

SB 1300

Date of Hearing: February 13, 2009

Committee: Senate Education and Housing

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Patricia Hamamoto, Superintendent

Title: S. B. No. 1300, Relating to the Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps

Purpose: Appropriates funds for 6 instructor positions for JROTC programs in high schools in the State.

Department's Position: The Department supports S.B. 1300 as long as its implementation does not impact or replace the priorities set forth in the Executive Biennium Budget for Fiscal Years 2009-2010.

Lahainaluna, Kapolei, and Mililani High Schools are currently on waiting lists for establishment of a Navy or Army JROTC Program. These schools have completed the preliminary requirements to establish a program and will accept a program as soon as approved by either military service. Based on U.S. Code Title 10, Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps, Section 2031 the institution is required to employ two retired military personnel whose pay is cost shared between the institution and military service at fifty percent.

Approving this bill will ensure that each school will be able to establish a JROTC program as soon as the offer to host a program is made by either the Navy or Army .

Nationally, JROTC cadets graduate on time, have less discipline referrals, and participate in school and community service more often than students in general. In Hawaii, 15% of enrolled cadets are special education students. Last year, 52% of senior cadets enrolled in postsecondary education. Hawaii JROTC provides over 500 hours

of co-curricular activities for cadets and performs over 40,000 hours of school and community service annually; or translated into valued savings, \$290,000 based upon Hawaii's minimum wage.

The Army is planning to exhaust its waiting list to host a JROTC program nationally over the next five years. If a school is offered a program, it is vital that the school is ready to accept the program or the offer will be rescinded and the school will be removed from the waiting list.

University of Hawaii Army ROTC Alumni Assoc

Testimony on Junior ROTC program

12 February, 2009

Senator Hanabusa and committee members, I am Colonel (Ret) Ed Gayagas, a graduate of the UH Army ROTC and President of the UH Army ROTC Alumni Association. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to provide supporting information on the bill for six JROTC instructor positions for Kapolei, Mililani and Lahainaluna.

The Junior ROTC program affords the type of training and education for our future leaders whether they select a military career or not. Regardless of the profession one selects, the leadership principles taught by the JROTC program applies to all walks of life. Anyone participating in the program will be assured of a solid foundation in not only leadership principles, but a rounded ability to solve everyday challenges facing the broad spectrum of life in Hawaii, the nation and the world.

As a graduate of the ROTC program, I can attest to the advantages and benefits I gained in preparing for my civilian life. Having served as a private and as a colonel I was prepared by the programs to solve problems, to meet challenges without hesitation, to routinely apply critical thinking in resolving an issue and most importantly, to be able to work in concert with people in pursuit of a common goal.

Our priorities in allocating funds should look to the future of our potential future leaders, who must be given opportunities that will provide avenues to bigger and better ways to become a better citizen. The JROTC program has proven itself many times over and is one that will give them the added advantage of succeeding in life and making them a productive member of our society.

I ask for your assistance in allocating funding to support the JROTC program.

Mahalo,

Ed Gayagas

Ed Gayagas,
Colonel (Ret), USA

What JROTC Means to Me

Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen. I am Cadet Major **Halen Yacapin**, the Executive Officer of the Wallace Rider Farrington High School "Governor's Guard" Army JROTC Battalion. I am going to tell you my story on what JROTC means to me.

First let me tell you a little about myself. My name is Halen Ginovese Kuliaikalani Hekekea Yacapin. My ethnicities are Hawaiian, Chinese, Filipino, Portuguese, Spanish, and English. I am sixteen years old and I am a junior. As you can see by my uniform I am a JROTC cadet. In school I am a very active cadet and I am involved in many JROTC activities. Last week I had the honor of leading the parking detail for the February Board of Education meeting at Dole Middle School and before that, on January 21st, I also had the honor of being a member of the color guard for the Hawaii House of Representatives opening day ceremony at the state capital. Since joining the JROTC program my freshmen year I have been in many leadership positions such as:

- Assistant S-4; a caretaker of our Battalion's drill equipment.
- Platoon leader; leader of a group of 25 cadets.
- Drill Team Leader; a commander of a drill team for many competitions.
- Battalion Executive Officer; the second in command, chief of staff, and president of the JROTC Club at Farrington, and in charge of the over 175 cadets in the Corps.

In JROTC we are exposed to many available leadership positions within our battalion. We strive to put all our cadets into a position where they may lead others to success for both their school and their community. Our mission in JROTC is "to motivate young people to be better citizens." It's an all around class. We learn history and life skills such as first aid, team work, college and career planning, communication skills, technology and current event awareness and to strive for a nourished mind and a physically fit body.

JROTC has taught me eight Core Values: Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless Service, Honor, Integrity, and Personal Courage. Through these Core Values I have developed positive habits and overall have become a better student, friend, and citizen. JROTC also introduced me to the Cadet Honor Code: "a cadet does not lie, cheat, or steal." JROTC motivates young people to take responsibility, be morally upright and to Quote "Do the right thing" as First Sergeant Aguilar always reminds us.

I believe, no, I know that JROTC has changed my life completely. When I became a cadet as a mediocre and scared freshman, I was quiet, timid, and lazy - the basic nerd. I was physically weak and mentally careless. I hung out with the Gothics, drug addicts and dealers, and the gang members. If I had not joined JROTC surely I would have become one of these. Through JROTC I have gained new friends, comrades, brothers and sisters, a home away from home, but most of all a family. I feel that JROTC has a place for everyone. We have students from all academic levels, ethnic backgrounds, cultures; students who are the best in their class to those who are barely staying in school; cadets of all shapes and sizes: big and small, tall and short. We are diverse, but instead of segregated groups we are one big family. JROTC bonds people together and it is a life saver for many, including myself.

I am Cadet Major Lan Tran, from William McKinley High School Army JROTC. The reason I am standing in front of you today, is to request that you establish new JROTC programs in three schools. Many people join JROTC because their class registration forms are turned in too late. Some students enroll in JROTC because they plan to join the Military. I personally did not see myself in JROTC or the military. I enrolled in JROTC and stayed in it for three reasons. I did not want to be in a certain class, JROTC got interesting, and everyone including me would like to be a part of an organization.

I originally enrolled in Spanish; it was probably my last choice. Actually, I wanted Chinese or Japanese. My mother was the reason I wanted to take these languages. I was helping out at my aunt's store, where we have many tourists from China and Japan. That is why either Chinese or Japanese were my choices. I did not want to stay in the Spanish class, and it would look weird to transfer to another language class, so I picked JROTC. I was not the only one, my friend also joined with me.

When I got into JROTC, everything seemed so interesting. I found the classes helped me to really understand what it means to be a citizen of this great country of ours. I never imagined doing physical things in a class, other than physical education. Another thing that was even more cool, was the extracurricular activities, like parades, and the military ball. Come on, who

would not think that was cool? I know I was not the only one. We have a cadet from Pearl City that is now in our program. It is interesting that she would wake up around four in the morning or so just to come to our school, because of JROTC. If you did not know, Pearl City High School does not have JROTC.

The reason I enrolled, and stayed in JROTC is because of the organization. I was new to the school, so I wanted to be a part of something. It is not every day you find fellow students that accept you for who you are. JROTC welcomed me with open arms. I believe everyone wants to belong somewhere. I wanted to belong to a place, and I found it right here in JROTC.

I am not like many people. I did not plan to enroll. I do not plan to join the military. Look at me now, the first third year cadet to become the Battalion Commander at McKinley High School. The people I meet, and become friends with, are individuals who will become my life long friends. This makes JROTC an organization that has served me well. Sirs and Madams, do you have any questions for me?

Aloha, my name is Cadet Commander **Gabriela Espino**. I strongly support SB 1300, JROTC Appropriation. I was the Cadet Commander of the Navy JROTC Unit at Kalaheo High School. The NJROTC program has truly influenced my character, so I believe that every high school possible should have the JROTC program available for high school students.

I have attended many leadership academies for the Marine Corps and Navy, which have taught me self-discipline and initiative. I have been in command of many people, organized many events and I have learned that honesty and dedication are very important in order to get things done. Today, I am a nominee for the United States Naval Academy and an applicant to the United States Coast Guard Academy. Without all of the experiences I have had in the program, I would not be the person who I am today.

I joined NJROTC because my brother was an officer in the program and was enjoying it. While in the program, I have been exposed to the possibilities available in the naval, marine corps, air force, and army service. NJROTC courses included Maritime History, Naval Leadership, Maritime and International Law, and the Nautical Sciences. Exciting hands-on training piqued my interests. Fieldtrips included tours of the hangars on the USMC Base, Hawaii, Sea Cruises at Pearl Harbor, Water Front Operations at Kaneohe USMC Base, Hawaii, complete tour of the U.S.S. Abraham Lincoln, Blue Angels, and a Arizona Memorial tour.

I believe that all high school students should have the opportunity to participate in this extraordinary program. It provides leadership and citizenship opportunities not available in other programs. If you are a cadet in the program, it is not required to join the military; however, you are able to participate in numerous activities with the regular armed forces. Nowhere can you find an opportunity like this!

I have numerous friends in different high schools that do not have the JROTC program available for them. Many times, they have told me that they wish they were in the program, or have joined it before they graduated from school because of the tremendous opportunities that I have had as a Navy Junior ROTC cadet.