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House Committee on Education
Representative Roy Takumi, Chair
Representative Takashi Ohno, Vice Chair

February 4, 2015

Dear Chair Takumi, Vice Chair Ohno and Committee Members:

This testimony is submitted in support for HB14 on student instructional hours.

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.

Act 167/52, establishing a minimum number of student instructional hours and days per year, was passed in 2010 for three primary purposes:

1. Prevent future furloughs for students
2. Provide instructional time equity among Hawaii students and their mainland peers
3. Establish transparency and clarity in the definition and amount of instructional time provided by each school

Hawaii is unique; the only state that is one school district, with one funding source, and one union contract for all teachers. This should help ensure that equity exists across the state. Instructional time for students should be no different. Prior to the law, there was great disparity especially in secondary schools on instructional time for students. The law has helped bring schools in line. Therefore, we support the first phase of the law, which requires 180 days and 915 and 990 student instructional hours per year for elementary and secondary schools, respectively.

We agree with eliminating the second phase of the law which requires an increase of all schools to 1080 student instructional hours a year from 2016, in particular, because schools will be challenged with another change in schedules and because schools will not have the financial resources to support the increase in instructional time. However, we also recognize that 1080 student instructional hours per year is average across states, especially in the secondary years (see table attached). Therefore, Hawaii at 915 and 990 hours per year is below national averages.

We also agree with the bill which has the Board of Education in consultation with representatives of collective bargaining units define student instructional time; we recommend that the definition be broadened to give more flexibility to schools with the goal of creating schedules that are best for student learning.

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

Academy 21	Punahou School PUEO Program
After-School All-Stars Hawaii	Teach for America
Alliance for Place Based Learning	The Learning Coalition
*Castle Complex Community Council	US PACOM
*Castle-Kahuku Principal and CAS	University of Hawai'i College of Education
Center for Civic Education	YMCA of Honolulu
Coalition for Children with Special Needs	<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>
*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	