



**OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF WAR
1500 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301-1500**

**MANPOWER AND
RESERVE AFFAIRS**

February 11, 2026

Honorable Representative Della Au Belatti, Chair
Honorable Representative Kim Coco Iwamoto, Vice Chair
House Committee on Public Safety

Hawai'i House of Representatives
415 S Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: House Bill 2298 HD1 (Relating to education.)

Dear Chair Belatti, Vice Chair Iwamoto, and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the U.S. Department of Defense, I am writing to express our support for House Bill 2298 HD1. This measure would reinstate past Hawai'i Department of Education policy to honor the sacrifices of individuals whose high school education in Hawai'i was interrupted by their service in the United States Armed Forces during specified times of war.

Many residents of Hawai'i answered our nation's call to service before they had the opportunity to earn their high school diploma. The provisions included within this measure reestablishes a mechanism for the State to award a diploma to these veterans, formally acknowledging an educational milestone that was sacrificed due to their service.

We thank the Committee for considering this measure and are especially grateful for the tremendous effort Hawai'i continues to make in support of service members and their families, no matter when they served.

Sincerely,

Kelli May Douglas
Defense-State Liaison Office
Pacific Southwest Region

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



STEPHEN F. LOGAN
MAJOR GENERAL
ADJUTANT GENERAL
KA 'AKUKANA KENELALA

JOHN P. ALAMODIN
LIEUTENANT COLONEL
DIRECTOR
KA LUNA HO'OKELE

STATE OF HAWAII
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

KA 'OIHANA PILI KAU
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459 PATTERSON ROAD, E-WING, ROOM 1-A103
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STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL
RELATING TO EDUCATION

BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY

BY

JOHN P. ALAMODIN
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF VETERANS SERVICES

FEBRUARY 13, 2026

Aloha Chair Belatti, Vice-Chair Iwamoto, and members of the committee:

I am John P. Alamodin, Director, Office of Veterans Services, State of Hawaii, Department of Defense

The Office of Veterans Services (OVS) provides written testimony in **SUPPORT** of HB 2298, HD1.

This measure seeks to authorize the Department of Education to award a high school diploma to qualified persons who did not receive a high school diploma as a result of compulsory or voluntary induction into the armed services of the United States or whose high school education was interrupted due to wartime practices during World War II, the Korean War, or the Vietnam War.

In 1940, Congress enacted the Selective Training and Service Act. All males between the ages of 21 and 35 were ordered to register for the draft and the first national lottery is held. As World War II progressed, the draft age was lowered to 18 and men were called to service not by lottery number but by age, with the oldest going first. In 1941, following the attack on Pearl Harbor, Congress gave the President power to send draftees anywhere in the world, removing the distinctions between draftees, Active Duty, National Guardsmen and Reservists, and creating one army made up of all.

In 1947, President Harry S. Truman recommended to Congress that the 1940 Selective Training and Service Act expire and that the level of required military forces be maintained by means of voluntary enlistments. In 1950, the Korean War draft called up men between the ages of eighteen-and-a-half and 35 for terms of duty averaging two years. In 1951, the Universal Military Training and Service Act was passed, requiring males between 18 and 26 to register. In 1952, Congress enacted the Reserve Forces Act, compelling every man who is drafted or enlisted to an eight-year obligation to military service. After a term of active duty is completed, one is assigned to standby reserve and can be called back to active duty upon a declaration of war or national emergency. In 1969, President Nixon orders the "19-year-old draft" stating if a young man is not drafted at age 19, he will be exempt from future military service except in the event of war or national emergency. Deferrals are allowed for hardship cases, certain occupations, conscientious objectors, clergymen, and high school and college students. One year later Nixon will argue in favor of ending student deferments. In 1969, President Nixon orders a "random selection" lottery system for selecting men to serve in the war in Vietnam, changing the previous system of drafting according to age. In 1973, the 1967 Selective Service Act, extended through an act of Congress in 1971, expired, ending the authority to induct draft registrants.

Data through a limited literature review would note there were 4,336 residents of the Hawaiian Islands drafted in the United States military during the First World War (September 1917-November 1918) and 32,197 residents drafted during the Second World War (November 1940-October 1946). There are no statistics available as to the number of Hawai'i's residents drafted during the Korean War (June 1950-June 1953) and the Vietnam War (August 1964-February 1973), but there were over 25,000 of Hawai'i's residents who served during the Korean War and 13,000 of Hawai'i's residents who served during the Vietnam War.

Summarily, we support efforts to honor those who sacrificed and served to defend and to protect our country and allies. We support the program described in this measure to provide service members in the identified wartime eras who had their high school education interrupted to be awarded their diploma.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

John P. Almodin, john.p.almodin@hawaii.gov



STATE OF HAWAI'I
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
KA 'OIHANA HO'ONA'AUAO
P.O. BOX 2360
HONOLULU, HAWAI'I 96804

Date: 02/13/2026
Time: 10:00 AM
Location: 411 VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE
Committee: PBS

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Keith T. Hayashi, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: HB2298, HD1, RELATING TO EDUCATION.

Purpose of Bill: Authorizes the Department of Education to award a high school diploma to qualified persons who did not receive a high school diploma as a result of compulsory or voluntary induction into the armed services of the United States or whose high school education was interrupted due to wartime practices during World War II, the Korean War, or the Vietnam War. Effective 7/1/3000. (HD1)

Department's Position:

The Hawai'i State Department of Education (Department) supports HB 2298, HD1, which authorizes the Department to award high school diplomas to individuals who did not receive a diploma due to military service and individuals whose high school education was interrupted due to wartime practices during World War II, the Korean War, or the Vietnam War.

Act 101, Session Laws of Hawai'i 2007, which previously authorized the Department to issue the Kupono diploma to World War II, Korean War, and Vietnam War veterans, as well as individuals whose schooling was interrupted due to military service or internment, sunset in 2020. The Department would appreciate authorization to resume awarding high school diplomas to the individuals outlined in this bill in recognition of their sacrifices during wartime.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on HB 2298, HD1.



TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 2298 HD1 RELATING TO EDUCATION

House Committee on Public Safety
Representative Della Au Belatti, Chair
Representative Kim Coco Iwamoto, Vice Chair

Friday, February 13, 2026 at 10:00 AM
Conference Room 411 or via Videoconference

Chair Belatti, Vice Chair Iwamoto, and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii Military Affairs Council ("MAC") supports HB 2298 HD1.

The MAC was established in 1985 when the Chamber was appointed by the State to serve as the liaison to the military. The MAC advocates on behalf of Hawaii's military, and is comprised of business leaders, academic institutions, State and County officials, members of the CODEL, community leaders, labor unions and organizations and retired U.S. flag and general officers. The MAC works to support Hawaii's location as a strategic U.S. headquarters in the Indo-Asia-Pacific region which is crucial for U.S. national and homeland security.

This measure honors veterans and affected community members by formally recognizing the sacrifices they made in service to the nation at the expense of completing their secondary education.

The gesture is modest in fiscal and administrative terms, but it carries real symbolic weight for veterans and their families: it validates their sacrifice, restores a measure of dignity and completeness to their life stories, and publicly affirms that the State values both their service and their interrupted educational aspirations.

For these reasons, the Hawaii Military Affairs Council respectfully urges passage of HB 2298 HD1. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

LATE *Testimony submitted late may not be considered by the Committee for decision making purposes.

HB-2298-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/12/2026 11:44:28 PM

Testimony for PBS on 2/13/2026 10:00:00 AM

RECEIVED

Date & Time

Feb 13, 2026, 7:57 am

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Angela Young	CARES	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Support.