

841 Bishop St., Suite 301
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813



Telephone: 808 926-1530
Contact@HEECoalition.org

Senate Committee on Education
Senator Michelle Kidani, Chair
Senator Breene Harimoto, Vice Chair

April 1, 2015

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Harimoto and Committee Members:

This testimony is in support of SCR93/SR47, which requests the Board of Education to review whether the student representative to the Board should be given voting rights.

The Hui for Excellence in Education (HE'E) is a diverse coalition of over 40 parent and community organizations dedicated to improving student achievement by increasing family and community engagement and partnerships in our schools. Our member list is attached.

One of the priorities of the Coalition is influencing public policy that affects education. Consequently, Coalition staff attends Hawaii Board of Education (BOE) meetings on a regular basis. We see the BOE student member present at every Committee and General Business Meeting, actively engaged. It is a privilege and a sacrifice for the student member to attend and participate in Board of Education meetings; the student member must give up two full days of school to attend the meetings, but participates in critical discussions on education policy. The Coalition believes that we should empower and allow our student member the next step, which is to have voting rights. According to the Education Commission of the States, four out of the fourteen states that have student members on their state education boards have student members with voting rights.¹ We believe that the student will have a true voice if they have the right to vote. In addition, the student member gives the unique student perspective and is also directly affected by the policies of the Board. We therefore support this resolution, asking the BOE to review whether the student members should be given voting rights.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Our support of this bill represents a 75% consensus or more of our membership.

Sincerely,

Cheri Nakamura
HE'E Coalition Director

¹ Education Commission of the States, 50-State Analysis, State Boards of Education, June 2013
(<http://ecs.force.com/mbdata/mbquestU?SID=a0i700000006evYW&rep=K12G413&Q=Q0643>)

Academy 21
After-School All-Stars Hawaii
Alliance for Place Based Learning
*Castle Complex Community Council
*Castle-Kahuku Principal and CAS
Coalition for Children with Special Needs
*Faith Action for Community Equity
Fresh Leadership LLC
Girl Scouts Hawaii
*Good Beginnings Alliance
Harold K.L. Castle Foundation
*Hawaii Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice
Hawai'i Athletic League of Scholars
*Hawai'i Charter School Network
*Hawai'i Nutrition and Physical Activity Coalition
*Hawaii State PTSA
Hawai'i State Student Council
Hawai'i State Teachers Association
Hawai'i P-20
Hawai'i 3Rs
Head Start Collaboration Office
It's All About Kids
*INPEACE
Joint Venture Education Forum
Junior Achievement of Hawaii
*Kaho'omiki
Kamehameha Schools
Kanu Hawai'i
*Kaua'i Ho'okele Council
Keiki to Career Kaua'i
Kupu A'e
*Leaders for the Next Generation
Learning First
McREL's Pacific Center for Changing the Odds
Our Public School
*Pacific Resources for Education and Learning
*Parents and Children Together

*Parents for Public Schools Hawai'i
Punahou School PUEO Program
Teach for America
The Learning Coalition
US PACOM
University of Hawai'i College of Education
YMCA of Honolulu

Voting Members () Voting member organizations vote on action items while individual and non-voting participants may collaborate on all efforts within the coalition.*