



Hearing Testimony Package

EDU at 4:05 PM on 05-18-20

[Master Testimony](#)

[Original Notice](#)

[Late Testimony](#)

[Tech Check](#)

[Supporting Files](#)

Testimony Start Page

The following pages contains testimonies submitted for this hearing. To jump to specific testimonies, please use the bookmarks contained in this PDF. Make sure the Bookmarks pane is shown in your PDF viewer program.



**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Education
Monday, May 18 at 4:05 P.M.
Conference Room 229, State Capitol**

RE: SR 94, FAFSA WORKING GROUP RESOLUTION

Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim and Members of the Committee:

The Chamber of Commerce Hawaii ("The Chamber") **supports** SR 94, which would establish a working group to create a state plan to make FAFSA completion a statewide graduation requirement and an opt-out waiver for FAFSA completion by the 2022-2023 school year and appropriate funds.

The Chamber is Hawaii's leading statewide business advocacy organization, representing 2,000+ businesses. Approximately 80% of our members are small businesses with less than 20 employees. As the "Voice of Business" in Hawaii, the organization works on behalf of members and the entire business community to improve the state's economic climate and to foster positive action on issues of common concern.

In 2018, Hawaii students left \$10 million in unclaimed federal Pell Grants, while nationally, that total was nearly \$2.6 billion in unclaimed federal financial aid for higher education for high school graduates of the class of 2018 as a result of not filling out FAFSA applications despite being eligible. It is estimated that 90% of students who complete the FAFSA will attend college, as opposed to 55% of those who don't. The Hawaii Department of Education has set a goal to have 90% of high school seniors complete the FAFSA for the 2020 year, but there are some worries that this goal will not be met.

By creating this working group, the state can take the first step to guaranteeing that we are able to help our students with completing the FAFSA for those considering post-secondary education. Students who might not have thought they could go to college due to financial situations, may now have an opportunity to do so, because of the access to federal aid. We need to help ensure that our students are offered the best education in order to prepare them for college and their future roles in the workforce.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SR 94.



david.miyashiro@hawaiikidscan.org
hawaiikidscan.org

David Miyashiro
Executive Director

May 18, 2020

Committee on Education
Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Chair
Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Vice Chair

State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

Aloha Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and Members of the Committee,

HawaiiKidsCAN strongly supports SR94, which requests the Hawaii Department of Education to establish a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) working group to develop and implement a plan to make completion of FAFSA a statewide requirement beginning in the 2022-2023 academic year.

We believe this is an incredibly important measure, and we would like to highlight a few key points in particular:

- **Independent effort:** We believe that the working group created by this resolution should sit outside similar efforts existing within the Hawaii State Department of Education (DOE), as it is incredibly important to ensure external voices are at the table and have equal weight. Similarly, we think the working group must have the explicit task of helping prepare the state for a FAFSA graduation requirement starting in 2022, which will add critical urgency and accountability around this effort.
- **Bold step needed:** While much great work has happened around the state to support FAFSA completions, the reality is that our completion data has moved only incrementally in the last four years. According to Chiefs for Change, nationwide FAFSA completion rates have dropped 2.6% compared to the same time last year. This means states will need to adopt creative and aggressive approaches to boosting completions in the coming years. A graduation requirement would be a bold step forward to shake up the status quo and ensure local students don't continue to lose out on millions of dollars in federal financial because of this incremental growth. To say this policy isn't needed at this time is to say that our state doesn't believe all students should know their options to afford and attend a 2 or 4 year college.
- **Protection for undocumented and vulnerable families:** It is simply not accurate to say SR94 would negatively impact vulnerable families or those with undocumented status. This resolution clearly establishes an unconditional opt-out mechanism, and

there is no connection between opting out and being the focus of law or immigration enforcement activities. Such coordination between schools and these enforcement agencies would be incredibly inappropriate and likely illegal. Louisiana, the first state to implement FAFSA as a graduation requirement, authorized schools to apply for hardship waivers in sensitive cases where trusted school staff and counselors recognize extenuating circumstances for non-participation. There have been no reports from Louisiana that students are being targeted due to opting out of FAFSA completion or receiving a hardship waiver.

- **FAFSA graduation requirement policy works:** HawaiiKidsCAN has spoken directly with leaders in Louisiana, which is a national success story, jumping from 44% in FAFSA completions to nearly 80%. Nearly 1,600 more students enrolled in college as a result versus the previous year, and over 2,500 more students of color, nearly 5,000 more economically disadvantaged students, and 400 more students with disabilities enrolled in college in 2018 than did in 2012.¹ Because of Louisiana's success, it is no surprise that a number of other states are looking at implementing a similar approach, and Hawaii has the opportunity to be part of this early wave of states, helping our students compete for successfully for financial aid before the rest of the country also implements such policies and deepens the pool of applicants.

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

FAFSA completion is critical component for increasing access and equity in higher education, as it is the form students need to fill out to get any financial aid from the federal government to help pay for college. Each year, over 13 million students who file the FAFSA get more than \$120 billion in grants, work-study, and low-interest loans from the U.S. Department of Education. The FAFSA is also an important pre-requisite for many other need- and merit-based forms of financial aid, including the Hawaii Promise scholarship.

FAFSA completion is also strongly correlated to college access, as 90% of high school seniors nationally who complete FAFSA attend college directly from high school.² Students in the lowest economic quintile who completed the FAFSA were 127% more likely to enter college than

¹ Staff, Louisiana Department of Education. (2019, May 22). NUMBER OF LOUISIANA GRADUATES ENROLLING IN COLLEGE CLIMBS TO ALL-TIME HIGH. Retrieved from <https://www.louisianabelieves.com/newsroom/news-releases/2019/05/22/number-of-louisiana-graduates-enrolling-in-college-climbs-to-all-time-high>

² Abigail Hess, CNBC. (2018, October 2). The FAFSA is now open—here's why every student should fill it out. Retrieved from <https://www.cnbc.com/2017/09/28/why-every-student-should-fill-out-the-fafsa.html>

students who did not.³ Other benefits include a potential edge in college admissions, as admissions officers know that students hoping for aid who don't submit FAFSAs to the college are less likely to enroll.⁴

We are excited about the many important outreach efforts already happening in Hawaii schools, including the Cash for College challenge and text message-based outreach, and we think a statewide plan to prepare for a FAFSA graduation requirement would greatly boost this work. With the economic disruption of COVID-19 impacting local families for a long time to come, federal financial aid becomes even more of an important lifeline to help students pursue their dreams. HawaiiKidsCAN strongly believes SR94 is an important step forward for our students and broader community.

Mahalo for your consideration,

David Miyashiro
Founding Executive Director
HawaiiKidsCAN

³ Bill DeBaun, National College Access Network (2019, December 3). FAFSA Completion by District Poverty Level Across the United States. Retrieved from <https://public.tableau.com/profile/bill.debaun.national.college.access.network#!/vizhome/FAFSACompletionbyDistrictPovertyLevelAcrossTheUnitedStates/Story1>

⁴ Staff, National College Planning Solutions. (2016, January 8). 3 Reasons You Should Fill Out the FAFSA—No Matter How Rich You Are. Retrieved from <https://ncps.com/3-reasons-you-should-fill-out-the-fafsa-no-matter-how-rich-you-are/>

SR-94

Submitted on: 5/16/2020 5:51:35 AM

Testimony for EDU on 5/18/2020 4:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Yvonne Sun	Testifying for HawaiiKidsCan	Support	No

Comments:

SR-94

Submitted on: 5/17/2020 1:38:21 PM

Testimony for EDU on 5/18/2020 4:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Aisha Heredia	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I strongly support SR94. It is important for students to have access to resources that will support them in completing FAFSA. I believe this working group and statewide graduation requirement will make a big impact on students completing FAFSA.

Mahalo,

Aisha Heredia

SR-94

Submitted on: 5/17/2020 1:47:15 PM

Testimony for EDU on 5/18/2020 4:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Heath Williams	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Requiring FASFA completion before exiting high school has proven effective in raising college enrollment in other jurisdictions. Please support this resolution.

SR-94

Submitted on: 5/17/2020 3:36:53 PM

Testimony for EDU on 5/18/2020 4:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
KianaRose K Dulan	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support this bill.

SR-94

Submitted on: 5/17/2020 3:42:53 PM

Testimony for EDU on 5/18/2020 4:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Aleta Hammerich	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

May 17, 2020

Committee on Education

Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Chair

Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Vice Chair

State Capitol

415 South Beretania Street

Honolulu, HI 96813

Aloha Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and Members of the Committee,

I am a supporter of the SR94 FAFSA bill. College affordability is one of the biggest issues affecting youth today, especially in the state of Hawaii. As a 2019 Hawaii high school graduate and a student at the University of Hawaii, I can say that the FAFSA is extremely important for the decisions students and their families have to make regarding college. Having a group from the Hawaii Department of Education work towards the goal of statewide completion of the FAFSA will be instrumental in giving the students of Hawaii the opportunities they deserve. This is an important and necessary change for the youth and future of Hawaii.

**Mahalo,
Aleta Hammerich**

SR-94

Submitted on: 5/18/2020 10:45:43 AM

Testimony for EDU on 5/18/2020 4:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Dylan	Testifying for HawaiiKidsCAN	Support	No

Comments:



david.miyashiro@hawaiikidscan.org
hawaiikidscan.org

David Miyashiro
Executive Director

May 18, 2020

Committee on Lower & Higher Education
Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Chair
Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Vice Chair

State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

Aloha Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and Members of the Committee,

HawaiiKidsCAN supports SR150, which requests the Hawaii Department of Education (DOE) to submit a report to the legislature on the status of achieving Act 51, Session laws of Hawaii 2018, mandates for computer science education.

As an organization that was proud to advocate in support of the legislation that was signed by Governor Ige as Act 51, HawaiiKidsCAN believes the information requested by SR150 would be incredibly valuable in our state's efforts to expand access and equity in computer science education and increase our high-tech workforce. We supported the initial legislation after our *State of Computer Science Education in Hawaii 2018* report (accessible at <https://tinyurl.com/CSHawaii2018>) found that less than half of Hawaii public schools offered computer science courses, only 14 high schools offered Advanced Placement Computer Science (AP CS) courses, and only 32 percent of the 290 AP CS test takers in 2017 were female and only 4 percent—just 12 students statewide—identified as Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander.

The legislature and the public deserve to know how those numbers have improved since the investment of Act 51. HawaiiKidsCAN has been an active member of the DOE's Computer Science Stakeholder Group for the last few years, and we know how hard the DOE's team has been working to advance computer science education. We believe SR150 will help identify what additional supports this team needs in order to achieve the goals set in the DOE's Computer Science Action Plan and Act 51, which requires each public high school to offer at least one computer science course during each school year beginning in the 2021-2022 school year.

As recent disruptions by COVID-19 have demonstrated, Hawaii needs innovative learning experiences and a diversified economy, particularly where residents with computer science skills can earn high incomes while working remotely for local, national, and global companies. Research continues to overwhelmingly show that jobs in Hawaii requiring computer science skills will grow twice as fast and pay twice as much versus the state average over the next ten

years. Let's make sure we are on track to ensure our students and state not just survive, but thrive moving into the future.

Mahalo for your consideration,

David Miyashiro
Founding Executive Director
HawaiiKidsCAN

SR-150

Submitted on: 5/16/2020 5:55:39 AM

Testimony for EDU on 5/18/2020 4:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Yvonne Sun	Testifying for HawaiiKidsCan	Support	No

Comments:

SR-150

Submitted on: 5/17/2020 1:42:33 PM

Testimony for EDU on 5/18/2020 4:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Aisha Heredia	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I strongly support SR150. As a former educator I have seen how students can explore and have fun learning many concepts in math, algorithmic thinking, logic and creative skills such as writing narratives and visual art through computer science. I support SR150 because there should be accountability in how the Hawaii State Department of Education implements Act 51 of Hawaii Session Laws of Hawaii 2018.

Mahalo,

Aisha Heredia

SR-150

Submitted on: 5/17/2020 1:52:27 PM

Testimony for EDU on 5/18/2020 4:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Heath Williams	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

It makes sense that the Department update the Legislature on progress toward a specific goal for which funds were appropriated. Please support this resolution.

SR-150

Submitted on: 5/17/2020 2:32:55 PM

Testimony for EDU on 5/18/2020 4:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lauren Ballesteros- Watanabe	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

SR-150

Submitted on: 5/17/2020 3:36:27 PM

Testimony for EDU on 5/18/2020 4:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
KianaRose K Dulan	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support this bill.

SR-150

Submitted on: 5/17/2020 3:44:06 PM

Testimony for EDU on 5/18/2020 4:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Aleta Hammerich	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

May 17, 2020

Committee on Lower & Higher Education

Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Chair

Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Vice Chair

State Capitol

415 South Beretania Street

Honolulu, HI 96813

Aloha Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and Members of the Committee,

I support SR150 as a 2019 graduate from a high school in Hawaii, and a current student at the University of Hawaii. Computer science education is becoming an increasingly important subject and is part of what makes a student in today's day and age successful. I support this bill because I believe it will allow students of Hawaii the opportunity to not only discover but also pursue this subject in the future.

Mahalo,

Aleta Hammerich

SR-150

Submitted on: 5/18/2020 10:46:56 AM

Testimony for EDU on 5/18/2020 4:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Dylan	Testifying for HawaiiKidsCAN	Support	Yes

Comments:

HAWAII YOUTH SERVICES NETWORK

677 Ala Moana Boulevard, Suite 904 Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Phone: (808) 489-9549

Web site: <http://www.hysn.org> E-mail: info@hysn.org

Rick Collins, President

Judith F. Clark, Executive
Director

Bay Clinic

Big Brothers Big Sisters of
Hawaii

Big Island Substance Abuse
Council

Bobby Benson Center

Child and Family Service

Coalition for a Drug Free Hawaii

Collins Consulting, LLC

Domestic Violence Action Center

EPIC, Inc.

Family Programs Hawaii

Family Support Hawaii

Friends of the Children of
West Hawaii

Hale Kipa, Inc.

Hale 'Opio Kauai, Inc.

Hawaii Children's Action
Network

Hawaii Health & Harm

Reduction Center

Hawaii Student Television

Ho'ola Na Pua

Kahi Mohala

Kokua Kalihi Valley

Kokua Ohana Aloha (KOA)

Maui Youth and Family Services

Na Pu'uwai Molokai Native

Hawaiian Health Care
Systems

P.A.R.E.N.T.S., Inc.

Parents and Children Together
(PACT)

PHOCUSED

PFLAG – Kona Big Island

Planned Parenthood of the
Great Northwest and
Hawaiian Islands

Residential Youth Services
& Empowerment (RYSE)

Salvation Army Family
Intervention Services

Sex Abuse Treatment Center

Susannah Wesley Community
Center

The Catalyst Group

May 16 2020

To: Senator Michelle Kidani Chair
And members of the Committee on Education

**TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO SR 144 URGING THE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO PROVIDE A SCHOOL
RESOURCE OFFICER OR REGISTERED GUARD AT EACH
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AND STATE PREKINDERGARTEN
PROGRAM.**

Hawaii Youth Services Network (HYSN), a statewide coalition of youth-serving organizations opposes SR 144 urging the Department of Education to provide a school resource officer or registered guard at each elementary school and state prekindergarten program.

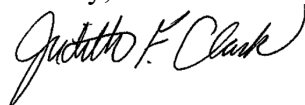
The State of Hawaii has many urgent funding needs related to the COVID-19 crisis. Unemployment has soared to unprecedented levels; hunger is rampant; and children have lost months of effective educational services. At the same time, tax revenues are plummeting.

Placing School Resource Officers in elementary schools and prekindergarten sites is not an urgent need.

Please use our limited funds to support the critical safety net – homelessness, domestic violence, child abuse, child care, hunger.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,



Judith F. Clark
Executive Director

SR-144

Submitted on: 5/16/2020 8:20:16 AM

Testimony for EDU on 5/18/2020 4:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
cheryl B.	Individual	Oppose	No

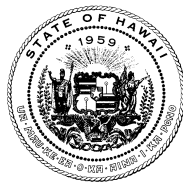
Comments:

JUST NO!

It is proven research that putting an SRO or officer at a school does not improve the safety of students or the community. In another SR, you are looking at the rate of suspensions for various communities, guess what SRO and officers contributions are on this occurrence.

False sense of security and added stressor for too many.

AND NO to allowing educators to carry guns into schools either..



STATE OF HAWAII
HAWAII STATE PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM
OFFICE OF THE STATE LIBRARIAN
44 MERCHANT STREET
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Monday, May 18, 2020

4:05 pm

State Capitol, Room 229

**By Stacey A. Aldrich
State Librarian**

**S.R. 27 REQUESTING THAT THE HAWAII STATE PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM CONVENE A
TASK FORCE TO IDENTIFY AND RECOMMEND STANDARDS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT
OF AN ALL-ELECTRONIC PROCESS FOR MAINTAINING GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS
CREATED BY STATE AGENCIES.**

To: Chair Michelle N. Kidani
Vice Chair Donna Mercado Kim
Members of the Senate Committee on Education

The Hawaii State Public Library System (HSPLS) appreciates the opportunity to provide comments regarding Senate Resolution 27, which requests the Hawaii State Public Library System convene a task force to identify and recommend standards for the development of an all-electronic process for maintaining government publications created by state agencies.

HSPLS is responsible for ensuring public access to government publications not only as a means of transparency, but also as a way to document the discussions, reports and work of government agencies for future generations. We take our role of preserving access to government publications from the past, now and into the future very seriously.

HSPLS supports the necessity of creating standards for the increased number of electronic documents. However, while HSPLS appreciates the desire to decrease paper waste, HSPLS **does not support** "...an all-electronic process for maintaining government publications..." as set forth in the first Be It Resolved paragraph.

Access to paper copies ensures access to government publications when online resources are disrupted. Additionally, over time, digital copies degrade and changing technology can limit or prevent the public's access. Therefore, HSPLS supports the maintenance of government publications in both paper and electronic formats.

Further, HSPLS will be able to support the Legislature's desire to establish a task force to identify and recommend standards for the development of standards for electronic documents produced statewide.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this Resolution and your continued support of the Hawaii State Public Library System.