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**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON
EDUCATION AND ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT**

RE: SB 2166 – RELATING TO PUBLIC SCHOOLS

February 11, 2008

**ROGER TAKABAYASHI, PRESIDENT
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION**

Chairs Sakamoto, Menor and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association supports HB 2166 which will aid schools in acquiring alternative energy. Currently the Department of Education allocates to individual schools a specific amount of monies to cover electricity costs. Once schools have disbursed the allocation, the remainder of electricity costs falls upon the school.

We believe finding other ways to provide our schools with electricity would be beneficial financially and academically. On the financial side, it would free up monies that may be used to pay the school's electric bill. The monies saved could be directed towards other expenses that may directly benefit the students' learning. Academically, students will be given the opportunity to strengthen their science and math skills.

We urge the committee to pass this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

*Testimony in support of
[S.B. No. 2166]*

**Presented by Briana Bailey
Student, Kauai High School**

[Chairman/Chairwoman Name] and members of the Senate, my name is Briana Bailey and I am a student from Kauai High School. I am here today to ask for your support of Bill No. 2166, which asks for an appropriation of funds for grants for alternative energy utilities on public school campuses. The implementation of such a bill would greatly help schools take the initiative to begin using alternative energy utilities. Not only would using renewable energy sources help the environment and save money, but it would also help Hawaii move towards self-sustainability, serving as a model for the rest of the nation.

In H.B. No. 2175 (Act 96), it is stated that despite Hawaii's abundance of natural resources, "Hawaii's dependency on petroleum for about ninety per cent of its energy needs is higher than any other state in the nation."

In January 2008, Governor Lingle launched the Hawaii Clean Energy Initiative with the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE). The initiative is to try to have 70 per cent of Hawaii's energy needs supplied by renewable resources by the year 2030. One of the sub-goals suggested in the Memorandum of Understanding that I would like to point out is to enact educational programs within each of the energy performance areas listed in the memorandum. The bill that I am supporting suggests that the implementation of the bill could serve as a learning tool for students in classes such as business, math and science. This would satisfy one of the goals of the agreement.

In 2006, with the enactment of H.B. No. 2175(Act 96), there was a sum of about \$5,000,000 appropriated for the fiscal year of 2006-2007 to develop and implement a photovoltaic, net energy metered pilot project in public schools. I believe this was a very beneficial step for Hawaii; However, I don't think that we need to limit the type of alternative energy to just solar power. With the abundances of natural resources in Hawaii, it could be beneficial to leave the option open for other resources as well. But regardless of the type of alternative energy used, I strongly feel that it is necessary to continue the implementation of renewable energy for schools if we would like to make Hawaii more self-sustainable.

Making Hawaii Self Sustainable is a long term process. We may not be able to see significant results immediately, but the only way for us to fulfill our sustainability goals is to work on them now.

Thank you for allowing me to testify today in support of this legislation. I look forward to seeing Hawaii become the model for self-sustainability of our nation and the world.

Briana Bailey

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