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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.<sup>1</sup> 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

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<sup>1</sup> Education Commission of the States, 50-State Analysis, State Boards of Education, June 2013 (<http://ecs.force.com/mbdata/mbquestU?SID=a0i70000006evYW&rep=K12G413&Q=Q0643>)

Academy 21	*Parents for Public Schools Hawai'i
After-School All-Stars Hawaii	Punahou School PUEO Program
Alliance for Place Based Learning	Teach for America
*Castle Complex Community Council	The Learning Coalition
*Castle-Kahuku Principal and CAS	US PACOM
Coalition for Children with Special Needs	University of Hawai'i College of Education
*Faith Action for Community Equity	YMCA of Honolulu
Fresh Leadership LLC	<i>Voting Members (*) Voting member organizations vote on action items while individual and non-voting participants may collaborate on all efforts within the coalition.</i>
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	