



100TH Infantry Battalion Veterans

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February 24, 2026

BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair | Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair

RE: TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 2687 RELATING TO EDUCATION

Good morning Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Kathi Hayashi, and I serve as President of the 100th Infantry Battalion Veterans organization, also known as Club 100. I am writing today in strong support of Senate Bill 2687 — The 100th Infantry Battalion Curriculum and Heritage Act.

My father, Tokuichi Hayashi, was a veteran of the federalized Hawai‘i National Guard. After the attack on Pearl Harbor, he was assigned to the original 100th Infantry Battalion, whose soldiers were segregated from the multi-ethnic U.S. Army Hawai‘i National Guard solely because they looked like the Japanese enemy. He later served in Italy and France until the end of World War II with the 100th Infantry Battalion (Separate) and the 442nd Regimental Combat Team (RCT). Together, they rose above unfounded distrust and discrimination to become among the most decorated units in U.S. military history.

Today, I represent Club 100 in supporting Senate Bill 2687. We envision this educational initiative beginning with the pioneer 100th Infantry Battalion from Hawai‘i which led to the formation of the 442nd RCT, and including the contributions of Americans of Japanese ancestry (AJA) in the Military Intelligence Service and the 1399th Engineer Construction Battalion. Hawai‘i Senate Resolution SCR 24, adopted April 16, 2025, recognized that *“the most renowned group of Japanese Americans to fight for the United States in this war was the 100th Infantry Battalion which led to the formation of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team.”*

We, the descendants of the 100th soldiers, support this education initiative not for vanity, but to take a stand to pledge our commitment and fulfill our responsibility to pass forward the values our forefathers instilled in us, to the youth of Hawai‘i. Today, there are only six veterans of the 100th Infantry Battalion still with us — all now 100 years old or beyond — and time is asking us whether we will preserve their legacy for our keiki. Their children, including myself, who grew up with the 100th soldiers, are now near or over 70. Time is limited for us to share the lessons we learned from them on how they overcame discrimination, accusations of sabotage, and even physical stereotypes and small stature (on average, 5’4” and 125 lbs.) to become high-performing individuals and an elite fighting force. This bill provides a vital vehicle to preserve their knowledge in a curriculum for future generations.

At a 1992 memorial service, late television anchor Bob Jones told the 100th veterans and their families: *“Sons and daughters absolutely cannot ever let people forget what you’ve done for this country — how you did it and why you did it.”* We stand ready to share that knowledge. Its 1,432 soldiers were already serving in the U.S. Army and therefore remained in uniform at a time when many Japanese Americans were classified as “enemy aliens,” among a population of about 280,000 people of Japanese ancestry living in the United States — approximately 160,000 in Hawai‘i and about 120,000 on the U.S. mainland. The 100th, who called themselves “One Puka Puka” was a small group, composing only about one-half of one percent of the Japanese-ancestry population at the time — many of whom were incarcerated on the mainland or living under martial law in Hawai‘i. These soldiers bore a tremendous responsibility to demonstrate loyalty and create a positive legacy for Japanese Americans and for all people of color.

Students deserve the opportunity to learn what the 100th Infantry Battalion accomplished, and why and how its soldiers rose to meet an enormous responsibility — helping to change perceptions of people of Japanese ancestry in America and make a positive difference for people of color across our nation. They proved their loyalty with courage, sacrifice, and their blood. After landing in Salerno, Italy with approximately 1,300 men, fierce battles — including Monte Cassino — reduced their fighting strength to only 420 able soldiers due to death and injury. The media’s perception shifted from suspicion to honor, bestowing on them the name “The Purple Heart Battalion,” with 1,703 Purple Hearts eventually awarded among 3,147 soldiers.

Club 100 has long supported education through accessible student resources, including a historical digital library (<https://www.100thbattalion.org/>), social media (<https://www.facebook.com/100thibv>), and organizational website (<https://www.100thibv.org/>) that provide valuable primary and educational materials. These resources are ready for integration into the proposed curriculum.

We have also partnered with ‘Iolani School, the University of Hawai‘i Center on Aging, and Central Pacific Bank (CPB) for five years on a project-based learning initiative called “100th Infantry Battalion Legacy2Action (L2A).” Students identify a social problem they are passionate about, apply the high-performance values and lessons learned from the accomplishments and sacrifices of the 100th, and put it into action with a recommended community service solution. The solutions were well-thought out and presented to members, educators, legislators, and key leaders of our community. Projects have included apps and services for kūpuna and their families, tutoring and supplies for under-resourced youth, environmental projects such as removing invasive algae, and many more.

Governor Josh Green recognized this work in a special message during our 81st Anniversary in 2023, stating, *“Beyond the battlefield, the 100th Infantry Battalion has been an emblem of unity, resilience, and the triumph of the human spirit. Their legacy is one of determination and perseverance in the face of discrimination and prejudice. Club 100 was formed in 1945 by the veterans of the 100th Infantry Battalion to continue their brave legacy and to promote the values of community service, patriotism, and social welfare. Their initiative Legacy2Action focuses on these ideals and works to support and inspire young leaders to solve the issues that impact our state and nation.”*

Student feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. Participants report they enjoyed learning the history and values of the 100th and applying them to do something positive to improve society. Many students have received scholarships and/or acceptance into top universities based in part on their participation in L2A. One student accepted to Harvard in January 2026 was told by the acceptance officer that her Legacy2Action project — an educational video titled “The Most Loyal Traitor” — played a key factor in her acceptance.

Students learn core values embodied by the 100th Infantry Battalion:

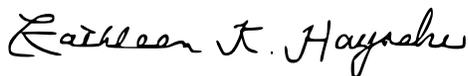
- Ganbari — perseverance and giving one’s all
- Gaman — quiet, steadfast endurance
- Chuugi — loyalty and teamwork
- Sekinin — responsibility
- Giri — sense of duty
- Haji — avoiding shame to protect the family name

This is the legacy they entrusted with us. Club 100 is also involved with and helping to fund an upcoming educational documentary, “The 100TH, Seeds of Aloha,” by Director/Producer Steve Sue of non-profit ID8. It is about the AJA warriors, starting with the Hawai‘i-born 100th Infantry Battalion. It is not a battlefields story, but one of overcoming obstacles and spreading positive seeds of change. It includes many interviews with European villagers who still remember their liberators from Hawai‘i, with some even singing Hawai‘i Pono‘ī. This documentary could serve as an additional educational tool within the curriculum.

I attended public school in ‘Aiea and later retired as Senior Vice President of Verizon Communications in New York City, responsible for \$11 billion in wholesale marketing revenue. GTE/Verizon sent me to Smith College and many leadership training courses. The leadership concepts I learned through my career — goal setting, affirmations, visualization — are deeply embodied in the lived experiences and values of the 100th Infantry Battalion. Many current members of 100th Infantry Battalion Veterans organization (Club 100) rose from humble upbringings to achieve success at the highest levels of their professions, while always keeping their 100th patriarchs’ desire to give back to the community, in line with Club 100’s motto: “For Continuing Service.”

For our keiki, for a better Hawai‘i, and for “a more perfect union,” we respectfully urge the passage of Senate Bill 2687. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

For Continuing Service,



Kathleen Hayashi
President, 100th Infantry Battalion Veterans
Daughter of Tokuichi Hayashi (Able Company)

SB-2687-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 2:59:11 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/25/2026 10:55:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| David A. Bramlett | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Members:

I write in strongest support for SB2687, which integrates the history of the 100th Infantry Battalion in the DOE curriculum. The 100th Infantry Battalion and the Nisei Soldier in WWII are celebrated in every segment of our nation's history. You will find descriptions in various detail, whether the impact is on social history, cultural inclusion, military campaigns, and history in general.

The 100th's story is an emblem for the larger tale of an immigrant population who paid the price of citizenship with their heroism and sacrifice, and returned from the battlefields to shape our post-war nation, especially in Hawaii and California (if not, the entire west coast).

I note SB2687 includes mention of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, also an essentially Nisei fighting force. The teacher will find a rich repository of material in the literature and history of other Nisei units, the Military Intelligence Service (MIS) and the 1399th Engineer Battalion. And, the story of the Nisei women who served has yet to receive deserved, historical notice.

We owe this legislation to those who gave so much on the battlefield and endured so much in their lives. It's a legacy that must endure, and SB2687 is a major, welcome step in preserving a significant part of Hawaii's story and its place in our nation's history.

Mahalo,

General David A. Bramlett, US Army (Ret)

SB-2687-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 5:08:22 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/25/2026 10:55:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Robert Lee | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

We are indebted to this famous Army unit that became the most decorated unit in the US Army due to their combat exploits. Future generations must know their story of sacrifice, and patriotism under adverse conditions.

February 23, 2026

The Honorable Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
and Members
Committee on Ways and Means
State Senate
Hawai`i State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz and Members of the Committee,

SUBJECT: Senate Bill No. 2687 SD 1, Relating to Education

My name is Colonel (Retired) Keith K. Horikawa, a former commander of the 100th Battalion, 442nd Infantry, US Army Reserve, and a US Army veteran with over 33 years of service in both the Hawaii National Guard and US Army Reserve. I am writing to express my strong support for Senate Bill No. 2687 SD 1, the Hawai`i 100th Infantry Battalion Curriculum and Heritage Act, Relating to Education. This bill represents a significant step forward in ensuring that the history and contributions of the 100th Infantry Battalion, as well as the broader narrative of Asian American history, are integrated into the social studies curriculum for Hawai`i's public high schools.

The 100th Infantry Battalion, originally comprised of second-generation Japanese Americans, exemplified loyalty, courage, and sacrifice in the face of adversity and the tumult of world war. Despite facing discrimination and prejudice during World War II, these soldiers demonstrated extraordinary valor and commitment to our country, earning numerous decorations and playing pivotal roles in the outcome of the war in Europe, the desegregation of the U.S. armed forces, and the shaping of Hawai`i into the state it is today. Their story is not only a testament to their heroism and triumph in combat but is also a vital part of Hawai`i's local history, it's continuing legacy in the modern US Army, and the broader Asian American experience in the United States.

Currently, the statewide public high school social studies curriculum does not adequately represent Asian American history, despite the significant contributions of Asian Americans to our state and nation. This underrepresentation perpetuates marginalization and racial stereotypes, depriving students of the opportunity to learn about the diverse narratives that have shaped our society. By integrating the history of the 100th Infantry Battalion into the curriculum, this bill will provide students with a unique opportunity to engage with history through a local and multicultural lens, fostering a deeper understanding of the social, political, and economic transformations of the United States during World War II.

The proposed pilot program for the 2026-2027 school year and the statewide implementation of the curriculum in the 2027-2028 school year are critical steps toward addressing this gap in our education system. By studying the formation, achievements, and legacy of the 100th Infantry Battalion, students will gain valuable insights into the resilience and contributions of Asian Americans, as well as the importance of diversity and inclusion in shaping our nation.

I urge the legislature to pass S.B. NO. 2687 SD 1 to honor the legacy of the 100th Infantry Battalion and ensure that future generations of Hawai`i's students understand the significance of their story. This bill is not only an investment in education but also a commitment to preserving and celebrating the cultural heritage of our state.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important legislation.

Sincerely,

Keith K. Horikawa, COL (Ret)
US Army Reserve

SB-2687-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 9:11:39 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/25/2026 10:55:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Christy Nishita | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

As a mom and 4th generation Japanese American, I strongly support SB2687. I want my children to have a deeper appreciation of Hawai‘i’s role in shaping American democracy. By focusing on the 100th Infantry Battalion’s legacy, students will have the opportunity to connect more personally with the stories of real people from their own communities.

This bill ensures that all high school students engage with themes of discrimination, citizenship, and social change through a local and multicultural lens. This will strengthen critical thinking, combat stereotypes, and affirm the identities of our Asian American and Pacific Islander students.

SB2687 will help build bridges between past and present, and between our schools and community organizations, giving students the chance to learn from primary sources, oral histories, and living experts. My daughter had the opportunity to volunteer at the 100th Infantry Battalion Clubhouse and participate in a project-based learning challenge called “Legacy2Action”. Her experience, learning about the legacy of the 100th Infantry Battalion, has empowered her to take a more active role in her community.

When young people study how Nisei soldiers from Hawai‘i helped pave the way for desegregation in the armed services and expanded civil rights at home, they see how local action can transform national policy, inspiring them to become informed, engaged citizens in our democracy.

SB-2687-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 9:38:09 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/25/2026 10:55:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|----------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Johnnie-Mae L. Perry | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I, Johnnie-Mae L. Perry, Oppose

2687 SB RELATING TO EDUCATION.

HAWAIIAN HISTORY/CULTURE DELETED FROM DOE SCHOOLS, REINSTITUTE THIS
FIRST

February 23, 2026

The Honorable Donovan Dela Cruz
Senator, Hawai`i State Senate
Chair, Ways and means Committee
415 South Beretania Street, Room 208
Honolulu, Hawai`i, 96813

Aloha, Senator Dela Cruz,

I am Calvin Nomiya, a *sansei*, or third generation son of a World War II veteran. I retired from Hawai`i State Department of Education (HIDOE) after serving over 35 years, and retired from the U.S. Army Reserves, after 37 years of service, with time in the 100th Battalion, 442nd Infantry Regiment for sixteen years (1971-1987). I am also a life-member and the current Secretary for the Go For Broke Association; a veterans' organization started in 1978, whose primary purpose is to promote the legacy of the 100th Infantry Battalion, the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, and the World War II Military Intelligence Service.

I am writing this letter in support of Senate Bill 2678 that requires the Department of Education to develop and implement a curriculum plan for grades 9 through 12 on the history of the famed World War II *nisei* unit, the 100th Infantry Battalion.

As a graduate of Hawai`i's public schools, and having served as a high school coach, an elementary and secondary teacher, and a school administrator, I have experienced the absence of content on the 100th Infantry Battalion, or any other Asian American history curricula, specifically, in Grades 4, 7 where Hawaiian culture and history are routinely taught. There is little to no mention of the 100th Infantry Battalion in Grade 5, 11, and 12 where U.S. history is presented.

The lessons learned from the accomplishments of the *nisei* Soldiers during combat in the European Theater of Operations and their contributions and community involvement after the war are a testimony to their character: Bravery, Loyalty, Courage, Resilience, Cultural Identity, and Service. Repeatedly, as individual Soldiers during a time of war or collectively as in civilian life, these Americans of Japanese Ancestry paved the way for generations of all races throughout the nation to rise above discrimination to become whomever we want to be. I honestly believe that the achievement of the *nisei* Soldier and their units made it possible for me to rise to the office of the Complex Area Superintendent and retire at the rank of Colonel.

Through developing and implementing the curriculum, it serves everyone, from those who develop the prospectus to the students that receive the instruction, they all will learn not just about the accomplishments and contributions of the 100th Infantry Battalion, but also the way Hawai`i has become to be known for generations as the "melting pot." The men of the 100th Infantry Battalion, through their actions in combat and in community service after the war, significantly impacted of who we are today.

Mahalo and Go For Broke!



Calvin Nomiya
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People need heroes and inspiring values. The 100th Infantry Battalion has a storied role in winning significant World War Two battles. For example, the rescue of the Lost Battalion by the 100th is easily recognized in U.S. Army history as one of the most heroic engagements of World War II. Fighting against the best of German forces, the 100th battled with unparalleled grit and rescued the 'Lost Texas' 1st Battalion, 141st Infantry. This 'Lost Texas' battalion was with dwindling food, water and ammunition. They were isolated and cut off. They were surrounded and attacked and bombarded, behind enemy lines. It took a brutality of fighting by the young Nisei men of the 100th and the loss of many of their lives, in toe-numbing cold, muddy, and mine-laden terrain, to root out the entrenched German forces. Hitler had expressly told his German forces there not to lose that battle at any costs. The 100th displayed fierce courage, a sacrifice of their body and life, and an endurance and tolerance of extreme hardship and suffering.

The 100th were also involved in the well-known battle of Breaking the Gothic Line. The Gothic line was the last German defensive line in Italy. The Germans were securely ensconced high on mountain tops. They could see for miles away. But they never thought that they could be attacked from the rear, where there was a steep cliff face. But under the cover of darkness, on April 5th, 1945, the 100th scaled up in total silence up what-was-considered-an-unscalable slope and attacked the German forces who were facing the opposite direction. The fight to victory then lasted 30 minutes.

The sacrifice - the courage -- the endurance -- and the 100th contributions to our history shall be remembered and used as an example and inspiration in our own lives.



**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 2687 SD1
RELATING TO EDUCATION**

Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Sharon Moriwaki, Vice Chair

Wednesday, February 25, 2026 at 10:55 am
Conference Room 211 or via Videoconference

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii Military Affairs Council ("MAC") supports SB 2687 SD1.

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.

The 100th Infantry Battalion, formed primarily of Japanese Americans from Hawai'i, proved their loyalty and courage on some of the most difficult battlefields of World War II while their families faced discrimination and suspicion at home. Their extraordinary record of valor, sacrifice, and service did more than win battles; it helped change hearts and minds, contributed to the desegregation of the U.S. Armed Forces, and opened doors for future generations in Hawai'i.

For Hawai'i, the 100th is not just a military unit in a textbook but rather a part of our community story, our local identity, and our understanding of what it means to stand up for country. SB 2687 SD1 is a deeply meaningful way for the State to say that the sacrifices and achievements of the 100th Infantry Battalion will not be forgotten.

We look forward to the report on the statewide integration of local histories into existing social studies curricula at public schools prior to the 2027 legislative session. For these reasons, the Hawaii Military Affairs Council respectfully urges passage of SB 2687 SD1.



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

Date: 02/25/2026

Time: 10:55 AM

Location: CR 211 & Videoconference

Committee: WAM

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Keith T. Hayashi, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: SB2687, SD1, RELATING TO EDUCATION.

Purpose of Bill: Requires the Department of Education to report to the Legislature on the integration of certain content into existing social studies curricula at public schools. Establishes a one-year 100th Infantry Battalion history curriculum pilot program within certain public high schools during the 2026-2027 school year. Requires reports to the Legislature. (SD1)

Department's Position:

The Hawai'i State Department of Education (Department) appreciates the intent of SB2687, SD1, and the opportunity to provide comments on the measure, which establishes a one-year pilot program within the Department to develop and implement a 100th Infantry Battalion history curriculum for select Department high schools during the 2026–2027 school year.

We recognize the profound historical significance of the 100th Infantry Battalion, particularly its role in World War II and its broader connections to Asian American history in the United States. This history holds deep relevance for Hawai'i and offers meaningful opportunities for student learning, reflection, and civic understanding when thoughtfully integrated into existing social studies coursework.

We understand the Legislature's interest in exploring a pilot approach during the 2026-2027 school year. We are prepared to collaborate with partners, consistent with available funding and existing instructional requirements, to explore how this important history may be effectively supported in current high school social studies courses. We have planned conversations with the 100th Infantry Battalion Veterans group to discuss curricular possibilities across grades nine through twelve. These conversations are intended to explore instructional approaches, alignment with existing course standards, and age-appropriate integration within required social studies courses previously noted.

We also wish to reiterate that there are already numerous existing resources, scholarly, community-based, and educational, including resources provided by the 100th Infantry Battalion Veterans, that support the teaching of this history. These resources will assist

the Department of Education as it considers curriculum design, teacher support, and contextualization within broader Asian American and United States history.

Finally, we acknowledge the reporting requirement outlined in subsection (d) to guide future legislative discussion.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer these comments on SB2687, SD 1.

SB-2687-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 9:54:15 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/25/2026 10:55:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Candice Sakuda | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Kākou,

As a classroom teacher, I strongly support SB2687. This facilitates a deeper, more accurate understanding of history and Hawai‘i’s role in shaping American democracy. By focusing on the 100th Infantry Battalion’s legacy, students will not only meet content standards; they’ll have the opportunity to connect more personally with the stories of real people from their own communities.

This bill ensures that all high school students engage with themes of discrimination, citizenship, and social change through a local and multicultural lens. This will strengthen critical thinking, combat stereotypes, and affirm the identities of our Asian American and Pacific Islander students.

SB2687 will help build bridges between past and present, and between our schools and community organizations, giving students the chance to learn from primary sources, oral histories, and living experts. We have piloted fun, engaging classroom lessons that teachers can easily implement in their classes, with the hope that the legacy of the 100th Battalion will empower students to serve their communities today. When young people study how Nisei soldiers from Hawai‘i helped pave the way for desegregation in the armed services and expanded civil rights at home, they see how local action can transform national policy, inspiring them to become informed, engaged citizens in our democracy today.