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## A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO CIVIC EDUCATION.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:**

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that civic education  
2 prepares students to participate in the public and political  
3 lives of their communities. Teaching students about the  
4 importance of civic engagement through civic education helps  
5 develop critical thinking skills that are vital to the  
6 functioning of a democratic nation, including how to recognize  
7 social problems, evaluate possible solutions to problems,  
8 separate evidence-based claims from opinions, and act upon what  
9 is learned.

10           The legislature further finds that in the 2020 general  
11 election, forty states had a higher voter turnout than did  
12 Hawaii, which placed Hawaii among the ten states with the lowest  
13 voter turnout in the nation. The legislature also finds that  
14 cultivating social and political engagement among students  
15 through civic education is an important strategy available to  
16 increase voter turnout and citizen engagement over the long  
17 term.



1           The legislature additionally finds that in 2018, the board  
2 of education adopted the Hawaii core standards in social  
3 studies. These core standards outline the content, concepts,  
4 and inquiry skills students need to reason, wonder, and think  
5 about the vastness and richness of the human condition. The  
6 Hawaii core standards in social studies also integrate and  
7 encompass the democratic values, civility, and global  
8 perspective needed to support the development of critical  
9 thinking and habits of mind that are the hallmark of a mature,  
10 community-minded citizen. The standards are also premised upon  
11 a rigorous and relevant K-12 social studies experience.

12           The legislature finds that engaging students in the pursuit  
13 of active and informed citizenship will connect students to the  
14 world through informed instructional experiences that are led by  
15 teachers who are committed to active civic participation. In  
16 this way, students will not simply acquire and produce knowledge  
17 but will have the knowledge and skills to engage in the workings  
18 of a democracy and practice democratic citizenship. However,  
19 the legislature finds that the department of education has not  
20 engaged in systematic teacher training on the new standards nor



1 has addressed the paucity of culturally appropriate materials  
2 for historical and civic education.

3 The purpose of this Act is to increase access to civic  
4 education in Hawaii's public school system.

5 SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general  
6 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$84,000 or so much  
7 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2022-2023 for the  
8 expansion of civic education in public schools, including  
9 professional development and classroom resources related to the  
10 Hawaii core standards in social studies.

11 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of  
12 education for the purposes of this Act.

13 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general  
14 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$100,000 or so much  
15 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2022-2023 to hire  
16 one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) permanent civic education  
17 resource teacher position.

18 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of  
19 education for the purposes of this Act.

20 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2022.

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H.B. NO. 2494

INTRODUCED BY:

*Amy Amuso*

JAN 26 2022



# H.B. NO. 2494

**Report Title:**

Civic Education; Department of Education; Resource Teacher;  
Appropriation

**Description:**

Appropriates funds for the expansion of civic education in the public schools and for one full-time equivalent permanent civic education resource teacher position.

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