



MANPOWER AND  
RESERVE AFFAIRS

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

March 18, 2026

Honorable Representative Justin H. Woodson, Chair  
Honorable Representative Trish La Chica, Vice Chair  
Committee on Education

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

**RE: Senate Bill 2614 (Relating to education.)**

Dear Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica, and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the U.S. Department of Defense, I am writing to express our support for Senate Bill (SB) 2614. 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



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

**Date:** 03/19/2026  
**Time:** 02:00 PM  
**Location:** 309 VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE  
**Committee:** EDN

**Department:** Education

**Person Testifying:** Keith T. Hayashi, Superintendent of Education

**Title of Bill:** SB2614, 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.

**Department's Position:**

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) supports SB 2614, 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 Hawaii 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 SB 2614.



**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 2614  
RELATING TO EDUCATION**

House Committee on Education  
Representative Justin Woodson, Chair  
Representative Trish La Chica, Vice Chair

Thursday, March 19, 2026 at 2:00 PM  
Conference Room 309 or via Videoconference

Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica, and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii Military Affairs Council ("MAC") supports SB 2614.

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 SB 2614. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

**SB-2614**

Submitted on: 3/17/2026 4:51:44 PM

Testimony for EDN on 3/19/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
M. Leilani DeMello	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I KĀKO‘O PIHA this bill and feel that this is a long overdue show of honor and respect that we should bestow upon our esteemed veterans. I don‘t see any reason this should not be done and I hope that you support this bill as well.

Mahalo,

M. Leilani DeMello

‘Ōla‘a, Puna, Hawai‘i