

Date of Hearing: February 6, 2008

Committee: Senate Education/Health

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Patricia Hamamoto, Superintendent

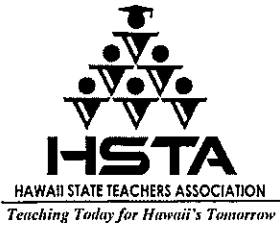
Title: S.B. No. 3043, Relating to Physical Education

Purpose: Requires physical education as a mandatory component of the public school education curriculum.

Department's Position: The Department of Education (Department) does not support the Bill as currently drafted. The Department has several concerns that would need to be addressed.

Currently, the Hawaii Content and Performance Standards (HCPS) for Physical Education provides a rigor of study that follows a developmentally appropriate scope and sequence for all students grades K through 12. The focus of the HCPS for Physical Education is for all students to develop knowledge and skills in the components of health-related fitness and to become physically active. The Department strongly encourages physical education instructional periods as follows: students in grades K–3 receive 45 minutes per week, grades 4 and 5 receive 55 minutes per week, elementary grade 6 receive 107 minutes per week, and secondary grades 6–12 receive 200 minutes per week in any required physical education class. This Bill would result in instructional time being shifted from other content areas and school determined priorities. The Bill as written also would result in the shifting of current teaching staff to new positions in physical education unless new teaching positions were funded. There

is a shortage of certified physical educators to meet the requirements of this Bill. The Department has collaborated with institutions of higher education such as the University of Hawaii to graduate qualified teachers, but would need several years to meet the recruitment demand for new certified physical educators.



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

RE: SB 3043 – RELATING TO PHYSICAL EDUCATION.

February 6, 2008

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

Chairs Sakamoto, Ige and Members of the Committees:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association agrees with the intent of SB 3043.

Research indicates obesity is becoming a major health issue, affecting many of our students. We appreciate the Legislature's recognition of this problem and the effort to rectify the situation.

Since the implementation of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and its emphasis on Reading and Math, physical education in most schools in Hawaii has been reduced to one period a week or none at all. By requiring a specific amount of time to be allotted to PE, this bill provides a solution that ensures our children are provided with the physical activities crucial to their health and physical development.

However, we would like to comment on the capacity of schools to allocate forty-five minutes and sixty minutes every day for elementary students (K-5) and secondary students (6-12) respectively. The ESEA/NCLB law has driven schools to focus only on reading and math and soon science. We support the increase of physical education but worry about the capacity of schools to deliver.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

The American Heart Association mission is: To reduce disability and death from cardiovascular diseases and stroke.

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Testimony Supporting SB 3043 With Amendments

The American Heart Association supports SB 3043, but recommends several amendments:

1. Physical education is a highly specialized course that should be taught by appropriately trained instructors. Would we be concerned if schools used physical education teachers to instruct our keiki in mathematics? Physical education professionals should be given the respect befitting the training they receive to become experts in their field. The AHA recommends that a certified PE teacher requirement be phased in, with an annual progression of benchmarks aimed at achieving 100 percent compliance. Current non-certified classroom teachers teaching PE, who have made a commitment to completing DOE-provided PE training for three consecutive years should be grandfathered in for the early years of the bill's implementation, and a reasonable deadline established by which they should take the necessary actions to become certified PE instructors. The AHA defers to the University of Hawaii Dept. of Kinesiology and Leisure Sciences to determine the time needed to develop and recruit the certified PE teachers necessary to achieve 100 percent compliance, but that time should not exceed seven years. The AHA also recommends that funding be provided to the U.H. to add teaching positions to meet the demands of developing the certified PE instructors that will be needed in Hawaii public schools under the new law.
2. Adequate funding to cover the costs of adding certified PE teachers should be provided, in addition to the DOE's normal operating budget.
3. The AHA has concerns with the section of the proposal that calls for physical education to include nutrition education and preventative health education. The content and physical education standards don't currently include any nutrition- or health education-related content. Health Education is a related, but different content of study and standards. Physical education instructors have a full plate addressing physical education standards. Some nutrition education is addressed in PE, but the bill should be clarified so that physical education content is what is taught, not physical education and health. Health education needs to be addressed in a separate course.
4. The bill calls for the Department of Education to be "encouraged" to meet the National Association for Sport and Physical Education content standards in developing and implementing a physical education program. To insure that positive change is made and that our keiki receive the most up-to-date, science-based physical education, the word "encouraged" should be amended to read "required."

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For information on the AHA's educational or research programs, contact your nearest AHA office, or visit our web site at www.americanheart.org or e-mail us at hawaii@heart.org

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Please remember the American Heart Association in your will.

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The AHA understands and appreciates the multitude of challenges faced by Hawaii's public schools today. However, those issues should not serve as a reason to abandon the school's role in teaching and promoting life-long health in our keiki. Overweight adolescents have an 80 percent chance of becoming overweight adults if one or both parents are overweight or obese. Clearly, children, especially those most at risk, need to be taught at school how to live healthier lives.

Physical education needs to receive the same focus as other core curriculum, or our children will face an early adulthood of physical strife, and decreased economic status due to increased healthcare costs.

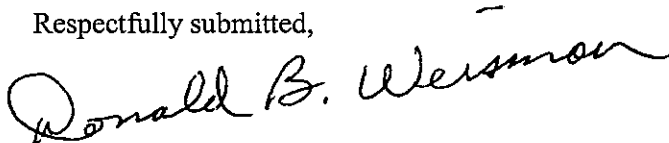
Hawaii's businesses, which cover approximately 90 percent of the state's healthcare costs, will be increasingly challenged to meet healthcare costs and will be under increasing pressure to compete for healthier employees. Smaller businesses which make up a large portion of the state's employment force, will be especially affected because of their challenge to compete with larger employers for the healthier workers.

On Jan. 22, 2008 the American Heart Association and the Centers for Disease Control released new data showing that, while advances in medical treatment and technology have helped to reduce the cardiovascular death rates by 25 percent since 2000, success in reducing risk factors associated with cardiovascular disease has not been achieved to levels we had hoped. In fact, both obesity and diabetes are on the rise since 2000. If we don't commit to first, arresting those increases, and then working to reduce those risks, the AHA predicts that the current decline in cardiovascular disease deaths could quickly turn. The AHA feels that to achieve the goal of reducing those risk factors, a commitment must be made to changing the lifestyles of our youngest generation. And that commitment must start in schools where are keiki spend the majority of their day and where they go to learn.

Hawaii has reached a crossroads in its commitment to educating our next generation. We can commit to turn the direction of this generation's health, or we can continue toward a generation that will suffer health issues like none other before them. We have the ability to develop a healthy workforce that gives Hawaii an economic advantage in competing with businesses on the U.S. mainland, based on reduced labor costs reached by better management of healthcare costs.

The American Heart Association urges legislators to incorporate its recommended amendments to SB 3043, and to pass the bill.

Respectfully submitted,



Donald B. Weisman
Hawaii Communications and Marketing/Government Affairs Director