

LATE TESTIMONY

Date of Hearing: March 18, 2008

Committee: House Labor and Public
Employment

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Patricia Hamamoto, Superintendent

Title: H.C.R. No. 230, Recognizing the Week of September 1, 2008 –
September 7, 2008 as Hawaii Labor History Week

Purpose: Requesting the Department of Education to encourage teachers
across the state to provide labor education learning experiences for
students appropriate to their grade level and consistent with state
educational history and social science content standards.

Department's Position: The Department of Education (Department) supports this
Resolution to recognize the week of September 1, 2008 to
September 7, 2008 as Hawaii Labor History Week, but has some
concerns as it is currently drafted. The resolution states (in part),
“. . .there are no Department of Education approved standards-
based textbooks, or commonly used social studies curricula that
focuses significant time on the history of labor in Hawaii. . .” This
is not an accurate statement. The Recommended Instructional
Materials List is currently being finalized for Social Studies and
will be available for teachers by the beginning of the 2008-2009
school year. The DVD titled “Voices of Civil Rights”, generously
donated to our schools by the AARP (formerly known as American
Association of Retired Persons), contains relevant primary source

material dealing with the labor movement in Hawaii. This AARP resource has already been sent to all high schools and will be placed on the Recommended Social Studies Supplemental Materials List. The Hawaii Content and Performance Standards (HCPS) III (BOE Policy #2015) course benchmarks in both U.S. History and in Modern History of Hawaii specifically include the study of labor as part of the Social Studies curricula.

In addition, should this Resolution with recommended revision(s) be adopted, the Department will send a memo to all schools encouraging teachers to recognize the history of labor in Hawaii and will provide a list of resources for teachers.

The Department recognizes the important role labor has played in our state's history and will support and encourage teachers to provide educational learning experiences consistent with HCPS III.

LATE TESTIMONY

3/17/08
Submitted

Testimony from Alfred C. Lardizabal
Government and Community Relations Director
Laborers' Union Local 368

In Support of HCR 230
RECOGNIZING THE WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 1, 2008 – SEPTEMBER 7,
2008 AS HAWAII LABOR HISTORY WEEK

To the Committee on Labor and Public Employment
March 18, 2008, 9:15 a.m., Room 309
State Capitol

Honorable Representative Alex Sonson, Chair; Representative Bob Nakasone, Vice Chair and Members of the Committee: HCR 230 intends to provide students the opportunity increase their educational skills in speech, history, arts, writing etc. with labor history as a vehicle, culminating in celebratory events where students are recognized for their educational successes during Labor History week.

In a partnership with the Department of Education, Center for Labor Education and Research, labor organizations and others, plans could be developed to provide students incentives to increase their learning:

- a) Developing writing skills through research of Hawaii labor history;
- b) Develop speaking skills through speech contests (speeches on democracy, the success of immigrants in Hawaii etc.);
- c) Developing artistic skills through art (visual, painting, sculpture, photography, plays etc.) contests, with labor history as the theme;
- d) Internship programs;
- e) Field trips and other events;
- f) Scholarship incentives

Many of our students in Hawaii have English as their second language. They come from countries and cultures throughout the Pacific Basin and Asia. By linking their culture with the success of the immigrants that came to Hawaii previously, despite the severe social and economic challenges, our students could learn how Hawaii's first and second wave of immigrants help lay the foundation of modern Hawaii and achieve many of the benefits we now enjoy. Many of these benefits were brought about by immigrant labor.

There are many role models of children of immigrants and immigrants themselves who have succeeded in Hawaii. Our students should learn how these immigrants succeeded and perhaps apply the values learned to their own lives.

This resolution is not only a call to celebrate labor history; it is also to provide our youth the opportunity connect with their past and thereby, develop their own vision of the future that they desire to create.

We recommend deleting the reference to the year 2008 in the title to make it an annual event. We also request that the University of Hawaii Professional Assembly be included in receiving a copy of the resolution.

We call the attention of the Committee that HCR 329 REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS TO LEARN ABOUT HAWAII LABOR HISTORY, was introduced immediately after the introduction of HCR 230. HCR 329 is a more substantive resolution on this subject.

We ask for the support of the Committee in passing this resolution.