do we expect to keep the brightest in the classrooms? How can I advise students in the teaching field to become teachers, when I am fully aware of the great sacrifices they will have to make along the road? Good teachers are not starved for opportunities and know their worth. We need to ensure that public education in Hawaii can provide the setting that will attract highly qualified teachers to stay in their classrooms. I believe Schools Our Keiki Deserves Bill introduces provisions that would help us recruit and retain our best teachers and improve the quality of education our students get.

Thank you for your time.

I hope we can count on you for your support,

Michał Nowicki
University Laboratory School
michal_nowicki@universitylaboratoryschool.org

Honorable Chair Kidani, and other Committee Members

Hello, my name is Avery Miranda, and I am a freshman at Mililani High School. My bill is on SB:2586 "Classroom Supplies." I agree with this act because teachers shouldn't have to take out of their own pocket to pay for school supplies. Coming up with an idea like a debit card system might just work, the teachers get a certain budget and spend it on the essentials they need. I hope this idea works because I don't want teachers coming out of their own pocket for things like this. Teachers already don't get paid enough for the job that they're doing, educating the children of tomorrow. They shouldn't have to come out of their pocket too. School supplies is definitely a need towards being educated, because without it students wouldn't have the bare essentials to learn. I understand that not all children have the privilege to buy school supplies before the beginning of the year...but teachers should become there backup. A debit card system is exactly what teachers and students need to become successful.

"Teachers in schooling systems typically spend between \$200-\$500 a year on school supplies, sometimes even more than \$1000." In order to fix this problem the department of education is coming up with a solution for teachers to use debit cards for school supplies. Stores that sell school supplies will recognize the cards and allow teachers to use them. This could possibly become a huge help for students and other teachers in need. People like me have to understand that not everyone can provide for themselves in this big world and they need help from others to have the best future for themselves. So please take my opinion into consideration.

Sincerely,
Freshman from MHS

From: harper5050@yahoo.com
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: SB2586
Date: Tuesday, February 09, 2016 1:03:14 PM

Thank you for hearing the Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act. As a hardworking educator, I strongly support this bill because I know firsthand how it will boost quality teaching and student learning.

In Hawai'i today, class sizes sometimes exceed forty or fifty students. Classroom temperatures have reached as high as 108 degrees. Curriculum is poisoned by a toxic amount of standardized testing. Arts, vocational, and special education instruction is neglected. Teachers are besieged by a burdensome evaluation system and, in turn, receive the lowest pay in the nation.

We, the teachers, deserve better. Please support professional pay for educators, an end to toxic testing, smaller class sizes, cooler classrooms, funding for arts, vocational and special education, and an end to unfair evaluations. In doing so, you will not only help teachers, but the students who will forge the future of our island home.

Please support this bill,

Mahalo,
Susan Harper

From: [Jaime Tanigawa](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#); [EDNtestimony](#)
Subject: Testimony for SB 2586 Testimony for HB 2733
Date: Tuesday, February 09, 2016 11:16:15 AM

Hello,

I am a middle school special education teacher that is very concerned about our children's learning as well as our future teachers. I have been teaching for 10 years in the special education setting. In that time I have been injured on the job, have been left short staffed and have been expected to do things for my students that other teachers would never be asked to do.

I have my masters degree in education and continue to take classes to further my knowledge and I don't feel that teachers are given the compensation they deserve in Hawaii.

Our cost of living and expectations for teachers is so high that it doesn't match what we are paid. Today, nobody wants to be a teacher because they know the job doesn't pay. Teachers sometimes have to work additional jobs just to pay rent. We are then left uneducated staff that are expected to teach in positions that they are unqualified for.

Parents then become mad at teachers and expect more for less.

I have been seriously injured on the job and still came to work the next day because of the concern I have for my students. I've been through numerous appointments and found that I have a lifelong injury. I can't be effective in my job because of the injury I have.

The aids in schools generally do not have the education or training they need to work with students with special needs which make it more difficult for the teachers to do their jobs. The teachers end up having to oversee the staff as well as the students and lose even more time with the students.

In order to retain the qualified and educated teachers we have and that want to continue teaching, more needs to be done. Teachers need support from the state, the schools and the parents.

Teachers need to be paid more to compensate for the cost of living. And, teachers need to be compensated for additional education.

Please consider that those of us who went to school for higher education to teach in Hawaii need to feel appreciated. We are often ridiculed by parents for things that are not our fault.

We are lacking in support from school personnel who don't understand the position that we as fully self-contained teachers hold. I am not a babysitter. I am an educator who cares about the education that students with special needs deserve and require.

Thank you for your time.

Jaime Tanigawa

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Cc: lamorrison17@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB2586 on Feb 10, 2016 13:15PM
Date: Tuesday, February 09, 2016 10:21:27 AM

SB2586

Submitted on: 2/9/2016

Testimony for EDU on Feb 10, 2016 13:15PM in Conference Room 229

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lisa Morrison	Hawaii State Teachers Association	Support	Yes

Comments: Honorable Chair Kidani and committee members, My name is Lisa Morrison. I am a teacher at Maui Waena Intermediate School on the island of Maui. As a teacher of 4 years in Hawai'i, I am writing in support of SB2586 The Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act. Public education in Hawaii has the potential power to democratize and make our society more equal, fair, and just. The teachers in our public schools think that public education policy should accordingly be designed, developed, and assessed in as democratic a fashion as possible. The Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act will support this vision. In this shared preferred future, public schools become a primary site of public investment, and the resources and facilities available for learning in our public schools reflect the high value we place on our keiki and future generations. The Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act will support... Educating the whole child (by ensuring the arts are provided in every school, along with Hawaiian Studies and cultural and language programs, and P.E and that these subjects are NOT pushed out by over-testing policies) Supporting all students (including resources needed for those students with special needs and English Language Learners) Reducing class sizes (to allow for more responsive instruction, collaborative learning, individualized, and small group learning experiences for our students) Providing a robust vocational education path to rewarding careers, along with a college path Providing quality facilities (not 90+ degree classrooms!) Properly funding our rural and small schools (these schools should not have to sacrifice their funding to buy paper all year in order to allow a much needed librarian or counselor to be placed at their school), Attracting and retaining the best and brightest teachers (we pay our teachers the LOWEST in the nation, when you consider the cost of living, this fact is unacceptable. We were short 250 special education teachers this year! We need competitive salaries to achieve this!) Ending high-stakes standardized testing (we need to stop the test and punish policies) Supporting public preschools (that our families desperately need) Putting classroom supplies in teachers hands (Teachers know best what supplies their students need)! I am especially concerned about toxic testing, because I see my colleagues, like myself, who love teaching Language Arts and Math but are fleeing those subjects because they are no longer allowed to teach but are required to do test prep and use canned curriculum instead. I am deeply troubled by the fact that Hawaii spends \$107 per student each year on

testing, with no value being recouped on that money for students, parents, teachers or our community. All of these points are inter-related and support each other in providing the quality public schools that ALL of our keiki deserve. We hope we may count on you for your support. Our keiki need you! Thank you for your time, Lisa Morrison Student Activities Coordinator Maui Waena Intermediate School

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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From:
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony for SB 2586 (February 10, 1:15pm)
Date: Tuesday, February 09, 2016 1:22:57 PM

Thank you for hearing the Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act. As a hardworking educator, I strongly support this bill because I know firsthand how it will boost quality teaching and student learning.

In Hawai'i today, class sizes sometimes exceed forty or fifty students. Classroom temperatures have reached as high as 108 degrees. Curriculum is poisoned by a toxic amount of standardized testing. Arts, vocational, and special education instruction is neglected. Teachers are besieged by a burdensome evaluation system and, in turn, receive the lowest pay in the nation.

We, the teachers, deserve better. Please support professional pay for educators, an end to toxic testing, smaller class sizes, cooler classrooms, funding for arts, vocational and special education, and an end to unfair evaluations. In doing so, you will not only help teachers, but the students who will forge the future of our island home.

Please support this bill.

Testimony for: Support of SB2586

Committee on Education Hearing

Wednesday, February 10, 2016 1:15pm

Honorable Chair Kidani and committee members,

We, Megan Schendel and Vinaia Somsanith, support the passing of the Bill SB2586. Most important to us is that it pass so that part III, Special Education, can be fulfilled. Most often students in the special education programs at schools are left in the dust behind non-special education peers. As stated in the bill report, it has been found that there was a 48 percent achievement gap between non-special education students and special education students in mathematics and reading on a statewide test in 2004-2005 and in 2013-2014. This bill would provide special education instructors with more time to prepare for teaching and more time per school year to teach their special education students. With more hours devoted to them, special education students would gain a better chance of making it through high school and bridging the achievement gap between non-special education students and special education students. The bill would also devote more money to the special education teachers; they could receive up to \$1,690 as reimbursement to pay for better and more special education oriented classroom tools. Many special education teachers receive the bare minimum of classroom tools to help them teach, most of which are not special education oriented. This can make it severely difficult to teach as many special education students have a hard time comprehending advanced technology and learn in different ways. With more money to spend on tools to individualize each child's learning and match how they learn, we can increase the chance of them having the same achievement level as non-special education peers and the odds of them being able to acquire a paying job once they make it to the real world.

I, Megan Schendel, have personal experience with the special needs programs in Hawaii as my younger sister, age 11, is a special needs student. It can be very frustrating having a sibling that is special needs, both because you get irritated with them and the schools. You try to stay calm and helpful when working with special needs students on things such as homework but when you can't figure out how to explain it where they will understand it, you get frustrated and become little to no help. Moreover, it is even more frustrating when the teachers who went to school for teaching and get paid to enrich students' learning can't help. My sister struggled and continues to struggle with school because she doesn't always receive the attention that she needs to learn and more commonly because the teachers don't have the specific tools that she needs to learn. One of the most common ways of teaching special needs students is with visual aids as they don't always have the mental capacity to picture it in their minds. However, not all teachers have the money to purchase these aids so the students continue to struggle with learning and can never fully grasp what is happening. This bill would help increase the time devoted to students like my sister and help improve the specialized learning plans that the

teachers develop for special needs students by increasing their funds and the teachers time to plan out each lesson to match each student.

Sincerely, Megan Schendel and Vinaia Somsanith

Testimony for: Support of SB2586

Committee on Education Hearing

Wednesday, February 10, 2016 1:15 pm

Honorable Chair Kidani and committee members,

I, Tyler Birchard, a student in Mililani High School, support Senate Bill SB2586. As a student within the educational system of Hawaii, the Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act presented a series of issues which I believe have plagued our state for too long. With my testimony, I wish to focus upon the section of the bill which addresses high stakes testing. High stakes testing, which puts pressure upon the teacher to force their kids to do well, should be reformed or replaced. The system simply does not work. As mentioned within the report for this bill, high stakes testing decreases the value of education. Educators are put under extreme pressure to teach adhering to the flawed standards and are evaluated on their performance based on an unreliable method. The “value-added-method” which is used to evaluate teachers has been proven to be fluctuating, unreliable, and unfair. Quoting the report, “the American Statistical Association has established that the VAM formulas fail to determine effectiveness ‘with sufficient reliability and validity.’” Educators in Hawaii know this, and understand that they aren’t being evaluated fairly which has a huge impact upon the mindset of the teachers and the way they teach. This causes stress on the part of educators, and harm to the education of their students.

Being the son of a teacher, I know the truth behind the purpose of this act. I cannot count how many times my mother has come home stressed and tired because of the way she has to teach her kids. Our state has shifted its entire focus towards improving test scores, rather than teaching valuable skills; resulting in valuable educational money being thrown into improving test scores. Honestly, the convulsion of the whole system is quite apparent to me. We spend all of our money in hopes of being able to get a grant to provide us with more money. Money is being lost in this system! Furthermore, the tests which the schools administer are not appropriate for the intelligence of the children. Expecting kids to know things which do not exist within the standards is outrageous. It puts the educators of Hawaii under more strain; strain to both teach their kids while also adhering to the standards which do an ineffective job of teaching these skills. Therefore, I propose a reform. A reform of the system which puts the kids before the tests and puts education above money.

Respectfully,

Tyler Birchard

9th grade student at Mililani High School

Testimony for: Support of SB2586

Committee of Education Hearing

Wednesday, February 10, 2016 1:15pm

Honorable Chair Tekumi and committee members,

We, Mitchell Miyahara and Timothy Kaneshiro, are students who currently attend Mililani High School, and we fully support Senate Bill 2586 section XII. In Senate Bill 2586, it was mentioned that the Department of Education was required to provide public school students with decreased class sizes. We are in full support of this notion. The reason we agree with this part of the senate bill is because we believe that a classroom with more students has less quality in education than classes with a smaller number of students. There are many reasons for this. Either the teachers can't help every single student in a larger classroom, but can in a smaller sized classroom. Another situation is maybe when the larger class is causing too many distractions causing the students to fall behind. There are many more consequences for having a larger class rather than having a smaller class. With smaller classrooms, it is possible to cut down on distractions, hindrances, and other things. The Department of Education "analyzed the achievement of students in 2,561 schools across the nation by their performance on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) exams. After controlling for student background, the only objective factor that correlated with higher test scores was class size." It was also stated, "A smaller class size allows teachers to be able to use a variety of pedagogical approaches more effectively as well as provide more individualized instruction and deeper teacher feedback while also improving students' non-cognitive skills such as engagement and attentiveness, contributing to higher graduation rates and fewer dropping out of school." Reducing the class sizes can greatly increase the amount of people graduating and leading a successful life.

Having classes with a large quantity of people affects us students because when off-task behaviors occur, it usually starts a chain reaction in which it will spiral out of control to the point in which no one can understand the teacher or everyone is not doing what is intended. "If these lower achieving students are placed in larger classes, they tend to have off-task behaviors that interfere with their learning." Personally as a student, I have seen these things happen in multiple occasions, even in our own school. One disruption leads to another until the teacher cannot even gain control of the students. When these events happen, most of the times, we cannot even finish what was intended to be finished by the end of each period. All these untaught lessons stack up day after day and we do not know enough by the time the test date arrives. I also believe that teaching smaller classes will not only benefit us, but the teachers as well. In smaller classes, teachers can get to know their students a lot better. Since there is not a lot of students, they can actually have a 1 on 1 conversation with them. This can help the teacher and help the students if they see them falling behind.

Sincerely,
Timothy Kaneshiro & Mitchell Miyahara

Testimony for: Support of SB2586

Committee of Education Hearing

Wednesday, February 10, 2016 1:15pm

Honorable Chair Kidani and committee members,

I, Katriel Kapahua (Student of Mililani High School) support Bill SB2586 because I believe that we should have proper heating and cooling facilities in Hawaii's schools. Part V, Facilities, of Bill SB2586 talks about climate control and cooling. It states that 2016-2017 will bring new plans to air condition more public schools. I support the passage of this bill and believe it should take place as soon as possible. The students deserve school facilities with clean air and comfortable cooling and heating. At the very least, being in Hawaii, all classrooms should have a cooling system. Our schools in Hawaii do not all have air conditioning and it can distract student learning. Some of the most important features of a classroom that help students learn is temperature and air quality. These are most important for student achievement.

I also support Bill SB2586 because of personal experiences within my high school. I was fortunate enough that two of my classes could be air conditioned, yet, the other five are not. As I am driven to school each morning, I hear on the radio how students and teachers around the island have to go to the emergency room because of heat stroke. I think to myself, could Mililani High School be next? Could it be my classmates, or teachers, or me next? As I go to my classes each day it gets hotter and hotter because of the lack of cooling facilities. Bill SB2586 stops this fear and heat we experiences during school so it needs to be followed through with. The heat in classrooms also affected others and my learning. In my Spanish class it is always hot and we do not have any air conditioning. Three boys in my class were constantly falling asleep and the teacher had to awaken them. This caused a distraction in other student's learning and an absence for those three boys.

To conclude, we need proper heating and cooling facilities to decrease the amount of heat strokes and complaints on Oahu. By passing this Bill students can focus on their school work in class and reduce the amount of students that sleep in class. Passing Bill SB2586 will limit the distractions in class.

Sincerely,

Katriel Kapahua

Testimony for: Support of SB2586
Committee on Education Hearing
Wednesday, February 10, 2016 1:15pm

Honorable Chair Kidani and Committee members,

We, Kathryn Brown and Jazmin Curley (students at Mililani High School) support bill SB2586. According to section V of Bill SB2586, “7,000 classes in Hawaii are in need of air conditioning”. These classrooms, without air conditioning, sometimes reach over ninety degrees. The estimated amount of money needed to cool these rooms down is \$110,000 per classroom. Though this price is high, the children in these classes are desperate to have relief from the heat. “The estimated achievement gap from air conditioned classrooms to non air conditioned classrooms is 17 percent”. The children in non airconditioned classrooms have a lower achievement level because they can not focus due to the heat in their classroom.

Would you be able to concentrate on your work if fans kept blowing your papers around while you were trying to write, read, or study? Well we know that we can't. In three or more of our classes, there is no air conditioning. Since we lack air conditioning in these classes, the teachers have turned to using fans. These fans don't really cool down the class, they just blow our papers around while we are trying to work. Another disadvantage that comes with non air conditioned classrooms is the fact that our teachers have to turn off the lights to “try” to cool down the classroom for both students and themselves. Turning off the lights is not good for students eyes, and we can't see our work. The one of the last things that comes with non air conditioned classrooms is that teachers have to keep the doors open so that wind might come in to cool the classroom down. With keeping the doors open, we are exposed to distractions, such as people talking outside our classroom. Do you think we can concentrate with all this going on during every day of class?

Sincerely,
Kathryn Brown & Jazmin Curley

Testimony for: Support of SB2586
Committee on Education Hearing
Wednesday, February 10, 2016 1:15pm

Honorable Chair Kidani and Committee Members,

We, Jewel Amrich, Micah Andrade, and Chaleia Tamashiro, support the passage of SB2586. Hailing from a school where class size is generally not an issue, it is hard for us to relate to the positive impacts that this bill will have on students and teachers regarding the forced decrease in class sizes. Considering our class sizes are fairly normal at Mililani High School, it seems rather odd that we would fight for a bill that may or may not affect us. But this bill impacts more than just students. Teachers around the state are also suffering with the enormous class sizes that are prominent in schools such as Campbell High School, where classes can consist of over 40 students. Combined with classroom temperatures that can reach 100 degrees Fahrenheit, it is clear to see that classrooms being too crowded is a serious problem in our communities.

Recently we have seen that some students struggle to get the teacher's attention when there are so many students that need the same help. In our relatively normal class of 32 students, it is commonplace that our teacher may have to answer the same question multiple times. Imagine this scenario, but stack on another 10 more kids! This bill will save teachers the time of having to repeat the same answers as well as saving the time it takes to deal with the same problems from multiple children. Students can therefore have more time to receive one-on-one help from their teachers, directly improving their results on exams. If larger class sizes remain intact, lower achieving students will continue to perform at low levels due to the fact that they cannot receive individual help from the instructor. If these lower-achieving students are placed in larger classes, they also tend to have off-task behaviors that interfere with their learning. Students tend to produce quality work when in an environment that fosters independent as well as codependent learning in small groups, so by changing the number of students in each class, this bill will help students be more productive and maintain their focus in the classroom. Not only will smaller classes result in more quality work, but it will also increase the amount of students that graduate each year. A smaller class size allows teachers to be able to use a variety of instructional methods and approaches more effectively. As well as provide more individualized instruction and deeper teacher feedback. This improves students' non-cognitive skills such as engagement and attentiveness, contributing to higher graduation rates and fewer students dropping out of school.

I, Micah, have a personal experience with this problem, given that my mom has been a Special Education teacher for over 20 years. Because of enlarged class sizes, her inclusion classroom this past year consisted of half Special Education students and half regular education

students. This is not the way an inclusion classroom should be run; a normal inclusion classroom consists of around one-third Special Education students to two-thirds regular education students. My mother and her co-teach partner sometimes struggled to keep track of all of their kids' success in the classroom because of the influx of Special Education students. These class sizes need to be monitored and modified so that every student can benefit from teacher instruction.

It makes complete sense to reduce the class sizes at schools because the positive effects would be overwhelmingly beneficial to the students and teachers of our public schools. Considering that our students and children are our future, it is only logical that this bill be passed. We want our future to be bright. How can our future be bright when there are many students left in the dark?

Sincerely,

Jewel Amrich, Micah Andrade, and Chaleia Tamashiro
Mililani High School

Testimony for: Support of SB2586

Committee on Education Hearing

Wednesday, February 10, 2016 1:15pm

Honorable Chair Kidani and committee members,

We have chosen to support the passage of the bill, SB2586, mainly Part V. Facilities. Part V states that there is “an achievement gap that is as high as seventeen per cent between air-conditioned and non-air-conditioned classrooms,” which clearly shows that air conditioned classrooms have a significant and beneficial outcome to the learners. Also, other outcomes of poor ventilation and heat on classrooms cause more student absences, less productive learning environments, and more negative outcomes. With these problems fixed, it could lead to a better and more effective education. It is proven that students are more productive and focused in more ventilated facilities. Poor facilities also lead to teachers and students becoming ill, which obviously affects the education system.

I, Brayden Murakami, can say from a personal experience that a comfortable environment benefits the students who inhabit it. There was a time in one of my classes that I was attempting to read a passage, but my peers and I were obviously struggling to talk due to the lack of ventilation in the area. If that class were to be air conditioned, it would benefit me and all others around me leading to a better and more efficient environment.

I, Kai Brennan, can say from personal experience that having a school with proper physical conditions at school benefits the students' learning habits. When there is no AC in my Spanish class, everyone gets headaches during class and no one understands the work. This is because of all the heat in the classroom and it stops us from learning the proper way. If we as a class were able to get AC in that room are learning would increase a great deal. In all having a room with proper facilities would benefit the students greatly.

Testimony for: Support of SB2586

Committee on Education Hearing

Thursday, February 4, 2016 1:04pm

Honorable Chair Kidani and committee members,

We, Steven Camacho, Rasa Maximus Melchor, and Cody Villegas support the aspect of standardized testing of SB2586 bill, because we and a great number of our peers believe that the way we are being taught is geared too much to the tests. And are not learning enough information that we will need to know when we enter the "real world."

According to the SOKD (Schools Our Keki Deserve) report "Since No Child Left Behind (NCLB) was enacted in 2001, Hawai'i schools have gradually been forced to shift their focus from teaching to preparation for testing. Although it may not have been the intention, teachers have spent more and more class time preparing their students for tests, and much less time engaging in rich and meaningful instruction that does not pertain directly to the narrow goal of achieving a desired test score." What we see in this statement, is what we were arguing for in the first place; that the curriculum being taught to our keiki and us which is geared too much towards the testing which the schools receive profits from. Standardized testing takes too much time out of the day, time that could be better spent on learning information that could help students in preparation for college, and life after college such as career pathways that would help them. Much of the content we are learning currently in many of our classes is taught "to the test" and we do not learn enough meaningful information.

What we are learning in school is geared too much toward the standardized tests, and this cannot continue anymore. With the education that the younger generation are receiving, Hawaii's next generation of adults will be ones with no proper education from their grade school, high school, and won't be able to understand new standards that are being taught to their children because they were not educated well enough. If we are the leaders of tomorrow, we deserve to be properly taught in order to be what we are intended to be.

Sincerely,
Rasa Maximus,
Steven Camacho,
Cody Villegas,
and Mililani high school

Testimony for: Support of SB2586

Committee on Education Hearing

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Sincerely,
Rasa Maximus,
Steven Camacho,
Cody Villegas,
and Mililani high school

Kerri Nashiro
Erin Bumanglag
Taylor Coloma

Testimony for: Support of SB2586
Committee on Education Hearing
Wednesday, February 10, 2016 1:15pm

Honorable Chair Kidani and committee members,

We, Kerri Nashiro, Erin Bumanglag, and Taylor Coloma, as students of Mililani High School, support Act SB 2586. In particular we support the section that emphasizes smaller class sizes, which results in better achieving students. Based on experiments in Tennessee, Wisconsin, and other states, it has shown that students in smaller classes have higher academic achievement, receive better grades, and exhibit improved attendance. Not only that, but it was also proven that students benefited the most from smaller class sizes which are from poor and minority backgrounds, and yet they experience twice the achievement gains compared to students from bigger classes. It is also stated that having smaller classes can drastically affect students in grades K-3 and in secondary school, which is some of the most influential and important educational years of a student's life. In particular, students who perform at low levels still remain at low levels or in fact decline in passing when put into a large, populated class. This is most likely caused by the fact that having larger classes means a greater possibility of misbehavior from multiple people, leading teachers to focus on redirecting behaviors, which wastes the limited amount of time, and takes away from actually teaching. However if teachers were to work with smaller class, they would have an easier time at redirecting misbehavior and focus on teaching more. This results in giving more attention to individual student needs. Which actually increases student achievement and seems like a much more efficient way of learning. With a smaller class, students can also feel more comfortable in speaking publicly, or even having a one-on-one discussion with a teacher if help is needed, and student-teacher bonds can be better established.

As students in one of the most populated High schools, we understand the issue with crowded classrooms personally. To be specific, our geometry class. During class discussions multiple students get off track. Our teachers often get distracted and must answer those questions, which leads to the actual lesson getting pushed off. This would be fine if there wasn't such a limited amount of time in class. There would also be times when students get rowdy and off track, and the teacher would then have to try and calm them down and get them to focus. In an event like that students who are trying to focus must wait, which personally gets very frustrating because we aren't able to retain all the information needed in time before the class bell rings. Oversized classrooms are also a problem because personally, I have experienced classes before, and now, that were so big that I wouldn't get the full lesson that was taught because I didn't get the attention I needed to understand what was going on. For example, if classes were smaller, I would get the attention of the teacher, and they would help me understand what was supposed to be taught in the time frame that I have in that class. Another incident that I experienced is in my Office Administration and Technology class where I was

unable to work to my full potential due to too much distraction. There is too much people in the class that were talking and I was unable to concentrate. I believe that I could have been able to finish the tasks if I didn't get distracted, which is possible by having a smaller class size.

Sincerely,
Kerri Nashiro, Erin Bumanglag, and Taylor Coloma

Testimony for: Support of SB2586
Committee on Education Hearing
Wednesday, February 10, 2016 1:15pm

Honorable Chair Kidani and committee members,

We, Jackson Huston and Nathan Sawyer, are students at Mililani High School and we support Part VIII of SB2586. In the "School Our Keiki Deserve" paper Part VIII addresses the need for us to end high stake testing in schools. By continuing to use standardized testing we are putting teachers jobs on the line. Teachers will be judged based off the scores they get on the tests. "The impact of the adoption of this faulty evaluation process by the Hawai'i DOE has been a widespread drop in teacher morale." This is not fair to any teacher since kids could simply not try. It could easily kick teachers out of their for something that wasn't their fault. Clearly this paper shows us why we should support part seven in particular of the bill, SB 2586.

We both also see the need for the standardized testing to stop. We are smart students but at the same time terrible test takers. We feel that it can be unfair that students are judged on how good they are in tests as they just bring pressure and anxiety. The both of us just find state tests unnecessary. Students will end up not caring about them and will therefore, do poorly putting a bad impact on the teachers. So we strongly support Part VIII of SB 2586 and we think other people should too.

Sincerely,

Jackson Huston and Nathan Sawyer

Testimony for: Support of SB 2586

Committee on Education Hearing

Wednesday, February 10, 2016 1:15 pm

Honorable Chair Kidani and committee members,

I, Seanpaul Kaleopa'a-Tadaki, a student of Mililani High School, support SB 2586 on limiting standardized testing in schools because standardized testing compares students to other schools across the state. What good does this do for the student? It lets them know how little or how much more or less someone knows compared to them. Students take about 112 mandatory standardized test from kindergarden to the end of twelfth grade. Standardized testing only evaluates a student in one particular day, which is the day of taking the test, not over the course of their school year and are only evaluating their ability to remember what will be on a test. This lowers a student's confidence of what they are capable of achieving in schools.

For most of my time in school from second grade until now, I always wonder why I had to take these tests and how they will this help me and other students in the real world. Well, it doesn't help my classmates or myself, because we spend hours preparing for a test that will not help us. We could use this time to explore our talents and see what they can do for us. We need to stop standardized testing and dictate the way we learn. We need tests that further your education, and not compare you to someone else's education.

Sincerely, SeanPaul Kaleopaa-Tadaki

Kerri Nashiro
Erin Bumanglag
Taylor Coloma

Testimony for: Support of SB2586
Committee on Education Hearing
Wednesday, February 10, 2016 1:15pm

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As students in one of the most populated High schools, we understand the issue with crowded classrooms personally. To be specific, our geometry class. During class discussions multiple students get off track. Our teachers often get distracted and must answer those questions, which leads to the actual lesson getting pushed off. This would be fine if there wasn't such a limited amount of time in class. There would also be times when students get rowdy and off track, and the teacher would then have to try and calm them down and get them to focus. In an event like that students who are trying to focus must wait, which personally gets very frustrating because we aren't able to retain all the information needed in time before the class bell rings. Oversized classrooms are also a problem because personally, I have experienced classes before, and now, that were so big that I wouldn't get the full lesson that was taught because I didn't get the attention I needed to understand what was going on. For example, if classes were smaller, I would get the attention of the teacher, and they would help me understand what was supposed to be taught in the time frame that I have in that class. Another incident that I experienced is in my Office Administration and Technology class where I was

unable to work to my full potential due to too much distraction. There is too much people in the class that were talking and I was unable to concentrate. I believe that I could have been able to finish the tasks if I didn't get distracted, which is possible by having a smaller class size.

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Committee of Education Hearing

Wednesday, February 10, 2016 1:15

Honorable Chair Kidani and committee members,

We, Sydney Quitoles and Marlena Brotchie, support the Part V of the SB 2586 Bill. This part talks about facilities in schools that need to be improved, but mainly the air conditioning. With the current global warming problem, record high temperatures have been appearing more frequently. The lack of air conditioning in schools can be the reason to bad student performance. Campbell High School has over 3000 students but only 20% of the classrooms are air conditioned which can be the reason for their 77% and 59% test score average in reading and math. In comparison to Mililani High School that has more than 20% of its school air conditioned with a 87% and 66% test score average in reading and math. If we created a better learning environment for our students Hawaii, not only will it help with learning, but also improve their intelligence.

A personal experience with this was at the start of our freshman school year when we were beginning to transition into a different classroom environment. Because we were accustomed to being in a classroom with air conditioning, it was difficult to accumulate to a school with majority of classrooms to have no air conditioning at all. The heat affected our learning and our focus of the content being taught in our classes which threatened our grades and our test scores. Not only was it affecting us mentally, but it was also affecting us physically to a point where students had symptoms near heat stroke. Especially being that the summer is the hottest time of the year in Hawaii, the lack of temperature controlled rooms made coming to school, a place for learning, almost unbearable. It is not safe to have these conditions in public schools just because we do not have the money to afford air conditioning for our classrooms.

Another summer could inflict even worse effects on students because it is only going to get hotter. The quality of our education is at stake and if that is not reason enough to take action, what is?

Sincerely,

Sydney Quitoles

Marlena Brotchie

Mililani High School Class of 2019

Testimony for: Support of SB2586

Committee on Education Hearing

Wednesday, February 10, 2016 1:15 pm

Honorable Chair Kidani and committee members,

We, Alicya Burt and Emily Graham, support the section of Senate Bill 2586 on early childhood public education. The Hawaii DOE (Department of Education) changed the age for children to be able to enter kindergarten to five years of age on or before the 31st of July with the school year commencing at the beginning of August. This was changed due to Acts 183 and 178 passed in 2010 and 2012 from children having to be five years of age on or before December 31. This change was brought on because of research showing that students of a higher age do better in school than those of lower age. Currently, there are pre-kindergarten courses for private education, but that limits the other children. Not only is age a factor but the income of their families also impact the ability for children to go to school at an early age. According to a national census taken in 2011, only 48% of children from low-income families go to kindergarten ready and able to learn. Therefore, not only do these children miss out on learning, they miss out on the ability to develop curiosity, discipline, a chance to increase their self-esteem, and an improvement in physical activity. This early education also affects students later in life. According to Early Childhood Education Zone, 40% of those who do not get quality education during preschool are more likely to become a teen parent. Also, 70% of those children without quality education were more likely to be arrested.

Generally stated, our keiki are our future. If we do not set them up for success then how are we helping to improve not only their lives but the rest of the world? These kids may cure cancer or become the president, but if they aren't given the opportunity to start school early and have time to truly grow and learn, they can't accomplish those things. My sister is currently four

years old. She turns five at the end of August this year. Because she was born a few weeks after the cutoff date, she is not able to attend kindergarten this upcoming year. We know that she is ready and could easily keep up with the rest of the “older” students. However, we understand that every child is different and not every child is ready to start kindergarten at the same age. Therefore, readiness should not be determined by age but by capability. This is why we fully support the development of more public preschools for those who are too young for kindergarten, or those who may not be able to afford private preschooling. With the new public preschools, children in the same situation as my sister will get the opportunity to further prepare themselves in an affordable way before enrolling in kindergarten. They can still get on the right track to success later in their school careers. Thank you for taking the time to listen to our thoughts.

Sincerely,

Alicya Burt and Emily Graham

Testimony for: Support of SB2586

Committee on Education Hearing

Wednesday, February 10, 2016 1:15 PM

Honorable Chair Kidani and committee members,

I, Paige Tominaga, support the **PART V** of the **SB2586** bill. In the simplest terms, the purpose of this part is to ensure that all schools have adequate physical conditions for their students. There is a strong link between student performance and the quality of learning environment. A student who learns in a classroom with air conditioning, adequate lighting, and clean air is better able to focus than a student who learns in a lacking classroom. Hawai'i ranks last in the nation in capital improvement investment per student. This chronic failure to adequately invest in public schools is not just a source of public embarrassment. When students see that buildings are neglected and dilapidated, research has shown that they question whether or not education is valued by their community, and this has noticeable effect on their level of motivation. If we simply better the conditions of our keiki's learning environment, we can improve their brilliance.

As a student, I have been fortunate enough to have the majority of my education in comfortable conditions. Unfortunately, not all students have the same privileges as myself. Sometimes focusing in class is hard enough, but add hot conditions, poor lighting, and a leaking roof and it becomes absurd that anyone should expect a student to be able to focus. If education is such an important value, then why is it that Hawai'i ranks last in the nation in capital improvement investment per student? To me, it is unreasonable that there are some students who are getting heat strokes during class,

and yet the state still neglects to give schools more funding for adequate classrooms. Personally, I strongly believe that if the conditions of my classrooms were to be improved, I would have better focus and therefore obtain more knowledge. We have the resources to improve our schools so let's use them. Education is important to me, to my peers, and to the community. Simply improving the conditions of our classrooms, will improve our education, improve the amount of knowledge each child obtains, and therefore improve our futures.

Sincerely,

Paige Tominaga

Testimony for: Support of SB2586
Committee on Education Hearing
Wednesday, February 10, 2016 1:15pm

Honorable Chair Kidani and committee members,

We, Shaun Kamisato and Sarah Wong, are Mililani High School students and we support SB 2586 because we both strongly believe that controlling class sizes does affect the outcome of students learning. According to the bill, "Experiments in Tennessee, Wisconsin, and other states have demonstrated that students in smaller classes score better on standardized tests, receive better grades, and exhibit improved attendance." This bill will help to increase student achievement as of right now and in their future by reducing class size in all grade levels. By restricting the size of classes, it will not only benefit the students but the teachers as well. It has been said that "A smaller class size allows teachers to be provide more individualized instruction and deeper teacher feedback while also improving students' non-cognitive skills such as engagement and attentiveness..." By limiting the amount of students in a class it will contribute "to higher graduation rates and fewer dropping out of school." Thus, it is beneficial to reduce the class amounts because it benefits the student and the teacher overall.

We are being impacted by the large class sizes as of right now. In our history class, we have over thirty students sharing supplies and trying to find space to learn. Our class is bigger than all of our teacher's other classes and she has said that they are more productive due to the amount of students in her class. Because we have so many students in our class, it is harder for us to focus and hear instructions causing us to spend more time finishing work. Although our class sizes are big, there are other schools that face classroom sizes even bigger than us, for example Campbell High School. This just goes to show that we aren't the only school that is facing this problem that needs to change. As students, we have also faced this problem because when we are in big classes we have a hard time focusing on the assignment and teacher. Yet if the both of us come into study hall where there are less students, we have an easier time concentrating on the teacher and assignment achieving a better grade and a better understanding. This is a very serious and important problem that needs to be solved and this bill will help to solve it.

Sincerely,
Shaun Kamisato and Sarah Wong

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Cc: jeanne@itendswithus.org
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB2586 on Feb 10, 2016 13:15PM
Date: Tuesday, February 09, 2016 3:15:31 PM

SB2586

Submitted on: 2/9/2016

Testimony for EDU on Feb 10, 2016 13:15PM in Conference Room 229

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jeanné Kapela	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments: Education ends exploitation. Every year, more than 2,500 women and children are sex trafficked on our shores. Hundreds of victims are children, with the average victim being only 13 years old. Hawai'i is home to over 150 high risk sex trafficking establishments. The islands are also subjected to "cybertrafficking," with over 110,000 ads for prostitution in Hawai'i posted online each year. By empowering our youth to advance their learning, however, we can end human trafficking within the next generation. As part of my run for Miss Hawai'i, I created UNITE!, an educational program devoted to ending human trafficking in Hawai'i. Through outreach and awareness in local schools, we provide students with the skills necessary to prevent exploitation by building healthy relationships and learning communities. Our program, "It Ends With Us," explains how trafficking works in the 21st Century, preparing students to recognize threatening situations and respond to potential abuse. Additionally, we teach young adults how to become leaders in developing support systems that help heal peers who have been targeted by traffickers. Yet, this program can be only be successful if students are given broader opportunities to succeed. That is why we must invest in education by funding classroom air conditioning, lowering class sizes, placing artistic creativity and Native Hawaiian studies above test-taking skills, expanding career training for students who want to enter the workforce after high school, and paying our teachers respectable, and respectful, salaries. When we advance our schools into the 21st century, we prevent modern-day slavery from taking a foothold on our shores. Please pass SB 2586, giving every child a chance to prosper. Mahalo.

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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From: [Renee Romerdahl](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony for SB 2586 (February 10, 1:15pm)
Date: Tuesday, February 09, 2016 3:52:54 PM

Thank you for hearing the Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act. As a hardworking educator, I strongly support this bill because I know firsthand how it will boost quality teaching and student learning.

In Hawai'i today, class sizes sometimes exceed forty or fifty students. Classroom temperatures have reached as high as 108 degrees. Curriculum is poisoned by a toxic amount of standardized testing. Arts, vocational, and special education instruction is neglected. Teachers are besieged by a burdensome evaluation system and, in turn, receive the lowest pay in the nation.

We, the teachers, deserve better. Please support professional pay for educators, an end to excessive testing, smaller class sizes, cooler classrooms, funding for arts, vocational and special education, and an end to unfair evaluations . In doing so, you will not only help teachers, but the students who will forge the future of our island home.

Please support this bill.

Thank you,

Renee Romerdahl

--

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Cc: whoru@hawaiiantel.net
Subject: *Submitted testimony for SB2586 on Feb 10, 2016 13:15PM*
Date: Tuesday, February 09, 2016 4:24:13 PM

SB2586

Submitted on: 2/9/2016

Testimony for EDU on Feb 10, 2016 13:15PM in Conference Room 229

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Dennis F Lokmer	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Cc:
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB2586 on Feb 10, 2016 13:15PM
Date: Tuesday, February 09, 2016 4:04:30 PM

SB2586

Submitted on: 2/9/2016

Testimony for EDU on Feb 10, 2016 13:15PM in Conference Room 229

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
kelley puuohau	Individual	Comments Only	No

Comments: Department's Position: The Department of Education offers COMMENTS on S.B. No. 2586, S.B. No. 2587, S.B. No. 2588, S.B. No. 2589, S.B. No. 2590, S.B. No. 2591, S.B. No. 2592, S.B. No. 2593, S.B. No. 2594, S.B. No. 2595, S.B. No. 2596, S.B. No. 2597, S.B. No. 2598, and S.B. No. 2599. Overall Comments The Department of Education's (Department) vision is that our students are educated, healthy, and joyful lifelong learners who contribute positively to our community and global society. To achieve this goal, our schools and educators need the proper tools and resources. We support initiatives aimed at improving working conditions for teachers and educational opportunities for students. In 2004, the Legislature established the "Reinventing Education Act," allowing schools the autonomy and responsibility to allocate school-based budgets to support school-identified programs and priorities, whether it be hiring more staff or purchasing supplies and materials. And, it empowered schools to make the best decisions to fit the needs of its students and communities. Over the last decade school funding levels have not kept up with our education costs. Nevertheless, our public schools have made significant strides that have not gone unnoticed by the U.S. Department of Education and other national organizations. Attendance has improved, students are progressing and achieving more, and more students are going to college. This is a testament to the dedication of our educators and students, as well as other community leaders and partners. The measures before you address many important aspects of education – curriculum, assessments, staffing, facilities, class size, funding, etc. However, respectfully, the Department is concerned that the crafted language, such as providing specific types of teachers for schools or a one-size-fits-all approach to instructional time or class size, detracts from school-level decision making and also circumvents the appropriate participants and venues for these conversations. Such a proposal would hinder the progress made by school leadership teams or School Community Councils, the collective bargaining process, the Board of Education which sets the policy direction for the Department, and principals and teachers in collaboration with Department leadership. We welcome continued support from HSTA and the Legislature for additional resources for public education as well as the Department's budget priorities, as set out in the Executive Budget request. Adequate funding for our students helps to ensure a quality education that they deserve, and need, to prepare to be contributing members in our community and global society.

Teachers have the most impact in ensuring a quality education. It's important that they have the support, the right tools, and the best facilities to thrive in their profession. We look forward to working with the Committee and other stakeholders to address the issues raised in these measures. Specific comments to the parts of the bill are itemized below.

Part II. WHOLE CHILD EDUCATION (S.B. No. 2587) The Department recognizes the importance of promoting creative thinking, self-directed learning, and cultural understanding, as well as the impact it has upon children's future outcomes and the state's economic growth. Since 1999, the Department has provided "whole child education" through its K-12 standards-based system which includes the General Learner Outcomes (GLOs). GLOs are the overarching goals and content standards in nine areas including fine arts, social studies, Hawaiian studies, world languages, and physical education. Complex areas and schools have the flexibility to design class offerings that are best suited to their community. Additional funding would support increased opportunities and more diverse offerings for students. Given that a Board of Education policy for whole child education is already in place, the Department respectfully finds S.B. No. 2587 to be unnecessary.

Part III. SPECIAL EDUCATION (S.B. No. 2588) The Department appreciates the intent of S.B. No. 2588 to provide each teacher with \$1,690 of discretionary funds for instructional materials and equipment and to add additional preparation time for special education (SPED) teachers. This additional preparation time, during which teachers would "not be required to interact with students", would be to complete individualized education programs (IEPs), which are required for each SPED student. Teachers' preparation time is subject to collective bargaining. Article VI of the current HSTA contract and Department regulations include provisions for preparation periods and that address providing SPED teachers with additional non-student time to work on IEPs and other related SPED duties. If this measure is adopted, additional funds would be required to either pay SPED teachers for the additional 40 plus hours of additional preparation time, or alternatively, schools would need to establish and hire additional SPED teachers or substitute teachers to cover the instructional time for SPED teachers during the extra preparation period. Because Hawaii's SPED teaching positions are "hard-to-fill," as they are nationwide, creating more positions in order to hire more SPED teachers will not, in the near term, be a solution. The Department is not opposed to the Legislature appropriating funding for \$1,690 for every SPED teacher to purchase additional instructional materials and equipment, provided that it does not replace or adversely impact priorities as indicated in budget approved by the Board of Education (Board). Given that teacher preparation time is included in the collective bargaining agreement, the Department respectfully does not support S.B. No. 2588.

Part IV. VOCATIONAL EDUCATION (S.B. No. 2589) The Department supports the intent of S.B. No. 2589 to expand vocational, technical, and career pathways programs and welcomes additional funding to support career and technical programs, provided that it does not replace or adversely impact priorities as indicated in budget approved by the Board. Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs (formally known as Vocational and Technical Education) are currently offered in 46 public high schools. In school year 2014-2015, 29,356 students were registered in at least one CTE course and 4,453 seniors had completed a CTE program of study. Also, the Department awards Honors Recognition Certificates for graduates earning Career and Technical Education Honors or Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Honors. CTE programs are organized under

six Career Pathways: Arts and Communication, Business, Health Services, Industrial and Engineering Technology, Natural Resources, and Public and Human Services. The Department currently offers 41 programs of study within the six career pathways framework. Current Board Policy No. 2103 defines Career and Technical Education. The Department is committed to improving CTE opportunities for students throughout the state. The Department respectfully finds the provisions of S.B. No. 2589 to be unnecessary, as the intent of this bill is currently being implemented.

Part V. FACILITIES (S.B. No. 2590) The Department welcomes additional funding for heat abatement and energy efficiency measures. The Department's Ka Hei program is a comprehensive energy and sustainability program designed to provide comfortable learning environments for our students and teachers. One of the key objectives of the program is to reduce costs and energy consumption at all 256 public schools. The Department has made significant progress in working toward the goals of Ka Hei and appreciates the support of the Legislature to further these efforts. In addition, the Governor announced his plan to air condition 1,000 classrooms by the end of 2016, and is making available GEMS financing. We appreciate his initiative and are moving rapidly to execute his proposal.

Part IV. WEIGHTED STUDENT FORMULA (S.B. No. 2591) The Department offers the following comments: This bill states: "Principals, in consultation with teachers and school community councils, shall expend moneys provided to the principals' school." Section 302A-1124, HRS, currently defines the role of the school community council and mandates a composition that includes teachers. The new language related to a "superintendent's reserve" states both that the reserve is "to address needs at unique and remote schools," and that "the committee on weights shall make recommendations...for how the reserve should be used." Stating that the reserve is for "unique and remote schools" would be unnecessary if the intent is to allow the committee on weights to determine the criteria for the reserve's use. The Weighted Student Formula (WSF) reserve was established in school year 2012-2013 based on a committee on weights recommendation that was approved by the Board. A portion of WSF funds are set aside in this reserve to provide supplemental funds to schools that demonstrate a need as combination school (e.g., K-8, 7-12), geographically isolated, has very low enrollment, or is experiencing an extraordinary circumstance. The distribution of these funds is made based on committee on weights-recommended guidelines.

Part VII. STANDARDIZED TESTING (S.B. No. 2592) Statewide standardized tests provide one valuable source of information on student learning for students, parents, teachers, and educational administrators, but also informs educators and policy-makers about the progress of the education system. Standardized testing is an efficient method for reliably and objectively measuring the academic performance of the over 90,000 students in tested grades and 275 public schools (Department and charter) across the state. Standardized test scores provide one consistent measure, although incomplete, of school and student performance. Thus, all of the Department's accountability systems – for schools, educators, and students - use multiple measures. Many provisions in this bill related to testing conflict with federal requirements which are a condition of receiving federal educational support including Title I funds. Despite the elimination of No Child Left Behind, its successor, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), still requires states to administer a statewide student test and use those test scores to "meaningfully differentiate" schools and identify the lowest-performing. Federal requirements for minimum

participation of 95% of students continue under ESSA. And students who have individual needs may receive accommodations on a test based on their IEP, which is informed by their teachers' assessment of their needs. The Department also administers an alternative assessment for students with significant cognitive disabilities and an exemption for the English Language Arts state assessment for students with limited English proficiency who are in their first year in a U.S. school. The Department understands that instructional time is incredibly valuable for teaching and learning. The Department is continuously reviewing the tests that are required for all students to ensure that they are necessary and valuable. Over the last two years, we have reduced the number of tests that are required. Currently, the number of standardized tests required by the state is at the federal minimum with the exception of grade 11 which is being reviewed. The Department remains cognizant to minimize the burden on students while balancing the need to support students through measuring achievement and complying with federal requirements. As such, the Department respectfully suggests that S.B. No. 2592 is unnecessary.

Part VIII. CLASSROOM SUPPLIES (S.B. No. 2593) The Department supports providing teachers with the resources necessary to help our students thrive in the classroom. The Department estimates the fiscal impact to be approximately \$11,900,000 per year using the calculation of \$1,000 per Full Time Equivalent (FTE) positions at schools which total approximately the Department's workforce of 11,100 classroom teachers, 200 libraries, and 600 counselors. Additionally, there may be some administrative issues that need to be addressed before implementing such a program through a debit card system, as described in the bill. These administrative considerations include processing, procurement, reconciliation, and workload issues at the school and vendor payment levels.

Part IX. TEACHER RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION (S.B. No. 2594) The Department supports the intent of S.B. No. 2594. Loan subsidies can encourage prospective teachers to contemplate careers in special education, vocational education, technical education, and career pathways. However, the Department believes the bill may not be necessary. Federal loan forgiveness is already available for teachers in areas the Department has designated as "teacher shortage," including special education, technical, and vocational education. Furthermore, the program proposed for teacher recruitment and retention is complex and would be, as a result, administratively burdensome given the Department's current systems and staffing. The Department anticipates the establishment and maintenance of the program would require substantial resources to fund the incentives and administer the program.

Part X. EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION (S.B. No. 2595) The Department supports efforts to provide opportunities for early childhood education for all of Hawaii's keiki as it is critical that they enter kindergarten ready to learn. Children deserve the best possible foundation upon which to build success and early childhood education is integral to this foundation. Children are most successful when they enter the public school system prepared with the socio-emotional and pre-academic skills that make them kindergarten-ready.

Part XI. EVALUATIONS (S.B. No. 2596) The Department offers the following comments on S.B. 2596: The Department recommends maintaining the existing 302A-638, HRS, which was established in 1996 and preceded the current evaluation systems which were negotiated between the State and its unions. The proposed changes should be bargained, as HSTA has previously testified in response to prior year's efforts to legislate aspects of teachers' evaluations. The

Department supports the intent of the portion of paragraph (a), which requires the Department to consult with the unions in establishing an evaluation program for teachers and educational officers (EOs), but notes that proposed language is redundant with existing statute and practice. A consultation process is already codified in section 89-9(c), HRS, and in the past, the Department has consulted, and at times negotiated, with Hawaii State Teachers Association (HSTA) and Hawaii Government Employees Association (HGEA) regarding evaluation programs for teachers and EOs. Many provisions of this measure are currently governed by agreements with HSTA and HGEA.

Part XII. CLASS SIZE (S.B. No. 2597) The Department supports the intent of S.B. No. 2597 but respectfully opposes the measure for the reasons identified below. Class size is a subject of collective bargaining and is addressed in the Department's contract with HSTA. Article VI, Teaching Conditions and Hours, Section A. 6., of the current contract states that the employer agrees to maintain the "average statewide class size ratio of 26.15 to 1." Moreover, class size is product of school-level decisions by the principal and School Community Council in budgeting of school funds. Thus, schools are empowered to select its number of teachers based on its allocation of its student population-based budget toward personnel. Rather than class size limitations determined by the Legislature, class size is better addressed by providing additional funding for the Weighted Student Formula, which would allow schools to allocate additional resources towards personnel and thus reduce class size. The current HSTA contract also provides a process to follow should there be issues in connection with the class size of individual classrooms. For example, a class size committee is required, with the authority to hear and investigate class size complaints and make recommendations to the Superintendent for change. If there is no majority vote on a decision of the committee, the HSTA may have the matter submitted to arbitration. Finally, any change to the class size requirements, including a change from average statewide ratio to individual classroom maximum, would have significant cost implications due to the need for more teachers and additional facilities to house additional classrooms. The Department believes there are other, often less costly, means to provide students with quality education and to address working conditions for teachers.

Part XIII. FUNDING (S.B. No. 2599) The Department has no position on this measure and defers to the Administration with regard to the generation of revenues to fund public programs.

Part XIV. MISCELLANEOUS (S.B. No. 2598) The Department supports the intent of S.B. No. 2598. The additional funds would provide the Department with additional teaching positions to support the programs and needs of our schools and students. However, this bill prescribes the subject area of teachers to be funded, and the Department supports schools' using their autonomy to determine the types of positions for necessary for their school program and community.

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From: [Lisa Doucette](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony for SB 2586 (February 10, 1:15pm)
Date: Tuesday, February 09, 2016 4:41:44 PM

Thank you for hearing the Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act. As a hardworking educator, I strongly support this bill because I know firsthand how it will boost quality teaching and student learning.

In Hawai'i today, class sizes sometimes exceed forty or fifty students. Classroom temperatures have reached as high as 108 degrees. Curriculum is poisoned by a toxic amount of standardized testing. Arts, vocational, and special education instruction is neglected. Teachers are besieged by a burdensome evaluation system and, in turn, receive the lowest pay in the nation.

We, the teachers, deserve better. Please support professional pay for educators, an end to toxic testing, smaller class sizes, cooler classrooms, funding for arts, vocational and special education, and an end to unfair evaluations. In doing so, you will not only help teachers, but the students who will forge the future of our island home.

Please support this bill.
Lisja Doucette

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Logan HSTA Okita](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony for SB 2586 (February 10, 1:15pm)
Date: Tuesday, February 09, 2016 5:07:05 PM

Thank you for hearing the Schools Our Keiki Deserve Act. As a hardworking educator, I strongly support this bill because I know firsthand how it will boost quality teaching and student learning.

In Hawai'i today, class sizes sometimes exceed forty or fifty students. Classroom temperatures have reached as high as 108 degrees. Curriculum is poisoned by a toxic amount of standardized testing. Arts, vocational, and special education instruction is neglected. Teachers are besieged by a burdensome evaluation system and, in turn, receive the lowest pay in the nation.

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Please support this bill.

Thank you for your consideration!

Ms Logan Okita, MEd NBCT