



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

Date: 04/20/2026

Time: 01:01 PM

Location: CR 225 & Videoconference

Committee: EDU

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Keith T. Hayashi, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: HCR118, URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO STRENGTHEN MENSTRUAL HEALTH EDUCATION INITIATIVES AND TO ADOPT A COMPREHENSIVE MENSTRUAL CYCLE CURRICULUM.

Purpose of Bill: Urging The Department Of Education To Strengthen Menstrual Health Education Initiatives And To Adopt A Comprehensive Menstrual Cycle Curriculum.

Department's Position:

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) respectfully offers comments to the committee for its consideration on HCR 118 HD1.

The Department is committed to promoting students' health and well-being. As a public school system, the Department follows statutory requirements and Board policies, and references nationally recognized guidance to inform curriculum development and adoption. Schools provide a comprehensive sexual health education that aligns with the Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS) §321-11.1. and follows the requirements set forth in the Hawaii State Board of Education (Board) Policy 103-5 Sexual Health Education, which states:

In order to help students make decisions that promote healthy behaviors, the Department of Education shall provide sexual health education to include age appropriate, medically accurate, health education that: (1) Includes education on abstinence, contraception, and methods of infection prevention to prevent unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted infection, including human immunodeficiency virus; (2) Helps students develop relationships and communication skills to form healthy relationships that are based on mutual respect and affection and are free from violence, coercion and intimidation; (3) Helps students develop skills in critical thinking, problem solving, decision making and stress management to make healthy decisions about sexuality and relationships; (4) Encourages student to communicate with their parents, guardians and/or other trusted adults about sexuality; and (5) Informs students of available community resources. Instruction will emphasize that abstention from sexual intercourse is the surest way to prevent unintended pregnancies, sexually transmitted infections such as HIV/AIDS, and consequent emotional distress.

A description of the curriculum utilized by the school shall be made available to parents and shall be posted on the school's website prior to the start of any instruction. A student shall be excused from sexual health instruction only upon the prior written request of the student's

parent or legal guardian. A student may not be subject to disciplinary action, academic penalty or other sanction if the student's parent or legal guardian makes such written request.

Substantively, the Department would like to share efforts that are currently underway to address sexual health education. The Department identified and made public a list of appropriate sexual health education instructional materials. These curricula typically also include information about the menstrual cycle. Additional information is available on our Department website at

<https://hawaiipublicschools.org/school-services/health-education>

Should this resolution move forward, the Department recommends the following language changes to strengthen the alignment and scaffolding of elementary, middle, and high school content for menstrual health education:

- Page 4, Lines 25-26: Streamlines language of the resolution and communicates scaffolded content - "Build from elementary content and integrate middle school content designed teaching standards designated to help students understand."
- Page 4, Lines 28-35: Remove (A) and (B) because this is previously addressed in the elementary content on Page 4, Lines 2-9.
- Page 4, Lines 40-42: Remove (D) from the middle school content, and add this item to the high school content.
- Page 5, Lines 19-21: Streamlines language of the resolution and communicates scaffolded content - "Build from elementary and middle school content and integrate high school content designed to help students understand: integrate the standards applicable to students in middle school, as well as the additional standards requiring students to be able to:"
- Page 5, Line 23: Aligns to suggested language for Page 5, Lines 19-21 - "Identify v/various reasons..."
- Page 5, Line 28: Remove (B) from the high school content because this is previously addressed in the middle school content on Page 5, Line 2.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on HCR 118 HD1.



The Thirty-Third Legislature, State of Hawaii
Senate Committee on Education
Honorable Chair Donna Mercado Kim
Honorable Vice Chair Michelle N. Kidani
Committee Members

Monday, April 20, 2026, 1:01 pm

RE: Support for HCR 118, HD1 - Urging the Department of Education to strengthen menstrual health education initiatives and to adopt a comprehensive menstrual cycle curriculum

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

Ma'i Movement Hawai'i **strongly supports HCR 118, HD1**, which urges the Department of Education to strengthen menstrual health education initiatives and to adopt a comprehensive menstrual cycle curriculum.

Ma'i Movement Hawai'i is a locally grown organization committed to addressing menstrual inequity and ending period poverty, defined as the inability to buy and access menstrual products, due to factors including but not limited to financial constraints, lack of menstrual health education, feelings of societal shame or stigma surrounding menstruation, and inadequate access to clean facilities to maintain proper hygiene. Research suggests that this issue disproportionately affects students, low-income and houseless girls and women, trans, and gender non-conforming individuals, and those who are incarcerated.

As the only Native Hawaiian and women-led grassroots organization dedicated to this issue in Hawai'i, we take a comprehensive, multi-pronged approach through direct service, education, and advocacy to address the economic inequality, gender inequity, and socio-cultural stigma surrounding menstruation. Since our founding in 2020, we have distributed nearly 1.3 million period products, participated in outreach and education fairs across the state, and advocated in the legislature for free period products in public and charter schools, the University of Hawai'i system, and public buildings.

Health and education are inextricably linked. The passage of Act 113, which requires all public and charter schools to provide free menstrual products, marked a major milestone in advancing menstrual equity. Strengthening menstrual health education builds upon this foundation, further promoting health equity and addressing a critical public health need within our school system.

We are particularly encouraged by the findings of the Committee, which recognizes that menstrual health education is often inconsistent, incomplete, or introduced too late, leaving many students unprepared for a normal biological process and contributing to stigma, embarrassment, and misinformation. We agree that schools play a critical role in ensuring that all students receive standardized, accurate, age-appropriate,

and preemptive health education, and that menstrual health should be included as a standard component of a comprehensive health education curriculum.

Our own research over the years supports these findings. The [2021 survey conducted by Hawai'i State Commission on the Status of Women and Ma'i Movement Hawai'i](#) revealed that 48% of respondents received little or no information about their periods before their first period started. Furthermore, the statewide pilot, [The Ho'ohanohano Initiative](#), in six schools during the 2021-22 academic school year found that only 8% of school faculty surveyed at the start of the pilot felt that the menstrual education in schools was adequate, while 50% of students said it was not. By the conclusion of the pilot, the percentage of faculty who felt that menstrual education was adequate increased to 50%, and the percentage of students who reported it was not decreased to 27%. Although no formal education curriculum was implemented during the pilot, increased access to free period products prompted more conversations within schools about access, menstrual health education, and product use. These shifts demonstrate that education coupled with product distribution can have a positive impact on menstrual health outcomes and attitudes.

Finally, in 2023, Ma'i Movement Hawai'i, in collaboration with George Mason University, published a [study](#) in the *International Journal of Gynecology & Obstetrics* examining University of Hawai'i students' lived experiences regarding accessibility of menstrual products and its impacts across the system. Notably, respondents were also asked about their knowledge of menstrual health and K-12 educational experience regarding menstrual health. While the findings suggest that students generally have a baseline awareness of menstrual health, their K-12 experience was widely perceived as inadequate, with 51% indicating that their school did not sufficiently inform them and their peers about menstrual health.

We strongly support the Committee's request that the Department of Education consider standardizing an appropriate timeline for menstrual health curriculum introduction to empower students and help promote consistent attendance, participation, and academic success as they progress through their educational careers. Because many students receive little or no information about menstruation before their first period, early and consistent education is essential.

We also share the Committee's view that menstrual health education provides a vital opportunity to eradicate stigmas, empower informed health decisions, and ensure equal access to and understanding of menstrual products. This measure aligns with the State's commitment to equity, inclusion, and access to care by addressing a topic that has historically been overlooked or stigmatized, often resulting in negative academic and social outcomes for students. We also echo your Committee's recognition that educating students who don't menstruate is equally important, bridging the gender gap and fostering empathy amongst peers. We witnessed this firsthand during our school pilot, where both students and teachers observed the positive impact of the program on non-menstruating students, breaking down stigma and systemic barriers.

As your Committee finds, inconsistent menstrual health education continues to stifle progress toward achieving period equity, and some students lack confidence in managing their menstrual cycle and its symptoms, even with free products. Research and best practices indicate that inclusive menstrual education can reduce misinformation, promote self-confidence, and help students better manage their health. Providing comprehensive menstrual education throughout a student's career ensures not only that

they are equipped with knowledge and skills to manage their menstrual health confidently throughout their lifetime, but also that they can fully participate in school and life with dignity.

HCR 118, HD1 is an initiative that takes steps to address one of the root causes of period poverty and menstrual inequity in Hawai'i. It promotes common goals of public health, education equity, social-emotional well-being, and access to essential menstrual health resources, ensuring that all students can thrive. We urge you to support **HCR 118, HD1** and welcome you to contact us with any additional questions. Mahalo for your leadership and service to Hawai'i!

Me ke aloha,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nikki-Ann Yee". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Nikki-Ann Yee
Co-Founder
Ma'i Movement Hawai'i

HCR-118-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/18/2026 5:07:45 PM

Testimony for EDU on 4/20/2026 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sylvia Dolena	Testifying for Winning Edge Women's Leadership	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support the Mai Movement for menstrual education.

This is an important issue for girls.



April 19, 2026

Position: **SUPPORT** of **HCR118 HD1**, URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO STRENGTHEN MENSTRUAL HEALTH EDUCATION INITIATIVES AND TO ADOPT A COMPREHENSIVE MENSTRUAL CYCLE CURRICULUM.

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

From: Llasmin Chaine, LSW, Executive Director, Hawaii State Commission on the Status of Women

Re: Testimony in SUPPORT of HCR118 HD1, URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO STRENGTHEN MENSTRUAL HEALTH EDUCATION INITIATIVES AND TO ADOPT A COMPREHENSIVE MENSTRUAL CYCLE CURRICULUM.

Hearing: Monday, April 20, 2026, 1:01 p.m.
Conference Room 229, State Capitol

The Hawaii State Commission on the Status of Women **supports HCR118 HD1**, which seeks to advance menstrual health education within the Department of Education.

As a statewide feminist government body dedicated to promoting equality for women and girls, we recognize that comprehensive menstrual education is **fundamental to the health, well-being, and empowerment of students**. Addressing menstrual health in educational settings helps reduce stigma, fosters inclusion, and ensures that all students, particularly girls, have the information they need to manage their health and participate fully in school life.

Expanding menstrual education aligns with our commitment to equity, inclusion, and access to care. Research and best practices indicate that age-appropriate, accurate information about the menstrual cycle can **improve health outcomes, support self-confidence, and reduce barriers caused by misinformation or shame**. By normalizing conversations about menstruation, the Department of Education can contribute to a more supportive and equitable school environment.

We respectfully recommend that implementation of this measure includes ongoing consultation with students, health professionals, gender equity advocates, educators, and community organizations to ensure identified health curriculums continue to meet student needs and align with best practices. Additionally, we encourage the Department to provide educators with appropriate training and resources to deliver this content effectively.

We respectfully urge this Committee to **pass HCR118 HD1**. Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony.

LATE

HCR-118-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/20/2026 5:38:28 AM

Testimony for EDU on 4/20/2026 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Leila Mae Gonzales	Testifying for Menstrual Equity Initiative	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Committee Members,

My name is Leila Mae Gonzales. I am a 2024 graduate of McKinley High School and I currently attend the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa.

I am submitting testimony in support of HCR118 HD1.

Menstrual health and its complexities should be clearly defined and taught in the curriculum of K-12 schools. The existing curriculum generalizes menstrual health, but more needs to be done in order for students to thoroughly have knowledge to navigate their health well. Adequate education promotes early detection of serious conditions like endometriosis, polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS), and reproductive cancers.

Noting that some students get the complete picture while the rest are left with insufficient information. Strengthening the existing curriculum is crucial for students to communicate effectively with loved ones and their providers. Emphasizing that adequate menstrual health education can strengthen relationships and communication patterns. If more students are aware of menstrual health and its complexities, health concerns could be recognized better, support would be better, and stigma would be reduced.

Mahalo,

Leila Mae Gonzales

HCR-118-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/17/2026 7:55:31 PM

Testimony for EDU on 4/20/2026 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Andrew W Cordiale	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Senators,

I think it is the responsibility the state and schools to pitch in at least 75% of the education to help these young women with their menstrual cycles and help take care of themselves. There are many different women of culture there some may come sooner than later, in starting and some may have embarrassment issues, which we should not, but it still happens.

On this day and age, and also that having the education will make it a consistent classroom for these young women inconsistent type of teaching to help them and feel good about themselves. No young lady should ever ever feel bad about themselves and the Internet has gone too far too many times and I have seen being with the Red Cross young girls mostly a bullying actually killing themselves from hanging jumping drowning a gun just killing themselves because they felt they were left out no human being should feel that way you are all loved every person matters in this world. I don't care what country you're in. I don't care what year you were born. I don't care what your ethnicity is. I care that you are a human being and from once you came to earth and we're created by two people you will go back to earth and help with the life Levon. I believe myself that they soul is ever living part of a person that is the essence of their bodies and you know just to clarify this a little more. I am a Reverend/Minister Andrew Cordiale here and I have become this at your seeing so much. Disregard for things and not appropriate items from women when I was at the several Maui shelters and we the Red Cross went out and bought these. Yes many organizations filled in as well, but we also bought these and I and I do not feel uncomfortable. I asked the woman or if the parent is whether or guardian or whomever if she wants me to what size does she need? Has she gone through this before? What will you be able to teach her? I think the importance of this is so crucial and just every little detail from the time that they put them in if they use a tampon if they use a tampon in the underwear liner or just a liner itself girls do weed in many stages as well and that's why there's many sizes and it's nothing to ever be embarrassed about and every young woman should be proud that they are alive, giving soul to create a new soul. I asked son of Hawai'i to pass this strongly and to know that bills like this are needed these are add-ons that are just there to spend money. This is true human items that people in this world and these women need and my honest opinion as well I have a few is that women have a better thinking way of doing things for man or just more Braun in Russian to do it and it might not be the right choice. It's not the right choice whereas women they tell them what to do and it gets done correctly so I could congratulate you all. I hope this passes. I hope I'm there on time for you all, but I won't be in person, but I will have to read it afterwards right now. I'm an update. New York and I have to work on some things for Shelter resident transition

which I was happy to meet all the young women and man and children and moms and dads and aunts and uncles and grandmothers, and in the the woman of the house that is the person of the house is a woman so I think I said that before they are the one in charge so I appreciate you all and thank you for your time. I ask you all to save our women save our future.

.Minister /Recerebd AndrewCordiale - Portillo

I did wanna say on a sidenote, Dr. Greene it was such a pleasure meeting you you may or may not remember me, but I had worked in so many locations as you know many people had and you know we wanted to be there. It's not that we were forced to be there we volunteer and Dr. Greene. It was wonderful to meet the people of Hawai'i the cultures and how they still wanted to move on this is the most horrific buyer I've ever been to whereas a town had been wiped out and I was even saved as well by your people who comforted me did I shed a few tears? I'm sure I did and from what I heard is them tell me while we know you care you're here and you're only human too so I want you to know that's exactly how I am. I am only human too, but every single person is equal nobody's better than anybody else and we can get through anything if we work together and once again, I thank you all for your time, patience and reading that.

HCR-118-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/17/2026 9:03:36 PM

Testimony for EDU on 4/20/2026 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Stephanie Ouanlavong	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

I am submitting this testimony in **strong support** of HCR 118, which urges the Department of Education to strengthen menstrual health education initiatives and adopt a comprehensive menstrual cycle curriculum for students across Hawai‘i.

Menstrual health education is an essential part of student health education and overall well-being. However, many students today still receive limited, inconsistent, or incomplete instruction about menstruation. This lack of education leaves young people unprepared to understand their bodies, manage their cycles with confidence, and navigate a normal biological process without fear or stigma. The result is unnecessary confusion, embarrassment, school absenteeism, and delayed recognition of potential health concerns.

This issue is deeply personal to me. I received my first menstrual cycle in 5th grade. At the time, I had no prior education or preparation for what was happening to my body. My mother, who was born and raised in Laos, also did not have access to comprehensive menstrual health education. When I began menstruating, she simply told me that all girls and women would experience blood coming from their bodies and handed me a pad. While I understand she did her best with the knowledge she had, I was left without explanation, reassurance, or emotional support during a confusing and frightening experience. I did not understand what was happening to me, and I felt unprepared during a major developmental milestone that should have been normalized and supported through education.

In Hawai‘i, the high cost of living places additional strain on families, making access to menstrual health resources even more important. While providing menstrual products in schools at no cost and ensuring they are conveniently available in restrooms and health rooms would be a meaningful and supportive measure for students, the most critical and lasting solution is education.

The central importance of this measure is the **strengthening of menstrual health education initiatives and the adoption of a comprehensive menstrual cycle curriculum** within the Department of Education. Students deserve accurate, age-appropriate, and medically sound instruction that covers menstrual biology, hygiene, symptom management, emotional and physical changes, reproductive health basics, and when to seek medical care.

A comprehensive curriculum would do more than provide information—it would normalize menstruation as a natural biological process, reduce stigma, and ensure students are not left to navigate these changes in silence or fear. It would empower students with knowledge, confidence, and lifelong health literacy.

Strengthening menstrual health education is a matter of dignity, equity, and public health. When students are properly educated, they are better able to attend school consistently, focus on learning, and seek help when needed. This directly supports both their academic success and overall well-being.

For these reasons, I respectfully and strongly urge the Department of Education to prioritize and implement a comprehensive menstrual health education curriculum in collaboration with healthcare professionals, educators, and community stakeholders.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in **strong support** of HCR 118.

Sincerely,
Stephanie Ouanlavong

HCR-118-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/17/2026 9:18:09 PM

Testimony for EDU on 4/20/2026 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Venise Costales	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION SHOULD STRENGTHEN MENSTRUAL HEALTH EDUCATION INITIATIVES AND ADOPT A COMPREHENSIVE MENSTRUAL CYCLE CURRICULUM CAUSE SOME OF THE GIRLS DONT UNDERSTAND WHAT THEY ARE GOING THROUGH OR EVEN WHAT TO DO SO EDUCATION ON THIS SUBJECT IS ENCOURAGED

HCR-118-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/17/2026 10:59:27 PM

Testimony for EDU on 4/20/2026 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Justina Afele	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Justina Afele, and I am writing in strong support of HCR 118, HD1.

As someone who has been personally affected by menstrual health conditions, I know firsthand how important education and awareness are. I have been diagnosed with both PCOS and endometriosis, and I have struggled with irregular menstrual cycles since high school. At a young age, I did not fully understand what was happening to my body, and I didn't have access to the kind of education that could have helped me recognize that something was wrong.

There was a time when I experienced continuous bleeding that lasted for about a year. During that time, I made nonstop trips to the emergency room and underwent multiple scans, yet doctors could not determine what was wrong. It wasn't until I collapsed from significant blood loss—after my sixth emergency room visit in just one week—that the severity of my condition was finally discovered. I had an ovarian cyst that was on the verge of rupturing.

I was rushed into the operating room for emergency surgery. The procedure resulted in the removal of the cyst and my right fallopian tube, followed by several D&C procedures. Even after surgery, I continue to struggle with complications, including abnormal thickening of my uterine lining, ongoing symptoms, and frequent visits to my OB-GYN. I also now face challenges with fertility as a result of everything my body has endured.

The severity of my condition has impacted my daily life in ways that many people don't talk about. I experienced heavy, overflowing bleeding that required me to go through an entire case of pads along with adult protection just to manage it. I have also spent a significant amount of

money on menstrual products over the years. Even today, I continue to deal with irregular periods, mood swings, and ongoing symptoms that affect my quality of life. This has not only been physically exhausting, but also emotionally and financially draining, affecting my dignity, confidence, and ability to function normally.

No young person should have to go through something like this without understanding what is happening to their body or knowing when to seek help. Comprehensive menstrual health education could empower students to recognize symptoms early, seek medical care sooner, and feel less alone in their experiences.

HCR 118, HD1 is important because it pushes for stronger menstrual health education and a more complete curriculum. This is not just about information—it's about health, dignity, and early intervention. Education can change outcomes.

I strongly urge you to support this measure so that future generations have the knowledge and support that many of us did not.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Justina Afele

HCR-118-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/18/2026 1:01:07 PM

Testimony for EDU on 4/20/2026 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sydney T Kameenui	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a mother of a young girl of eight I know this is something that should be taught to benefit young girls. As a youth myself when I did get my period/ma'i I did not know what to do or how to take care of it. My brother and father were the only ones around when I first got my period. Nobody at the time could really direct me on what to do. When my mother got home she wanted to show me with her own body how to put a tampon in as I had wasted a box trying to use it. I finally locked myself in the bathroom and figured it out but it was a real trial and error situation. I had only thought a period comes out when you urinate. It took me a lot of trial and error and I feel I could have been better prepared for this had I been taught in school. I hope that my daughter does not have to go through the same trauma and experience I did if I am at work or unable to guide her at the time. Please consider this as I think she could greatly be influenced with the education prior to her menstruation starting. My daughter is already questioning my period products and I see that she takes it apart looking at it inquisitively. Please help me educate her on this as it's not an easy thing to teach a young girl.

HCR-118-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/18/2026 2:30:10 PM

Testimony for EDU on 4/20/2026 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sarah Kern	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

April 18, 2026

Aloha Chair and Committee Members,

My name is Sarah Kern and I am a resident of Līhu‘e, Kaua‘i. I am a math and science teacher at Chiefess Kamakahahei Middle School. I am testifying in strong support of HCR 118.

I support this resolution because as a graduate of a Hawai‘i public school, I felt extremely uneducated about my own body and the way it works. We had to take health class in middle and high school, but most of what I got out of those classes was about drug prevention. I can’t remember a single lesson about menstruation and working at a middle school now with a one semester health class for 6th grade students, I can’t say much has changed. I remember asking my mom questions that she herself (another Hawai‘i public school graduate) could not answer, forcing me to get much of my menstrual health education from friends and the internet.

When we understand the human body, we can make better decisions about our health. Families may argue that students should be learning about their bodies from their parents, but rarely do today’s adults have a thorough understanding of their own biology. Many students do not have access to parents who are willing or able to do the educating at home on such a critical topic. Having comprehensive menstrual health education for all students, whether they menstruate or not, is essential for better public health outcomes, which is important to our entire community and the future of Hawai‘i.

Thank you for your consideration.

Mahalo,

Sarah Kern

Teacher, Chiefess Kamakahahei Middle School

HCR-118-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/18/2026 6:03:23 PM

Testimony for EDU on 4/20/2026 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Hi'ilani Nalua'i	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Education upon menstrual cycles, for females AND non-females, is ESSENTIAL to understanding how to live properly. If we understand the menstrual cycle, we understand the cycle of life. WITHOUT WOMENS BODIES SACRIFICING FOR THE NEXT GENERATIONS, THERE WOULD BE NO HUMANS. (Say what you want about males part in procreation-it can never compare to the sacrifice of a woman's body, time, energy, worldview, money, and how she is viewed in society with ultimately equate to how she is treated within society.) To be ignorant about the cycles your mothers had to live through in order to one day have you is DISGUSTING. Education in the menstrual cycle also benefits men, as most of the are planning to be with women and create children. If they are ignorant to how the mother of their child has to live, they should not BE HAVING CHILDREN. This bill must pass or else we are sure there is no empathy within this government.

HCR-118-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/19/2026 9:21:40 AM

Testimony for EDU on 4/20/2026 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joelle Watanabe	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I'm Joelle Watanabe. I am a 2024 graduate of Moanalua High School and I currently attend Boston University. I stand on my written testimony and support HCR118.

I got my first period when I was 9 years old. It was extremely traumatic for me to see blood when using the bathroom, because I was not educated on what a period even was. I don't remember receiving any information about the menstrual cycle in my sex ed course in elementary school, nor my mandated health classes in middle or high school. I remember attempting to look up information about the menstrual cycle and what it entails on the internet, however at first I felt ashamed about even looking it up due to internalized stigma.

I push for menstrual education in Hawaii DOE public schools as I genuinely didn't have the opportunity to learn at home. I didn't have much older women figures in my life as a child, I only had my mother. However, like many students in the DOE public school system, my mother, the main provider of my household to three kids, would come home from 8 hours of emotionally taxing work as a social worker. She did not have the time as a working mother to not only me but two other children (one of whom has an intellectual disability) and emotional capacity to sit down with us to talk about a sensitive and important topic such as this. She relied on my sex ed class in 5th grade to teach me, but as I said earlier menstrual education was not in the topics. Everything I eventually learned was from my own looking for resources.

I know I am not the only one who was in these circumstances, and I am sure that other menstruating persons like me who were in the DOE system would appreciate menstrual education.

Mahalo!