

Date of Hearing: February 6, 2008

Committee: Senate Education/Health

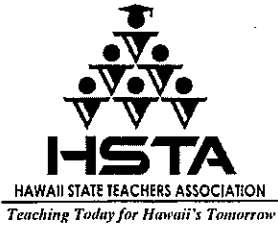
Department: Education

Person Testifying: Patricia Hamamoto, Superintendent

Title: S. B. No. 2701, Relating To Student Health

Purpose: Requires each student to have a vision evaluation six months before entering the beginning grade of any school in the state, at parents' cost.

Department's Position: The Department does not support S.B. 2701 as written. Vision exams are an element of the overall health screening students might benefit from. Hearing, cognitive abilities, speech/language skills, autism, emotional levels and adaptive behavior information are some of the areas that should be considered when building a comprehensive health screening for a student. This bill is too narrow in scope when truly looking at a student's ability to access their education. For example, amblyopia and strabismus screenings are specifically required by the bill and affect less than 1% of the general population. Therefore, the Department does not support S.B. 2701.



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**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON
EDUCATION AND HEALTH**

RE: SB 2701 – RELATING TO STUDENT HEALTH.

February 6, 2008

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

Chairs Sakamoto, Ige and Members of the Committees:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association supports SB 2701, which closely conforms to a measure passed by the 2006 HSTA State Convention. This measure urged the Department of Education to work with the Department of Health to provide vision and hearing screening as mandated by Hawaii Revised Statutes 321-101.

We believe this bill is needed to ensure students entering any public school in the state are properly screened for vision problems. Currently, there is no program through the Department of Education and the Department of Health that conducts vision screening for public school students. Hawaii is one of only 10 states that do not require vision screening for students entering school.

We believe good vision is imperative for a child's learning. If a child is unable to clearly see a book, poster, blackboard/whiteboard, or computer screen, it will impede his or her learning ability. These impairments can also lead to frustration and behavior problems which can affect the teacher and the entire class. If vision problems can be detected early, teachers informed and the problems corrected, accommodations can be made to assure every child has a better opportunity for a quality education.

We urge the committee to pass this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



February 5, 2008

Senator Norman Sakamoto, Chair
Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Vice Chair
Committee on Education

Senator David Y. Ige, Chair
Senator Carol Fukunaga, Vice Chair
Committee on Health

RE: SB2701 Relating to Student Health – Vision Evaluation

Dear Chair Sakamoto, Vice Chair Tokuda, Chair Ige, Vice Chair Fukunaga and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to discuss with you, children's' vision health.

I am Bob Palmer, Director of Government Affairs of American Academy of Ophthalmology.

There is nothing more important than helping children successfully see their way to adulthood. Good vision is essential for the development of a child's physical and mental well-being. Whether it's seeing the chalkboard, or participating in sports or family activities, a child's vision is a blessing that must protected.

However, SB 2701, which we are discussing today, is the wrong answer to this very important child health issue. This approach wastes scarce health care dollars. The health reality is that not all children need a full comprehensive eye exam – and the economic reality is that not all children can afford them.

- This bill would potentially remove the ability of any health care provider, except an ophthalmologist or optometrist to perform a vision screening.
- There is no medical basis to require all Kindergarten children to be taken to an eye doctor's office for vision examination.
- Properly trained family physicians, pediatricians, school nurses, public health nurses, and lay screeners are qualified to conduct appropriate eye screenings and identify children who may have visual dysfunction.
- This bill would be an unnecessary burden on families who would have to bear the costs of these exams. There is a significant difference in a screening and an exam with regard to cost and complexity. And ultimately, this mandate on Hawaii's families would result in wasteful over-prescribing.

A much more efficient and effective use of scarce health care dollars would be to strengthen the Hawaii vision screening statutes with the following vision screening requirements:

- Provide vision screenings for children entering K, 1st, and 3rd grades; and
- Children who fail a vision screening would then be referred for a thorough eye exam by an ophthalmologist or optometrist.

Vision screening is a visionary benefit for children, because it delivers an effective, quality health benefit while saving taxpayers and parents money. Vision screenings allows pediatricians, family physicians, and trained screeners to see more children so more children can see.

According to the Center for Disease Control, approximately 1.8 million children under the age of 18 are blind or have some form of visual impairment and yet only one in three children receive a vision evaluation before entering kindergarten. Two to five percent of children who fail a vision screening have significant eye problems beyond simple refractive errors and need careful follow-up care (e.g. amblyopia – commonly known as lazy eye).

The Hawaii Ophthalmology Society as well as the American Association for Pediatric Ophthalmology and Strabismus, and the American Academy of Ophthalmology strongly support routine vision screening for the following reasons.

- Thorough, yet cost-effective screenings identify children who need comprehensive eye exams, saving money for children who need it most.
- Unlike comprehensive eye exams, we can afford to do visions screenings routinely ensuring we see more children over the period in which their vision develops.
- Vision screenings are a valuable benefit for children because they detect vision and eye problems as eyes develop and before serious eye problems can develop.

In summary, screenings are safe, inexpensive, thorough and smart – they catch problems this year that weren't there last year. Proper vision screening allows more children to be seen, identifies those who need full eye exams, and saves money to treat those who truly need it. For these reasons, I urge you to vote **NO** on SB2701 as it now reads, strike the current language, and insert visions screening language that would provide Hawaii children a visionary benefit and the opportunity to grow into adulthood with healthy vision

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony.

Hawaii Ophthalmological Society
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February 2, 2008

Senator Norman Sakamoto, Chair
Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Vice Chair
Committee on Education

Senator David Y. Ige, Chair
Senator Carol Fukunaga, Vice Chair
Committee on Health

Dear Chair Sakamoto, Vice Chair Tokuda, Chair Ige, Vice Chair Fukunaga and Members of the Committee:

Testimony in opposition to SB 2701, Relating to Student Health

On behalf of the Hawaii Ophthalmological Society I want to commend you for working on legislation that will improve the health and safety of our state's children. I have read Senate Bill #2701 and am pleased by the intended effort to help our children.

However, you should be made aware that it is not necessary, and might even have negative consequences, because it could require that every child undergo a complete eye examination which can only be performed by an ophthalmologist or optometrist.

This is because there is a stipulation in this bill that the exam consist of testing for amblyopia, strabismus, and **INTERNAL** and external eye health. This will require the pharmacologic dilation of the pupils and examination of the interior of the eye which only an ophthalmologist or optometrist is trained and qualified to do. Such procedures are not generally necessary for all and amount to a hugely expensive, and potentially wasteful, undertaking.

There are current available voluntary screening programs that are doing a good job of detecting potential keiki vision problems. Please encourage the public to be aware of them and use them. And if in your judgment, or that of the Department of Health, or the DOE, more voluntary programs are necessary, the professions will deliver them as a part of our professional obligation. We would be honored to do so.

SB2701, Relating to Student Health
February 3, 2008
Page 2

For example Pediatricians and family practitioners already have vision screening programs used in the course of performing routine pediatric examinations.

These exams detect most major eye pathology which then leads to a much more limited group of children being sent to the specialist for comprehensive eye examination and treatment.

For these reasons we urge you to file this bill and in its stead consider enhancing currently available screening programs and devote the resources thus saved to other more needy causes.

Sincerely,

George F. Nardin, M.D. M.P.H.
President, Hawaii Ophthalmological Society

February 6, 2008

Senator Norman Sakamoto, Chair, Senate Committee on Education
Senator Jill Tokuda, Vice Chair, Senate Committee on Education
Senator David Ige, Chair, Senate Committee on Health
Senator Carol Fukunaga, Vice Chair, Senate Committee on Health

RE: Testimony in Support of SB 2701

Dear Senators Sakamoto, Tokuda, Ige, Fukunaga and members of the Committees:

Healthy eyes and good vision are essential to effective learning at all ages.

Undetected vision disorders hamper learning, and contribute significantly to reading difficulties and developmental delays.

SB 2701 would mandate eye evaluations at the initial entry into any school in Hawaii. This would help to detect children with early vision or eye health disorders, and thereby cause a subsequent referral for appropriate treatment and care.

This legislation would greatly reduce the incidence of vision and eye health disorders which hampers early childhood learning.

We urge your support in passage of SB 2701.

Respectfully,

The following doctors of optometry request that this testimony be submitted on their behalf.

DERRICK ABE, O.D.
ARAKAKAI, LINDA O.D.
SEULYN LEE AU, O.D.
KARI J.Y. CHANG MOSES, O.D.
NAI-WEN CHANG, O.D.
PAUL CHIN, O.D.
CHARLES DEAN, O.D.
DIRK V.FUJII, O.D.
DAVID K.FUJIMOTO, O.D.
MILES S. FUJINAKA, O.D.
CLAYTON GUSHIKEN, O.D.
WESLIE HAMADA, O.D.
JANN F. HARA,, O.D.
CARLYS HIGUCHI, O.D.
JAN HIRAKAWA,O.D.
RAE HOLT, O.D.
PATRICIA ICHIMURA, O.D.
KENSEY S .INOUYE, O.D.
JON ISHIHARA, O.D.
ISHIMOTO, KATHY O.D.
EDWIN S. KAJIWARA, O.D.
GLENN KATO, O.D.
KEITH T. KAWAMURA, OD
ARTHUR KOBAYASHI, O.D.
SHERI KOZOHARA, O.D.
BRIAN KUBO, O.D.
IRIS KUWABARA, O.D.
DENNIS KUWABARA, O.D.
FRANKLIN LAU, O.D.
GERALD M. MATSUDA, O.D.
GERALD MATSUYAMA, O.D.
DAVID MAU, O.D.
LEILA MIYAMOTO, O.D.
TIM MOON, O.D.
CLARENCE Y, MURATA, O.D.
KEN NAGAHIRO, O.D.
DAPHNE NISHIKAWA, O.D.
ERYLE OKAMURA, O.D.
MICHAEL ORIDE, O.D.
ERNEST OSHIRO, O.D.
TRINH T. PHAM, O.D.
SUSAN PIETROWSKI, O.D.

REID SAITO, O.D.
BRYAN SAKKA, O.D.
JON SAKUDA, O.D.
JANEL SATO, O.D.
JANINE SHERRY, O.D.
VERNON I., SHIBATA, O.D.
GLENN SHIGEZAWA, O.D.
PETER SHOJI, O.D.
LILLIAN TAKAMURA, O.D.
STANLEY K. TANAKA, O.D.
BRIAN TERUYA, O.D.
MARK TERUYA, O.D.
TAYLOR TOM, O.D.
JOHN TSUE, O.D.
BECKY VISHER, O.D.
KENT VISHER, O.D.
GLENN M. WATANABE, O.D.
LINDA R. WONG, O.D.
MICHAEL K.H. WONG, OD
MILY A. WU, , O.D.
CHRIS YAMAMOTO, O.D.
WALTER M. YAMAMOTO, O.D.

Peggy M. Liao, M.D.***Pediatric Ophthalmology and Strabismus***

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February 5, 2008

Sen. Norman Sakamoto, Chair
Sen. Jill Tokuda, Vice Chair
Senate Education Committee

Sen. David Ige, Chair
Sen. Carol Fukunaga, Vice Chair
Senate Health Committee

Wednesday, February 6, 2008
1:15 pm
Conference Room 225

re: SB2701 Relating to Student Health

I am a pediatric ophthalmologist and I am opposed to SB 2701.

A child needs to succeed in school and he/she needs to have good vision, good hearing, good health and good social support. I support vision screenings that help to identify and address the vision problems of children. This can be done as part of the physical examinations required for school entry. Students who fail the screenings should have further evaluations by an ophthalmologist.

This bill is unnecessary and will only create an additional burden of time and expense for parents and families.

I urge to hold this bill.

Sincerely Yours,


Peggy M. Liao, M.D.



Franklin Y. P. Lau, O.D.
Doctor of Optometry

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Kahala Mall Shopping Center
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February 6, 2008

The Honorable Chair Norman Sakamoto
The Honorable Chair David Ige
The Honorable Vice-Chair Jill Tokuda
The Honorable Vice-Chair Carol Fukunaga

RE: Testimony in Support of SB 2701

Dear Chairs Sakamoto and Ige, Vice-Chairs Tokuda and Fukunaga, and
Members of the Senate Committees on Education and Health:

Healthy eyes and good vision are essential to effective learning at all ages.

Undetected vision disorders hamper learning, and contribute significantly to
reading difficulties and developmental delays to a significant number of the
children of Hawaii.

SB 2701 would mandate eye evaluations at the initial entry into any school in
Hawaii. This would help to detect children with early vision or eye health
disorders, and thereby cause a subsequent referral for appropriate treatment and
care.

This legislation would greatly help to reduce the incidence of vision and eye
health disorders which hampers early childhood learning.

I urge your support in passage of SB 2701.

Respectfully,

Franklin Y. P. Lau
Franklin Y. P. Lau, O.D.



Member
American Optometric Association

Malcolm R. Ing, M.D.

**Kapiolani Medical Center
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(808) 955-5951**

Senate Education Committee

Dear Sen. Ige, Chair
Sen. Fukunaga, Vice Chair
Senate Health Committee

RE: SB2701 Relating to Student Health

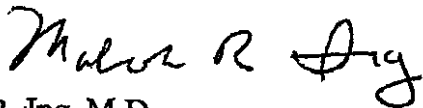
I am a Hawaii physician specializing in Pediatric Ophthalmology and I am opposed SB2701.

Unimpaired vision is vital to a student's ability to learn and succeed in school. I support vision screenings that help to identify and address the vision problems of children.

Vision evaluations are already part of physical examinations required for school entry. This bill is unnecessary and will only create an additional burden of time and expense for families.

I urge you to hold this bill.

Respectfully,



Malcolm R. Ing, M.D.
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MRI/smv



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February 5, 2008

Sen. Norman Sakamoto, Chair
Sen. Jill Tokuda, Vice Chair
Senate Education Committee

Sen. David Ige, Chair
Sen. Carol Fukunaga, Vice Chair
Senate Health Committee

Wednesday, February 6, 2008 1:15 pm
Conference Room 225

Re: SB2701 Relating to Student Health

Dear Sir/Madam:

I am a Hawaii physician specializing in Ophthalmology and I am opposed SB2701.

Good vision is vital to a student's ability to learn in school. I support vision screenings that help to identify and address the vision problems of children.

Vision evaluations are already part of physical examinations (Form 14 Student's Health Record) required for school entry. This bill is not necessary and will create an additional burden of time and expense for families.

I urge you to hold this bill.

Sincerely,

Troy M. Tanji, M.D.

TMT:tt

Enclosure: Form 14 Student's Health Record

Department of Education STUDENT'S HEALTH RECORD

Student Address Label

Name _____
(Last) (First) (Middle Initial)

Female Preschool: Entry Date ____/____/____
 Male Elementary: Entry Date ____/____/____
 Intermediate/Middle: Entry Date ____/____/____
 High: Entry Date ____/____/____

Birthdate

<small>Month</small>	<small>Day</small>	<small>Year</small>			

Parent's Name _____
(Mother/Guardian) (Father/Guardian)

Please complete the following sections (CHECK IF YES)

MEDICAL STATUS					
Allergy (type) <input type="checkbox"/>	Cancer/Leukemia <input type="checkbox"/>	Hearing Problems <input type="checkbox"/>	Rheumatic Heart <input type="checkbox"/>		
Asthma <input type="checkbox"/>	Chronic Cough/Wheezing <input type="checkbox"/>	Heart Disease <input type="checkbox"/>	Sickle Cell Anemia <input type="checkbox"/>		
Vision Problems <input type="checkbox"/>	Diabetes <input type="checkbox"/>	Hemophilia <input type="checkbox"/>	Seizures <input type="checkbox"/>		

PHYSICIAN'S EXAMINATION CODE: N-NORMAL; A-ABNORMAL; C-CORRECTED; R-RECEIVING CARE																												
Date	Grade	Height	Weight	Blood Pressure	Vision		Hearing		Eyes	Ears	Nose	Throat	Teeth	Heart	Lungs	Abdomen	Nervous System	Skin	Scoliosis	Extremities	Nutrition	Significant Findings and Recommendations	Varicella Immunity Secondary to Disease (DATE)	Reviewed Immunization Record (Check if Yes)	Completed PPD Screening (Check if Yes) (See Results Below)	Provider's Signature	Provider's Stamp or Printed Name	
					R	L	R	L																				

TUBERCULOSIS EXAMINATION MANTOUX TEST (INTRADERMAL)			
Date Given	Date Read	Results (mm)	Physician, APRN, PA, or Clinic (Signature or Stamp if Different from Above)

CHEST X-RAY		
Date	Results	Location

DENTAL EXAMINATION	
Dental Check-Up	

IMMUNIZATIONS (VACCINES, DATES GIVEN: MONTH/DAY/YEAR)								
Type	Date Given	Type	Date Given	Type	Date Given	Date Given	Date Given	Date Given

February 6, 2008

Sen. Norman Sakamoto, Chair
Sen. Jill Tokuda, Vice Chair

Senate Education Committee

Sen. David Ige, Chair
Sen. Carol Fukunaga, Vice Chair

Senate Health Committee

Wednesday, February 6, 2008
1:15 pm Conference Room 225

Rhoads Elliott Stevens, M.D.
1329 Lusitana St., Ste 209
Honolulu, HI 96813
808-545-4488

Re: SB2701 Relating to Student Health

I am a Hawaii physician specializing in Ophthalmology and I am opposed SB2701.

Unimpaired vision is vital to a student's ability to learn and succeed in school. I support vision screenings that help to identify and address the vision problems of children.

Vision evaluations are already part of physical examinations required for school entry. This bill is unnecessary and will only create an additional burden of time and expense for families.

I urge you to hold this bill.

Yours truly,

Rhoads Stevens, M.D.

February 6, 2006

Roger Ede, O.D.
377 Keahole Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96825

Senator Norman Sakamoto, Chair, Senate Committee on Education
Senator Jill Tokuda, Vice Chair, Senate Committee on Education
Senator David Ige, Chair, Senate Committee on Health
Senator Carol Fukunaga, Vice Chair, Senate Committee on Health

RE: Testimony in Support of SB 2701

Dear Senators Sakamoto, Tokuda, Ige, Fukunaga and members of the Committees:

I would like to submit testimony in support of SB 2701. I have attached information that confirms my support of the bill.

Respectfully,

Roger Ede, O.D.

Re: SB 2701

Dear Senators Sakamoto, Tokuda, Ige, and Fukunaga:

I am a physician/surgeon, specializing in ophthalmology, having practiced for over forty years on every island in Hawaii.

Good vision is certainly vital to students' ability to learn and succeed in school. I have always been in support of vision screenings that identify the vision problems of children.

Fortunately, vision screenings are already part of physical examinations required for school entry. **This bill is therefore completely unnecessary!** Furthermore, this bill creates an additional burden of time and expense on parents.

Please hold this bill.

Mahalo,

John M. Corboy, M.D., President
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