



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
P.O. BOX 2360
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

October 29, 2009

Special Senate Committee to Consider Approaches to Teacher Furloughs
The Honorable Brian Taniguchi, Chairperson
The Honorable Will Espero, Vice Chairperson

Friday, October 30, 2009, 12:30 p.m.
State Capitol Auditorium

Testimony from the Hawaii State Department of Education

The Department of Education's general fund operating budget has been reduced and restricted beginning last fiscal year. Each successive reduction increases the impact on student learning.

FY09 Amount	FY10 Amount	Description
\$10.26 M	\$10.26 M	2008 Legislature reduction in Act 158/08, beginning FY 2008-09
\$38.90 M		Governor's restrictions (3 separate actions)
	\$5.69 M	"Non-recurring costs" reduced by Department of Budget and Finance (B&F) in Fiscal Biennium 2009-2011 budget
	\$40.01M	Reductions approved by Board of Education October 9, 2008
	\$43.00 M	2009 Legislature reduction to EDN 100 in Act 162/09; a proviso in section 163 states it shall be considered a non-recurring reduction to be restored in FB2011-2013
	\$0.30 M	2009 Legislative reduction to programs in EDN 150 and 400
	\$127.70 M	Governor's restriction (June 2009)
\$49.16 M	\$226.96 M	TOTAL: Cumulative impact on general funds

Special Senate Committee to Consider Approaches to Teacher Furloughs
The Honorable Brian Taniguchi
The Honorable Will Espero
October 29, 2009
Page 2 of 3

Many general fund programs were reduced or eliminated in the Fiscal Biennium 2009-2011 budget. The programs which were eliminated by either the Governor or the Board are listed below. In addition, funding for many other programs was reduced.

ProgID	Program Description	FY 2009 FTE	FY 2009 Program Total
15126	Agriculture Education	1.00	\$83,147
25239	AP Teacher Training & Materials	-	500,000
16366	Artmobile	-	92,935
24319	Audiovisual Centers	-	160,131
18892	Career Opportunities Program	-	310,415
15699	Comprehensive System of Prof Dev	2.50	127,753
25749	Cooperative/Host Teacher Training	-	15,315
15610	Early Childhood Learning	2.00	350,001
15625	Early Learning Council	3.00	250,000
91521	Families For REAL	4.00	399,999
33081	Financial System Improvement	-	1,250,000
37996	Hawaii 3R's	-	460,000
47249	Non-School Hour Programs (not A+)	2.00	807,748
16404	Position Related Furniture	-	750,000
12262	Preliminary Standards Achievement Test	-	175,000
12642	Resources For New Facilities-Reg Educ	-	1,609,658
12644	Resources For New Facilities-Sch Admin	-	153,251
12645	Resources For New Facilities-Sch Library	-	50,991
12643	Resources For New Facilities-Spec Educ	-	13,232
15135	School Complx Res Svcs-Gen Curriculum	0.50	21,579
34000	School Support Services	5.00	325,776
15112	School To Work Transition Centers	15.00	762,712
12260	Science Instructional Materials	-	2,000,000
16765	Student Services Coordinators-PCS	28.00	1,875,165
12664	Substitute Clericals*	-	1,719,914
12668	Substitute Custodians*	-	1,406,905
12665	Substitute Security Attendants*	-	264,736
47244	Substitute Teacher Compensation*	-	800,000
25750	Teacher Education-Kauai District	-	80,445

*Substitute costs will be charged to federal Impact Aid

Special Senate Committee to Consider Approaches to Teacher Furloughs
The Honorable Brian Taniguchi
The Honorable Will Espero
October 29, 2009
Page 3 of 3

The Board of Education approved the Department's FY 2009-10 budget at its July 9, 2009 general business meeting. Included in the Board's approval was \$117.43 million labor savings to be achieved by "Reductions of casual hires, Accrued Salary Savings, Negotiate Furloughs, or RIFs."

The Governor's \$127.7 million restriction for FY 2009-10, which was announced on June 15, 2009, was based on an assumption of three furlough days per month. We have been advised that next year's reduction will be at least \$142.6 million. To illustrate the magnitude of these numbers, if the Board eliminated the general fund appropriations for all programs and personnel in EDNs 200, 300, and 500 (Instructional Support, State and Complex Area Administration, and School Community Services) the total "savings" would be \$89.1 million, which would be \$53.5 million less than the reduction for next fiscal year.

Also included in the Department's FY 2009-10 budget, as approved by the Board, are funds for education from the ARRA State Fiscal Stabilization Funds (SFSF), Part A. The Department will draw on Part A SFSF totaling approximately \$53 million per year for Fiscal Biennium 2009-11 to offset the \$43 million per year budget reduction taken by the 2009 Hawaii State Legislature and to meet the additional 14 percent budgetary restriction of \$127.7 million this fiscal year, and an additional reduction of \$142.6 million next fiscal year imposed by Governor Lingle on the Department in July 2009 and October 2009, respectively.

Thank you for your support of public education and your concern for the impact on student learning due to the furloughs. We are willing to work with you to arrive at solutions to improve the situation. If you, or your committee members, have questions regarding the Department's operating budget, please contact Mr. James M. Brese, Assistant Superintendent and Chief Financial Officer, at 586-3737, or Ms. Adele Chong, Budget Director, at 586-3359.

**TESTIMONY OF THE HAWAII STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
TO THE SPECIAL SENATE COMMITTEE
TO CONSIDER APPROACHES TO TEACHER FURLONGHS
STATE CAPITOL
AUDITORIUM
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 30, 2009**

Chairperson Taniguchi, Vice Chairperson Espero, and Members of the Special Senate Committee, good afternoon. I am Garrett Toguchi, Chairman of the Hawaii State Board of Education (Board). Thank you for this opportunity to present testimony on the Board's behalf on options to address the issue of teacher furloughs and loss of instructional days in our public schools.

In addressing the massive \$473.7 million budget shortfall imposed on the Department of Education (Department) for Fiscal Biennium 2009-2011, the Board looked at a wide range of options. Preventing the loss of student instructional days and avoiding furloughs not only for teachers, but other employees, have been at the forefront of our deliberations. Without a doubt, furloughs negatively affects student learning, as would deep cuts to educational services, elimination of programs, and increasing class sizes through layoffs.

The Board has long maintained that there must be a multi-pronged approach to meet the \$473.7 million shortfall for the 2009-2011 Fiscal Biennium. This includes:

- Implementing a five percent across-the-board cut to non-labor costs on supplies and equipment;
- Streamlining Department operations by consolidating programs and services;
- Placing hiring freezes on vacant employee positions;
- Implementing internal cost and energy-saving measures for water, electricity, sewer, and transportation;
- Holding off on new educational initiatives;
- Reducing workshops and other professional development opportunities;
- Cutting down, and in many cases, eliminating travel;
- Moving forward on a process to streamline the consolidation of schools that includes studies of possible sites and the closing of Wailupe Valley School this past May; and
- Implementing furloughs.

The Board's and Department's intentions have been to mitigate the impact of budget cuts to schools and classrooms. Seventy-two percent of the Department's total budget is still expended by principals, with a significant portion of this funding going to direct services for classrooms. Centralized services, which makes up 22 percent of the Department's total budget, covers a range of essential services, such as food and transportation costs, utility costs, repair and maintenance costs, and autism services costs. These are all services that are essential to supporting schools, classrooms, and students.

There is little doubt in my mind that these huge budget restrictions and reductions will have an adverse impact on student learning.

The Board is requesting greater state support for public education. We are requesting the Governor and the Legislature to pursue other funding options and sources for public education and our public libraries. The Rainy Day Fund and the Hawaii Hurricane Relief Fund are two options to offset the immense impact of the budget shortfalls to public education. The enactment of a General Excise Tax increase is another option to support the education of students. We understand that tapping these funds is short-sighted and a one time act. But we need this short-term relief for students.

The Board also requests the Governor to support public education with the commitment of State Fiscal Stabilization Fund Part B moneys (*federal Governor Services Fund moneys*) that was made available to her through the federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. This federal assistance is crucial to address critical education needs.

Federal stimulus dollars, revenue increases, and moneys from special funds, combined with the actions the Board and Department have taken to cut spending, can support student learning and public education in these dire times.

Besides the other cost-cutting measures in the areas I have mentioned, I will ask the Board to look at increasing user fees, such as the use of school building and facilities, student transportation, the After-School Plus (A+) Program, and athletics, as a means to addressing shortfalls and balancing the education and libraries' budgets.

On behalf of the Board, thank you very much for the opportunity to present testimony.

Special Senate Hearing: Education Furlough

Hearing on Friday, October 30, 2009
12:30 pm in Capitol Auditorium

Testimony in **Strong Support of Full Funding for Public Education**

Senator Espero:

Thank you for allowing me to provide testimony as an individual Member of the Hawaii State Board of Education (Board).

Education is a service. Whether it's a public school or a private school, education is a service. Teachers are the service providers. The funding cuts and restrictions to our public education budget to date have resulted in services being cut.

As the cuts and restrictions began a year ago, the Board did what it could to not allow the instructional time to be affected. In fact, just before we began contract negotiations the Department and the Board affirmed our desire to preserve instructional days and increase funding to the schools. For instance, we moved over \$20 million from DOE special program funds, including some athletics monies, into the Weighted Student Formula pot so that each school could be allocated a larger amount per student. [For many years now, the Board has funded the weighted student formula beyond the percentage mandated in Act 51. Why would we willingly undue all that work?]

However, more and more cuts and restrictions kept coming. Facing cut after cut, restriction after restriction, the Board's refusal to cut instructional days, made the governor and other decision makers think they were not cutting public education enough. Just when we thought we would get relief from the ARRA federal stimulus money, we were preemptively struck by more cuts and restrictions.

It's like a kid in a playground refusing to cry "uncle" when being pushed around, so the bully pushes harder. Well, I think we are hearing the kids in the playground screaming "uncle!" We are hearing families screaming "uncle!". We are hearing citizens who don't even have children in public schools screaming "uncle!".

Please stop cutting public education funding from the budget. Please help us to persuade the Lingle-Aiona Administration to stop imposing additional restrictions. Please raise the state funds needed deliver the service of educating our children. The legislature raised the GET by 0.5% to invest in rail. The education of our children must be valued as much as a mass transit system – if not more.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Kim Coco Iwamoto

Hawaii State Board of Education Member



HAWAII GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION

AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO

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The Twenty-Fifth Legislature, State of Hawaii
Hawaii State Senate

Interim of 2009

Special Senate Committee To Consider Approaches To Teacher Furloughs

Testimony by
Hawaii Government Employees Association
October 30, 2009

The Hawaii Government Employees' Association, AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO respects the agreement negotiated between the Hawaii State Teachers Association, the Board of Education, Department of Education and the state administration that includes seventeen furlough days. While we understand and appreciate the community-wide interest in restoring lost instructional days, the agreement negotiated by the HSTA under Chapter 89, HRS should not be altered in any way through legislative action. It is up to the parties to negotiate any changes in the agreement.

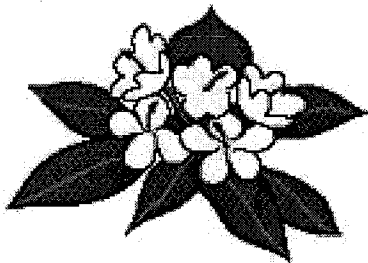
Moreover, discussion about using the Hurricane Relief Fund or special funds to pay for the restoration of lost instructional days is too limited. A broader solution to the revenue shortfall is needed that would mitigate the impact of furloughs not only in the Department of Education, but in other vital programs that impact public health and safety. The state would be better off raising revenue to make up the furlough savings.

We appreciate the opportunity to present testimony on this important issue.

Respectfully submitted,

Randy Perreira
Executive Director





S E A C
Special Education Advisory Council
919 Ala Moana Blvd., Room 101
Honolulu, HI 96814
Phone: 586-8126 Fax: 586-8129
email: spin@doh.hawaii.gov

October 30, 2009

**Special Education
Advisory Council**

Ms. Ivalee Sinclair, *Chair*
Mr. Steve Laracuento, *Vice
Chair*

Ms. Brendelyn Ancheta
Ms. Sue Brown
Ms. Deborah Cheeseman
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Mr. Duane Yee
Mr. Shawn Yoshimoto

Jan Tateishi, Staff
Susan Rocco, Staff

Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair
Senator Will Espero, Vice Chair
Special Senate Committee to Consider Approaches to Teacher Furloughs
State Capitol
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

RE: Options to Address Teacher Furloughs/Loss of Instructional Time

Dear Chair Taniguchi and Vice Chair Espero,

The Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC), Hawaii's State Advisory Panel under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, is very concerned over the disruption to student learning opportunities caused by the loss of 17 instructional days due to teacher furloughs. Prior to the imposition of the furlough schedule, SEAC consistently requested the Legislature and the Governor to seriously consider finding alternative funding for education through the use of special funds (such as the Hurricane Fund and the Rainy Day Fund) and general excise tax increases.

Teacher furloughs affect not only students, especially vulnerable students whose disabilities make learning more challenging, but their families, as well. Working families are scrambling to find alternative child care, a task made more daunting and expensive when generic child care providers, like the YMCA and Kamaina Kids, are unable to accommodate a child with special health or behavioral needs. A number of parents have also expressed their anxiety over how their child's IEP services will be delivered given the altered instructional calendar.

The pending lawsuits over furloughs are adding to the uncertainty and anxiety experienced by parents and teachers. Should the furloughs be overturned in district court, the Department will most certainly be faced with a difficult choice of cutting teaching positions to make up the budget deficit or ending the instructional year early. Either choice would negatively impact ALL students and particularly students with disabilities, who are often more vulnerable to academic failure.



Special Senate Committee to Consider Approaches to Teacher Furloughs
Page 2
October 30, 2009

Even if special education teaching positions are spared, the majority of IDEA eligible students receive two or more classes a day in the general education classroom and will have a harder time reaching IEP goals with larger class sizes, fewer opportunities for classroom personnel to learn the evidence based learning strategies these students need to succeed, and fewer overall resources to the classroom.

SEAC believes strongly, as we assume your Committee does, that reducing support for public education causes the effects of the current economic recession to be felt much more deeply and for a longer period of time. Children are our greatest assets. SEAC would therefore be supportive of further exploration into alternative funding sources, so that instructional days can be reinstated and Hawaii's students can receive a quality education.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on this most important issue. If you have any questions, you are welcome to contact me at 988-4962 or 733-5363.

Respectfully,

Ivalee Sinclair
Chair

SENATE AD HOC COMMITTEE

HEARING ON EDUCATION DAY FURLOUGHS

Friday, October 30, 2009

My name is John Radcliffe, and for thirteen years, from 1975 until 1988, I was the Executive Director of the HSTA. When I came to the job, Hawaii's teachers were, on a state to state basis, the 4th best paid in the country, and we also ranked among the best in educational outcomes. For thirteen years I struggled to keep our schools as good as they were when I came to the union. By 1988, they had declined some, but not a lot. The basic reasons for the decline in Hawaii were: growing permissiveness, increased bureaucratization, and the aggressive rise of privatization of schools.

The Hawaii public schools have never had the advantages of Hawaii's private schools. They were always, physically, pretty bare bones. But they were blessed by generations of strong, dedicated teachers who made the difference. And, at least since statehood, the relevant parties have provided a level floor for public school kids, in that they didn't throw up official barriers to getting to school, or being in school. In the words of that great British philosopher, Mick Jagger, ***you couldn't always get what you want. But you could get what you need.***

That is, until now. By cutting the school year from 180 days to something just around 160, our kids lose any semblance of a level floor with any other kids in Hawaii, in the United States, or, indeed, any other modern country. In some school months they will be permitted to attend school only 10 or 11 days! At this level of non-support, hope flies away. Why should they try? Why should their teachers try? They are officially second class.

It means as a society we are not merely economically challenged, but morally bankrupt. If it stands, it means that we have abandoned our children to something not even technically fair. I note that last night, in an unofficial poll in the local business newspaper, The Pacific Business News, 81% said NO to using some money from the Hurricane Relief Fund to permit public school kids to attend a full year of school. If that doesn't say moral bankruptcy, what does? Moral bankruptcy it may be, but it also signals that many of our business and professional people, perhaps a strong majority, no longer consider public education in Hawaii to be an essential part of the American dream.

Nonetheless, if our kids and teachers are not given a fair chance to at least try to compete, if a level floor is taken away, hope for any fair chance at success goes with it.

Beyond the two federal suits that will be heard on Tuesday by Judge Ezra, there is not a lot that any of us can do, legally, to force the issue. However, for the sake of the community, I urge that all of us, respectfully ask the Governor, the DOE and BOE, and the respective unions, to reopen bargaining as to this issue and to try again.

All good citizens, including those in business and the professions, need to step up on this one---and ask the parties to try again.

We all have to say with a clear voice: Hawaii's public school kids have to be given the hope of fairness.

No hope, no fairness. No fairness, no Hawaii—as we know it.

Sen. Will Espero

From: Sen. Suzanne Chun Oakland
Sent: Wednesday, October 28, 2009 9:17 AM
To: 'Joni Kamiya'; All Senators; All Reps
Subject: RE: The State of Public Education

Categories: Print Big Island

Thank you, Joni. I appreciate your thoughts.

Aloha,

Senator Susie Chun Oakland

From: Joni Kamiya [mailto:joni.kamiya@leg.state.ca.us]
Sent: Wednesday, October 28, 2009 7:07 AM
To: All Senators; All Reps
Subject: The State of Public Education

Dear Senators and Representatives,

I am writing to you in regards to the latest discussion regarding the public education furlough issue. I would like to express my opinion to you and challenge you to think broader and deeper when it comes to problem solving some very difficult issues.

I realize that funding our educational system is the problem with why we have to have furloughs however, the problem lies much deeper than that. For years, nearly 40 years, there have been discussions about reforming the public educational system that has been wrought with problems. Multiple panels have found that because of the multiple parties involved with decision making with the educational system, there is not accountability. This pervades all of government in fact.

I urge you to come up with discussions much broader than throwing money from other funds to pay for this broke bureaucratic system. More money in to a system that lacks accountability will not make it better and is only a bandaid to the bigger problem. You as our leaders have to take a bigger step and stick your neck out for what is right and create a government that is SUSTAINABLE.

Sen. Will Espero

From: Joni Kamiya [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, October 28, 2009 5:59 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Special Senate Committee Regarding Teacher Furloughs 10/30/09

Categories: Print Big Island

Dear Senator Espero,

I am writing this testimony in regards to the above mentioned meeting on 10/30/09 at 12:30 p.m.

The issue at hand with the furloughs in our educational system must not be seen and dealt with simply. What this issue indicates is that there is a much deeper problem in our public educational system rather than funding.

I encourage this special committee to look beyond the simple funding of the furloughs as a solution. Too many times in government, throwing money at the issues temporarily solves problems. I do not want to see this happen in this case. You as our leaders in government have to look at creating a sustainable system that supports itself and functions through good and hard times.

There has been many panels studying our public educational system and each have indicated that there is a lack of accountability. Herein lies the issue in which we must address. What is this lack of accountability stemming from? The state auditor as well as the panels that have reviewed the educational system has found that decentralization is key to addressing this problem. It has yet to happen in reality after 40 years of multiple governors attempting to reform the system. This is the challenge that lies ahead for this committee.

I urge you to avoid the simple and most obvious fixes of putting more money into education. How can it be that our largest portion of the state budget is for education and it can't run properly nor provide the results we'd expect of it? Go beyond furloughs and look into addressing the real issue of reforming the system. If not, every few years when tax revenues are low we will have to deal with the same problem over and over. Address the real issue once and for all, REFORM EDUCATION and stop adding more money to a system that can't even account for it. This is your responsibility to the taxpayers as well as the future of Hawaii's keiki!

Sincerely,

Joni Kamiya
Kaneohe, Hawaii
[REDACTED]

Sen. Will Espero

From: Josephine mcgarry [mailto:joletalk@hawaii.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, October 28, 2009 11:02 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: October 30th hearing Testimony

Categories: Print Big Island

Dear Senator Espero

I ask that you please include this in the arguments for special session. Thank you for ensuring our voices are heard.

sincerely

Jo Curran

Dear Representative Gene Ward

I strongly support a special session to find a solution to furlough days for public school students and I hope that you will too.

I feel it is vital that all parties come together and resolve this situation which has resulted in Hawaii's children having the shortest time in school in the nation.

Compromising our children's education is not an option, and I believe in the long term, ignorance costs far more than education.

I would ask that you consider public opinion, which is reaching an unprecedented level of concern over Hawaii's children being the most poorly educated in the nation, and ask Senator Espero to call for a special session.

Most sincerely,

Jo McGarry Curran

Sen. Will Espero

From: John Gallagher [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, October 28, 2009 11:15 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Furloughs

Aloha Senator Espero,

The problem with the furloughs as currently implemented has split decisions. Of course parents are upset. The issue of Special needs children is nothing but a smoke screen. What happens during regular scheduled holidays, etc. Seems to be no problem then and it should not be with the current furloughs.

Personally, I think the Unions played a big part in causing all the problems. Common sense would indicate that there were better days to select for the furlough without causing much disruption in school activities. If Monday had been selected as many suggested, the Friday activities and sports would not have been affected as much. I think the Unions picked Friday since this would have caused the most problem yet it did provide a three day weekend which would have been the same if Monday had been selected..

The idea of using teacher training and professional development days, etc, which is now being considered is a much desired solution. However, I am firm against using the Hurricane Relief Fund for any purpose not related to a hurricane. The Rainy Day Fund is a reserve setup using ALL taxpayer money. The Hurricane Relief Fund belongs to the homeowners.

NOW LET ME SUGGEST THE BEST SOLUTION THAT WOULD EFFECTIVELY ALL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES THE SAME AND WOULD NOT REQUIRE CLOSING OFFICES ETC. Stop and think. Why not pass a law that effectively established a procedure that when a budget situation arises such as we now face, paid Holidays will not be paid; however, individuals would take the Holiday without pay. This provides a means to adjust the number of Holidays that employees would not receive any pay and when the budget returns to normal, payment of the Holidays could be resumed. Notice that would apply to ALL State workers thus there would be no need to negotiate with the different Unions which affect State workers. This would be a across the board action. Simple, fair, easy to implement. The Legislature and Governor would implement the policy whenever a crisis occurs. No need to haggle with the Unions. (By the way - this would affect even the Legislators and Governor, etc)

Mahalo for listening. Better yet - adopt this solution and everyone should be happy.

John P. Gallagher
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Sen. Will Espero

From: Noel J Kent [mailto:jkent@hawaii.edu]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 3:57 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Testimony on Furloughs

I am speaking as a person who has had the privilege of being a member of the UH Manoa faculty for the last thirty-seven years and as some one who believes that Hawai'i and the United States will live or die with our public education system.

In this century we are going to desperately need public spirited young men and women who can help to find reasonable answers to the acute challenges that we face; challenges from the impacts of climate change to the traumatic changes in our lifestyles brought about by declining economic abundance. We need people who can revitalize the meaning of citizenship and the commitments to the common welfare. People who believe in the life of the mind and the life lived with other human beings, people with critical thinking skills, anxious to experiment and collaborate to gain knowledge and skills. People able to locate meaningful work for themselves and others, work that will help to make Hawai'i and this world a decent place.

Most of my students are graduates of the Hawai'i public school system. I am very fond of them and try to support them in gaining the thinking, writing, communication skills they will need to be this type of public person. Or to be competitive for jobs in this terribly difficult economy. What is very clear to me, however, is that with some notable exceptions, the education they have received in the current DOE system, leaves them at a disadvantage.

They very often do not have the writing, analytical, communicative skills they will need. And our society will need. Especially when compared to some of the private schools in Hawai'i. Working with several Oahu high schools in past years, I have become convinced that, indeed, the DOE curriculum needs to be very profoundly revised. And the education process made deeper, more serious. This demands students spending more time, more meaningful time in school.

Therefore, the implementation of a seventeen day furlough is shocking. This is a guarantee that our public school students will be even less ready than they are now to take on the challenges of college or the workplace, less ready to provide the

leaders we will need in this century. I appeal to the Legislature to take the initiative in raising the funds not only to restore the days being furloughed, but to extend the school year from what it was before. Noel Jacob Kent Professor

TESTIMONY REGARDING TEACHER FURLOUGHS

Public Hearing: October 30, 2009
12:30 p.m.
State Capitol Auditorium

Governor Lingle, Senators and Representatives:

I strongly urge you to convene a 5-day special session of the legislature to address the issue of Furlough Fridays.

We should not wait until next year to resolve this issue. Every single Furlough Friday that happens is valuable classroom time gone to waste. My son is a freshman at Baldwin High School. He is doing very well, his grades are excellent, and he is thriving there. We have always taught our kids the value of a good education. The media runs commercials stressing kids to "get a life, get a job, get college". And now we send the message that when it comes to saving money, education is not that important.

My concern is also for those kids who are walking the thin line between passing and failing. These kids need the nurturing environment of a classroom. They need to see other kids trying hard in school. If they don't go to school, that's one more day for them to be out on the streets, getting involved with the wrong crowd. And also one more night for them to stay out late and get into trouble. If teachers put more pressure on them because of lost school days, these kids would probably give up. High school drop out rates would soar and test scores would plummet.

Kids get sick. With furlough Fridays looming, parents would be forced to send their sick kids to school even more because losing more school days is unthinkable.

Every parent, for one reason or another, chooses to send their child to a public school. Not all kids are suited for private schools. And of course, not all parents can afford to send their child to a private school.

Please consider taking money from the Hurricane Relief Fund and Rainy Day Fund. Find Federal funds. Even consider raising taxes. Taking away school days from our kids should NEVER be an option.

Now is the time for everyone to stop pointing fingers, stop the blaming, come together for the good of our kids. Hawaii public schools have a serious problem. We need to focus on the solution. In our public schools are future lawmakers, doctors, scientists...kids who will actually make a difference in the world. Please don't wait till next year to do something. The urgency of this situation calls for a resolution now. Thank you for putting kids first.

Ruth Murata
Wailuku, Maui

Sen. Will Espero

From: Linda Elento [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, October 28, 2009 2:48 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Oct. 30 12:30p special/teacher furlough

Dear Senator Espero and Special Committee Members:

As a parent of a sophomore at a public high school, I would like to suggest the legislature find a way to speak directly with principals without deference and preference of the unions in order to come up with options such as clock schedules (parents do speak up and feel very unheard and are not able to waste time anymore, or do not know who to talk to and don't).

With or without a furlough Friday, I see a need for my son's high school to have a consistent schedule that has classes at least 50 minutes (no more than 70) long each, and at least 4 classes each day.

To comply with the current furlough Friday schedules, solutions for at least many students in high schools (and waivers* for those students who cannot stay later) could include:

- Set each day to end at the same time (no early releases);
- Extend each day (M, T, W, Th) until 3pm.

The private programs/providers such as A+ programs can adjust. I'm sure the city bus system would too.

Thank you for your attention for some quick comments. *Let's allow for some flexibility and accommodations.

Linda Elento
Parent, Kaneohe, Oahu
[REDACTED]

Sen. Will Espero

From: Bob Kayser [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, October 28, 2009 2:58 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: RE: Espero E-Newsletter

Please leave the hurricane relief fund alone....make summer vacation shorter to make up the lost "instructional" days....Please provide an update to Kapolei pkwy and the rest of N/S roadways completion dates....Finally, Roosevelt is a pot hole nightmare again!

Thanks

BobK

From: Sen. Will Espero [mailto:senespero@Capitol.hawaii.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, October 28, 2009 2:01 PM
Subject: Espero E-Newsletter

Senator Espero's October E-newsletter

Sen. Will Espero

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, October 28, 2009 2:52 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Teacher Furlough Meeting Friday 10/30/09 @ 12:30

To Whom It May Concern:

I am mother of very young children! I am also so very concerned about what the future holds for these kid's. From what I understand Hawaii kids are not on the top of the list for academics, but with this furlough Friday's they will surely make the list (the bottom part of the list). This is the perfect recipe for disaster! Less money for families and less education for the kids. The kids will have more times on their hands but parents have to work 3-4 jobs just to put food on the table! Soon the school structure the kids once had will collapse and they will feel they no longer would need to go to school! Like my mom always said "One thing leads to another"

Please this is the ONLY structure and sure thing these kids got!! and its SCHOOL.

Thank You

Bev Hiranaga

FAX

To: Senator Will Espero
FAX (808)586-6361
From: Mary and Del Alexander
Kauai constituents (808) [REDACTED]
RE: Furlough Fridays for the DOE
12:30 meeting in the auditorium on 10/30/09
Date: 10/28/09

Dear Senator Espero:

We are writing to submit our public testimony RE furlough Fridays for the DOE.

While we understand that our State budget is in crisis, we believe that cutting school days for the public schools is NOT the answer, and ask that these days be restored immediately, and that there be no such days in the 2010-11 school year.

Legislators must work to prioritize state services, instead of cutting agencies equally across the board, and must apply the Federal stimulus money that Hawaii received to education.

Children lacking education, children left home unsupervised, children who will not eat on those Fridays, teachers stressed at having to cram even more learning into less school days while struggling to meet the standards of No Child Left Behind—these are serious social issues that affect us all in Hawaii, and disproportionately affect the poor.

Alexander C. Simson

Fax to: 808 586-6361

October 28, 2009

Senator Will Espero
Hawaii State Capitol
415 S. Beretania St.
Honolulu, HI 96813

Re: Testimony for Public Hearing on Furlough Friday Funding 10/30/09

Dear Senator Espero,

Thank you for taking the time to read this testimony. I am the parent of a second grader attending Kapaa Elementary School on Kauai and I am writing to express my extreme dissatisfaction with the decision to furlough our public teachers for 17 days this school and next school year. This decision is equivalent to leaving all of our public school students behind here in the state of Hawaii. I have always been a firm supporter of the public educational system but my support is beginning to waiver. I attended public schools and universities up through graduate school and my father was principal of a public elementary school and I had always envisioned my child attending public schools as well. However, I do not believe my daughter will receive a decent education if these furloughs remain in effect. My husband and I are considering the various private school options on the island despite the fact that this would be financially difficult for us.

I understand the magnitude of the budget crisis and that many difficult decisions and cutbacks needed to be made, however I personally believe that our public school educational programs should be untouchable. Education should be given the highest priority in these challenging times. How can our children ever hope to compete on a global level when our state ranks dead last in the number of instructional days that it offers? President Obama spent his formative years in Hawaii but his grandmother chose to enroll him in private school after elementary school to get him the best education. Most of us cannot afford the enormous tuition at Punahou or any other private school and we depend upon our public school system to educate our youth. Carving away instructional days sends a clear message that education is not valued in our state. We depend upon our elected officials to provide real leadership, direction and vision for our state. This vision should include the need to provide the very best educational opportunities for our students, to inspire our youth to think critically, explore their horizons, tackle the impossible, and achieve their personal best. A great educational system is the essential foundation for a prosperous future.

Our Secretary of Education and our President are calling for longer school days and longer school years with programs being piloted in such states as Kansas. How can our state be headed in the opposite direction when over 60% of our public schools are not making adequate yearly progress according to No Child Left Behind? This is an educational emergency with long term ramifications for our state. I am in full support of using the Hurricane Relief Fund and any other rainy day funds to restore funding to our public schools here in Hawaii. This is a rainy day for Hawaii when our state ranks at the bottom of an educational list and it is the educational equivalent of a destructive Hurricane. The Hawaii State Teachers Association was faced with the impossible decision of approving the furlough days or seeing massive teacher layoffs that would impact our students in multiple ways as well. The HSTA should never have been put in such a predicament.

I implore you to call a special legislative session to consider the various options to restore funding to our public schools. Please give our children a fighting chance at a decent future. Attached are

the signatures of many parents who are also asking for a special legislative session regarding this issue.

Sincerely,

Katherine Vercelli


Kapaa, HI 96746

*164
individual
names
attached*

**PETITION TO CONVENE A SPECIAL SESSION
OF THE HAWAII STATE LEGISLATURE TO
RESTORE TEACHING DAYS**

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Name

Katherine Vercelli
Chanin Tavito
TRISTANA FERNANDEZ-F
Ray Cotanig
BRIAN GLEN
Eli Kessler
KATHLEEN CLEARLY
Joon Connor
Luana Ruggiera
JOANNA CAROLAN
Karen Heresa
Sharon Sarinathan
Kira S By
MARK WABERWATS

Please mail petitions to Katie Vercelli at 5434 Makaloa S
vercellix2@aol.com by October 23, 2009. Mahalo for y

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Name

A

Gabrina Murphy

Jimmy Willis

Marnie Crawford

Please mail petitions to Katie Vercelli at 5434 Makaloa Street, Kapa`a, HI 96746 or email her at vercellix2@aol.com by **October 23, 2009**. Mahalo for your support!

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Name

Donna Umetsu
Wette Sakut
Kalei Arinaga
Tanya Stott

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Name

Stacy Ricciardi

Missy Hoesel

Kristen Valent

Chris B. Newbold

Angie Oyama 5

JENNIFER ANTONY P

Joyce Nagata F

Jean Souza P

ANITA KLINSTEAD

Gloria Brigante S

Tim BYNUM 5995

Chris Hoedel 5082

Maddie Hae

Minde Hine 5

Jasmine Hine

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Name

Susannah Woolway

Daniel Schaal

Eme Valena

Jonathan Kessler

Linda Dietrich

Elizabeth L Bacleyen ^{uhzuh@yahoo.co}

She Pantano Selatana

Please mail petitions to Katie Vercelli at 5434 Makaloe
vercellix2@aol.com by October 23, 2009. Mahalo for

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Name

Athena Alexander	A
Mary Alexander	
Leslie Lane-Schwartz	
Christopher Takenaka	
LISA POLUAK	
PAT GEGEN	
Claudette Hoosen	
Budd R. Cleary	H16
Renaé Hamilton	hamil
Melinda Morey	mo
Monica Horgan	MT
Antia Ventura	a.v
Zayda Hennessey	poi
Sandy Herndon	f

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vercellix2@aol.com by October 23, 2009. Mahalo for your

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Name

Nancy Jean Dingus
L CONNORS O. BARDIT
Robert Goldberg
Julie Goldberg
JANECE YATSKA
LOIS ANDERSSON
ASTRID ANDERSSON
Shaunna GANUN
Jai GANUN
Maureen Tabara
Liselle Dusenberry-Lee
Carol Pescaia
Jennifer Winn 3
Jan Sung 58

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Please mail petitions to Katie Vercelli at 5434 Make
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Name

- Jimmy Tolhiohu
- Peter Marmore
- Lianne Parongao
- Stephanie Inasaki
- Mark MacDell
- MICHAEL GOODWIN
- Keith Cruickshank
- Galen Nakagawa
- Artis Shiramizu
- Sarah Styron
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vercellix2@aol.com by October 23, 2009. Mahalo

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Name

Kelly Bynum
Kasey Kajiwara
Diane Johnson
Robert Kajiwara
Christine Murphy
Joseph Hicks
~~Melissa Swartz~~
Collette Althouse
Sophie Kessler
Kipukai Kyati
Koonan Pauk
Melissa Anderson
ALEXANDER SIMSON S
Makanata SIMSON S

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Name

Kisa Davalos

Riley Davalos

Andrew D.

Matea Davalos

Ricardo Davalos

Rebecca Snowden

Levi Snowden

Charlotte Casey

Noah Casey

Jeff Casey

Rose Schmidt

Andra Drake

Matt Drake

Amber Drake

Matty Drake

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Name

DeLynn Watson

Shirley GARAA

Karen Skam

Happi Olu

Oliver Coyard

Analyn Flores

James Buller

~~Timothy Stamm~~

Katie Stamm

Timothy Stamm

Darrian Alcox

Heath Akau

Lei Matthews

FRANK AYON SILVA

Please mail petitions to Katie Vercelli at 5434 Makala
vercellix2@aol.com by October 23, 2009. Mahalo fc

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Name

Elia Cole
Kamakahine Wong
Cherisse Eguchi
Pat Eguchi
Cherisse Eguchi
Chris Turner
Crystal Sauna
Delbert Silva
Tera Silva
Robert Williams
Sally Ory
Nini Ory
Kathy Hetherington
Shirley Ryan

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Name

Alora Bekker
Denny Jose
Janet J.
Kamgawe
Kurt M. Mata
Jennifer Scagnoli
Marina Octavio

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vercellix2@aol.com by **October 23, 2009**. Mahalo for your support!

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Name

Jay Shumay 4

Larry & Willis Fernandes

Michelle Lewis

Larry Heller 7

Joan Heller PC

Ana Valdez

Walt Taylor v

Manay Jones F

Mary Carlson P.O.

Chandra Walker 2080 Chandra

Kimberlee Stewart PO Box 2

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Please mail petitions to Katie Vercelli at 5434 Mal
vercellix2@aol.com by October 23, 2009. Mahalo



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Name

Address / e-mail address

Maui Kaiio

BIB JOHN KANS

Marlene V. Kans

~~Josephine Kans~~

~~John Kans~~
TODD ANDERSON

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07

Please mail petitions to Katie Vercelli at 5434 Makaloa Street, Kapa'a, HI 96746 or email her at vercellix2@aol.com by **October 23, 2009**. Mahalo for your support!

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Name

JEANNE EELLS

Elisabeth Dingus

Please mail petitions to Katie Vercelli at 5434 Makaloa Street, Kapa`a, HI 96746 or email her at vercellix2@aol.com by **October 23, 2009**. Mahalo for your support!

Sen. Will Espero

From: Cynthia Franklin [mailto:cfranklin@senate.hawaii.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, October 28, 2009 9:56 AM
To: All Senators
Subject: STOP Furlough Fridays

Categories: Print Big Island

Dear Senators:

We write as a concerned group of parents of Iolani children who are NOT being left behind to urge that you act immediately to STOP Furlough Fridays. There are less harmful, more equitable solutions to the state's budget woes.

This state's shameful disregard for public education is nothing new, but now to have the nation's shortest school year takes this state to an all new, and unacceptable, low. Furlough Fridays do irreparable harm to children, to their parents, and to already underpaid teachers.

It is time to INVEST in public education. Especially during times of economic hardship, it is the right and necessary thing to do.

We join our voices with those who spoke so eloquently at the State Capitol on October 23. And together with public school parents, we say to you, let these first Furlough Fridays be the LAST Furlough Fridays.

Katharine Anderson
Eva and Cline Ardo
Christine Daleiden
Marcus Daniel
KahBo Dye-Chiew
Brian Emmons
Charlotte Farmer
Cynthia Franklin
Art and Kris Furuta
Beth Greenhill
Peter Greenhill
Betty Ickes, PhD
Chris Isham
Deborah Juarez
Linda Lierheimer
Candace Lotomau
Brooke Loughridge
April and Jeff Manson
Marc Murdock
Cathy Petticord
Charles and Sally Proctor
Cynthia Scheinert
Annabelle Streegan Stone
Alan Van Etten
Cathie Valdovino
Charles Ying

Cynthia Franklin
Professor, Department of English
Co-Editor, Biography: An Interdisciplinary Quarterly
University of Hawai'i at Manoa
Honolulu, HI 96822
tel: (808)956-7884 fax: (808)956-3083
cfrankli@hawaii.edu

Sen. Will Espero

From: Jackie Last Name [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 6:39 AM
To: Governor.Lingle@hawaii.gov; Sen. Will Espero; Sen. Colleen Hanabusa; Sen. Clayton Hee; Sen. Sam Slom
Cc: ksskcoach@aol.com; rickhamada@hawaii.rr.com; dbboylan@yahoo.com
Subject: No accountability for School furloughs

Categories: Print Big Island

Please do not raid OUR hurricane fund. Home owners who had a mortgage was mandated to purchase hurricane insurance from the government when private insurers did not offer this service. I believe this money belongs to the people who paid into this fund, and should not be used to play into the hands of various unions such as HSTA to either save jobs or prevent a pay cut for their union members. If my hurricane fund is used for HSTA, where does it stop? What about HGEA, or any other union that if unwillingly to take pay cuts. I worked for Aloha Airlines, employees took a 20% pay cut, and I can't remember when management received a raise, and we gave up other benefits such as paying for our health insurance, less holidays, sick leave.

I am requesting that someone look into the original contract or legislation when the hurricane fund was created, and let the people who paid into this fund what our legal rights are. Please do not rush into raiding the hurricane fund, and giving into the unions. I agree with Governor Lingle, if the unions did not want furlough days, why did they ask for it?

I am not the only one who strongly disagrees with raiding the hurricane fund, we are waiting to see what the people who we have put into office do about this very important issue.

Mr. Price, Mr. Hamada and Mr. Boylan would you please publish the original intent of the hurricane fund.

Sincerely,
Jackie Miyashiro

Do You Yahoo!?
Tired of spam? Yahoo! Mail has the best spam protection around
<http://mail.yahoo.com>

From: Jackie Last NameMiyashiro [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 10:14 AM
To: Sen. Norman Sakamoto; Sen. Russell Kokubun; Sen. Brian Taniguchi; Sen. Shan Tsutsui
Subject: Fw: No accountability for school furloughs

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: Jackie Last NameMiyashiro <jysm70@yahoo.com>
To: senbaker@capitol.hawaii.gov; senbunda@capitol.hawaii.gov; senchunoakland@capitol.hawaii.gov
Cc: Governor.Lingle@hawaii.gov
Sent: Thu, October 29, 2009 10:05:26 AM
Subject: Fw: No accountability for school furloughs

I understand there will be a special Senate committee hearing tomorrow at 1230pm regarding raiding the hurricane fund to prevent furlough Fridays. Please use this as my testimony since I will not be able to attend. I along with a lot of your constituents are against raiding the hurricane fund, start over again with the unions and consider other cuts such as pay cuts, holidays, sick leave and vacation pay. In addition, it is time that some legislatures and all of the union officials stop blaming Governor Lingle for the furlough days. As she stated, if the unions did not want furlough days, why did they request for it. Using the hurricane fund to offset furloughs just plays into the hands of the unions. I worked for Aloha Airlines, took a 20% pay cut, no pay raises, paid part of my medical coverage and guess what, we all lost our jobs. How come no one offered to use the Hurricane fund to save Aloha Airlines employees.

Sincerely,
Jackie Miyashiro

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: " [redacted] <[redacted]>
To: jysm70@yahoo.com
Sent: Thu, October 29, 2009 9:22:50 AM
Subject: Re: No accountability for school furloughs

Hi Jackie,
good going.
mahalo, larry

-----Original Message-----

From: Jackie Last NameMiyashiro [redacted]
To: senespero@capitol.hawaii.gov
Cc: Governor.Lingle@hawaii.gov; ksskcoach@aol.com; rickhamada@hawaii.rr.com; dbboylan@yahoo.com
Sent: Thu, Oct 29, 2009 8:25 am
Subject: No accountability for school furloughs

Senator Espero, I understand from this mornings news that you and 14 other Senators are in favor of raiding the hurricane fund. I as well as others who were mandated to pay into this fund, is against using the hurricane fund to prevent furlough Fridays. This fund is not and should not

be considered the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. Please email me names of the 14 Senators in favor of raiding my hurricane fund. I would appreciate your immediate response so that we may take further action on this unfair action.

Mr. Hamada, Mr. Price, and Mr. Boylan, thank you for your insight in this matter. You all hit a homerun...ever thought of running for office? Please consider into writing and explaining the original intent of the hurricane fund. I would like to know if raiding the hurricane fund is legal, and if so, under what guidelines, and if public approval is needed.

Sincerely,
Jackie Miyashiro

Sen. Will Espero

From: Kirstin Hamman [mailto:kirstin.hamman@maui.k12.hawaii.edu]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 8:49 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Teacher Furloughs 10/30/09 12:30 p.m.

I support a special session of the legislature in order to find alternative funds in order to restore classroom instructional time, lost as a result of teacher furloughs.

I am the parent of a 7 and 9 year old. My children attend Waihee Elementary School on Maui. I am already concerned with my children's quality of the education. With the loss of more classroom time, I am overwhelmingly concerned. Teaching a child is a full time job. I do not have the ability to quit my job in order to teach my children. I also do not have the training.

I have to work to pay for our mortgage and take care of all of our family needs. Now we also face having to cover childcare costs when the kids are out of school. I understand that the teachers at Waihee school voted overwhelmingly against offsetting the furlough days by converting waiver/planning days. That is no longer an option at Waihee.

It is unacceptable, and a shame that teacher furloughs have been instituted. Our children deserve better. They are the future leaders of our community and we are crippling them.

Please help our children and find a way to eliminate teacher furlough days. Thank you.

Kirstin Hamman
[REDACTED]

Sen. Will Espero

From: Sandra_Togashi/KAWAII@notes.k12.hi.us
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 9:04 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Support HI Public Schools!

Aloha Senator Espero,

As a public school teacher, public school parent, and a registered Hawaii voter, I am writing to ask for your support for public school teachers and public school education for the next two years and beyond. Public school furloughs are an atrocity!

In September's HSTA ratification vote, I was in the minority of members who voted "no" to what has become our current contract settlement for the next two years. After discussing issues and topics with colleagues and reflecting to myself on the night prior to the voting, I decided to vote against the then tentative settlement mainly because these parties would suffer short term and long term losses:

My 142 students (Grade 7)
about half of whom live at the poverty level
about half of whom do not display common courtesy, manners, good self-directed behaviors, nor a value for education and learning
about one-third of whom are reading below one-or-more current grade level(s)
about one-third of whom are living with a single parent / guardian
about one-fifth of whom are unsatisfactory (D/F grade) in core academic classes
about five of whom do not speak English (LEP, NEP level)
about five of whom have special learning disabilities, emotional-educational plans, 504 plans

My 2 own children (Grade 5 and Grade 7 attending public schools)
who attend school every day, unless ill
who come to school punctually, having slept well, having eaten breakfast
who meet or exceed HSA benchmarks in all classes
who exceed HSA testing levels
who score at Stanine scores: (once one was a 6) 7, 8, 9 consistently on norm-referenced Terra Nova and SAT-based pre-tests
who value education and plan to attend a university
who enjoy school
who consistently display all GLOs

My chosen teaching profession, where I work hard among other dedicated, committed, smart public school teachers

My head of household, single parent status (and the other working moms like me)

My hope for a brighter, higher-skilled, better character traits, successful Hawaii community.

We public school teachers face daily challenges, even during the better economic times.

During the next two years of this current HSTA contract, there is little to no way that "brain drain" and loss of academic and school's social/emotional functions can ever be "made up." The groups that I have outlined above; we all just took an immeasurable, devastating loss in terms of human capital, consumer confidence, and educational promise for our future! What a terrible shame! Where is Hawaii

headed?

Hawaii public schools need your support from here out.

Every student -- from the special education child, the immigrant, the low income, the "average ability", the accelerated learner, the gifted and talented student, the star athlete, the musically inclined -- just got left behind in short term and long term ways. Every public school student has a right to a safe, rigorous, high quality, academically stimulating, enriching, public education! ...And teachers need the instructional days, reinstated to provide that environment! We public school teachers all work very hard with so very little time, money, and resources. ...And then there's the homework that we bring home to do! Out-of-pocket money that we use for classroom materials and supplies! Resources lacking for us to teach in the 21st century manner (computers, electronic equipment, sufficient electricity usage). We need funding for books, equipment, and supplies.

Let's retain the highly qualified and experienced teachers who still enjoy our work with children! (...And yes, some slacking, ineffective teachers gotta go! Even some tenured teachers oughta be fired by the D.O.E! But where is the documented accountability for this?) Public school teachers were making due head way with deserved pay increases, but we still lag behind other mainland public school districts in terms of salary and benefits.

Public school needs smaller class sizes (even at the secondary levels), in the area of 24:1 students to teacher ratio, maximum. We need better morale and a strong sense that public school teachers are and will be highly respected members of our working community. Hawaii needs public school children of all learning/aptitude levels to proudly stand tall and be recognized among their private school counterparts! I urge you to support Hawaii's future. I believe in Hawaii's public schools. Mahalo,

Sandra M. Togashi

Sen. Will Espero

From: Susan Deloria [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 9:06 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Emailing: Furlough senate committee.docx
Attachments: Furlough senate committee.docx

The message is ready to be sent with the following file or link attachments:

Furlough senate committee.docx

Note: To protect against computer viruses, e-mail programs may prevent sending or receiving certain types of file attachments. Check your e-mail security settings to determine how attachments are handled.

DATE: Friday, October 30, 2009
TIME: 12:30 p.m.
PLACE: Auditorium Fax to Senate Sergeant-At-Arms
1-800-586-6659

State Capitol 415 South Beretania Street

SPECIAL SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONSIDER APPROACHES TO TEACHER FURLONGHS

Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair

Senator Will Espero, Vice Chair

10/29/2009

Dear Governor Lingle,

It is with great anger that we write to you on the decision to implement the "Friday Furloughs" for our Keiki. Our kids need all the education that they can get in our public schools. It's no secret our kids scores tend to be lower than the rest of the country and now we find out they will miss 17 instructional days this school year, with the threat that this is just the start of it. What happened to the "no child left behind" that our government keeps reminding us about, there has to be some other solution to this budget deficit.

We are hard working citizens of Maui and have several kids in public school. You have put us in a very difficult position, we now have to either take time off our work, in an already tough economic environment we need all the money we can make, or look to a private enterprise to take our kids (that costs money) or impose on friends and family to take care of them. What are we supposed to do?

We find this course of action to be unacceptable and implore you to re-consider closing the schools and opting for any alternative that does not compromise our kids education. Our kids are our future, what does this tell us of where we are heading as a State? If we cannot afford to keep our schools open then what kind of message are we sending to our kids? We expect a reversal of this decision and a much better solution to be found. Cut costs elsewhere, not our kid's education.

Sincerely



Susan DeLoria

~~520 KAHALA RD ST~~

Lahaina HI 96761

Sen. Will Espero

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 9:17 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: OCTOBER 30TH HEARING TESTIMONY

The time is NOW to correct the unacceptably low number of school days in Hawaii.

Call a special session of the legislature. It is not only the right thing to do but it would be morally wrong not to. Inaction at this point condones the fact that Hawaii's children have fewer school days than the whole rest of the country.

What if every state in the union did what Hawaii has done? We, as a country, must compete at a global level for jobs with the rest of the world. Jobs in technology know no borders. And young people from other countries with better schooling and greater knowledge than our own children can cross our borders and take their jobs.

We, as a state at a grassroots level, must keep our children competitive in a global economy. The buck stops here.

Do the right thing. Call a special session of the legislature. If you, as an individual, do not support calling a special session, you are derelict in your duty to the people of this state.

Sincerely,

Diana Caldwell
Kailua, HI

October 29, 2009

The Senate:

Re: Special Senate Committee to Consider approaches to Teach Furloughs

Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair

Senator Will Espero, Vice Chair

Notice of Meeting

Dae: Friday, October 30, 2009

Time: 12:30 pm

Place: Auditorium, State Capitol, 415 S. Beretania Street

Dear Sirs:

It is to my dismay that I have to write this letter. As a parent of a third grader, PTO Board Member, SCC Parent Representative to Kahala Elementary and a tax payer, I am very disappointed in our leaders.

How on earth could the state of Hawaii be in this situation? Why are our children, our future out of school? Hawaii test scores are already one of the lowest in the nation. Japan has 240 school days, Korea 230 school days, the average US school days is much less at 180 days and then we come in last at 163. To add to that the children are in school much shorter days than when I was when in school. They have ½ days every Wednesday, they have Wavier days that don't make sense and then we wonder why oh why are our children not succeeding let alone exceeding? I can tell you why. Isn't it just common sense. We've got to look at this and put our children back in school for not only the furlough days but add to the time not take away. Why should we feel that we're failing our children if they aren't in private school. Why can't our leaders provide an appropriate school time and curriculum. Isn't this their job? Isn't this why they are there?

When these children get older they are going to lose out on the good jobs. They won't be prepared. The mainland children will take these jobs or they will go to the private school children. This is simply scary and ridiculous to me.

Do any of our "leaders" have children or grandchildren in public schools? I doubt it. Do you think that they'd do this to their children?

Page 2

October 29, 2009

I believe the entire school system needs to be looked at. But I do understand that the issue right now is the furlough days. It simply does not make sense. I do understand the state has a deficit. But how did we get there? It wasn't the children? How does someone spend money they don't have, let alone millions. These people need to be accountable for putting the state in this kind of situation. I really don't know how people sleep at night.

I find that even in the immediate school funds that some money is being misused. As a SCC parent representative I have been addressing this issue. The tax payers did not pay taxes to send our staff/volunteers to dinner. This is what I'm finding. If this goes on throughout the entire education system, no wonder we don't have money. It's got to stop and it's got to stop now. Everyone should be accountable for their actions. We've got to change the way things are going.

Why oh why is the Manoa Library being torn down and rebuilt when it was a perfectly fine library? Where is that money coming from? No one that I have written to has answered that question. Can you?

There are 170,000 children needing your help in getting them back in school. Special needs, less fortunate, bright and not-so-bright. They all need your understanding and support in getting them back in school.

Our lack of leadership and school days is on the national and world news. Is this how you want Hawaii perceived? People love to visit here because it is so beautiful. Keep it beautiful in the locals eyes and the children's eyes by providing a good, successful education. We are the laughing stock of the nation. How can this be? Is this Paradise?

When making the signs for the rally I was trying to make this a lesson for my son. He was studying about Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King. I explained to him that he was doing the same thing as they did. Standing up and fighting for his rights.

Page 3
October 29, 2009

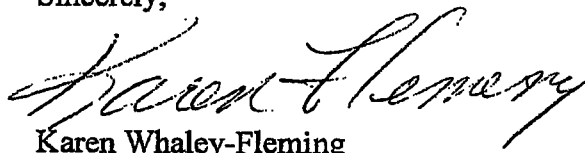
PLEASE HELP these children in trying to educate, improve themselves, and working towards being a positive member of society where they can grow up to do well and do for others as we all should.

This is a very upsetting time for everyone. Our leaders have to lead not hender.

It is more costly to fail than it is to succeed.

With sincere appreciation in your help to put our children back in school.

Sincerely,



Karen Whaley-Fleming
Kahala Elementary School Parent
[REDACTED]
kathy.fleming@yale.edu

DATE: Friday, October 30, 2009
TIME: 12:30 p.m.
PLACE: Auditorium Fax to Senate Sergeant-At-Arms
1-800-586-6659

State Capitol 415 South Beretania Street

SPECIAL SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONSIDER APPROACHES TO TEACHER FURLOUGHS

Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair

Senator Will Espero, Vice Chair

10/29/2009

Dear Governor Lingle,

It is with great anger that I write to you on the decision to implement the "Friday Furloughs" for our Keiki. Our kids need all the education that they can get in our public schools. It's no secret our kids scores tend to be lower than the rest of the country and now we find out they will miss 17 instructional days this school year and all core classes for my senior child in high school!!! Is this just the start of even more furlough days? What ever happened to the "no child left behind" that our government keeps reminding us about??? Is there no other solution to this budget deficit, we are talking about our future, not some piece of machinery.

I'm a hard working citizen of Maui and a proud parent of a senior at Lahainaluna High School. You have put all us parents in a very difficult position, we now have to either take time off our work, in an already tough economic environment we need all the money we can make, or look to a private enterprise to take our kids (that costs money) or impose on friends and family to take care of them. What are we supposed to do?

I find this course of action to be unacceptable and demand that you re-consider closing the schools and opting for any alternative that does not compromise our kids education. Our kids are our future, what does this tell us of where we are heading as a State? If we cannot afford to keep our schools open then what kind of message are we sending to our kids? I expect a reversal of this decision and a much better solution to be found. Cut costs elsewhere, not our kid's education.

Sincerely



Derek Escalera



Lahaina HI 96761

To whom it may concern

This is what a private school
does to keep cost down.

At Koolau Baptist Academy
They charge a comprehensive fee
of \$250.00 to help keep cost down.
take a look at attached paper.

also if we need more classroom
time. we shouldn't have 1st periods.
and lunch ~~break~~ time should be
made up. When we work and
lunch time is made up right.

Parents should pay more because
they will be paying more for child
care as well as the lack of time
they have to learn
Thanks
Carole



Koolau Baptist Academy

45-633 Keneke St. / P.O. Box 1642 • Kaneohe, HI 96744 • (808) 233-2900

LIST OF EXPENSES 2009-2010 SCHOOL YEAR

Our goal at Ko'olau Baptist Academy is to provide a quality Christ-centered, Bible-based learning environment that educates the whole child spiritually, academically, socially, and physically. We want this opportunity to be affordable to all of our parents. In addition to these expenses listed, there are other incidental expenses in attending Ko'olau Baptist Academy such as school supplies, uniforms, lab fees, athletic fees, and graduation expenses. These vary according to the needs of the students.

TUITION - \$3,400 PER CHILD

PAYMENT PLANS

- **TEN MONTH PLAN** - \$340.00 per month. First payment due before school starts. Each subsequent payment due the 30th of each month through May.
- **ELEVEN MONTH PLAN** - \$309.09 per month. First payment due before school starts. Each subsequent payment due the 30th of each month through June.
- **FULL PAYMENT PLAN** - \$3,300.00 due before the start of school. (\$100.00 discount per child.)
- **TWO PAYMENT PLAN** - \$1662.50 due before the start of school. 2nd payment due December 30, 2009. (\$75.00 discount per child.)

Finance Factors and other lending institutions offer good tuition loan programs.

ENROLLMENT FEE

- \$75.00 per child.
- \$80.00 per child after the start of school.
- \$50.00 per child Re-enrollment fee

★ **COMPREHENSIVE FEE - \$250.00**

An annual comprehensive fee of \$250 is charged to cover the cost of textbook rental, workbooks, crafts, handouts, yearbooks, annual testing, and awards. Payment is due by June 30, 2009

Sen. Will Espero

From: Jenifer Young [jenifyoung77@ymail.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 11:46 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: OCTOBER 30TH HEARING TESTIMONY
Attachments: --static--intheclouds_lt.gif, --static--intheclouds_b.jpg

To Senator Espero and our leaders in the legislative party,

Thank you for your help! I am a constituent in your district. I am deeply concerned about the closure of school for 17 days, and the impact it will have on our children. The CHILDREN ARE OUR FUTURE! Their EDUCATION is KEY to their SUCCESS! Please convene a Special Session of the Legislature to address this issue and find an alternative solution.

Mahalo,

Jenifer Young

Sen. Will Espero

From: Kitt Percy [kittpercy@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 12:05 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: SPECIAL SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONSIDER APPROACHES TO TEACHER FURLOUGHS
Attachments: Copy of Senate Committee Letter re Furloughs.docx

October 29, 2009

Katherine L. Percy
3 [REDACTED]
Lahaina, HI 96761
(8 [REDACTED])

The Special Senate Committee to Consider Approaches to Teacher Furloughs Friday, October, 30, 2009, 12:30pm State Capitol
415 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI

RE: Testimony regarding the Teacher Furloughs

Aloha, Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am the mother of 7-year old twins who attend King Kamehameha IIIrd Elementary School in Lahaina, on Maui. In our household we juggle multiple jobs with erratic work-schedules, school and homework, and extra-curricular activities. My children's father is Polynesian, and I am from the mainland; Hawaii is our home because it is the cross-roads of our respective cultures. We are willing to work long hours, struggle to make rent, and enhance our children's already deficient education, because we love our community. However, this furlough crisis is too great an imposition to bear at the expense of our children. I have come to realize that our state entities, despite intentions otherwise, are systematically, institutionally, even maliciously, neglecting our children's educational needs. It is unacceptable. Lately, our family discussions are gut-wrenching and heart-breaking as we deliberate our personal solutions from private and home-schooling (options beyond our means) to moving elsewhere.

The Problem

We have compromised and accepted the poor national status of our schools—47th in the nation, with 63% of our schools slated for “restructuring.” We have lamented and compensated for the lack of music, art, and physical education through extra-curricular activities and our PTA. We have worked hard to supplement their academic education at home. At school, my children have one recess. During the month of October, they had 12 days of school. Just 3 years ago, our school had to use a tent for a classroom. And now the State has slammed the doors shut for all of our 170,000+ students and their 12,000+ teachers while incongruously paying 2,300 cafeteria and custodial workers to be on the closed campuses—to “balance the budget.”

While many will find humor in this ultimate Political Darwin Award, I assure you that the tragic expense of these furloughs reverberates exponentially from each child, through their families and communities, to the State at large. Review your textbooks; history offers numerous examples of the demise of societies that squelch the middle-class and deliberately suppress education.

The disposal of our children's academic education via the furloughs can not be underestimated or marginalized. Not only is the future infrastructure of Hawaii jeopardized, but immediately

the health, well-being, and safety of our children are compromised with the advent of missed meals for the lower-income, and safety issues regarding unsupervised children. Immediate economic losses will be generated as well at the parents' workplaces and out of their own pocketbooks.

These real costs to our society make no sense, even in the name of balancing the budget. It is as if we are throwing out the baby to save the dirty bathwater—what is the point? Usually, during times of crisis, the children are the first into the lifeboats.

Solutions

I urge you to access whatever means and resources we can to immediately off-set these furloughs. Call an Emergency Session, raid the Hurricane/Rainy Day funds, do bonds—do whatever it takes. I have no problem paying higher sales/excise taxes (earmarked for education); we have the lowest in the nation. If these are increased, I would suggest consideration for the lower-income families, perhaps via Earned Income Credits.

Do what it takes to get us out of this. However, it would be reckless not to demand and enforce transparent and full accountability from the Department of Education.

Give the counties some flexibility and leeway to contribute with their own policies.

And finally, bless our teachers, their wages are barely adequate. Yet, under no circumstances can I think of an employer that permits the employees to determine the hours of operation. You must legally protect our children, and their teachers, by mandating a calendar of 180/6-hour school days (in session). I have confidence our unions will negotiate their further needs.

It is foremost our children and their education that must be legally protected. Please use this opportunity to step up and be heroes for our keiki and communities.

Thank you for hearing, understanding, and addressing the dire consequences and social-economic devastation that these furloughs portend.

Sincerely,

Katherine L. Percy
Jett and Zia Taue'etia's Mom
~~kitt.percy@gmail.com~~

Sen. Will Espero

From: Olga Boric-Lubecke [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 11:46 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: OCTOBER 30TH HEARING TESTIMONY

Dear Senator Espero:

I am deeply concerned about the closure of school for 17 days, and the impact it will have on our children. Please convene a Special Session of the Legislature to address this issue and find an alternative solution.

Mahalo

Olga Boric-Lubecke
[redacted]

Honolulu, HI 96815

Sen. Will Espero

From: claire stucklen [mailto:claire.stucklen@hawaii.gov]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 11:42 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Testimony against Teacher Furloughs

To the Honorable Members of this Committee,

Thank you for your time to read my statement. I feel that it is imperative that the children and teenagers of Hawaii are given a fair opportunity to succeed in their future higher education and global opportunities. The students need as many hours of quality education as possible. My child just came into public school from private, and he is a full year ahead in math. This showed me how little is expected or presented to our children in public schools. Our teachers need to be paid well for raising and guiding our leaders, workers and teachers of tomorrow. Creative and advanced programs for children need to be supported and integrated into the curriculums. This takes more days to do, not less.

Hawaii's school children deserve to have at least the minimum number of hours to enter college and compete with other students from everywhere. Hawaii's children deserve to eat lunch if they are on food assistance and have a safe place to learn 5 days per week, not 3 and a half or 4 days.

It is one thing to take your child out of school for a special occasion, but to be left with no choice, and having to supplement the day via "other education programs" which usually cost a fee, is unfair.

I speak for the students with no voice, the families with no computers and perhaps language challenges. I speak for those that don't know what to do and the children are feeling the stress of it, either left home with the TV and less than Scout examples of how to conduct oneself in life. People do the best they can. Please give our children and teenagers a chance. They want to succeed and be acknowledged for their accomplishments.

Our teachers and schools are the lifelines of society. Please keep our kids in school, our teachers compensated well and our society safe.

Sincerely,

Claire Tatsumi Stucklen

[REDACTED]
Kihei, HI 96753

October 29, 2009

To the Special Senate Committee to Consider Approaches to Teacher Furloughs:

Thank you for providing this opportunity for public input on ways to “soften the blow” of teacher furloughs. As even the Governor has acknowledged, the devastating impact and implications furlough Fridays have for our students were not thoroughly considered. We appreciate the chance to offer suggestions to improve the situation. We see three areas in which improvements can be made.

I. THE USE OF SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS:

As the parents of a tenth grader at Kauai High School, we have noticed a marked increase in the use of substitute teachers. Sometimes it is because a teacher is ill or called away for family emergency. Much more often it is because the teacher is attending a conference or in-school meeting or training. Some of those meetings are mandated by the DOE. The cost in dollars is higher than ever since the substitutes won their wage increase. The cost in lost instruction time is more significant than ever in light of the loss of instructional days. The frequent and avoidable use of substitute teachers is even more puzzling given the state’s emphasis on having qualified teachers in the appropriate classrooms. CUT BACK ON THE USE OF SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS.

II. STANDARDIZED TESTING:

Even while we are decreasing the amount of instructional time in order to save, we are increasing the TIME, ENERGY, and MONEY spent on standardized testing. This is backwards and illogical. This year, the DOE is field testing on-line testing for all students in addition to administering booklet and pencil versions. The DOE has added:

- ▶ on-line field testing for both the annual HSAs and the quarterly HSAs;
- ▶ Algebra II tests;
- ▶ on- line field testing in science for grades 4, 8, 10 and biology students in grades 9, 11, 12

This comes at a time when funds for computers in school are being cut. It is time to do away with all standardized testing above eighth grade, and allow high schools to use PSAT scores to satisfy their standardized testing requirements. We applaud the DOE for administering the PSATs to tenth and eleventh graders. Let’s make that work even more to our advantage. We know that schools are interested in using the PSAT scores in this manner. In the past, the request has been denied.

In addition, it’s time to take a closer look at how the testing contracts are awarded. Is there competitive bidding? Are there companies that have better tests and better people scoring them? We as parents would like a detailed account of just how much money is being spent to satisfy NCLB and think it is time to ask is it money well-spent? CUT BACK ON THE AMOUNT OF STANDARDIZED TESTING.

III. SCHEDULING AND BUNDLING OF FURLOUGH DAYS:

The negative impact of the furlough days is magnified by their placement. Having them on scattered Fridays not only cuts down on instructional time, it interferes with rhythm and momentum. With a little rearranging, we can minimize the disruption and maximize the utility.

This can be done easily if we:

1. Move the furlough day scheduled for November 20 to November 25, the day before Thanksgiving.
2. Move the furlough days scheduled for December 4 and 11 to December 16 and 17, the days before winter break.
3. Move all the furlough days scheduled for second semester to the end of July and beginning of August, 2010.
4. Bundle all the furlough days for 2010-2011 and put them in July and August of 2011.

This may mean postponing or even eliminating fall break 2010.

There are several reasons for taking this approach:

- ▶ Students and teachers would have more time for summer employment.
- ▶ All teachers and high school students could attend resume and skill enhancing events and programs on the mainland that are held late in July and continue into August.
- ▶ Teachers would have time to teach summer school *and* attend training and certification programs.
- ▶ The DOE could develop some well thought-out programs to prevent "summer slide," perhaps generating revenue for the department

The seventeen days off are damaging in and of themselves. Scattering makes the furloughed days useless.

In any event, it is crucial we make sure that the schedule of furloughed days does not harm our students, especially those in high school. The furlough Fridays in the spring may conflict with events scheduled by forces outside of Hawaii. National competitions are one example. The advanced placement exams for AP classes are another. We know for a fact that the exam for the AP U.S. History course (a popular one at our high school) takes place on May 7, 2010. That is a furlough Friday. Something **MUST** be done about that issue in particular or students will suffer tangibly.

Thank you for your energies in this matter.

Wendy and Jim Hoglen
parents of a tenth grade student at Kauai High School

[REDACTED]
Kalaheo, HI 96741

[REDACTED]

Sen. Will Espero

From: Leocadia Conlon [leocadia@...]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 11:08 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: OCT 30TH HEARING TESTIMONY

Dear Senator Espero,

I am a parent of a student who attends a private school in Kailua. My daughter is in first grade and this is her first year in private school. For kindergarten she attended Aikahi Elementary School - a wonderful public school with remarkable teachers and administration. However, we decided to change to a private school because of the budget cuts to the public school budgets and my fear of decreased school days. Unfortunately my fear became a reality as the public schools of Hawaii face 17 furlough days this year, and 24 furlough days set for next year. While my daughter is not directly affected by this, I believe that as a member of society I have an obligation to be proactive in protecting education for all children. What a society wants for their future, is defined by what they invest in children today. Education is important and a right for all children!

Education is the one defining factor that can make the difference as to whether or not a child is able to one day achieve the American dream, or will be bound by the limitations of poverty. Education is also the ultimate safety net for a child. For example, a child can be homeless and have unemployed parents, but still have a safe, nurturing place to go everyday where she or he can receive nourishment and be given an opportunity to further themselves in life. Education in school also fosters a child's social development and physical skills. Education can rescue a child from a high risk environment of drugs and other dysfunctional lifestyles by providing them with safe activities and knowledge. Education is everything. Education defines a society.

Because of this, the 17 and 24 furlough days should be a concern for everyone in our community, whether or not you have children, and whether or not you have children in public school. This negative impact on children's education in Hawaii will also have a negative impact on our society as a whole. 17 days this year equals over 3 weeks off from school. Most people do not even have that kind of vacation time from work. Why is it ok then for children to be out of school for this long? What kind of message are we passing along?

Our government and society have an obligation to protect vulnerable citizens who cannot speak for themselves - these citizens are our children. We need to give a voice to all children and demand that all children receive a full time education. To do anything less will be destructive to our children and our community.

I personally believe that the DOE and the Hawaii Teachers Union have not done their job to promote and protect our children's education. The education budget in Hawaii is quite reasonable and our government has frequently responded with increase in funding when monies for school projects were requested by the DOE. However, the end result of what resources have been made available to our children and teachers is simply pathetic. I believe that in this crisis we should not only be trying to put a stop to school furlough days, but also demand that full time education and enrichment programs be brought back into our schools. The DOE must be held responsible, a formal audit must be done, and the DOE must be restructured so that they are accountable to the people that they are supposed to serve.

I do realize however that this may take months to be put into action and our children and teachers do not have months. Time off from school is wasted time that will only be a set back to our children's education. Therefore I urge our government to use what emergency funds may be available to stop furlough days now while more permanent actions take place to audit and restructure our DOE. To do anything less is a gross disservice to the children of our society.

Mahalo for your time,
Leocadia Conlon
leocadia@psdschools.org
2

Sen. Will Espero

From: Paula Carroll [paula.carroll@netmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 11:08 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Teacher furloughs, Friday, October 30, 2009, 12:30 p.m.

I want to express my dismay about furlough days falling on instructional days. Teachers have several paid holidays during the school year (Thanksgiving, Christmas break, winter break, spring break, *ad nauseum*). Why not use those days as non-paid days when school is not in session anyway? The children are not the losers or being punished as they are under the current furlough system. Teachers wouldn't be laid off either.

Paula Carroll
[REDACTED]

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Date: October 29, 2009

To: The Special Senate Committee to Consider Approaches to Teacher Furloughs
Friday, October 30, 2009, 12:30 p.m.

Fax: [REDACTED]

From: Chief Moana Tavita Leatutufu

Re: Fix the Student/Teacher Furloughs

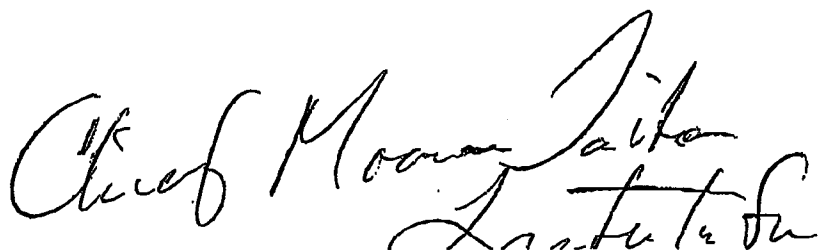
My parents, both teachers—my father, an esteemed High-Chief, and my mother with a Masters in Education from Stanford University—moved their family here from American Samoa, specifically for the educational opportunities that Hawaii offered me and my five siblings. We left a much easier life for the hard-scrabble of Palolo Valley with one goal in mind: Education. We worked hard and moved up, through Education. I have travelled the world and been to over 25 other countries. I am proud to be Samoan, Polynesian, and to reside in Hawaii as a U.S. citizen.

Right now, I am not proud of our state's actions regarding my children's education. It is the desire of every parent, more so with immigrants, that our children have a better life and better opportunities. These furloughs are denying our children a better opportunity and it is shameful for all of us. We are hurting our children's futures while ignoring the hard-fought values of the generations before us.

We must use whatever resources there are to correct this wrong. Public education was started in 1840 under the Kingdom of Hawaii; in our 50th year of Statehood, we must honor the obligations to our future and past generations. Fix the student/teacher furloughs.

Chief Moana Tavita Leatutufu

[REDACTED]
Paia, HI 96779



Sen. Will Espero

From: Pamela Vera [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 1:28 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Approach to Teacher Furloughs 10/23/09 Noon

Aloha,

I am a tax paying, parent of public school children here in Hawaii. As such I beg you not to throw more funds (Hurricane Relief funds or Rainey Day funds) into a Broken system, without FIRST addressing the Real problem. -

The DOE and BOE are Old, outdated systems that need a complete overhaul (and over throw!). These un-elected (and in my opinion, ineffective) peoples have seen to it to secure for themselves 2/3rds of the funds intended for public education. They need to show us how those funds were spent.... where did the money go? We need them to be Accountable. Most of these people have NO true involvement with children or educating them. Lets illiminate 60% of these Dept/ Board members and correct the balance of 2/3rds of the budget going Directly to the Front Line... the teachers, and ON Campus admin, and principals. This will place the responsibility of schools performance back in the hands of the principals and teacher at each school, giving them the tools needed to reach the benchmarks I believe the desire to reach and overcome. It will also encourage the communities of each school to step up and assist in ways as of yet, unseen, since they will feel the immediate response/performance of thier aide.

As for an Immediate solution, we need the HSTA to be flexible with the minutes of instruction per day they allow, so that we can add hours back to the shortened Wednesday schedule, and convert all of the teacher "in service" days back to instructional days, to keep our kids from falling further into the vast hole of neglect that has been created.

We need elected officials, un-elected boards/dept.s, the school staffs, and general public to work Together for the good of our children, with Open and transparent agendas and budgets.... to put Hawaii's children back on a path for success. Haven't we dragged them behind the bus long enough?

In closing, I have never met a teacher who chose that particular profession as a means to get wealthy... only those who do it for the Love of the children, and hope for our future being better and brighter. Let's make that the reality.

Respectfully,

Pamela Vera
Parent & taxpayer

SPECIAL SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONSIDER APPROACHES TO TEACHER FURLOUGHS

DATE: Friday, October 30, 2009
TIME: 12:30 p.m.
PLACE: Auditorium
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

I have been a public school teacher in Hawai`i for 17-1/2 years and a public school administrator for almost six years. I have shaken my head in disbelief many times through the years over the decisions made concerning public education, but the decision to deprive Hawai`i's keiki of a significant number of days of their opportunity for education is the most outrageous. I find it very difficult to believe that the learned men and women of our state's legislature could not come up with a better way of saving the state money than placing the consequences for that savings on the backs of our children.

Anyone who understands basic math can see that reducing the pay of a huge segment of the state's work force will result in a decrease in tax revenues, due to the loss of discretionary income to that work force, and their inability to spend money in local businesses. As the tax revenues dwindle, more of the work force will have its pay reduced or removed, when the state requires further layoffs of state workers, and businesses close their doors because they cannot make a profit, and it will not end until there is nothing left of our state economy.

For those of you who don't think this has any affect on you because your children attend private schools, think again. When there are no customers, there are no businesses. When there are no businesses, there are no customers seeking goods and services and those CEOs, doctors, lawyers, bankers and other professionals have no one able to avail themselves of their services. You will no longer be able to afford those public school tuitions. My issue is not with the private schools, I hasten to add. One of my children attended private school for a part of her education because that was in her best interests. My other child, however, attended public schools right through the University of Hawai`i at Manoa, and is now one of those teachers having to take a furlough every Friday.

Because of politics, and politics only, several avenues that do not mean people losing their jobs or a portion of their income have been discarded. An increase in the state general excise tax is one of them. But our legislators and governor would rather send our keiki home from school and state into economic disaster rather than work together to come up with a solution that would keep people working and keep our tax revenues up.

This whole mess could be cleaned up with a modest increase in the general excise tax coupled with putting all state offices—including schools—on a four-day work week. The savings to the state in the cost of operating the facilities for four rather than five days each week would be significant. School days could be lengthened

by two hours each day, more than making up for the time “lost” from going to a four days week. State workers could continue to earn enough to allow them to spend in local businesses and the loss in state tax revenues from local sources would be eliminated.

When will those of you—legislators and governor alike--charged with working in the best interests of ALL of the citizens of our state take your responsibilities seriously, forget whether you are Democrat or Republican, and do what is right? We keep waiting, and waiting, and waiting.

Katherine L. Bowers

[REDACTED]

Kailua, HI 96734

(808) [REDACTED]

Sen. Will Espero

From: Joanne Williams [mailto:joanne.williams@ymail.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 9:39 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Furlough Fridays

Dear Sirs/Madams

The education of our children is the cornerstone of their success (or failure) in life. The implementation of furloughs is a direct assault on the possibilities of such success, and the adults who came up with this idea should be ashamed! While I understand the importance of teachers getting paid, it is the continuing gross misappropriation of funds that has gotten us here. There is vast over spending and in none of the right areas.

The children and families in Hawaii have been unilaterally thrown under the bus by the HSTA, DOE and Governor Lingle. Politics and posturing seem to have clouded their judgment. Furloughs for our children's learning should not even be an option. Why not extend Wednesdays? Why not make the teacher's furloughs on the myriad of other days (professional development, collaboration, etc.) when students are not present at school? Anything is better than sacrificing our children & family's well being! Students, many who may already be struggling, may never recover from the lack of instruction time. What will that do to their future, as well as the future of this state? That is a gamble I sure do not want to take!

Mahalo for your time
Joanne Williams
Kahana, Maui

(children at King Kamehameha III and Laihainaluna)

Sen. Will Espero

From: KAREN SETH [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 9:46 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: OCTOBER 30TH HEARING TESTIMONY

I am deeply concerned about the closure of Hawaii public school for 17 days, and the impact it will have on our children. My daughter is a fourth grader at Aikahi Elementary School, and I am so frustrated that the state's budget crisis has to result in the sacrifice of our children's education. The way to solve the economic crisis long-term is to invest in our children's education not take away from it.

Please convene a Special Session of the Legislature to address this issue and find an alternative solution that does not include cutting teachers or furloughs on instructional days.

Mahalo,
Karen Seth
[REDACTED]
Kaneohe, HI 96744

Sen. Will Espero

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 9:51 AM
To: sentaniguch@Capitol.hawaii.gov
Cc: Sen. Colleen Hanabusa; Rep. Ken Ito; Sen. Norman Sakamoto; Sen. Carol Fukunaga; Sen. Will Espero; Sen. Gary Hooser; Rep. Marcus Oshiro
Subject: level of transparency

The last thing Hawaii needs or can afford is a special five day legislative session. Some of your colleagues with future career goals are salivating about five additional days of microphone and media time. Don't do it. The cameras will be there in ten weeks. You are each evaluated by your accomplishments, not aspirations. Please take the time and money in the next ten weeks to send a postcard to your constituents expressing some form of sympathy/empathy for the difficult times they are all facing. Many of them will never forget your 32% pay raise this year.

I am one of many who was sucked into the deep, dark hole of Chapter 431P which became effective on July 1, 1993. Because I chose to refinance my house in July 1993, I was forced to pay a 1% special mortgage recording fee (more than \$2900). This assessment set by statute was attached to every mortgage recorded at the Bureau of Conveyances from 1993 to 2001. It's called the Hurricane Relief Fund. Were you forced to contribute? If not, then you perhaps believe this is your money. I'm researching the document and nowhere does it say that a partial or entire raid of the fund can be given to the DOE. You can safely assume that a consequence of a "raid" on the Hurricane Fund will result in legal action.

Helen Awaya
Retired senior, voter, constituent, consumer and citizen

Sen. Will Espero

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 9:54 AM
To: Rep. Jessica Wooley; Sen. Will Espero
Cc: sheena_alaiasa@notes.k12.hi.us; pamela_kino@notes.k12.hi.us;
val_nakagawa@notes.k12.hi.us
Subject: Furlough Fridays

Senator Espero and Representative Wooley,

You, of all people, must understand how this has got to stop! I have three children and all three learn very differently. My oldest, a Sophomore at Castle High, will be ok missing 17 days because she takes on extra work, works hard, puts extra effort into every assignment--she will be fine and the day off will actually help to keep her going physically and mentally.

My other two, students at King Intermediate, will not. I feel my other daughter, especially, is already being left behind. She is so smart but only does what is expected of her. Because she is a lousy test taker--her HSA tests are good but not recognized by the schools as being good enough for her to be put into a GT program or to be in a program that challenges her in any way. As a result, she has never done homework at home since we moved to Hawaii 6 years ago (from Japan where they grew up in the Japanese school system and although my husband and I were born in the midwest, in many ways, English was a second language for them). She gets it done in class because she says she gets bored listening to the teacher. I have tried to talk to the school counselors about this but their hands seem tied. Now that she will be getting 17 fewer days of instruction, she will have 17 fewer chances to do any classwork at all because she is not doing it at home. In fact, she gets so bored at home while her brother and sister are working on homework, that she has started writing novels. She is on her 3rd or 4th. She took copies of her last (52 pages!) one to her English teacher, last year's English teacher and another teacher and although they seemed to encourage her to write more, because it wasn't classwork, there was no offer to help her polish it or go further with this gift she has.

My son, also does not do as well on HSA tests and therefore does not qualify for GT classes. Like my oldest daughter (who also does not do well on tests) he was given a chance in elementary school to be in GT in 6th grade. Unlike my daughter who was automatically received into the GT program at King because she had been in it in 6th grade, due to rule changes, he had to re-test to enter it at King and was not allowed in. He did get in the math program after someone dropped out and because of a hearing difficulty and the noise of airplanes at King which has required some time for him, he's been working hard to prove he deserves to be there. And, with the help of his wonderful teachers, he is living up to that challenge in every way. My guess is that once he does get used to the environmental factors and is able to adjust with his auditory processing disorder, he will also be craving additional challenges, which is what happened his last two years at Ahuimanu. This is a child that thrives on classroom participation and interaction with the teachers and to lose that on Furlough Fridays is horrible.

Three children of the same parents; three different learning-styles and two children that are going to suffer if Furlough Fridays are not ended. Please do what you need to do to restore these instructional days for the sake of all the other families like mine who are scared to death about what this will mean for their children.

Thank you for listening.

Diane Weible

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE
SPECIAL SENATE COMMITTEE
TO CONSIDER APPROACHES TO TEACHER FURLOUGHS

Friday, October 30, 2009
12:30 p.m.

WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY

Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Espero and members of the committee:

My name is Lloyd Lim. Although I work for State government, I am testifying solely in my capacity as a private citizen on the issue of teacher furloughs and how they can be addressed.

I wish to point out that the issue of teacher furloughs is only one part of a larger question about funding of the DOE, which itself is only a small part of the larger question about funding State government. These questions relate to even larger questions, not only about the economy of Hawaii, but about the national economy. Obviously, our economy here feeds our tax base which feeds our government.

At the national level we nearly had a collapse in the financial system which has largely been averted, but some of the structural problems remain and are not totally fixable by federal regulation, even assuming that passes. Our federal government is engaged in Keynesian activities and they are spending a lot of money. One can debate about that Keynesian policy,¹ but when you start talking about heading towards \$17 trillion dollars in federal debt, we are getting to a level of government spending that is destabilizing. Why is it destabilizing? Because it creates uncertainty for business and for consumers, particularly with respect to taxes, inflation and interest rates. Add to that the coming crisis in federal entitlements, which Congress is not dealing with, and uncertainty about the wars we are fighting and the overall situation is worrisome. It could be that our economy comes roaring back, or it could be that we are witnessing a fundamental change in the American consumer as relates to discretionary spending. I don't have to tell you that a vacation in Hawaii falls in the realm of discretionary spending. We also have to consider the future loss of Senator Inouye and the threat this poses to the federal spending which is the other big part of Hawaii's economy besides tourism.

¹ Keynes is the author of the pump priming theory that government spending can make up for weak private sector demand. Having actually read Keynes in the original text, I can tell you that he is a theoretician as compared to Adam Smith who was an empiricist. Keynes went wrong on two notable points. First, that the intervention by the government itself can create problems. Second, that the government is not a flexible balloon that can expand and contract at will to supplement consumer demand. The primary evidence for pump priming is WW2. Two things need to be noted about that. First, the stimulus was very large and for an extended period. Second, America ended up in the primary economic and military position in the world at the end of it. Therefore, extrapolating from that experience to current stimulus attempts, which have not been constructed properly to begin with, is perilous.

Sen. Will Espero

From: Robert Tellander [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 11:01 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: FURLOUGHS FOR THE COMMON GOOD

Aloha,

Here are my responses: One, a one-page short form, that suggests two options. Another, a two-page long form, that supplies the rationale, as well. I also plan to attend the session tomorrow.

Sincerely, Robert Tellander

(1) SHORT FORM:

FURLOUGHS FOR THE COMMON GOOD

Furloughs keep benefits, sustain careers, and preserve the *status quo*. They retain costly health care for staff, reduce services and productivity for the public, and do not change the institutionalized structure of the services offered. Consequently, we have bundled all our educational and medical care problems in a locked, "back room" and expect them to become "productive assets" once the economy revives enough to reactivate them and restore the systems to full production.

Therefore, I support furloughs as an opportunity to improve the lives of all citizens who use and need public services. I do not, however, support furloughs as a holding pattern to preserve the *status quo* in our public health services and educational systems.

FURLOUGHS IN PUBLIC EDUCATION

In public education we need to focus on what we do and whether the outcomes merit its continuation. In short, we need to validate what actually enables students to grasp new ideas and determine how they can create their own valid insights and apply them meaningfully to overcome that which defines their incapacity. Now we use a normed standard that favors only those who conform to it. In short, we want them to become more than "normal."

On Fridays, we should invite back all the keiki to tell all school principals and their support staff orally and/or on questionnaires, "What in the current curricula, do they **not** understand?" Any good administrator should be able to translate those perceived needs and curricular flaws into something where the students themselves could teach each other new insights at the subsequent Friday gathering, in the absence of teachers who normally act as "curricular **control** agents."

FURLOUGHS IN PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES

Similarly, health care must be extended beyond the medical model. Screening should be done at each public school of the students' vital signs to see who is **not** well. Rather than prescribe drugs to the clusters of sick students to mask their symptoms, discover from them how they became ill. By moving away from the medicated muffling of symptoms toward public health, where illness has real origins and victims can participate in recognizing them and preventing them so others in their community do not become victims, as well, we venture into the field of "health care."

Kaiser and HMSA need such data to make valid maps of disease by zip code clusters on the island to enhance their diagnostics and to screen out psychosomatic illness. They should supply a nurse practitioner/staff to collect the data on Fridays. Otherwise, Public Health Officers should collect the data and sell it to medical care practitioners, or use the data as evidence of misdiagnosis by them during any pandemic illness.

In both these examples, note that we seek to create common and beneficial solutions to problems that can be achieved through inquiry, discussion, cooperation and common action (help) and thus improve the climate of learning in our schools where currently, the survival of the most socially fit poisons the ability of others by preventing them from participating in the learning process, and dealing similarly and effectively with their health problems to overcome massive, possibly benign, neglect.

Robert Tellander
[REDACTED]
Honolulu, HI 96815-2002
[REDACTED]
tellander@hawaii.gov

(2) LONG FORM:

FURLOUGHS FOR THE COMMON GOOD

Furloughs keep benefits, sustain careers, and preserve the *status quo*. They retain costly health care for staff, reduce services and productivity for the public, and do not change the institutionalized structure of the services offered. Consequently, we have bundled all our educational and medical care problems in a locked, "back room" and expect them to become "productive assets" once the economy revives enough to reactivate them and restore the systems to full production.

Both the State's Public Education System and the Medical Care System do not offer what they purport to give: Care and enhanced human outcomes. Instead, they have opted for a system of **control** that rewards the healthy and the well-behaved with an enhanced status as role models. The ill and incapacitated become "burdens" that the system must carry. Similarly in public education, the "No Child Left Behind Program merely identified which behind was attached to which child. It judged them as inadequate and told the educational systems that under their **control** this inadequacy persists. Instead of relating to the patient and to the student, the system responded by demonstrating that the cultural factors beyond their control caused the problem. Blame, thus, was deflected; the problems were not addressed.

In our medical care system, the poor and ill are told that they must take better care of themselves and not to expect miracles in the emergency room. And certainly not, if they lack health insurance.

The medical care system and the public educational system have both become the willing victims of the economic system.

After years of hearing "government cannot do anything right," we have come to believe it. Conversely, private, free market solutions will produce better and more efficient outcomes. Acting on that assumption, we have created two systems of essential care that we cannot now afford to operate.

We in Hawaii, like those on Wall Street who believe that profit best defines the "common good" and who nearly destroyed the economic system in this simplistic quest, now face the task of redefining health care away from the medical **control** model and now too must refocus education on the needs and abilities of the student and not their **control**.

Contrary to what the vested interest saw in furloughs, they now have become a beneficial means where we can question and rethink our public services. Obviously, if "no services on Fridays" makes no appreciable difference, we should not restore that option when the financial means is restored.

More importantly, we need to test the capacity of our administrators--our public service leaders. If they cannot improve services during these difficult times, we should let them go and replace them with others who can. In so doing we reduce our service costs to only functional and beneficial services lead by those who make that happen.

FURLOUGHS IN PUBLIC EDUCATION

In public education we need to focus on what we do and whether the outcomes merit its continuation. In short, we need to validate what actually enables students to grasp new ideas and determine how they can create their own valid insights and apply them meaningfully to overcome that which defines their incapacity. Now we use a normed standard that favors only those who conform to it. In short, we want them to become more than "normal."

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FURLOUGHS IN PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES

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In both these examples, note that we seek to create common and beneficial solutions to problems that can be achieved through inquiry, discussion, cooperation and common action (help) and thus improve the climate of learning in our schools where currently, the survival of the most socially fit poisons the ability of others by preventing them from participating in the learning process, and dealing similarly and effectively with their health problems to overcome massive, possibly benign, neglect.

CONCLUSION

Therefore, I support furloughs as an opportunity to improve the lives of all citizens who use and need public services. I do not, however, support furloughs as a holding pattern to preserve the *status quo* in our public health services and educational systems.

Robert Tellander

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Sen. Will Espero

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 1:46 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Testimony for the Special Senate Committee to Consider Approaches to Teacher Furloughs
Attachments: Testimony October 30.doc

Aloha,

Please see the attached written testimony for the October 30, 2009 meeting of the Special Senate Committee to Consider Approaches to Teacher Furloughs.

Mahalo,

Liz Sager
Maui Region Director, Hawaii State PTSA
President, Lahaina Intermediate School PTSA

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

October 29, 2009

TO: Special Senate Committee to Consider Approaches to Teacher Furloughs

RE: Written testimony for hearing at 12:30pm, on October 30, 2009

My name is Elizabeth Sager and I am a parent of an intermediate public school student. I would like to testify against the newly implemented teacher furlough days and encourage our legislatures to look for a better solution to the current budget deficit.

In light of the fact that Hawaii's public schools are consistently ranked at the bottom among public schools in the nation, every viable option to keep our students in school should be considered. I would recommend the following options:

1. Substitute waiver days for furlough days, therefore increasing the number of instructional days.
2. Substitute professional development days for furlough days, therefore increasing the number of instructional days.
3. Borrow from the hurricane fund to help balance the education budget. This fund, which was set up as a safe guard in a time of crisis when insurance companies were not underwriting insurance policies following Hurricane Iniki, is no longer needed. Insurance companies are once again providing hurricane insurance to Hawaii homeowners. Our current crisis is now the state of our public education.
4. Encourage the BOE and DOE that should layoffs become necessary, cut from the top, not at the teacher level, which will most influence our students.

The message we have sent Hawaii's keiki through teacher furloughs is that they and their education and future do not matter. Education must be a priority in Hawaii, as our children attempt to succeed in a global environment. Even third world countries understand the importance of education. Why does Hawaii think its okay to cheat our children of their right to education?

Please use your influence to right the wrong that has been done to the children of Hawaii.

Thank you for your consideration and the opportunity to express myself.

Respectfully,

Elizabeth Sager

[REDACTED]
Lahaina, HI 96761

[REDACTED]

Sen. Will Espero

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 1:56 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Furloughs

I know you are fighting for us, thanks. Please get rid of the furlough days. Mafeleine Brennan

Sent via BlackBerry from T-Mobile

Sen. Will Espero

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 2:03 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: teacher furloughs

Special Senate Committee to Consider Approaches to Teacher Furloughs

Date: Friday, October 30, 2009
Time: 12:30 p.m.
Place: Auditorium, State Capital

Thank you for this hearing but why is it that our state senate is reactive and not proactive?

Does our state senate value a well educated community? Linda Lingle's original demand of thirty-six furlough days continued her agenda against public education. Public education has been under attack since Regan appointed Bill Bennett to Secretary of Education. Bill Bennett wanted to privatize public education. A senate research paper stated that the direct result of George Bush's No Child Left Behind would increase the corporate testing industry from a million dollar to a billion dollar industry. The underlined theme here is that republicans do not value a well educated society! It is easier to manipulate when the masses are uneducated. They do believe in having the best private education money can buy-for the few that can afford it! Actions speak louder than words. Three years ago Hawaii had a six hundred million dollar surplus. The legislature allocated 200 million to education. The unhonorable governor didn't release it. Hawaii has been four hundred million dollars behind in repair and maintenance each of the four years I have taught in this state. Just recently HGEA, HSTA and the DOE were filling out paperwork for the 4.3 billion Race to The Top federal education funds. Linda Lingle was reluctant to be involved with this process until the unions reminded her that her legacy in education might be salvaged if some of this money came to Hawaii. Lingle and the speaker have been outspokenly against a special session. A special session was called for to save the super ferry but not for our keiki? Where are the priorities? I feel furloughing will also have an adverse effect on the teacher shortage. The DOE has had to stop spending twenty million dollars a year to train and recruit teachers to come to Hawaii. Who on the mainland has five thousand dollars to move to Hawaii and receive the lowest pay in America-when you factor in the cost of living? First find the funds that have been set aside for a rainy day and restore the furloughed school days. Second, start respecting education by making it a priority! *"If we're going to have a successful democratic society, we have to have a well educated and healthy citizenry".* - - Thomas Jefferson

Justin Hughey
Teacher

[REDACTED]

Sen. Will Espero

From: Shiyana Thenabadu [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 2:09 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: testimony for Special Senate Committee to Consider Approaches to Teacher Furloughs

Dear Sen. Espero and Members of the Special Senate Committee to Consider Approaches to Teacher Furloughs:

I have one child attending kindergarten in a Hawaii public school and another one attending high school at a private school. I would have loved to have seen my older child graduate from a top-notch Hawaii public school, but unfortunately, there are only substandard public intermediate and high schools in Hawaii. Our public school students score well below the national average in math, science and reading/writing. Taking away an additional 17 days of classroom instruction will only make matters worse - a lot worse. We all know that and yet the DOE, BOE, HSTA, Gov. Lingle and the legislators are permitting furlough Friday #2 to take place today.

I am so disappointed that the DOE believes that cutting 17 days of instruction is the best solution to balancing its budget. Why didn't the DOE cut 17 days of paid holidays and professional development/planning days instead? Probably because the powers-that-be were afraid that teachers may not vote in favor of that contract. So, they took the easy path - cut instructional days and send out the message that there will be no lay-offs and the teachers will get a three-day weekend. Who cares about the consequences? I care. And thousands of other parents care. And I know that there are hundreds of teachers who care.

So, please, let's do the right thing. Let's have the teachers take another vote to amend the Memorandum of Agreement to make all or most of the furlough days planning days and paid holidays. This is what should have been on the table from day one. I think Pat Hamamoto, Wil Okabe and the BOE will be surprised to see that most teachers are willing to give up a few paid holidays and planning days to restore classroom instruction time. Its not too late to stop this fiasco.

Presently, for an individual school to swap planning days for instruction, they have to jump through hoops and get the approval of too many administrators. Although I applaud the schools that are forging ahead with this so called solution, I feel this situation is unfair. All public school children should have the same number of classroom instruction dates. The best way to do this is to have the teachers vote again and to mandate that the minimum number of instruction days at Hawaii public school is no less than the national average. It's the least we can do to at least maintain our standard of public school education in Hawaii.

If we cut 17 days of instruction, don't be surprised to see Hawaii at the very bottom of the state rankings for Hawaii public schools. Is that what we want for our state and our keiki? I sure hope not.

Thank you for taking the time to listen. Now, let's take action!

Aloha,
Shiyana Thenabadu

address: 10 [REDACTED] AVE., Kailua, HI 96734
phone: [REDACTED]

Sen. Will Espero

From: Richard Wainscoat [redacted@mac.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 2:15 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: OCTOBER 30TH HEARING TESTIMONY

Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Espero, and members of the committee:

I have one child in public school, and I am extremely concerned about the impacts of the furloughs on my son's education. I also teach astronomy at the University of Hawaii to undergraduates, many of whom are products of Hawaii's public school system. I often find myself teaching basic science, mathematics, and problem solving skills that should have been learned in high school. It troubles me enormously that such a serious degradation of an already struggling public school system has been so recklessly implemented.

I believe that urgent action is needed to restore classroom instruction in Hawaii's public schools. We simply cannot wait until the regular legislative session - by then, there will be no hope of recovery of the 17 lost days of the 2009-2010 school year, and the education of Hawaii's public school children will have been irreparably harmed.

I would like to make the following recommendations to the legislature:

1. Mandate a minimum number of instructional days per year for public schools. I suggest that this should be larger than the pre-furlough number (180). Many teachers that I have talked to believe that there is too little time to teach what is required, and with the recent increases in testing, regular instructional time has been further decreased.
2. This should not be an unfunded mandate - I suggest that part of this can come from further cuts of non-instructional components of the DOE, but do realize that further funding will be needed via the hurricane fund, rainy day fund, or tax increases. In return for restoring full (2008-2009) teacher salaries, I suggest that a longer school year be immediately implemented. In this way, teachers will still be playing their part in these tough economic times to help Hawaii.
3. The lengthened school year should form the beginning of a strong effort from Hawaii to secure funds from the \$4.35 billion Federal Race to the Top fund. In the present 17 day furlough situation, Hawaii has no hope whatsoever for any part of this generous federal program.

Hawaii's children are our future. Please take immediate action to restore instructional time in Hawaii's public schools and invest in the future.

Aloha,
Richard Wainscoat

Sen. Will Espero

From: Jenny Fujita [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, October 28, 2009 10:19 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Teacher Furloughs

Aloha, Senator Espero,

The following is my testimony for the public hearing at 12:30 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 30 at the State Capitol.

Losing 17 days of instructional time is unacceptable and I support both short and long term solutions to this issue.

As a short term solution, a 5-day special session of the legislature should be held immediately to resolve the issue. We cannot put this off until the regular session in January of 2010. Putting the decision off to 2010 will cause the loss of a full school year. If we act now it is possible to save a majority of the present school year.

Funds exist now in the Hawaii Hurricane Relief Fund (\$185,000,000) and in the state's Rainy Day Fund (\$50,000,000 to \$60,000,000) that could be borrowed/transferred to the DOE to provide the approximately \$60,000,000 needed to restore the remaining instructional days that will otherwise be lost.

If we delay efforts to secure this funding now, the consequences are grave: we'll be providing a substandard education for our children, young children will be left home alone on furlough days, parents will struggle to take time off from work to be with their children on furlough days, employers will be left understaffed because employees have to be home with their children, etc.

As a long term solution, there must be a constitutional inclusion regarding the minimum amount of instruction time required for our children. Otherwise, school days could be taken away again should there be budget shortfalls again. The unions, DOE, and Governor were able to eliminate these school days without any repercussion. Given that there are no instruction time standards in our law books or our constitution, voters are left virtually powerless in this situation.

The question is whether or not we believe that our children have a right to a certain standard of public education, which we all pay into. A constitutional amendment would be a promise to our children that public education won't fail them. An amendment regarding the minimum amount of instructional time won't necessarily impact the quality of our public school education but without the quantity, we can't possibly have quality.

I urge you to take action to secure immediate funds for our schools and to amend our state constitution to include a minimum amount of instructional time. Let's make this a positive and permanent legacy for our children's future.

Mahalo and aloha,
Jenny Fujita, parent of a 3rd grader at Kalaheo Elementary School
[redacted]
Kalaheo, HI 96741

Topic: Teacher Furloughs

Special Senate Committee

Friday Oct. 30th 12:30 pm at the State Capital Auditorium

My name is Jennifer Antony, I am a registered nurse and my husband is a contractor, we live on Kauai. I am writing this letter in support of finding an immediate solution to the 17 furlough days in our public schools.

I have two children in public school. My daughter is a 7th grader at Kapaa Middle. She just finished her first quarter with a 4.0 GPA and is rated #1 out of 247 students! She loves school. Her teachers are expressing their stress over the loss of school days to the kids, and now the homework load will increase as the school days decrease. She is also now feeling the stress. How is she supposed to continue to excel with 17 days less school? This is unacceptable!

My son is a 3rd grader at Kilauea elementary. He is also a bright student who loves his teachers and school. He is sad because the last two weeks they were not able to do their science unit or their spelling units because of a lack of classroom time. Between the teacher workdays and furlough Fridays his teacher is playing catch up... This is unacceptable!

Hawaii's kids deserve better... Why are they the victims of this financial mess? Shouldn't the kids be the priority? **The kids are our future.** It is my job as a parent and as the Vice President of our PTSA to advocate for our kids... Therefore, I support a special session of the legislature to solve this crisis immediately and give the kids back there Fridays. This loss of classroom time should never have even been an option. This is simply unacceptable!

Thank you very much,

Jennifer Antony

Kauai

Sen. Will Espero

From: Melissa Norman [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, October 28, 2009 10:03 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Teacher Furloughs

Categories: Print Big Island

Teacher Furloughs

- 1) Losing 17 days of instructional time is unacceptable
- 2) A 5 day special session of the legislature should be held immediately to resolve the issue and we cannot put this off until the regular session in January of 2010. Putting the decision off to 2010 will cause the loss of a full school year. If we act now it is possible to save a majority of the present school year.
- 3) Funds exist now in the Hawaii Hurricane Relief Fund (\$185,000,000) and in the state's Rainy Day Fund (\$50,000,000 to \$60,000,000) that could be borrowed/transferred to the DOE to provide the approximately \$60,000,000 needed to restore the remaining instructional days that will otherwise be lost.

The students in Hawaii need more time in school. 17 days is a devastating blow that cripples the future for our community. Educating our community needs to be a top priority so that we can have a vibrant, competitive, thriving society. The research is overwhelming, more school, more success.

Please restore and re-invigorate our public school. Turn this around and make the right decision. It will give people across the country renewed faith in our leadership.

Sincerely,

Melissa Norman

Parent

12 grade student Kapa'a High School

4th grade student Kilauea Elementary School

Sen. Will Espero

From: Robert Patterson [mailto:rpatterson@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, October 28, 2009 1:10 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: October 30TH HEARING TESTIMONY

Categories: Print Big Island

To Whom it May Concern,

I believe that a special session should be considered because our children's education has been set aside and this should be unacceptable to your state of Hawaii. You should hold yourselves to a higher standard and place education at the top of your priority list.

In our house, education is very important and the message the state of Hawaii is sending is completely the opposite. You are setting each and every child up for failure by taking very needed classroom time from them. If a child is average or below average, there is virtually no way for those children to survive in this school system! What kind of government does that?

Please push for a special session to make a positive and lasting impact for the children. We teach our children to find a solution if they have made a mistake, apologize if necessary and learn from that mistake. Be an example for our children!

Thank you for your time!

Angel Patterson

Sen. Will Espero

From: Karen Kane [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, October 28, 2009 1:17 PM
To: Sen. David Ige; Sen. Les Ihara, Jr.
Subject: The obvious way to save \$ & avoid disruption of services/schools/colleges

Categories: Print Big Island

**Aloha, I saw this in the Honolulu paper when i was visiting Oahu from Hilo.
This is a definite answer to the issue of closing schools.**

October 14, 2009
Honolulu Advertiser
Page A13

FURLOUGHS

Unpaid Holidays makes more sense

Govt. Lingle has instituted furloughs to achieve payroll saving. this action results in the closing of schools, prisons, and offices with disruption of government services. **Instead of furloughs, why not have unpaid holidays for all state and county workers?**

During the holidays all schools, state institutions and offices are already closed so there won't be any disruption of services and alternative child care won't be an issue. Under the unpaid holiday system, the workload remains the same without compressing the work to four day work weeks under the furlough system. If they are going to cut your pay anyway, do it so it's less painful for everyone with the least disruption of government function.

Eliminating the state's executive mansion and vehicles for the governor and university president will also be cutting the fat. they should be able to afford to pay for their own housing and transportation like the rest of us. Other hidden perks and benefits need to be scrutinized.

Opening-day ceremonies for the Legislature should be considered a serious work day instead of being a `party day`.

The message is clear: We as a state are broke. so shape up and lead by example.

Harvey Chan
Hilo Hawaii

Karen Kane, MEd
Counselor, Disability Service Provider
Hawai'i Community College
Ha`awi Kokua Program
Services to Students with Disabilities and Academic Challenges
Mailing Address - 200 West Kawili Street - Hilo, Hawaii 96720
Program Office - Manono Campus - Bldg 388 - Room 106
KOKUA Technology Lab - Manono Campus - Bldg 388 - Room 104
V/TTY (808) 933-0702 - FAX (808) 974-7692
...assisting students in maximizing their potential by encouraging independence, self-determination, and full participation in the educational experience...

Sen. Will Espero

From: Curt Muraoka [mailto:cmuraoka@wheapcs.com]
Sent: Wednesday, October 28, 2009 1:28 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: IOUs for Union Employees

Categories: Print Big Island

Aloha Sen. Espero,

I suggest that state and union leaders discuss bond backed IOUs in lieu of pay in order to restore instructional days to public schools.

Would it be possible to use debt service to provide (for example) a 10-year note that employees could redeem upon retirement or after 10 years, whichever comes later? Something structured like US Savings Bonds might be more palatable psychologically than a simple IOU because the face value is displayed.

Thank you for the important work you are all doing.

Curtis Muraoka, Co-Director
WHEAPCS

From: Nevzat Soguk [mailto:nsoguk@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, October 28, 2009 3:55 PM
To: Sen. Brian Taniguchi
Subject: closure of our kids' school

Dear Sen. Taniguchi,

I am a constituent in your district. I am deeply concerned about the closure of school for 17 days, and the impact it will have on our children. Please convene a Special Session of the Legislature to address this issue and find an alternative solution. Mahalo.

Nevzat Soguk,

[REDACTED]

From: Dagny Looper [mailto:~~mailto:dagny.looper@gmail.com~~]

Sent: Wednesday, October 28, 2009 10:58 AM

To: Sen. Brian Taniguchi

Subject: please say no to "Furlough Friday"

Dear Senator Taniguchi,

I'm one of your constituents. I'm writing to ask that you please stand against "Furlough Friday" and keep our children in schools.

Sincerely,
Dagny Looper

From: lukas sheild [mailto:~~lksheild@gmail.com~~]
Sent: Wednesday, October 28, 2009 11:33 AM
To: Sen. Brian Taniguchi
Subject: furlough fridays

Dear Senator Taniguchi,

Hawai'i legislators are cashing in on our children's future too early hoping to save a quick dollar. Why not think more about the future of our State, children and lifestyle and look to alternative, more creative solutions to this crisis?

Why in a State known for its academic ineffectiveness (almost the least effective in the nation) would you take more educational time away from these students? Education and knowledge is the one tool that can break down the geographic isolation that hinders so many things in Hawai'i. There is no need to isolate us even more.

I am a soon-to-be father, business owner and activist and I am asking you to look into alternative solutions to this crisis other than furlough fridays. Examples such as more community based education on fridays (field trips, take a kid to work, etc), federal program dollars, and salary cuts to top payed state employees are all possibilities. In these economic times there is a need to step into the unknown with creativity and leadership. I hope you and the other legislators are able to do this.

Thank you,

Lukas

--

Lukas Daniel Sheild

~~808-957-XXXX~~

Researcher
Department of Civil & Environmental Engineering
University of Hawaii at Manoa
Honolulu, Hawaii 96822 USA

*****%
*****%

From: Marcus Daniel [mailto:m[REDACTED]@hawaii.edu]
Sent: Wednesday, October 28, 2009 12:00 PM
To: Sen. Brian Taniguchi
Subject: Furlough Fridays

Dear Senator Taniguchi,

I would like you to support the calling of a special session to address the problem created by the Governor's budget and the elimination of 17 days from the school year. This is a complete and utter disgrace. The protest last Friday drew national and international attention to the deplorable state of Hawaii's schools.

We now have the shortest school year in the nation (and possibly the developed world!). It's time for the people of Hawaii to finally break the modern plantation complex that continues to funnel our children towards service jobs and low-wage employment while nurturing a parasitic and expanding private school system. The largest in the country.

The legislature needs to act, and act decisively and boldly. This is not a temporary crisis caused by a budget shortfall. This is a systemic crisis created by years of underfunding and mismanagement.

Restore the 17 days. Raise taxes if you must. Fund public schools at a level that makes those who pay for private schools envious, and ultimately makes them squeal. And make sure that the system of democratic public education that once existed in Hawaii is restored at all levels: primary, secondary and higher education. UH Manoa must be saved as well from efforts to bleed it white and turn it into a local community college that will be swallowed up by John Morton and Linda Jonesrud, two parochial, narrow bureaucratic infighters who have no idea what a 1st class research university looks like and don't care to find out.

I think this is a decisive moment for Hawaii. This is not just about 17 furlough days or even our public schools. It's about the future of economic opportunity and democracy in the islands. Will we move decisively forward, and resist this effort to use the budget crisis to restructure the entire public sector? Or will we capitulate and allow Lingle (who is using this crisis to propel herself into national GOP politics) to betray our kids and their future?

It's that simple.

Marcus Daniel ([REDACTED])

From: Jill Haworth [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, October 28, 2009 8:37 AM
To: Sen. Brian Taniguchi
Subject: RE: Furlough Fridays

Senator – My husband and I are Manoa residents. We have two children that have graduated from Noelani and one currently in Manoa Elementary. We've seen you for years supporting Manoa's children – I think we've seen you at every May Day celebration (rain or shine) since we moved into the Manoa school district, not to mention the numerous Manoa Little League Baseball opening day ceremonies!!! We've heard the story about how you attending schools in Manoa yourself... and you must be perplexed at how we arrived with the Furlough Friday as a fix to the budget issues that have arisen in our state. To add insult to injury, there many Manoa Elementary teachers that organized enrichment programs on these days for a minimum charge of \$25 which we were more than willing to pay. However, a week prior to the program they were told to cancel the program or face ethic violation charges which would jeopardize their teaching certification. I have a daughter on Maui that is in her second year of teaching in the D.O.E. In order for her 5th graders to keep on track for meeting the DOE benchmarks, she and a group of her fellow teachers are holding weekend workshops at no charge to parents. It seems that Furlough Fridays are hurting our students and our teachers – this is sheer madness!!

I am not sure how we can assist you in a solution for this issue. In matters involving our children's education, we've turned many a times to our sons' former principal, Clayton Fujie. I encourage you to contact him and find out how we parents in Manoa, your constituents, can assist most effectively in implementing solutions. In the meantime, please let me know if there is anything we can do to show our support of your leadership for our community.

Warmest aloha, always,

Jill (and Mark) Haworth
[redacted]

From: cheryl beredo [mailto:beredo@hawaii.com]
Sent: Wednesday, October 28, 2009 1:43 PM
To: Sen. Brian Taniguchi
Subject: Request for a Special Session of the Legislature

Senator Taniguchi:

I am a constituent in your district. I am deeply concerned about the closure of school for 17 days, and the impact it will have on our children. Please convene a Special Session of the Legislature to address this issue and find an alternative solution.

Mahalo,

B. Cheryl Beredo
[REDACTED] St.
Honolulu, HI

From: Stuart P Donachie [mailto:~~stuart@hawaii.edu~~]

Sent: Wednesday, October 28, 2009 3:02 PM

To: Sen. Brian Taniguchi

Subject: Special Session of the Legislature

Mr. Taniguchi,

I am a constituent in your district. I am very concerned about the closure of our schools for 17 days, and the impact it will surely have on the future academic success of Hawai'i's children. I teach at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa, and many 'local kids' are in my classes. These children will not benefit academically from having the shortest school year in the nation. Most of the 'local kids' that enter my class would in fact benefit from having significantly more schooling before entering the university! I implore you to help convene a Special Session of the Legislature to find an alternative solution to the furloughs.

Stuart P. Donachie, PhD, MIBiol, CBiol
Associate Professor,
Department of Microbiology,
University of Hawaii,
2538 McCarthy Mall,
Honolulu,
Hawaii, 96822

Tel. ~~808-957-6452~~
Fax ~~808-957-6452~~

-----Original Message-----

From: Wendell Choy [mailto:wendellchoy@hawaii.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, October 28, 2009 2:40 PM
To: Sen. Brian Taniguchi
Subject: School Furloughs

Wendell Choy
2018 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96822-2444

October 28, 2009

The Honorable Brian T. Taniguchi
Hawaii Senate
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

Senator Taniguchi:

Everyone needs to take a chill pill. This is a temporary measure, not a permanent institution. The plain fact of it is, everyone is making cut backs to ride out this harsh economy.

The school furloughs are a necessary evil. Further, there are many studies that show four longer school days can be more effective than five shorter days. Bottom line, we're doing what we need to.

I don't think the motivation against the school furloughs is as much about the keiki, as it is about parents who don't want to have to watch their own kids. Either way, we need to stick with our decisions, and ride them out.

Sincerely,

Wendell Choy
8 [REDACTED]

From: Susan Bradford [mailto:~~susanbradford@hawaiiantelecom.com~~]
Sent: Wednesday, October 28, 2009 2:40 PM
To: Sen. Brian Taniguchi
Subject: FW: Testimony for Special Session on Education

Dear Senator Taniguchi,

Attached is my testimony for the Special Senate Hearing on Education regarding furloughs but perhaps more importantly the once of a lifetime opportunities for upgrading our primary and secondary education in Hawaii using stimulus funds, and help from the Gates Foundation. A year from now, this offer will not be on the table. The time is now. Please act!

Aloha, Susan Bradford
Kihei, HI

~~808-938-7017~~
~~susanbradford@hawaiiantelecom.com~~

Dear Senator Taniguchi, Senator Espero and the Members of the Senate Special Committee,

Most would agree that the quality of primary/secondary education in Hawaii is dismal. Hawaii is near the top of states on spending per student yet one of the lowest (42nd overall, Morgan Quintos ranking 2006) in regards to quality of education. Now the 17 furlough days are creating the shortest school year in the nation.

U.S. Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, decried the furloughs in a letter to the Honolulu Advertiser. 'Reduction in school days is not the way to invest in education' According to Duncan, it's important to increase, not decrease, learning time for students as is happening in education globally. Otherwise our students won't be prepared for success in the global workforce.

The good news? Hawaii presently has an unprecedented opportunity to fix this problem: to upgrade our educational system (let's at least rank 25th in the nation for a start), better educate our kids and prepare them for their future as well as ours, and, put our teachers back to work!

How? The Federal Stimulus Program which was designed so that states like ours could invest in education by extending the school year and enhancing instruction. But while other states are using these funds to expand learning opportunities, Hawaii is moving in the exact opposite direction with furloughs. We should take advantage of these funds. Our legislators in Washington have offered to help.

Additionally, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, according to the Maui News Oct 26, is offering \$250,000 apiece to help states apply for the stimulus funds as long as the states go along with the foundations' researched approach to improving our schools.

What are we waiting for? I encourage you, our state legislators, to **take advantage of this golden opportunity?** As Duncan says: 'The people in Hawaii must come together to create a solution.' As legislators, please bring together the parents, the teachers, unions, and Department of Education to fundamentally upgrade our broken system. **Ask for help/funding from the US Department of Education and the Gates Foundation and our legislators in Washington.**

Let's take advantage of this once in a lifetime opportunity to bring this level of change to Hawaii's schools and to prepare our kids and our country for the 21st century.

Thank you,

Susan Bradford

~~_____~~
sus. _____@hawaii.net

October 28, 2009

Lori Fleming

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Dear Hawaii Senators and State Representatives,

I am writing to you in strict opposition of the Friday School Furlough program. Our children need to be put as the TOP priority, as they are an investment in the future of our nation (and world). Education is the key to knowledge and success... without it, we may as well be turning the clock backwards instead of forward.

I have a 2nd grader at Hanalei Elementary School. We are fortunate enough to have a great group of hard working teachers and loving parents. However, our community is already being affected by groups of teenagers who are stealing cars, breaking into houses, and vandalizing property. I wonder, with all the extra time these furloughs are affording the older kids, will they choose to be law abiding citizens or find themselves with too much time on their hands?

Many parents work full time jobs and rely on the public school system to offer a safe and educational environment for their kids. These parents cannot afford to pay for childcare, or even special Friday camps which have been frantically created. Most of these children will be left on their own, to parent themselves, or possibly with older siblings who may also be furloughed from school. Without guidance from proper role models, it will be easy for these kids to find their way into drugs, alcohol, crime and indifference.

We all know that Hawaii already does not rank among the top states for education and brilliance. When we furlough our children and show them that education lacks importance in our society, we are setting them up to accept mediocrity and keep their goals low. We should be pulling money from other sources, possibly even waiting to repair those potholes (or thinking twice before spending \$44 million on a super ferry), so that our children can benefit from the hard working teachers we have.

As far as I know, there is no other place who allows a 3 ½ day school week on a regular basis. The kids already are released at 12:45 on Wednesdays, and now furloughed on Fridays. How are we going to prepare our children for a typical 5 day work week if they have never learned to be accountable for anything over 3 ½ days?? In one editorial to our newspaper, I read that 'we are setting our kids up to only be the laborers, the waiters, the maids, and the drivers for the educated rich tourists that come visit our island'.

I know I want more for my child.

I urge you to please do whatever it takes to put education back as a priority in Hawaii.

Thank you,
Lori Fleming

Senator Will Espero

via Facsimile (808) 586-6361

re: October 30, 2009 meeting to fix school furloughs - 12:30 Capital Auditorium

Dear Senator Espero and other Senate Members:

Two years ago when Representative Calvin Say was considering convening a special session to draft legislation to keep the Hawaii Superferry operating, he was quoted in the Honolulu Advertiser as saying, "For me, when you have a crisis, that's when you're supposed to rise to the occasion."

The State has a crisis today - with our schools closed for 34 days over the next two years and with the shortest school year in the country (and the state with the second fewest number of days - North Dakota - has 10 more days per year than we do).

I expect the Hawaii legislature to rise to the occasion for our schools, the way it did so swiftly for the Hawaii Superferry - a single business -- two years ago. Was the Superferry worth more to this State than public education?

As a graduate of a public high school, UH-Manoa, and the William S. Richardson Law School, Hawaii's public education system was an integral part of my personal and professional development. Now, with two children in public schools, school furloughs undermine a core confidence that I have in my children's ability to get a good education in Hawaii's public school system. My husband and I have been worried during this past month that it's time to choose private schools for our children. We keep asking ourselves -- they cut out 17 days, who's to say the cuts won't increase in the future -- 20 days per year, 25 days per year?

Please find a way to fund the lost instructional days, increasing the G.E. tax if necessary. We are at a pivotal moment in Hawaii's history: what is to become of Hawaii if its elected leaders and its middle class wholly abandon the public school system?

Thank you,

Tracy Murakami

Tracy Murakami

Kauai

Sen. Will Espero

From: Tsuhako, Emily S CIV NAVFAC PAC [mailto:emily.tsuhako@navy.mil]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 7:54 AM
To: Sen. Colleen Hanabusa; Sen. Will Espero; Sen. Brian Taniguchi
Cc: governor.lingle@hawaii.gov
Subject: Teacher Furloughs

Senators,

As a parent of two public elementary school children, I am frustrated with the teacher furloughs. My frustration is not that the furloughs are happening, but that the furloughs are happening on instructional days! Our State is in a fiscal nightmare and furloughs are a reality. But by having the HSTA and DOE purposely choosing the furloughs to be on instructional days is unconscionable. I believe the HSTA and DOE had an agenda behind choosing the furloughs to be on instructional days...and that agenda was to have the public go into an uproar so that the State will back down on the furloughs. After reading yesterday's Honolulu Advertiser and seeing what options the special committee are looking into (hurricane funds, rainy day funds, raising taxes), it would seem their tactics are working! If these funds are tapped into, it should be only to close the budget deficit, not reduce/eliminate the furloughs. I and many others have written to the HSTA and the DOE to let them kn

ow how we feel about having furloughs on instructional days and am hoping they would amend that part of the contract. I hope you Senators will help push the HSTA and DOE to do the same.

Emily Tsuhako

Sen. Will Espero

From: Kendall Navares [mailto:kendallnavares@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 6:53 AM
To: governor.lingle@hawaii.gov; ltgov@hawaii.gov; BOE_Hawaii@notes.k12.hi.us; mayor@honolulu.gov; Sen. Will Espero
Cc: letters@honoluluadvertiser.com; oreilly@foxnews.com; glennbeck@foxnews.com; citydesk@starbulletin.com
Subject: Budget Cuts from Education? You can't be serious?
Categories: Print Big Island

It is absolutely absurd that any form of budget cuts would come from Education. First it's ridiculous that Education would be considered for budget cuts and what is even more disturbing is that you will allow this to happen.

If there is one thing that we can control, we can control the education of our children by giving them the absolute best. Now I know "absolute best" can vary in definition, but furloughing/laying off people who directly affect the future of our children is nowhere near the words "absolute best."

I am upset with the leadership of Hawaii, from the top, to include the governor, to the bottom, and everyone in between, for soliciting short-term fixes that have endless consequences. I refuse to stress the importance of Education to people in office. Gov. Lingle, especially if you plan for "70 percent of Hawai'i's energy [to] come from clean sources by 2030" (straight from your website) will education play a vital role in that initiative. By 2030 all students from K-12 will be of age to accomplish that task... but chances are significantly lower if you cut budgets from Education. If you don't know how invaluable Education is now, I don't ever expect you to understand and you should not be in a position to affect it.

Now I am not one to point out a problem and not propose a solution; I would start with the salary of the University of Hawaii Football coach (you can google it if you don't know what it is). If that means we keep just one teacher teaching... so be it! It is amazing how we let sports and money suppress Education and other issues but that is another subject.

I honestly hope that other resolutions are found.

Kendall Navares

Sen. Will Espero

From: Wendy Rosen [mailto:wendyrosen@hawaii.net]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 6:39 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Oct 30 Hearing testimony

Categories: Print Big Island

I am a parent of two elementary school children and find the Friday Furloughs very short sighted. I have no doubt that the students currently excelling in school will weather the storm of furloughs and will succeed. But those students are a small minority of the classrooms. However, all the other kids that are barely meeting proficiency or are truly struggling will be adversely effected by the reduce hours in the classroom. The children of Hawaii are our future and to reduce their education hours potentially risks the success of Hawaii's economy for years to come. Please do everything you can to get our children back in school.

Wendy Rosen
Kailua, Hi

Sen. Will Espero

From: Vernadette V Gonzalez [mailto:vg@hawaii.edu]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 6:21 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: testimony for education special session

As an educator at UH, I am taking the time early this morning to urge you to hold a special session to return and expand funding for Hawaii's public schools. I heard on the radio yesterday that Linda Lingle was headed to China for a two-week visit to promote tourism: because she felt that as a state, we needed to be proactive in light of the dire economic picture. Her words fall flat on an educational landscape that is about to become a big disaster for Hawaii. If indeed we are to invest in our state in times of crisis, what better resource to prioritize than our people? Tourism will take care of itself. Further investment of time and energy on diversifying our economy through education, from K-20, is crucial to the long-term economic health of Hawaii. Students from Hawaii are hungry to learn, and we must give them the kind of quality resources that let them do this in the best ways. Cutting funding for education, and indeed, swindling our children of stimulus funds money as Lingle has done, puts all of you and us, in a bad light, and robs our children of their futures. What kind of governor governs this way, and what kind of legislature allows this to happen? I urge to you put Hawaii and our keiki, first, rather than balancing the budget on their backs. Find the money: it is there. Use the hurricane funds for now if you must, but raise it through an excise tax: people whose children are in public schools are already paying a special tax because privatization of the school system forces them to find care on Fridays. This "burden" should be shared by all of Hawaii, because all of Hawaii benefits from an educated labor force.

Vernadette Gonzalez
Assistant Professor
Undergraduate Chair
American Studies Department
University of Hawaii at Manoa

Sen. Will Espero

From: Hugh Jones and Kate Lloyd [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 6:00 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Written Testimony for Hearing on October 30, 2009 at 12:30 pm

Committee persons:

I am deeply concerned about the closure of school for 17 days, and the impact it will have on our children.

Hawaii already ranks last in the nation in the number of instructional days--this is shameful and the furloughs only make the situation worse.

Please convene a Special Session of the Legislature to address this issue and find an alternative solution. There has got to be a better way to close the DOE's budget shortfall than making the children victims

Mahalo.

Hugh Jones
[redacted]
Kailua HI 96734

To: The Honorable Brian Taniguchi, Chair
The Honorable Will Espero, Vice Chair
Special Senate Committee to Consider Approaches to Teacher Furloughs

From: Carolyn Y. Santo
Kailua, Hawaii
(808) 261-1011

Date: October 29, 2009

Re: **Testimony regarding alternatives to closing schools for teacher furloughs**

My suggestions:

1. Stagger the furlough schedule so that the classrooms remain open.
2. Schedule all non-classroom days as furlough days.
3. Recruit volunteer teachers' aides from the community
4. Look into alternative curriculum like videos, movies, and guest lecturers from the community to lessen the burden of increased student:teacher ratios due to staggered furlough days.
5. Cut non-essential items from the DOE budget and force accountability for expenses
6. At a minimum change the furlough schedule by adding days to already scheduled vacations for parent convenience.

Even though my son is not in public school, I am outraged that the public school students in Hawaii are being locked out of their classrooms for 17 days because the teachers are not happy. How can the teachers respond to a financial crisis by cutting the classroom teaching hours? This is the essential function of the public schools.

Why are the truly dedicated teachers who have expressed an interest in volunteering to teach without pay for one day a week being prohibited from following their consciences and taking care of their students? The union leadership and the government officials who negotiated the furlough Fridays should be held equally accountable for coming up with a solution that puts such a heavy burden on the students and their families.

It seems like a lot of people are arguing (rightfully) about the long term impact on a child's education and achievement, but the more immediate concerns should focus on simple safety.

Many people with children in public schools cannot afford to take off work to supervise their children or to hire quality child care providers on furlough days. The potential harm of leaving children unsupervised or improperly supervised should be the biggest concern. Not only are they at risk for accidental injury, but they are also more vulnerable to people who prey on young victims.

Why can't a plan be devised that at least keeps the classrooms open in order to ensure basic supervision and safety for school-aged children?

Why don't the schools adopt a staggered furlough schedule and keep the schools open? Yes, they will have to increase the student:teacher ratio under this plan, but this is better than sending children home to fend for themselves. Even if the quality of education and/or curriculum is reduced, children would be supervised by people who are already qualified and

screened to work with children as opposed to aging grandparents; unskilled, unemployed opportunists, or other, barely-older children.

Instead of the normal curriculum they could do things like show educational videos (Bill Nye the Science Guy, National Geographic, Popular Mechanics for Kids, Signing Times, historical biographies, even Sesame Street or other PBS programming!) They could ask volunteer guest speakers to come in and share information about their profession, job, or hobby. They could spend more time outside doing physical activity.

In short, there are enough smart people in the system to devise a solution which wouldn't entail shutting classrooms. Unfortunately, this out of control power struggle has put Hawaii's children in the middle as pawns.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sen. Will Espero

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, October 28, 2009 11:00 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero; Sen. Brian Taniguchi
Subject: Using the current crisis to improve education

Categories: Print Big Island

Dear Senator Taniguchi, Senator Espero and the Members of the Senate Special Committee,

- Hawai'i is near the top of states on spending per student
- Hawai'i is one of the lowest in quality of education. (42nd overall, Morgan Quintos ranking 2006)
- The 17 furlough days are creating the shortest school year in the nation.

- According to U.S. Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, it's important to increase, not decrease, learning time for students as is happening in education globally. Otherwise our students won't be prepared for success in the global workforce.

Hawaii presently has an unprecedented opportunity to fix this problem: to upgrade our educational system. Better educate our kids and prepare them for their future as well as ours, and, put our teachers back to work!

How? The Federal Stimulus Program which was designed so that states like ours could invest in education by extending the school year and enhancing instruction. But while other states are using these funds to expand learning opportunities, Hawaii is moving in the exact opposite direction with furloughs. We should take advantage of these funds. Our legislators in Washington have offered to help.

Additionally, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, according to the Maui News Oct 26, is offering \$250,000 apiece to help states apply for the stimulus funds as long as the states go along with the foundations' researched approach to improving our schools.

What are we waiting for? I encourage you, our state legislators, to take advantage of this golden opportunity? As Duncan says: 'The people in Hawaii must come together to create a solution.' As legislators, please bring together the parents, the teachers, unions, and Department of Education to fundamentally upgrade our broken system. Ask for help/funding from the US Department of Education and the Gates Foundation and our legislators in Washington.

Let's take advantage of this once in a lifetime opportunity to bring this level of change to Hawaii's schools and to prepare our kids and our country for the 21st century.

Thank you,

Stuart Karlan

Sen. Will Espero

From: Lori Shimoda [mailto:lorishimoda@hawaiiadapto.org]
Sent: Wednesday, October 28, 2009 10:36 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: OCTOBER 30TH HEARING TESTIMONY

Dear Senator Espero

I am a parent of two elementary school children. I am very disappointed in our leaders shortsighted decision to balance our state budget on the backs of school children.

Our children deserve quality education.

Raising taxes and raiding special funds is not the solution to our systemic problem. We need an overhaul in how State business is conducted in Hawaii. Every program should be evaluated for its necessity and efficiency. Cut back, eliminate, restore what is essential!

You also need to understand that at the school level, parents are powerless. Parents make up the minority on the SCC, with the administration, teachers and staff all bannng together. This is why we NEED you to protect the interest of our children and to serve them well.

Get our children back in school. Please put an end to the school furloughs. It is simply WRONG!

Sincerely,
Lori Shimoda

Sen. Will Espero

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, October 28, 2009 10:18 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: SPECIAL SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONSIDER APPROACHES TO TEACHER FURLOUGHS
Attachments: Letter to Parents requesting volunteers and ideas.wps

Proposal for Keeping Hawaii Schools Open on Furlough Fridays

October 17, 2009

The furloughing of teachers on 17 instructional days per year makes things hard on the teachers, the parents and the students. Teachers lose income and face a reduced ability to help their students. The parents, many of whom have already paid the taxes for the schools, are now faced with finding or paying for additional instruction for their children while many do not have the time nor the money to do so. The students lose 17 instructional days a year and may be less prepared for the future as a result.

With the economy declining, government programs are being cut. There is plenty of extra bureaucracy in the Department of Education (DoE) that need to be cut before the classroom teachers ever have to furlough.

It's time for the parents and the community to step up and address this problem. Here's how we can keep our classrooms open on furlough Fridays.

Plan: Staff the classrooms with screened community and parent volunteers supervised by a small number of retired or current teachers:

1. State volunteers are already commonplace in State programs. The State of Hawaii already frequently uses community volunteers in many State programs, including the schools. The legal mechanism and procedures for screening and accepting community volunteers for the schools are already established.
2. Supervision means no extra insurance needed. Volunteers can be supervised by a small number of retired or current teachers and/or administrators who know the schools. This will allow existing DoE insurance plans to cover the operation.
3. No extra 'rent' needed, the schools are public property. There is no need for the parents and community volunteers to "pay rent" to the DoE for volunteering to keep the schools open. The schools are public property and are already paid for by and belong to the parents and the community.

This plan can work right now. We have volunteer nonprofit community organizations who are ready to help coordinate this plan.

The idea is not to replace the teachers, they are valuable to us and we want them back.

We would like to run an educationally based program consisting of the extracurricular activities that the teachers no longer have time to teach. For example: P.E., ART, MUSIC, Career Days, etc.

The idea would be to have the students stay on campus, within their usual routine and instead of going off campus for field trips, bring the field trips to them. Have the Nature Center, the Whale Foundation, the MACC, MAPA, Sugar Museum, AYSO, Little League, Firefighters, Doctors, Nurses, etc. come to the school on those Furlough Fridays. The children are exposed to more of the extracurricular activities and experiences and the teachers have more time to teach Monday - Thursday.

While the children are in their usual routine the rest of us adults can figure out what to do with the budget.

Please contact me for information on how you can help volunteer your time, services or contacts in the community to make this happen for our children.

Bridget Bunting
Kihei PTA President
Kihei, Maui
Kiheipta@aol.com or 808-276-4116

Sen. Will Espero

From: Melanie Bailey <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 2:25 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Fw: October 30th Hearing on Education
Attachments: October 30th Hearing.doc

--- On Wed, 10/28/09, Melanie Bailey <[REDACTED]> wrote:

From: Melanie Bailey <[REDACTED]>
Subject: October 30th Hearing on Education
To: senespero@capitol.hawaii.gov
Date: Wednesday, October 28, 2009, 9:19 PM

Disregard prior draft email! Please submit the attached file as testimony.
Thank you,
Melanie

October 28, 2009

Aloha,

This weekend I asked my son about his Social Studies homework and he said they were not studying Social Studies anymore because of the Furlough Fridays. Hopefully he will study Ancient Civilizations in College.

This has been his schedule for the month of October:

R1 School 7:55-2:05
F2 School 7:55-2:05
M5 No School-fall break
T6 No School-fall break
W7 No School-fall break
R8 No School-fall break
F9 No School-fall break
M12 No School-paid holiday
T13 No School-teachers professional development
W14 School 7:55-12:30 early release-teacher collaboration
R15 School 7:55-2:05
F 16 School 7:55-2:05
M19 School 7:55-2:05
T20 School 7:55-2:05
W21 School 7:55-12:30 early release-teacher collaboration
R22 School 7:55-12:30 early release-teacher conferences
F23 No School-Furlough Friday
M26 School 7:55-12:30 early release-teacher conferences
T27 School 7:55-12:30 early release-teacher conferences
W28 School 7:55-12:30 early release-teacher collaboration
R29 School 7:55-12:30 early release-teacher conferences
F30 No School-Furlough Friday

During the full school days (6 hours and 10 minutes) students have two recesses and lunch.
During the early release days (4 hours and 35 minutes) they also have two recesses and lunch.

How much education can be happening during these six full days and seven early release days?
We had a serious problem BEFORE furlough days were considered. What kind of problems are we setting ourselves up for?

I wish this month was an anomaly. But, November has three days of holidays and two furlough days, December: five holidays and two furlough days, etc...

I strongly support a special session to find a solution to furlough days for public school students and I hope that you will too. I feel it is vital that all parties come together and resolve this situation. Compromising our children's education is not an option. Education days should not be on the bargaining table.

Very concerned parent,
Melanie Bailey
[REDACTED]
Kailua, HI 96734
[REDACTED]

Sen. Will Espero

From: Melanie Bailey [mailto:melaniebailey@yahoo.com]
Sent: Wednesday, October 28, 2009 8:34 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: OCTOBER 30TH HEARING TESTIMONY

Dear whoever,

I don't like furloughs because I need to learn and learning helps the envirement. If someone in the future said aaa do you like to play the trumpet? I'll be like, what? Then work would get awfully confusing. Plus, what do I do on Friday? What? Play video games all day?

From: Someone who hates Furloughs Joshua Bailey

Mom's note: Josh is in 6th grade at Aikahi Elementary School. He reads at an 8th grade level but writes at a 3rd grade level. He needs to be at school, not Tutu's. Thank you for making education a priority. Instructional days should not be on the bargaining table.

Bailey Family 650 [REDACTED]

Sen. Will Espero

From: South Pacific Kayaks & Outfitters Maui [mailto:roger@southpacifickayaks.com]
Sent: Wednesday, October 28, 2009 8:57 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: FW: Teacher Furloughs

From: South Pacific Kayaks & Outfitters Maui [mailto:roger@southpacifickayaks.com]
Sent: Wednesday, October 28, 2009 7:36 PM
To: 'senespero@capitol.hawaii.gov.'
Subject: Teacher Furloughs

Aloha,

We have two kids in elementary school in Kihei, Maui. The recent cuts in instruction time to the children is an outcome of the budget shortfall that should not have happened. Schools are no place for politics or unions. Let the children continue to receive the teaching days / instruction time as usual. It's bad enough that Hawaii ranks so poorly in the ranks compared to the other states and spends so much but now our "managers" are taking from the kids and passing it up to the rank and file. Bad decision.

As a resident of the state, it sickens me to see the total disregard to the kids and their future. Kids deserve much more than having to pay for their parents generations mistakes, etc. Cut the things that can be made up for later – kids learning and eagerness to learn cannot be recaptured. As a parent, it simply makes me want to move.....what's next?

Politicians need to get a grasp of the reality of what's happening and how upset the communities are. There is a direct correlation between education and the quality of life. It's a slippery slope and if not corrected soon, will take a long time to make up.

Roger Simonot

Sen. Will Espero

From: Traci Villarosa [mailto:traci.villarosa@hawaii.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, October 28, 2009 8:45 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Teacher Furloughs

Testimony for Friday October 30 at the State Capitol Auditorium at 12:30pm.

I strongly urge the State to restore **all 17** furlough days back into the school calendar, even if this means extending the school calendar.

I support a GET increase to address the State's budget deficit. Hawaii's 4% GET is one of the lowest in the nation and hasn't been increased in years.

Traci Fujita Villarosa
mother of 2 girls, ages 9 and 2

Written Testimony to the

SPECIAL SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONSIDER APPROACHES TO TEACHER FURLOUGHS

Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair

Senator Will Espero, Vice Chair

NOTICE OF MEETING

DATE: Friday, October 30, 2009

TIME: 12:30 p.m.

PLACE: Auditorium

State Capitol

415 South Beretania Street

Creative solutions to this Furlough problem are plentiful. This list should be combined with many other options to create multi faceted solution to improving the education system during this fiscal crisis. I will try not to reproduce the most common and obvious solutions.

1. Change the DOE Management and Board of Education into non-paid volunteer positions. Similar to how all credit union Board of Directors is established. It not only saves money but also creates no conflicts of interest since only those who truly care about the education of our children would volunteer.
2. Rotate Teachers furlough days off and obviously switch instructional days into furlough days.
3. Hire more qualified substitutes to fill for furloughed teachers. They already fill in for teachers currently and are paid substantially less yet do the same work. To offset the substitutes costs have union teachers furloughed more often. Follow Patricia Hamamoto's prediction to layoff teachers if lawsuits ban furlough days. Then fill their positions with current substitutes and qualified student teachers.
4. Have more Prep rallies and large all school events since they requires less teacher supervision as current procedures allow for less teachers to be at attendance during these events. Less teachers need at school those day or many can half days off.
5. Bring in more non-profit Community Organizations to conduct large group learning and education on various approved topics.
6. Have more Field Trips with Parental help, PTA assistance, business support and community volunteers.
7. On Furlough Fridays days have older aged classes prepare lessons, stories or book readings and other performing arts multimedia presentations to the younger classes to learn from the older students during the day. With volunteer help the mixed aged learning decreases the need for half the teachers on those days
8. Multimedia Distance Learning opportunities allow teaching by television similar to Obama speech to all students which requires little teacher involvement.
9. Any furlough days that do close the schools should be at the end or beginning of the semesters to causes least disruption.
10. Create bills to introduce legal changes to current laws to allow more non-union teachers to work if Union workers vote to strike or be furloughed. Allow the voters to decide such crucial issues not union bosses with no accountability.

Written Testimony to the

SPECIAL SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONSIDER APPROACHES TO TEACHER FURLOUGHS

Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair

Senator Will Espero, Vice Chair

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10. Create bills to introduce legal changes to current laws to allow more non-union teachers to work if Union workers vote to strike or be furloughed. Allow the voters to decide such crucial issues not union bosses with no accountability.

From: hbruland@hawaii.rr.com [mailto:~~hbruland@hawaii.rr.com~~]
Sent: Wednesday, October 28, 2009 11:42 PM
To: Sen. Brian Taniguchi
Subject: Standing Up for Public Education

Aloha Senator Brian Taniguchi,

I am a constituent in your district. I am deeply concerned about the closure of school for 17 days and the impact it will have on our children. Please convene a Special Session of the Legislature to address this issue and find an alternative solution.

Mahalo,
Holly Bruland
Manoa Resident

From: Meg McGowan [mailto:mcg.mcgowan@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, October 28, 2009 9:35 PM
To: Sen. Brian Taniguchi
Subject: Furlough Fridays

Dear Mr. Taniguchi:

I strongly urge you and your colleagues in the legislature to take immediate action to remedy the loss of instruction days in the public schools. The legislature faced difficult choices in dealing with the loss of state revenues, but I think this was the wrong choice.

Thank you.

Meg McGowan

[Redacted]
Honolulu

From: Tsuhako, Emily S CIV NAVFAC PAC [mailto:emily.tzuhako@navfac.hawaii.gov]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 7:54 AM
To: Sen. Colleen Hanabusa; Sen. Will Espero; Sen. Brian Taniguchi
Cc: governor.lingle@hawaii.gov
Subject: Teacher Furloughs

Senators,

As a parent of two public elementary school children, I am frustrated with the teacher furloughs. My frustration is not that the furloughs are happening, but that the furloughs are happening on instructional days! Our State is in a fiscal nightmare and furloughs are a reality. But by having the HSTA and DOE purposely choosing the furloughs to be on instructional days is unconscionable. I believe the HSTA and DOE had an agenda behind choosing the furloughs to be on instructional days...and that agenda was to have the public go into an uproar so that the State will back down on the furloughs. After reading yesterday's Honolulu Advertiser and seeing what options the special committee are looking into (hurricane funds, rainy day funds, raising taxes), it would seem their tactics are working! If these funds are tapped into, it should be only to close the budget deficit, not reduce/eliminate the furloughs. I and many others have written to the HSTA and the DOE to let them know how we feel about having furloughs on instructional days and am hoping they would amend that part of the contract. I hope you Senators will help push the HSTA and DOE to do the same.

Emily Tsuhako

-----Original Message-----

From: Taylor Rock [mailto:rocktaylor@gmail.com]

Sent: Wednesday, October 28, 2009 11:16 PM

To: rocktaylor@gmail.com

Subject: please do not close schools

I am a constituent in your district. I am deeply concerned about the closure of school for 17 days, and the impact it will have on our children. Please convene a Special Session of the Legislature to address this issue and find an alternative solution. Mahalo.

-----Original Message-----

From: Taylor Rock [mailto:rocktaylor@gmail.com]

Sent: Wednesday, October 28, 2009 11:16 PM

To: rocktaylor@gmail.com

Subject: please do not close schools

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From: Nadine Tenn Salle [mailto:~~redacted~~]
Sent: Wednesday, October 28, 2009 10:26 PM
To: Sen. Brian Taniguchi
Subject: Furlough Fridays

Dear Sir:

I will not belabor the point that Furlough Fridays are on the minds of all parents with children in public schools. There are many reasons why such a decision has been voted into action. Please be aware that parents are watching to see how our elected officials handle this plight.

I believe this is truly a moment when community ethics and values (children for example) has to be shielded from politics. Our leader will hopefully rise to this occasion... and the rest will be voted out.

Nadine Tenn Salle

From: Jennifer Chandler [mailto:mallemah@small.com]
Sent: Wednesday, October 28, 2009 9:36 PM
To: Sen. Brian Taniguchi
Cc: Jennifer Chandler
Subject: Special Session to address furloughs

Dear Senator Taniguchi,

I am a constituent in your district. I am deeply concerned about the closure of school for 17 days, and the impact it will have on our children. Please convene a Special Session of the Legislature to address this issue and find an alternative solution. Mahalo.

Dr. Jennifer Chandler
(909) [REDACTED]

From: Theodore S. Gonzalves [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, October 28, 2009 8:01 PM
To: Sen. Brian Taniguchi
Subject: Please convene a special session

Aloha Senator Taniguchi:

Please call a special session to end school furloughs.

Having the shortest school year in the nation will hurt the educational future of Hawaii's children.

Sincerely,

Theodore S. Gonzalves

[redacted]
Honolulu HI 96822

Sen. Will Espero

From: Patty May [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, October 28, 2009 6:00 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Cc: Sen. Fred Hemmings
Subject: Furlough money possibility - Unclaimed Property - Florida Controller Alex Sink

Dear Senator Espero,

Saw on the news last night you are trying to get a group to approve using Hurricane Insurance money to help with the furlough situation. How about this: The State of Hawaii (at last count year 2007) had about \$160 million in unclaimed property. As you can see from the below email from Alex Sink in the Florida office, the State of Florida uses their unclaimed property to help supplement their education system.....just a thought.

The State of Hawaii is NOT proactive in finding rightful owners - some of the money goes back to 1982 and the largest amount I have seen is a little over \$48,000.

Thanks for listening!

Patty May
Kailua, Hawaii

Not everything that is faced can be changed. But nothing can be changed until it is faced. James Baldwin

Anything that is of value in life only multiplies when it is given.—Deepak Chopra

Subject: RE: Unclaimed Property - Alex Sink
Date: Fri, 8 May 2009 08:56:20 -0400
From: [redacted]
To: [redacted]

Patty,

Thank you for your email. Until they are claimed, unclaimed property funds are deposited into the State School Trust Fund and used to support public schools. The original amount reported can always be claimed by the owner. CFO Sink is aware of the unclaimed property account listed in her name and has chosen to leave the funds for the benefit of the State School Trust fund.

Thank you.

Liz Tatum
Administrative Assistant II
Bureau of Unclaimed Property
Department of Financial Services
200 E Gaines Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0358
850-413-5515
Elizabeth.Tatum@MyFloridaCFO.com

From: Patty May [mailto:██]
Sent: Wednesday, May 06, 2009 6:24 PM
To: Florida Unclaimed Property
Subject: Unclaimed Property - Alex Sink

Aloha,
It appears that Alex Sink may have \$ - she is listed as having some property in Tampa. Please have her check it out. It looks kinda bad for the CFO to have \$ they haven't claimed.

aloha, patty
Not everything that is faced can be changed. But nothing can be changed until it is faced. James Baldwin

Anything that is of value in life only multiplies when it is given.—Deepak Chopra

 **EMAILING FOR THE GREATER GOOD**
[Join me](#)

TO: Senator Willie Espero

FR: Rowena Sabangan Eddins

Enchanted Lake Elementary School parent/PTA member

~~848-448-7777~~

RE: October 30th Hearing Testimony

Aloha, I am a parent at Enchanted Lake School Elementary and a member of their PTA. I am respectfully submitting the following testimony in support of convening a special session to consider alternative options for furlough Fridays.

Although I attended parochial school, my husband is an ELES alumnus. He and I are practicing attorneys. Many of our fellow attorneys are, with very few exceptions, outstanding “products” of public school who excel at their profession and are also genuinely good people. I am particularly impressed with a very good friend of mine who graduated from Waialua High School. She is an attorney, one sister is a doctor and another is a biochemist. They are shining examples of why enrollment in public schools cannot be considered educational purgatory. I have long since felt that the alleged inherent “superiority” of *any* private school to *any* public school in Hawaii is a myth that should be debunked.

At any rate, I have been a fervent supporter of public school education. My oldest child Noah started kindergarten at Pearl Harbor Elementary in 2002. Noah genuinely thrived at PHE and experienced memorable moments like meeting then-President George W. Bush and the First Lady, performing a solo at a school concert, and performing with Kama’aina Kids A+ at Aloha Stadium for the “Aloha 9/11” commemorative event. Noah also had an excellent experience at ELES and now attends University Laboratory School.

My youngest son Roscoe is in kindergarten. We were looking forward to Roscoe enjoying the same experiences and success at school as his older brother. But any feelings of pride or goodwill abruptly ended when we received the furlough calendar in Roscoe’s take-home folder starkly highlighting the **17 days** chopped off his school year. My immediate emotions were (in no particular order)

extreme dismay, outrage, and confusion. How could something monumental like this happen without any notice?

I am not an educational expert nor do I have the immediate means or resources to provide you with current legitimate percentages or statistics on how the loss of 17 days will impact Roscoe or the 170,999 other students in the 50th State. But my uncle was a vice-principal at Campbell High School. A couple of friends of mine are tireless, dedicated teachers here and on the Mainland. I have been fortunate enough to meet several tireless and dedicated public school employees in different capacities.

As such, notwithstanding the purported “for-the-good-of-the-State” rationale behind the furloughs, I vociferously contend that the students of Hawaii **BELONG IN SCHOOL EVERY DAY**. They must not be deprived of the multitude of learning experiences that form an “education”, whether it is in the classroom, on the playground, in the cafeteria, in the library, at the gym, on field trips, or even at A+.

We are very lucky to be part of a school that has consistently attained “adequate yearly progress” (aka “AYP”). Although I cannot attest to the specific numbers, it’s my understanding that many other schools have not shared in the success and are already on an educational “high wire” with respect to achieving AYP. These furloughs will undoubtedly derail any progress made, shortchange any chance for continued progress, and ultimately send them back to square one. These students, our schools, and our State should not suffer further mortification.

In closing, it is impossible to overstate the negative impact the furloughs will have on the students, the schools and ultimately the State of Hawaii. Please consider immediately convening a special session to address this disaster.

Sen. Will Espero

From: Segura, Mike [F: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, October 28, 2009 3:46 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Cc: Segura, Lisa; Percy, Kitt
Subject: Teacher Furloughs

Categories: Print Big Island

Aloha,

This is in regards to the session being held Friday 10/30/09 @ 12:30 PM to address the teachers furlough situation. First and foremost these furloughs are a disgrace to our teachers, our children and to our beautiful state of Hawaii. Shame on us! While the White House is proposing more school time across the country we are cutting back, at a time where the importance of family values and education has for some time now been at the forefront of discussion we are forced to turn tail and head the other direction. This is unacceptable. I witness teachers pulling from their own funds to provide for the students, and we all know that these fine people do not earn excessive salaries to begin with. They teach and provide these noble gestures because of their love, passion and drive to do so. I have witnessed parents pitching in to help fill the void form monetary donations to helping out schools physically and everything else in-between. I know this because I am one of those many parents. Don't get me wrong, it gives me great pride and sense of accomplishment to assist when I can, and for that reason it sickens me to see government sit back and enforce ill advised decisions. Surely there are other areas to make necessary cuts. I see non licensed contractors getting by without paying their fair share of taxes; I see way too many DLNR personnel playing with very expensive water toys. These are just two examples of many oversights that can be looked at and addressed before stealing precious time away from our FUTURE GENERATIONS and a portion of livelihood from those who choose to develop and nourish their success at becoming positive, educated contributors to society. Thank you very much for the opportunity to have a say.

Mike Segura
Landscape Manager
Marriott's Maui Ocean Club

[REDACTED]

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Sen. Will Espero

From: Gisele Hetu [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 3:01 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: The Furloughs

Categories: Print Big Island

Aloha! My name is Gisele hetu, and I am a single mother of a six-year-old boy who attends Kindergarten at Waikiki Elementary School. Needless to say that I am apalled at our State government officials for lacking the wisdom of searching for better solutions to our deficit than this. I "heard about the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act" and wondered why none of these funds are being used to erase our budget problem within the school system and also add more jobs at the same time. There are a few public schools who have done this with great success, one of them being the city of St.Louis, MO.

I was so surprised that nobody at the first Furlough Friday demonstration at the Capitol on October 23rd mentioned ANYTHING about this, nor have I seen anything about it in the news!

I went to Recovery.gov and saw that \$50,000,000 was allocated to Hawaii from the ARRA - the American Recovery and Reimbursement Act, but when I went to the web page (Recovery.gov), it actually said that \$122,430,000 were awarded, \$12,540,000 were received, and that 250 jobs were created (Recipient Reported)... Agency Reported Funds were much higher! Funds Announced: \$1,391,130,000, Funds Available: \$1,101,820,000 and Funds Paid Out: \$338,260,000, leaving around \$660,000,000. Some of this money is for Education, don't you know? Several private schools, like Mary Knoll, have received funds from the ARRA. Why isn't the DOE asking for some????? Why does a private citizen like me have to ask you, our State representatives to go after some of this money? Please go to Ed.gov to read the article on how St. Louis schools are thriving after being awarded some of these funds, the SAME funds which are available TO US HERE IN HAWAII!

I called Barry Fukinaga's office as Lingle's secretary told me that he is the one in charge of receiving all calls and mail from Joe Biden's office, and unfortunately, nobody knew what amounts were allocated to the Public School System. I then looked up ED.gov to see what the funds are, went to the Administrators page, and Elementary Schools has a huge list of grants available for the taking! Please get back to me to tell me what grants are being applied for and when these funds will be allocated to the schools! If it takes a while for funds, so be it, but it is better than doing NOTHING. Another thing, Lingle said today that the teachers can accept a 5% pay cuts to do away with the 17 days' furloughs, but they were not offered this in the first set of proposed cuts - WHY NOT? She even said she didn't realise the children would suffer if the teachers were not in class. This is terrible policy-making and shows how insensitive she is to Obama's strong opinion concerning the improvement, not the destruction, of our children's education! That is why the ARRA was passed! To eliminate this kind of catastrophic situation!

Respectfully,

Gisele Catherine Hetu, mother of Kiki Jivan Mickens, 6

[REDACTED]
ALOHA!

Gisele Hetu [REDACTED]

Waikiki [REDACTED]

Sen. Will Espero

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 2:42 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: SPECIAL SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONSIDER APPROACHES TO TEACHER FURLOUGHS

Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair
Senator Will Espero, Vice Chair

NOTICE OF MEETING

DATE: Friday, October 30, 2009

TIME: 12:30 p.m.

I am giving written testimony regarding the teacher furloughs. **I am adamant about not taking a pay cut, or having to work on my paid holidays.** The furloughs, although inconvenient to the parents of the students, is the only fair way to address the budget shortage.

I, as many teachers, am already working 10 - 12 hours a day (more when we have to take projects home on the weekend and spend all weekend grading them), and I often give up my recess and lunch hours to help students with their assignments. I am giving a 150% to my students. Please do not ask me to give up more than I already have. I am burnt out to the point that I am seriously thinking of retiring from this profession after only 11 Years.

My students will not "suffer" or be adversely impacted by the 17 furlough days. Over half of them never do their homework, so valuable class time was taken up having them do their homework in class. Well, I will no longer have to do that since they can all catch up on their homework during the furlough Fridays and class time can be used only for teaching and not catch up work. Some of my students have told me that their parents will make them do work and even give them extra work, if need be.

The parents who are up in arms about this need to look at how to make the best of a situation that does not make anyone happy. Having students off every other Friday will not make them less prepared nor unable to meet the standards. We provide the tools, guidance, expectations - we teach the students, that is our job. The students need to follow up at home to practice and reinforce what they have learned, that is their job. It is also the parent's job to make sure the student is doing what he/she is supposed to do and provide support and assistance if needed. That is their job. The furlough Fridays will be an excellent time to do that.

Sincerely,
Marion Iwasaki
7th grade Social Studies Teacher

P.S. I know we were asked to send this in 24 hours in advance, but being that I was teaching, I didn't have time to do this until school ended. I still have papers to correct, lessons to plan, worksheets to make copies of....I'll be lucky if I get out of here before it gets dark.

Sen. Will Espero

From: Thomas McCarthy [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 2:44 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: October 30th Hearing Testimony

I am a mother of two kids, and the spouse of a military member. Moving around as much as we have, we as a family have faced many challenges. **Furlough Fridays** is not a challenge **WE** or anyone else should have to face!!

I am all for not having any more people loosing their jobs in the tough times that we are facing, but I also feel that our **FUTURE...** our **CHILDREN** should not be the ones to suffer!!

I know that there are ways out there that this can be fixed... It sounds like having to get to this point is mismanagement, at the expense of our children. Raise taxes by 1% to put toward education, or, simpler....**lengthen** the school day if Furlough Fridays **MUST** continue or better yet, restructure those teacher work days. My daughter gets out at 1:30 half the time.. Maybe lengthening the school day will help relieve some stress on the parents and money hardships, parents won't have to pay for after school care for as many hours.

Ideas that look good on paper are always not the best when put into action. Put yourself in the place of the parents and **THINK** of a solution that will not hurt our children. This Furlough Friday plan is for two years... but that is two years lost on bettering our children, our future.

Jennifer McCarthy

From: Vern Dahl/KAMALII/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us [mailto:Vern_Dahl/KAMALII/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 12:26 PM
To: Sen. Norman Sakamoto; Rep. Roy Takumi; Sen. Roz Baker
Cc: Mary_Auvil/KAMALII/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us; Bill_Rolph/KAMALII/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us
Subject: Fw: Just a thought re: Jr. K

Aloha all. I sent this to Pat Hamamoto early June as a suggestion to be put on the table. I never saw this brought up, but it is so obvious as the time to swing this in. Each school would reduce the number of K teachers, but attrition would easily take care of that. Note that the 7 months of kids would move along year by year for that savings to last for 13 years. I know it is too late at this year, but next year is just around the corner, and that is another proposed furlough year. The parents of the late born kids would appreciate the early heads up for planning, also.

Vern Dahl

Vern Dahl/KAMALII/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us

06/02/09 02:45 PM

To Patricia Hamamoto/LILI/HIDOE
cc
Subject Just a thought re: Jr. K

Hi Pat,

While listening to our money woes yesterday, I was thinking that maybe this is the time to make the break from having the last 5 month born "Jr. K" students coming to school this year. The last Jr. K number I saw was about 4,700 each year out of about 12,600 total K students. Figuring about 16 students per teacher, that would be about 293 teachers at about \$45,000 per teacher. That would be a cost savings of around **\$13,000,000** this year, and another 13M next year, as there would only be 7 months of students the next year in 1st grade, and so on.

This would compound with potential cost savings in fewer SPED students and dropouts in the future. **Guaranteed higher test scores would be an added plus.**

Parents of those Jr. K type students might complain, but it would be virtually the same as other state K cut dates, and they have to help the dire straits we are in along with the state workers.

We always seem to be short of teachers at the beginning of the year, and this would reduce the need for our usual recruitment into a state system needing deep cuts in education, and not having yearly salary increments.

Think about it. It would work now better than ever. Aloha, Vern

Sen. Will Espero

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 3:13 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Furlough prevention

Ideas; Unpaid holidays or straight time holiday pay Furlough non-class days Develop a database of voluntary substitute teachers instead of paid subs, Use retired teachers. Eliminate landscaping maintenance for 2 years, solicit volunteer landscaping from parents. Eliminate multiple levels of administrative mgmt Cease all travel for conferences Eliminate all field trips Madeleine Brennan

Sent via BlackBerry from T-Mobile

Sen. Will Espero

From: Debbie Oliveira [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 2:58 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Teacher Furlough in the State of Hawaii

Every administrator should know that Education is to be a priority. The decisions to cut costs in government should never touch our children. This decision can affect us terribly years to come as the children are our hope and future.

It's very disappointing to see such a bad administrative choice. This is a great nation, but with decisions like this it can become a third world country.

Sincerely,
Deborah Oliveira, mother of a student from Makawao Elementary,
Maui.



COMMUNITY CHILDREN'S COUNCIL OF HAWAII
1177 Alakea Street · B-100 · Honolulu · HI · 96813
TEL: (808) 586-5363 · TOLL FREE: 1-800-437-8641 · FAX: (808) 586-5366

October 29, 2009

The Honorable Brian Taniguchi, Chair
Special Senate Committee on Teacher Furloughs
The Honorable Will Espero, Vice Chair
Special Senate Committee on Teacher Furloughs

Senator Taniguchi, Senator Espero, and members of the Committee

The Legislative Committee of the seventeen Community Children's Councils of Hawaii appreciates this opportunity to provide input into the questions regarding possible options for teacher furloughs.

We are aware of the anxiety facing many families whose children require special education and related services. We know the Department of Education is addressing mechanisms to effectively provide the services in their child's Individual Educational Program (IEP). The uncertainty of exactly how this will be provided for their child has created some anxiety and need for reassurances. The pending decision of Judge Ezra adds additional uncertainty for their child's education and plans for child care; yet most recognize that furloughs or layoffs will be necessary unless additional funds can be provided.

The CCCs and others with whom we work have long advocated the use of other sources of funds such as the "rainy day" and "hurricane" funds. We also supported an increase in the General excise Tax dedicated for education with the understanding that the base allocation for the Department of Education would not be lowered during positive tax years and has happened in other states. We also note that if funds are provided for teacher salaries on furlough days; school expenses need to be added into the funds.

We recognize that the State is facing extremely tight fiscal constraints at this time. However, cutting additional educational staff rather the furloughs will have a negative impact on student learning. Education for all our students should be a high priority. We wish you well in your present endeavors.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide input into this special process.

Sincerely

Tom Smith, Co-Chair
CCC Legislative Committee

Jessica Wong-Sumida, Co-Chair
CCC Legislative Committee

From: Karla Wardell [mailto:kwardell@gmail.com]

Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 3:37 PM

To: Sen. Will Espero

Subject: Oct 30 hearing testimony

Please know that furloughs are not the answer. The DOE need to have an outside source look at their finances. Where does all the money go? As tax payers we have the right to know. The lack of value placed on education here is causing our family of 4 children to consider moving off the island. I know of other families who have said the same.

When you are not willing to invest in the future-you will not have a good one. The keiki are our future. To use them as pawns to get more money is an insult to them, the teachers who serve them, and to all who pay taxes to support their education. If Hawaii will not do what is right, I know many parents who love their children enough that will move away from this beautiful state so their children may have a beautiful future.

Karla Wardell
Manoa Valley

Sen. Will Espero

From: Gaylord, Carol A H [mailto:cgaylord@hawaii.gov]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 4:04 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: October 30th hearing testimony

Senator Espero:

I am a mother of 2 beautiful girls living in Kailua. My 1st grader, Lina, goes to Lanikai Public Charter School and my 3 ½ year old, Noe, will go there when she is ready for Kindergarten. Our principal has somehow managed to deal with the deep cuts to our school's budget (further widening the gap between what is spent on my child and any other child within the non-charter public school system) without teacher furloughs. My child has less than half the \$\$ dedicated to her education than the children attending Kailua, Aikahi, Kainalu or any other elementary school in my area. Yet our school test scores are consistently higher and our reputation as a school who is dedicated to our children is becoming legendary. The waitlist from out of district families to be considered for an exemption each year is always long. How can our government and the DOE honestly say that they don't have the \$\$ to provide our children with a decent education when Lina is receiving a top notch education for half price? Where is the passion and commitment to all our keiki?

Mahalo for your time. Please read my testimony at the Senate hearing tomorrow.

Carol Gaylord

Sen. Will Espero

From: Stephen and Amber Jensen [mailto:amjensen@jensen.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 3:50 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: OCTOBER 30TH HEARING TESTIMONY

This was taken from a CNN news article -

President Barack Obama said Tuesday that American children should go to school longer – either stay later in the day or into the summer – if they're going to have any chance of competing for jobs and paychecks against foreign kids.

"We can no longer afford an academic calendar designed when America was a nation of farmers who needed their children at home plowing the land at the end of each day," Obama said, adding U.S. education to his already crowded list of top priorities.

"That calendar may have once made sense, but today, it puts us at a competitive disadvantage. Our children spend over a month less in school than children in South Korea. That is no way to prepare them for a 21st century economy."

He urged administrators to "rethink the school day" to add more class time.

His proposal for added school hours was part of a broader effort to improve U.S. schools that he said are falling behind foreign competitors.

The same week this article came out, Hawaii schools sent home letters stating they would begin a **4-day** school week, because of budget cuts they can't afford to pay their teachers - thus teachers will be required to take 17 days furlough. I am all for my children getting the best education possible - if we can't afford to pay our teachers now, how are we going to pay for extended hours? Maybe the government should focus on coming up with enough money to get our kids back into school 5 days a week! Enough money has gone to corrupt companies and I am sick of them being bailed out! Let's educate our children! We always hear, "our children are the future." If our children do not receive a decent education, then the future looks bleak!

Get our kids back in school!

Amber Jensen
Aikahi Elementary Parent

From: George Warnock [mailto:~~gwarnock@hawaii.gov~~]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 11:33 AM
To: Rep. Isaac W. Choy; Sen. Brian Taniguchi; governor.lingle@hawaii.gov
Subject:

I am a constituent in your district. I am deeply concerned about the closure of school for 17 days, and the impact it will have on our children. Please convene a Special Session of the Legislature to address this issue and find an alternative solution. Mahalo.

-----Original Message-----

From: Shannon Bennett [mailto:sbennett@hawaii.edu]

Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 12:02 PM

To: Sen. Brian Taniguchi

Subject: Please convene a Special Legislative Session

Dear Mr. Taniguchi,

I am a constituent in your district. I am deeply concerned about the closure of HI public schools for 17 days, and the impact it will have on our children. Please convene a Special Session of the Legislature to address this issue and find an alternative solution.

Mahalo,

Shannon N. Bennett, PhD.

Assistant Professor,

Asia-Pacific Institute of Tropical Medicine and Infectious Diseases

Department of Tropical Medicine, Medical Microbiology and Pharmacology

John A. Burns School of Medicine

651 Ilalo Street, BSB 3rd Floor

Honolulu, HI 96813

Phone: (808) 692-1603

Fax: (808) 692-1979

sbennett@hawaii.edu

Sen. Will Espero

From: Allison Mikuni [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 4:13 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Repeal Furlough Fridays! Please restore lost classroom time!

Dear Senator Espero,

I'm a parent of two children at Kahala Elementary School, I live in Palolo Valley and I use a post office box in Moiliili.

I'm writing to you to express my viewpoint that furlough fridays should be repealed and make a plea to restore lost classroom time. This is a devastating blow to education of our State's children and I am concerned that there will be significant social costs and long-term implications.

I recommend all parties [Legislature, Governor, HSTA, DOE, BOE] come together and make concessions to correct this situation. If everyone could give a little bit here and there, we could find a solution to restore lost classroom time.

Mahalo,
Allison Mikuni
[REDACTED]

Sen. Will Espero

From: Judith Michaels [mailto:jmichaels@hawaii.edu]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 4:08 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Special Senate Committee To Consider Approaches to Teacher Furloughs

SPECIAL SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONSIDER APPROACHES TO TEACHER FURLOUGHS

Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair and Senator Will Espero, Vice chair

Friday, October 30, 2009

12:30 p.m.

PLACE: State Capitol: 415 South Beretania Street

Dear Senator Taniguchi, Senator Espero and the Members of the Senate Special Committee,

We are all aware the quality of primary/secondary education in Hawaii is already considered dismal. Hawaii is near the top of states on spending per student yet one of the lowest (42nd overall, Morgan Quintos ranking 2006) in regards to quality of education. With the 17 furlough days Hawaii now has the shortest school year in the nation.

Last week, the U.S. Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, questioned the wisdom of the furlough days in a letter to the Honolulu Advertiser. She wrote "Reduction in school days is not the way to invest in education". According to Duncan, it's important to increase, not decrease, learning time for students as is happening in education globally. Otherwise our students won't be prepared for success in the global workforce.

The U. S. Secretary of Educations, and many others, have confirmed that the Federal Stimulus Program, which was designed so that states like ours, could invest in education by extending the school year and enhancing instruction, has additional funds available if only we would apply for them. While other states are using these funds to expand learning opportunities, Hawaii is moving in the exact opposite direction with furloughs. We should take advantage of these funds. Our legislators in Washington have offered to help.

Additionally, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, according to the Maui News Oct 26, is offering \$250,000 apiece to help states apply for the stimulus funds as long as the states go along with the foundations' researched approach to improving our schools.

I encourage you, our state legislators to **take advantage of this unprecedented opportunity to upgrade our educational system and stop the 17 furlough days this year and the 17 furlough days scheduled for the 2010-2011 school year.** As Duncan says: 'The people in Hawaii must come together to create a solution.' As legislators, please bring together the parents, the teachers, unions, and Department of Education to fundamentally upgrade our broken system.

Ask for additional funding from the US Department of Education and our legislators in Washington thru the Federal Stimulus Program. Also seek the \$250,000 funds available from the Gates Foundation to assist in applying for these funds/grants.

Finally, if any Special funds such as the Hurricane Fund can be used, we should do so. This is an emergency. The best education possible for our children should be the number one goal of our State at this time. We do not want to create a state without a strong middle class....poor education always leads to more poverty and lower paying jobs.

We must do everything possible to invest in the best education possible for our kids and prepare them for their future, as well as ours, and put our teachers back to work!

Thank you,

Judith Michaels

4850 [REDACTED]

Kihei: HI. 96753

908 [REDACTED]

j[REDACTED]

Sen. Will Espero

From: Sherri Fujita [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 7:14 PM
To: Sen. Brian Taniguchi; Sen. Will Espero
Subject: SPECIAL SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONSIDER APPROACHES TO TEACHER FURLOUGHS
Attachments: no-furlough-days-for-hawaiis-childrens_102909.pdf
Categories: Print Big Island

Dear Senators Taniguchi and Espero

Please find attached a petition with 324 signatures to support a special session to end teacher furloughs. I also submitted this as testimony to senespero@capitol.hawaii.gov

Mahalo for your help and support
Sherri Fujita
[REDACTED]
Hilo, HI 96720

Hawaii residents

We, the undersigned are concerned about the recent decision to cut school days through the implementation of furloughs in the state of Hawaii. We realize that our state is facing a budget crisis; however, we adamantly believe that public education is a fundamental right. Funding must be found to maintain our schools at a basic operational standard. The 17 furlough days will bring us below acceptable levels.

The creation of furlough days is the beginning of the privatization of public education. It is forcing parents to pay out of pocket to supplement the inadequate provisions we are getting from public education.

The elected officials in the state of Hawaii have chosen not to place education first. Governor Lingle chose not to consider revenue increases earlier this year and the legislature did nothing to protect our education system. Both the governor and the legislature chose not to call a special legislative session to seek out alternatives.

This is an appeal to amend this wrong. We demand that the governor, the legislature and other elected officials of Hawaii to do their job and secure the funding necessary for our children and young adults to have the education they need and deserve.

	Name	From	Comments
1.	Sherrri Fujita	Hilo, HI	We will have to pay out of pocket expenses to supplement our children's education.
2.	Christine Quintana	Hilo, HI	I can not afford to pay out of pocket to supplement my children's education. Balancing the budget at our children's expense is not right. Our children are our future.
3.	Tiffany Edwards Hunt	Kurtistown, HI	I am not in support of furlough days. There aren't enough classroom days as-is.
4.	Peter Altomare	Pahoa, HI	Department of Education? What education? Show me. I see very little. Instructional time is one of the very last things that should be cut. We need innovation in the classroom. We need more and better libraries and other learning resources. Above all, we need a much smaller administrative staff. The tax revenues must go to instructional staff and learning resources at the school and classroom level. <i>(continues on next page)</i>

	Name	From	Comments
4.	Peter Altomare	Pahoa, HI	<i>(continued from previous page)</i> There must also be a recognition that our children are competing with the world. The taxpayers and all citizens must demand accountability and performance from the state of Hawaii and the DOE. I regard every child in Hawaii as mine- they and we- all deserve much, much better than we are getting and have gotten from the politicians and the DOE.
5.	Alice Yomono	Hilo, HI	Short-changing their education is sending the wrong message to our children!
6.	Can Atik	Ankara, Turkey	
7.	Glen Shigehara	Hilo, HI	
8.	Amy Tsuchiya	Hilo, HI	No child left behind? Governor Lingle is leaving all of our children behind.....
9.	Cathy Arita	Pepeekeo, HI	
10.	Jill Atwal	Hilo, HI	
11.	Rebecca Ryan	Waikoloa, HI	The state of Hawaii is robbing my child of a proper education! Shame on the State of Hawaii for allowing this! President Obama said our children should be spending more time in school just to catch up with the rest of the world. We will fall even further behind now. Shame on Hawaii for not putting our keiki first.
12.	pamela luis	keaaau, HI	Why do students who miss too many days end up in family court with their parents because the state says they need to be in school a certain number of days. But, the state can say if they need to reduce the number of days a student attends when it fits their purpose, is this legal?
13.	Charlene Lagrimas	Hilo, HI	Our students already have problems reaching national standards; stealing away learning time will only exacerbate this situation. Our students and our teachers NEED this time to reach their goals.
14.	Jill Nagao	Hilo, HI	Not happy with the furlough days. Hawaii is already behind in education. Our kids need to be in school.
15.	Steven Clements	Hilo, HI	
16.	Wendy Wai	Hilo, HI	
17.	Marsha Okajima	Hilo, HI	I get so upset when politicians say that education is their number one priority and then let something like this happen.
18.	Gale Klinker	Pahoa, HI	
19.	Tana-Lee Rebhan	Aiea, HI	We need Hawaii's children to receive maximum education in order for them to not become the financially irresponsible leaders we apparently have today who got them into this situation. Government and union leaders must resolve this shortfall without further endangering the <i>(continues on next page)</i>

	Name	From	Comments
19.	Tana-Lee Rebhan	Aiea, HI	<i>(continued from previous page)</i> education of our youth. Further, teacher furloughs affect more than teachers and students. Besides the parents/guardians of the schoolchildren, the support personnel and their families are affected as well, including education assistants for special ed students, cafeteria workers, and transportation services. Perhaps I missed reports that government leaders and education administrators were willing to take pay cuts to accompany these furloughs?
20.	P.K. Reilly	Hilo, HI	The governor, legislature, BOE and DOE should not be looking to cut instructional hours for students and thereby the pay of the teachers. The cuts should be made in other areas. Mahalo!
21.	Noah Emmanuel Luis Luis	Honolulu, HI	It's counterintuitive for students to stay home from school just because the state doesnt have funds to pay their teachers. The first to get pay cuts should be the Governor Linda Lingle first, then Lt. Governor Duke Aiona before anyone else. Lead by example!
22.	Nancy Seifers	Pahoa, HI	
23.	George Wurtz	Wahiawa, HI	Pay for education now - or pay for prisons later.
24.	Tom Jennings	Keaau, HI	
25.	keith arai	hilo, HI	
26.	Brandi Livingston-Aoki	keaau, HI	
27.	Renee Konen	Ewa Beach, HI	
28.	John Renauer	Pahoa, HI	
29.	Sherry Shepherd	Mountain View, HI	We now live in a global community. It is our collective responsibility, here in Hawai'i and everywhere, to prepare our children to thrive in that world community. Limiting education limits creative manifestation on multiple levels. We need more and better education, not less.
30.	steve oliver	captain cook, HI	the state of hawaii has a legal mandate and trust to provide an education to our children. I feel a breach of that contract and trust has occurred. I wont be surprised if the state eventually gets sued in a class action suit and if it comes to that i will support it in the interest of assuring our childrens future and that of our state.
31.	Mary S Pauole	Hilo, HI	I firmly believe that Hawaii's children should not suffer from the state financial problems. It would be so much more simple to raise the excise tax so all came bare the burden.
32.	Mei ling Shorey-Wong	keaau, HI	I think the politicians need to go back to public school as students and or teachers! EDUCATION should never be cut, It's Priceless!!

	Name	From	Comments
33.	Mei ling Shorey-Wong	keaaau, HI	I think the politicians need to go back to public school as students and or teachers! EDUCATION should never be cut, It's Priceless!!
34.	POTOBO RACING	kalaheo, HI	EDUCATION IS #1
35.	Steve Klein	Herndon, VA	
36.	Drew Kapp	Volcano, HI	
37.	Randal McEndree	Hilo, HI	
38.	Robin Phoenix	Santa Rosa, CA	
39.	Jacqueline Jara	Honolulu, HI	I think it is so sad that Hawaii's children have to suffer by having less days of learning due to deficit in the State's budget.
40.	Monica Burnett	Keaaau, HI	
41.	Carol White	Amherst, MA	
42.	Kagari Fujita	Hilo, HI	
43.	Sean Naleimaile	Hilo, HI	These furloughs imposed on our youth doesn't necessarily affect my situation right now, but I am extremely concerned about the long term effects of these furloughs! Why is it always the youth, the future of our existence be the ones to take the blunt of our governmental problems. First its programs that enrich our youth like music and sports, then it now their entire educational program. That for me affect me and my families future! We are setting precedent that values so many other things over being responsible for guiding our youth. Maybe we should call out the specific people responsible for this shortfall not place the burden on our youth. We should look at finding a solution that puts the burden on the irresponsible individuals that let this situation get so out of hand rather than making our students suffer. Raise the the general excise tax... everyone can bear the burden.... Does Lingle have children? go figure...
44.	Kimberly Rabideau	Waikoloa, HI	By law aren't we supposed to have 180 days. When it comes to breaking the law who is responsible not the children but it is they who will take the punishment. Shame on our government for making our children pay for their crime.
45.	Trina Ashcraft	Waikoloa, HI	
46.	Ruby Morse	Waikoloa, HI	
47.	Julie Taylor	Waikoloa, HI	We, at our local school, parents, teachers and community members have heard the cry and outrage of the majority and therefore have gegun our own petition against this unnecessary decision. Foresight and action could have prevented this decision in addition to changing our state <i>(continues on next page)</i>

	Name	From	Comments
47.	Julie Taylor	Waikoloa, HI	<i>(continued from previous page)</i> law to allow a surplus. Also, a 1% increase in the state excise tx. could have meant only a \$200 per family increase instead of an additional \$500 child care expense per family due to our State Government officials. We realize that they are trying to save face in hoping not to raise taxes and keep their constituents in tact but, have failed in many other areas and actions not taken to put our children and education first! Our Schools PTSA has heard the cry of our community and are taking action accordingly.
48.	victoria schneider	waikoloa, HI	We need to fight for our kids and countries education
49.	Tammy Shiraishi	Keaau, HI	Child care is a problem as it is an additional expense.
50.	Eric John Cunningham	Otaki, Japan	This is lunacy. The state has got to recognize its responsibilities. Schooling for children should be at the top of the budget. Hawaii is being used as a tourist and military playground while its schools aren't even able to stay open for a regular week. This is an outrage.
51.	Leslie Merrell	Honolulu, HI	Single father of 2 teenage daughters that dont need the idle time and teachers are already haveing a hard time presenting the material required by the no child left behind act at 180 days this is a travisty
52.	Teresa Kaniho	Waikoloa, HI	Our children are our future and a future without education is a future without hope. Are we going to replace our schools with prisons in the future?? If you answer is NO then we better be putting education first, and put an end to these furlough days and if anything add an hour a day to the already short days..
53.	Michelle Campbell	Kailua Kona, HI	I think a strong educational foundation is important to future success. Six less hours per week is a large impact on a child's foundation.
54.	Catherine Klug	Waikoloa, HI	It affects our family because we want our children to have a complete education.
55.	Nicola Bilger	waikoloa, HI	
56.	Felicia Murray	Waikoloa, HI	
57.	Toscha Allison	Waikoloa, HI	The solution to save state dollars is NOT to cut our children's education. It is addressing and cutting the large salaries of the policy makers that have us in this crisis in the first place.
58.	Aimee Kaneko	Hilo, HI	As my son is a Junior in high school he will soon have to be applying to colleges, taking the SAT test, etc. I am concerned about the impact of furlough days on his education as a whole and how this will affect his chances of getting into a good college. Much has been said about the impact on special education students, but 17 days will affect all students.
59.	Iris Jesse	Honolulu, HI	

	Name	From	Comments
60.	Ammy Case	Waikoloa, HI	
61.	Natalie Evangelista	Waikoloa, HI	
62.	Nicole Meadows Kashner	Waikoloa, HI	
63.	Jane Mireles	Captain Cook, HI	
64.	Heather Bondallian	Honokaa, HI	The last thing I want to do is be away from my child, but I am considering sending my son to the mainland to live with his dad just so I can make sure he gets a good education as it seems he will not in Hawaii due to lack of educational funding and furlough days. I fear Hawaii's students will be educationally behind which will in turn lead to a generation of under-educated and unemployable adults.
65.	Evelyn Cori Oles	Waikoloa, HI	
66.	Gladys Ventura	Hawi, HI	I recently visited colleges on the Mainland with my daughter and met an educator who toured with us with her daughter at Vanguard University. She mentioned that Hawaii schools have one of the lowest ratings in the nation (I've heard this statistic this in the past). With 17 furlough Fridays this year and 24 Furlough Fridays next school year, our children will be in deep trouble. Education should be a high priority because our children is THE future. I cannot believe that our government put our children's future on the line because of their irresponsible spending.
67.	Apryl Sasaki	Kailua Kona, HI	
68.	Stanley Yamada	Pearl City, HI	Once again we place the burden of our errors and lack of foresight on the backs of our children. We continuously fail to make education a priority and then whine about the lack of skills our graduates bring to the workforce. When will we learn? I think that the Governor, her staff and cabinet, the Senate and the House of Representatives along with their respective staff should all be required to take have their pay and benefits cut to minimum wage, until such a time as an equitable solution is found. I also feel that all the teachers should be required to take a pay cut rather that work 17 less days. If the union sees fit to not honor all provisions of the contract they agreed to, why must we the citizens of this state honor the raises they were given?
69.	Felicia Murray	Waikoloa, HI	The school year is already too short. Students are barely making adequate progress under the "No Child Left Behind initiative. Test scores are some of the lowest in the nation. How can we hope to reverse an already terrible trend and widespread mediocrity with teacher furlough days?! Gov. Lingle's budget cuts will further undermine our inadequate educational system. Stand up for our children. We need to invest in their future. NOW.
70.	Gabriel Bissell	Hilo, HI	

	Name	From	Comments
71.	Jonette Buza	Wahiawa, HI	Our children of Hawaii are in school less then the national average, can't even pass the national standard tests, and Linda Lingle wants to add an additional 17days of furlough days then has the nerve to support Youth Summit, Youth days....Why give our children false hopes and dreams when they can't even stay in school long enough to get a decent education. How does she expect our Children to acheive or accomplish these dreams...seems like hypocrisy to me..
72.	Elizabeth Kapp	Pahoa, HI	Please help our keiki succeed and be ready for a global future! No teacher furlough days! Do we really want to be the state with the fewest hours of instruction in public schools?
73.	Esther Nathanson	Hilo, HI	
74.	Lori Almarza	Lihue, HI	The State of Hawaii's children are already so behind other children around the nation. We need to educate them, not take away instructional days from them!!!
75.	Ellen Loney	Hilo, HI	
76.	Victoria Kalman	Kailua Kona, HI	Talk is cheap; quality education is not. If we really do care about the children of this state, we will do whatever it takes to provide them a full day, a full week, a full term of quality education every year. We will put our money where our mouth is!
77.	Jennifer Lienhart Tsuji	Waikoloa, HI	The state just keeps giving young families more reasons to leave. I love my children and will do whatever it takes to provide the best I can....I only hope that does not mean leaving Hawaii.
78.	Gina Perez Hawaii	Kapaau, HI	Our children are our leaders of tomorrow. Do you really want to take education away from them? This is a very sad thing that our government is taking away from our children. Governor Lingle,please stop the furlough fridays and find another way to save money.
79.	Charleen Melendez	Pahoa, HI	
80.	Barbara Bennett	Papaaloa, HI	
81.	Shauna Yamasaki	Kamuela, HI	
82.	Darlene Juan	Laupahoehoe, HI	It is disappointing that our State is taking away the education our KEIKIS NEED! Bad enough we are one of the lowest in the States!!!! More opportunities will be limited for our future leaders, our KEIKIS!!!!
83.	Greg Villafuerte	Papaaloa, HI	The future of America is our children. Why would we even think of cutting back on our future leaders. I work hard paying state taxes and to have my children's education be cut by 17 days is not right. Invest more into our children so we can have a better future.

	Name	From	Comments
100.	Robyn Carvalho	Kamuela, HI	Education should not have to be sacrificed for the budget shortfall. This threatens all our teachers' security and that of our children! Removing 17 days from the school year is NOT the solution.
101.	pat Freeman	Kamuela, HI	My employees are having a hard time finding day care
102.	Marnie Masuda	Wailuku, HI	Our students need increased instructional time, not furloughs.
103.	Scott Dennis	Kula, HI	
104.	Tim Hultquist	Wailuku, HI	As a parent with a son in school I am very displeased that students days of instruction have been reduced to help "balance the budget". There are other areas that should have been cut, education should have been the last option!
105.	Mary Feyt	Waikoloa, HI	
106.	Sean Rosete	Kahului, HI	
107.	Jenni Bryson	Waikoloa, HI	The world educates their children like crazy (start earlier, go longer, more days a week, fluent in multiple languages) in order to become the future leaders of nations. We are shortening our children's opportunities for the future. It won't be a competition for who has the best grades, knowledge or understanding in the area, it will be throughout the world, and our kids will lose. Rethink this for the sake of our children's futures.
108.	Deborah Kawamoto	Pearl City, HI	Children First!! Need I say more? This is all we've been hearing these past years. However, All I've noticed is our keiki being the FIRST to go!! How difficult would it have been for our teachers to convert a few days or a week from each of their existing intersessions and vacations into furlough days and/or non-paid vacation/intersession days. Take the 17 furlough days and spread it throughout the school year. SIMPLE!!! This way, our keiki does not miss out on anymore school days, parents are not left to scramble work schedules and finances to arrange additional daycare. Was this really that difficult to figure out Elementary People....Elementary!!
109.	Sarah O'Brien	Pukalani, HI	
110.	Keri Blackburn	Waikoloa, HI	It's not about the extra cost of child care on Fridays. It's the loss of education that will be a huge detriment to our children and the future!
111.	KB Brooks	Kamuela, HI	I don't agree with the wording of the petition exactly, but..... furloughs for teachers is only undermining Hawaii's future. In a world of difficult decisions, what a bad choice!
112.	Nehoa Elaban-Taniguchi	kihei, HI	well i just don't think they should take away from our children there is something else they can do to save money!!!!For the working parent/parents it's hard enough to pay for child care !!!

	Name	From	Comments
113.	Caroline rouzieres	waikoloa, HI	
114.	A Gollenberg	Kamuela, HI	The Education of our children should be one of our absolute TOP priorities, it is just plain WRONG to let them suffer at the hands of an unbalanced budget!
115.	Ashlee Yap	Kihei, HI	I think that these furlough days are robbing the kids of thier education. These kids need to be in school as much as possible. What happen to the law NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND? Doesn't Lingle know that she is helping these kids stay behind in the decision she has made to have furlough days. And these programs that places are offering they aren't free. What about the families that can't afford those programs, what happens to those kids? There are so many questions and no answers. Hopefully they figure this out soon!
116.	udom stamegna	aiea, HI	
117.	Shirley Penn	Panama City, FL	#1. My Grandchildren are in Gifted classes, they need to remain in school as is, # 2. My Son is a single father with them and only him there in Hi. The girls would be home alone when he is at work FAR too much with this plan. Please don't implement this plan
118.	Beth Gohn	Waikoloa, HI	Our teachers are already doing a difficult job for minimal compensation, but now we expect them to do it with 3 weeks less time with our children. I am disappointed that Gov. Lingle thinks our children are unimportant. I had higher expectations of her when I voted for her.
119.	Kellye Egan	HILO, HI	What kind of world are we living in when we are take away school days from children whom are already behind nationally. There has to be another way. We have to stand up and do something. This is our future, these children will be our leaders, or maybe they never will get the chance if they never get the education they deserve.
120.	Todd Gohn	Waikoloa, HI	Our children are the future....Gov. Lingle do you really care so little for them and the future of our state?
121.	john geisser	haleiwa, HI	This takes away from their learning and why should they sacrifice because the union bosses (not members) want to make this painful for everyone.
122.	Michael Bilger	Waikoloa, HI	This is beyond the pale. It is shameful that here in Hawaii we have furloughed more days than any other state!! It seems there must be an alternative to penalizing our children instead of paying a little more in slase taxes or other revenue considerations.
123.	Honu Lindsey	Kamuela, HI	I am a High school student at Kanu 'o Ka 'Aina NCPSC. Luckily I am not being affected by this. However many of my friends and family are. It's sad that education is being taken from children my age. Where will be ten years from now? The Furlough Days are taking opportunity from us. <i>(continues on next page)</i>

	Name	From	Comments
123.	Honu Lindsey	Kamuela, HI	<i>(continued from previous page)</i> Just taking a few days from school shows me that some people don't care about the future of our Hawai'i. We, (the children) are the future of Hawai'i. Sincerely, A worried student
124.	Duane Wong	Honolulu, HI	
125.	Anthony Nay	Kihei, HI	
126.	Doreen Souza	Papaikou, HI	Seems to me that the governor does not care about Hawaii's future. If that's the case, she should be replaced immediately. We need to have in power those who want the best for Hawaii's future.
127.	Jay Matsumoto	Kamuela, HI	What makes the DOE members so special that they are immune to the economic challenges that affect the rest of the state? Due to the recession, the general public has been forced to make adjustments, why should civil servants be exempt? If the DOE can not provide adequate education for our children, perhaps it's time to enact a voucher system and let us choose how and where our educational dollars are spent! Why do so many DOE teachers send their kids to private schools? Because they know the DOE system is woefully inadequate! It's time to disband the HSTA and HGEA. These unions exist to protect the weak employees, which in our state represents the majority of the civil service work force! Why does the State of Hawaii have 10 times the national average of civil servants per capita? One in every 25 citizens in the State of Hawaii works for some form of Government. It's time to trim the fat and make the Government accountable for it's spending and actions. Also, I think it's time to stop pointing fingers at the Governor and the Legislature (not that they are without blame), and time to lay the blame squarely where it belongs, on the shoulders of the HSTA and HGEA unions!
128.	Jami Boverman	Kihei, HI	
129.	Erin Haines	Waikoloa, HI	
130.	Winona Adams	Waikoloa, HI	My grandchildren of elementary school ages, 5yrs. and 9yrs. will have nowhere to go, that would be considered "safe" if furlough days are to come. Please, please....what I've shared will be the same for other young families!!! Parents will be turned in to Child Protective Services for leaving their children home....alone!!! Our lawmakers are so thoughtless when it comes to managing when times are tough. Playing politics is dangerous for the future of our country. Our children will be in a world with turmoil. So everyone has to make common sense work.

	Name	From	Comments
131.	Jackie Vuich-Leckie	Makawao, HI	A decrease in school days will be challenging for a child with special needs such as my daughter who's currently in Kindergarten.
132.	Sherri Reed	Makawao, HI	
133.	catherine taylor	Lahaina, HI	
134.	Garrett Toguchi	Honolulu, HI	
135.	Heather Phillips	Coffman Cove, AK	
136.	Traci Toguchi	Honolulu, HI	
137.	Patrick Velis	Kamuela, HI	
138.	Karen Nakamatsu	Mililani, HI	
139.	Carol Yamato	Makawao, HI	
140.	Barbara Love	Kailua-Kona, HI	We hear our President call for excellence in education, and what we get are furlough days. Wars, executive bonuses, government waste, the list goes on, but we get an unfunded & unsuccessful No child left behind program and furloughs. Guess what? All our children are being left behind. Think. That's what you are paid to do. Come up with something else. B. Love
141.	Stacy Jensen	Waikoloa, HI	
142.	Michael Yokoyama	Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo, Japan	My Baby Sister's children will be greatly impacted. As their Uncle, I pray that the Hawaii Government have the sense to put Education first before building new roads and increasing Salaries. Why don't they lay off Government workers? Private industry is the only one to suffer! Auwe!
143.	Leigh Shiroma	Ewa Beach, HI	Our kids need more time to meet their educational requirements. This will make it tougher on the kids who are barely making the requirements. They will have to cram more. As for the teachers, they are already putting in more time for love. What other state worker worker puts in more hours than needed? Not many. Please exempt the teachers from this furlough. Our kids are our future! Give the kids what they need and not have them be affected due to our State's problems.
144.	Alexandre Da Silva	Honolulu, HI	
145.	Bitu Sulistiono	kamuela, HI	
146.	Katie Benioni	Kamuela, HI	
147.	Sunee Campbell	honokaa, HI	I don't have children in school anymore. I see other families with children already struggling , children already struggling with school. As a teacher my experience is that consistency is very important to learning and for children to feel safe.

	Name	From	Comments
148.	Toni Marez	Waikoloa, HI	Do we really need to comment on how taking away this many days of education from a state whose test scores are so low in the country might effect our children? Come on, cut costs another way! The children are the answer - not the problem!! How can we tell our children to put their education first when our own state doesn't?
149.	Jill Eckenrode	Lahaina, HI	Our education system is already the second worst in the nation. Centralized abuse of power and completely unbalanced teacher salaries have put our kids in a terrible position with their education. It is time to STOP robbing our education funds and stop ROBBING our children of their constitutional right to a free and appropriate education. Jill Eckenrode
150.	Terri Glass	kamloops, Canada	I am Tutu to two beautiful children of Hawaiian descent and am appalled at the situation with education on the Big Island..Wish I could bring them to Canada for an education, but I am not able to arrange that.. Please give my grandchildren a good education... They deserve to be able to compete in the world.. Sincerely Terri Glass
151.	Dale Chun	Waipahu, HI	There must be another way.
152.	Amara Love-Joyce	Waikoloa, HI	
153.	Tami Ho	Kailua, HI	
154.	Jeanne Ryan	Hilo, HI	
155.	Kapono Peiper	waikoloa, HI	why should our children pay? Our education is allready questionable but this makes it worse might as well go back to old school hours this faux year round school is lame!!!!
156.	Leianda Murrill	Kailua Kona, HI	Think of the future for these keiki and how will they be affected?
157.	Francine Duncan	Pukalani, HI	SHAME ON YOU LINDA LINGLE, It not only effects our children today but many years to come!
158.	Teri Takamura	Makawao, HI	Can someone explain why this is happening only in Hawaii, in a state where the education already is questionable. Our numbers are horribly low already and now we will loose 17 +24 school days. My 8th gr son thinks this is bad, very bad...and he is an 8th grader.
159.	Sunny Gutierrez	Wailuku, HI	Hawaii's education system was already struggling before the furloughs. The impact on our children is not just in the short term but affects their future. They do not deserve to be the victims of the State's financial issues. They should be protected and respected. The message to our children is that they are not valued, that education isn't so important. Find another solution to resolving the State's financial crisis. Thank you.

	Name	From	Comments
160.	Adrienne Laurion	Haiku, HI	Our children need a quality education. Having them lose 17 educational days is not acceptable. There are more options. Take away Teacher Institute Day, teacher work days but do not take away the important education needed by our children.
161.	Bridget Pleuss	Waikoloa, HI	Taking away a child's right to education is unbelievable. In doing this you are not only hurting the children's education but a community as a whole because eventually these kids will be the one's in office making these kinds of decisions and god knows we want THEM to do a better job than what you have done here! As a result of the Furlough days I will have to pay for private education for my 3 children to so they are not cheated out of the education that they deserve.
162.	Margaret Bruck	Makawao, HI	Shame on the governor and the legislators -all they are doing is hurting the local people with children. Why can't all people share in the burden and raise the General Excise Tax by 1%! Education should be a priority! This is beyond words and disgraceful.
163.	Molly Maasoka	hilo, HI	
164.	Mikki Hastings	Kamuela, HI	
165.	Carrie Delara	Pearl City, HI	
166.	Christine Andrews	Wailuku, HI	
167.	Peggy Spencer	Waikoloa, HI	I am a hard-working teacher/student/adult/community member/mother/friend and I am not pleased with the decision of 17 furlough days. I take offense at those criticizing our teachers of HI, even if it were somewhat true. I know too many educators that bend over backwards to help our children learn life lessons as well as standards that our nation, state, and district have deemed necessary for our students to receive a well-balanced education. There are other avenues to pursue in order for our state to meet its budgetary restrictions; 17 furlough days for teachers, students, families, and communities IS NOT a wise decision. POLITICS has hindered our lives and especially now that the governor, legislature, and unions have agreed upon depriving our students a fair and equitable education. 17 days off with no pay and insurance premiums raised are very difficult for many hard-working individuals that have committed their lives to helping our youth enrich their lives through education and supporting activities. Please reconsider mandating our schools issue 17 furlough days. My personal suggestion is raise sales taxes to 5%, and watch how all deficits become manageable!
168.	Keeley Acosta	Waikoloa, HI	
169.	Debra McElree	Waikoloa, HI	Cut administrative costs, furlough administrators not teachers!

	Name	From	Comments
170.	Jen Mui	Honolulu, HI	
171.	Kellie Nunnelee	Early, TX	I have a niece that lives in Hawaii and she has a 14 year old son. I also have a 14 year old son and we all want our children to have an education. This should be taken from another place besides the children or teachers.
172.	Mary Cochran	Kahului, HI	
173.	Jade Stice	Kaneohe, HI	
174.	Sydney Cardea	Makawao, HI	There are no pain free choices given the current budget crisis, but there are better choices. The state is mandated, and the children deserve a fair and appropriate education. I believe the time has come to face a tax increase to resolve this problem. In years to come, when we are once again in economic good times, perhaps we should think twice about tax rebates.
175.	Jeremy Gray	Kahului, HI	
176.	Jennifer Brooks	Honolulu, HI	
177.	Klm Bartenstein	Kailua, HI	I'm very concerned about the recent decision to implement furlough days. Our state already has a weak education system and with the addition of furlough days our children will suffer even more. The furlough days will also put a significant financial burden on our family.
178.	Lyn Imamura	Waikoloa, HI	
179.	michelle Bousquet	waikoloa, HI	
180.	Ligaya Stice	Kaneohe, HI	Classic example of the teacher's union "protecting" themselves versus the interests of the children or even the interests of their membership body. No one wants this except the union who in their misguided attempts to represent teachers are actually making things harder for them by giving them less time and opportunity to teach the required material put forth by "No Child Left Behind". While the adults bicker, the children suffer.
181.	Sarah David	Waikoloa, HI	
182.	Katherine Ciriako	Kailua Kona, HI	
183.	Jakub Gola	Zory, Poland	Please to do something!
184.	Carl Ciriako Jr.	Kailua-Kona, HI	
185.	Jeff Beban	Waikoloa, HI	
186.	Jessica Chu	Waipahu, HI	
187.	Johnny & Debra McElree	Waikoloa, HI	Cut education last, please. There are other bureaucracies in the State government which should be trimmed before our schools are.
188.	Jacqueline Boland	Kaneohe, HI	Hawaii's kids are already handicapped because those with resources take their kids out and put them in private school. Furloughs are one more strike against them. And, <i>(continues on next page)</i>

	Name	From	Comments
188.	Jacqueline Boland	Kaneohe, HI	<i>(continued from previous page)</i> once again, because the parents will have to pay for daycare, this is putting the burden on lower middle class and poor residents. My child is only a year and a half old, and my husband and I are now realizing that we'll have to figure out how to pay for private school because Hawaii values its public school system so little. It's unfair.
189.	Joy Van Bergen	Kailua, HI	A state run school system doesn't work. That is why we are one of few states who does this. It has never worked for us, scores alone testify to this. There is so much "fat" on Oahu in the DOE. 90 cents of every dollar should go to the school and the DOE (who has done a terrible job) should be cut to a minimum. Decisions should be made at the county level. Get the money to the Principals and scores will go up or people will be fired. Either way it is better than the present situation. Joy
190.	Linda Williams	Kailua-Kona, HI	I am on the Board of Directors at Kona Pacific Public Charter School. We sat in a meeting for over 3 hours yesterday trying to vote on the subject of furlough days or pay cuts. This vote was after countless meetings, listening to teacher and staff hardship stories, seeing parents frazzled as to what to do with their children, how to maintain their own jobs on all of these off school days, etc. On top of all the furlough days this particular charter school gets half per child of what the DOE schools get. This is a travesty and the Hawaii government needs to find other ways to balance their budgets! This is our future generation. How are these kids going to survive when they can't read and write! Linda Williams Parent Representative Kona Pacific Public Charter School
191.	Kenneth Van Bergen	Kailua Kona, HI	There is plenty of money to bail out banks, insurance, auto, etc. industries but we have to sacrifice our children's education due to lack of funds. While Goldman Sacks has record profits our children are at home when they should be in school. US children (my children included) need all the education they can get to stay competitive in the future work force. Sacrificing their education is the last thing we should do. No more furloughs!
192.	Debra Miller	Kailua Kona, HI	I work for a company that contracts to the DOE to supply daily services for Autistic children and it shortens my time to work and make a difference with these students. I also work part time as a PPT in an elementary school and I feel it is a injustice to shorten the childrens time learning and developing an education that is needed to survive in this world.
193.	Pamela Hicks	Kailua Kona, HI	Who will solve the problems of tomorrow if our children are undereducated today?

	Name	From	Comments
194.	Joyce Trask	Kailua, Kona,, HI	
195.	Kaili O'Connell	Kailua, HI	
196.	Yuka Kogane	Hilo, HI	
197.	Amelia Kaulani Uribe	Ocean View, HI	Furloughs mean that I have to spend more time than ever teaching my children what their teachers don't have the time to teach them in school. I almost feel like they're being homeschooled.
198.	Lisa Nunnelee	Austin, TX	
199.	Ellen Okuma	Keaau, HI	As a college faculty member, I am concerned that K-12 children will have missed out a certain number of instructional days, which will eventually cause problems for those students when they reach college. They will not have had enough class time to develop the necessary academic skills to succeed in college.
200.	Christina Neubecker	Waikoloa, HI	Please do something to help our kids!
201.	Eric Mecklenburg	Hilo, HI	Furlough days are an unconscionable burden placed on the working classes. Stop them. Stop them now.
202.	Anonymous Anonymous	Hilo, HI	No child left behind? Is this the way to settle the score. Hawaii's children are being left behind, and parents are having to work even harder to arrange for something else to 'fill in' for those furlough day. Sheesh!!! Parents work hard as it is to make ends meet. Teachers are there to support the education of our children. We have many wonderful hard working teachers out there who are also needing to make ends meet all the same. I say, "No furlough days in Hawaii nei!"
203.	Susie Stadler	Kailua Kona, HI	
204.	James Schumaker	Kea'au, HI	Education is not a "discretionary expense." When an individual's revenue diminishes what one pays for his mortgage, for utilities, etc. does not get cut. Nonessential items yes, but basic subsistence costs should remain unchanged. Common sense, try it, it just might work. In other words, THINK, before you leap...
205.	Glendalee DeRuiter	honolulu, HI	From the very Beginning of his/her education, the child should experience the joy of discovery. Don't take this away.
206.	Jennette Gagnon	Brownsburg, IN	
207.	Hilo Jumanji	Chesapeake, VA	
208.	Kenoalani Dela Cruz	Hilo, HI	My husband and I do the best we can to supplement our daughter's public education at home. We are very unhappy about the lost instruction time because our daughter thrives in the classroom setting.
209.	Joyce Hamasaki	Kealakekua, HI	
210.	Mary Goya	Hilo, HI	

	Name	From	Comments
211.	Tania Laird	Kailua, HI	Look....We all understand there is no money. But our kids already dont have book that are current to learn from dont have enough resources at school so stay on par with those kids on the mainland and they already have so many days off. Dont take away any chance that our kids have to make it to college by affecting the amount of school days they have for learning to get that higher learning and the ability to get the practice and learning they need for the HSA and PSATs.
212.	Patricia Komae	Kailua, HI	
213.	Steve Furtado	Hilo, HI	I truly find it offensive that our children (the future of our country) has to suffer for the lack of proper leadership in this state. For years there has been waste in our government and now that things have come to a head its supposed to be acceptable that our children suffer. We have come to a time when youths from other countries are more qualified to be in our institutions of higher learning. Our future seems bleak.
214.	Kaleopono Quintana	Hilo, HI	
215.	christina doherty	waikoloa, HI	
216.	Nelson Ferreira	Lahaina, HI	GIVE ME A BREAK! AS A REALTOR, I'VE BEEN WORKING JUST AS HARD FOR MONTHS WITH NO PAY..... MANY PEOPLE HAVE LOST THEIR JOBS AND MORE WILL BE LOSING THEIR JOBS. THE ANSWER IS SIMPLE..... IF OUR TEACHERS REALLY CARE FOR THE CHILDREN THEY TEACH, THEY SHOULD ACCEPT THE FURLOUGH DAYS, BUT STILL SHOW UP FOR WORK! FOR THE KIDS! DO THE RIGHT THING TEACHERS!!!
217.	Wendy Kawabata	Honolulu, HI	
218.	Lei Ahu Isa	Honolulu, HI	
219.	Jo-Ann Adams	HONOLULU, HI	Stop using the children as human shields. Take the cuts out of the administration ... not out of your primary mission.
220.	Pier Sircello	Hilo, HI	
221.	John Hillas Cole	Mountain View, HI	There are supply-side and expenditure-side solutions to governmental poverty. Stop focusing exclusively on the expenditure side to the detriment of education K-PhD.; get some guts and raise some revenue! John Hillas Cole
222.	Ed James	Kurtistown, HI	Unlike #216, I don't mind my name being seen. He or she is still trying to make a living and doesn't want to loose custmers. I too have been having a rough time of it. However I feel if these teachers are already having to take the furlough days... and they really believe in "teaching" our children... then they should GO IN AND TEACH on (continues on next page)

	Name	From	Comments
222.	Ed James	Kurtistown, HI	<i>(continued from previous page)</i> these Fridays. Come on teachers show your REAL COLORS. Teach!
223.	Joel Peralto	Hilo, HI	I am not personally affected by the furloughs; my kids are grown, but I am an educator and what I see happening to public education in Hawaii (K-20) is appalling; two of three of my kids graduated from public high schools in Hawaii; my daughter graduated from UHH and Uh-Jabsom; my older boy attended HawCC, graduated from KCC and attended UHH; we need to stand together and take back public education in Hawaii; I am, btw, a lifetime resident; I was educated at UH and Chaminade and I teach at HawCC. Mahalo!
224.	Gleah Rider	Hilo, HI	
225.	Gina Ganir-gray	Hilo, HI	
226.	Lisa Lange	Kailua, HI	Make summer vacation longer-no furlough days!
227.	Juliet Moncrief	Volcano, HI	
228.	Janel Heidtke	Henderson, NV	
229.	Christina Tramontin	Kamuela, HI	
230.	Dan Gaudiano	Honolulu, HI	Our students are currently not doing well. I fear they will far even further behind.
231.	Chalie DuBois	Ewa Beach, HI	
232.	Harold Kaneshiro	Camarillo, CA	
233.	Terrence J Conlan	Honolulu, HI	By the way, how much Federal money will Hawaii loose because of dropped teaching days?
234.	Christine Hendrix	Pahoa, HI	
235.	K Fiish	Waikoloa, HI	It is difficult to see the rationale of they states position to cut education. It burdens the peolpe of the state with school aged children with more out of pocket expenses. Is this their way to stimulate the economy. On top of that the state says in these hard times all should give back. I do not remember the teachers at the school my son goes to getting rich the last ten years when the economy was strong and people were buying all their toys. I remeber them driving to school in old cars faithfully sticking to their under-paid job to educate our students. So what do they have to give back??? A teacher friend of mine tells me that the pay cut will take them back to their pay of almost 6 years ago. That is gross wrong committed against hard working people trying to manage all the federal NCLB legislation and still trying to make education fun for our kids. By the way I am sure with a month cut from their schedule no school will pass those tests this year. It is time the government admits this wrong and restores the students education.

	Name	From	Comments
236.	bill mautz	hilo, HI	
237.	Erick Cremer	Hilo, HI	
238.	Brian Crawford	Hilo, HI	
239.	Kenneth Shimizu	Kurtistown, HI	My children have increased homework assigned so that they may keep up with their standards. This has turned us (parents) into teachers at home. In these times, we are all living and surviving with our plates full. We are drained at the end of each day and my children have been placed at an educational disadvantage.
240.	Lora Stehsel	Kailua-Kona, HI	Bottom line: Our children have to be our priority. Our children are our future.
241.	ROGER DOMINGO	honolulu, HI	
242.	Erwin Udarbe	Mililani, HI	Requiring teachers to have at least a four-year degree, pass an DOE examination, work pass 2p.m withOUT pay, make out-of-pocket expenses for class supplies, adhering to a strict guideline referred to as No Child Left Behind, and one of the lowest paid professions, just to name a few... all the while receiving at least a \$2000 pay cut per year? Believe me, teachers are "Showing their real colors," they are "Doing the right thing."
243.	Julie Pinto	Lahaina, HI	This is absolutely shocking that Hawaii should consider to cut the education of our children. We already are at the bottom of the US tables, and it is apparent that our elected officials obviously don't care. The working class parents of small children are in a terrible spot because of the furloughs...SAVE OUR STUDENTS!!!
244.	Dana Welch	Wahiawa, HI	Hawaiian students are in school for half the instructional hours of most mainland schools and therefore are falling further behind in their education!
245.	Arthur Rapada Jr.	Mililani, HI	The first place Lingle looks to cut expenses is our children's' education from Kindergarten all the way through University level. Being a student at University of Hawaii Manoa, I personally can see the effects of budgets cuts towards education. All lecturers at Manoa have been let go and also many programs and majors are also being eliminated because of this. Without quality teachers there's no quality education for our students and children... students and children are the future!
246.	Selina Gagne	Wahiawa, HI	
247.	Ryan Hendrix	Anacortes, WA	My mother works at the University in Hilo and would be directly affected. The kids that are being left behind by lack of education are already flooding the higher learning centers, unprepared and not entirely dedicated. It would be a shame to see them receive even less enthusiasm to learn than they already do.

	Name	From	Comments
248.	Kelli Sybrowsky	Honolulu, HI	
249.	Krista Morrison	wahiawa, HI	My daughter is in 1st grade and while i was not concerned with her educational needs because she testing at the top of the charts however i am now very very concerned that she will not do well when we move back to the mainland. There has got to be some other way to come up with the money other than to take from the children who are already recieving an education that is in the bottom 25% in the US
250.	Tyler Cram	Kapaa, United States Minor Outlying Islands	
251.	Jessica-Lynn Nakasone-Koki	Wailuku, HI	This is an unfair thing that we are doing to the children..our future. My daughter is doing fine in school but... many other children are not. We are already ranked so low. I just got a call that the parents at my daughter's school will have to choose between may day or reading event where all the students write their own books. Reason.. not enough days in the year. We should never have to choose between the two.
252.	Jessica Placker	Wahiawa, HI	My daughter has been in the Hawaii school system for 5 years now. In which time she has dropped to half a year behind in her reading level. Cutting out more days for her to learn will only hurt her more. I am a working mom and don't have the option of staying home and TEACHING her on those days. I would agree with the furlough days if it meant saving money to hire better teachers, but that's just not the case. This is taking even more away from my daughters education. We are military and arent scheduled to leave this island until 2012. By that time my daughter probably won't even be close to the education level of someone her own age. Taking away from the kids is just sad!
253.	Mahealani Mahiai	Honolulu, HI	
254.	Carmen Curtis	Kihei, HI	
255.	James Tibbits	Ewa Beach, HI	This is an OUTRAGE. We live in the greatest nation in the world??? Not now. Where IS the money for our childrens education? Our state Government has squandered away our tax payers money! Millions wasted on harbor improvments for a fairy systems thats runs no more,on roads that seem to NEVER get finished and so on.USE THE EMERGENCY FUND!ITS A FRECKIN EMERGENCY! P.S. I'll let my vote speak for me.
256.	Linda Paisley	Kamuela, HI	I believe there are other alternatives that will not impact the number of school/instructional days. Our goal is student achievement, furlough days do not help us to reach our goal.

	Name	From	Comments
257.	Kathy Plack	Hilo, HI	It is appalling to me that the DOE started it's budget cuts with the education of the children instead of their bloated administration. Why don't the pencil pushers take some time off instead of the teachers, I guarantee they can all get their jobs done in 4 days of work!
258.	Glenn Fajardo	Waikoloa, HI	Hawaii's educational system needs help, not furlough days. Take money away from anything else except the children. They are our future.
259.	Ann Kam	Lihue, HI	DOE is top heavy. There's a lot of unnecessary jobs in DOE that don't directly affect the kids. The governor shows no heart by furloughing at the school level. Principals and DOE administrators are overpaid individuals. They can't figure it out. Why get paid the big bucks if you can't make the hard decisions and make good choices. Let's see if they extend the school days on Wednesdays to get more time with the kids. I could never understand why Wednesday kids are released at 1:25pm (only 5 hours of school). Good Grief!
260.	Katherine Vanderspek	Waikoloa, HI	
261.	pamela scheffler	volcano, HI	I love seeing Hawaii depicted as slow, dumb and backwards in the New York Times. Please, Gov. Lingle, stop making us a laughing-stock.
262.	Beryl Fajardo	Waikoloa, HI	
263.	Karen Riley	Keaau, HI	
264.	Paula P	Hilo, HI	I don't like the whole furlough friday's thing. I have to spend extra for child care for both my children, which is hard on us as it is! Please, please get rid of this! My child deserves the best education, but how is that if the state has already did budget cuts on schools and now with teachers! I would home school my child, but I even can't afford that!
265.	Brian Paiva	Honokaa, HI	
266.	Susan Lord	Kilauea, HI	
267.	Chrsistopher Rallustian	Honolulu, HI	As a student of Farrington High School, I believe that the Hawaii Public Schools should not have to deal with these circumstances. We worked hard for years and now we are loosing more education due to the low economic stocks. From students form the mainland, Students in Hawaii are loosing about a WHOLE ENTIRE YEAR of EDUCATION due to all of the state holidays and Waiver days through out there whole entire 12 to 13 years of schooling, and now the younger generation are loosing more days of education.
268.	Brenda McDonald	Laupahoehoe, HI	
269.	Amy Hunt	Waikoloa, HI	

	Name	From	Comments
270.	Casey Wooten	captain cook, HI	
271.	William Husek	Waikoloa, HI	It is incredulous to think the government officials feel it is OK to do this. The leaders & workforce of the future can not reach their potential on four days a week.
272.	Haley Albertson	Puako, HI	
273.	Etsuko Horio	Honolulu, HI	
274.	Branden Nakamura	Waipahu, HI	<p>i don't have kids of my own (yet), but i do have nieces, nephews, and cousins, that are still in the grade school level. i feel that it's important, for sakes of all children, to not be missing out on their educational instruction days. all kids are important contributing members to society, and they have a right too, to a full on education. just that one day a week furlough can take away a lot from our keiki of Hawaii.</p> <p>speaking as a contributing member of society, i too have bills to pay. i work in the DOE as a custodian, but soon to be a certified Substitute Teacher. that one extra day of no pay & no instruction is a huge toll on us all. thinking of it from a teacher's point of view-the students could be doing something they'd regret on a furlough friday, because of the lack of education & discipline to know any better. i'd rather see them being educated or in a safer place, instead of being out in the streets in a street gang or in trouble with the law.</p> <p>please, take what everyone says into consideration about their feeling of this furlough. i know that the kids may not see it as something serious because it's a day off for them, but it is a day of unproductivity. think about it!</p>
275.	M B	Schertz, TX	This is by far the most ridiculous decision ever made by a state governor. Pres. Obama could not express enough how education is so much more important. Governor and her official should take payroll cut off and send those kids back to school. Stupid realy stupid!
276.	Amanda Blodgett	Honolulu, HI	School is the learning ground and we need to keep it open for all children. Children are given the opportunity to learn and to be educated at schools. The State Government should not take it away from our children.
277.	Jane G	Waipahu, HI	This really can't be the ONLY way to budget money. Do you know what furlough days will tell the future of Hawai'i? That YOU DON'T CARE! You can talk all you want about how you want to improve education and how you care about our kamali'i, but they are the first ones you will take away from?! Where's the aloha in that?! Never mind we already have low test scores, a high dropout rate, but now you want our FUTURE to have the shortest school year in the nation? If you actually cared, you would have volunteered your entire salary. If you all keep making <i>(continues on next page)</i>

	Name	From	Comments
277.	Jane G	Waipahu, HI	<i>(continued from previous page)</i> stupid decisions like this, our future will be in the hands of those less educated than you are because YOU TOOK IT AWAY FROM THEM!
278.	Marvis Yanagisawa	Kamuela, HI	How ridiculous after President Obama lately stressed publically to increase the number of school days offered. I wonder about his personal thoughts regarding his "home" state having the highest number of furlough days across the country.
279.	Kathleen Johnson	Austin, TX	My granddaughter goes to one of Hawaii's schools on a military base. I personally feel it will be detrimental to her education to have these multiple furlough days. Being in the military and in military schools since pre-K, she's had to accept the educational environment she's in. I think its hard enough to get an education without furlough days let alone with all of these furlough days. I feel they are excessive.
280.	neal kunin	Haiku, HI	My Grandchildren (4 of them) have no place to be while there parents & I work. I beleive the best way to handle this instead of creating thousands of latch key kids, new drug addicts vandals, graffiti to just scratch the surface of the multitude of things that will cost the state in the long run millions to rectify. Let's start by cutting the jobs or % of hours of the administration first. They may save a whole hell of a lot right there. Then if you had a brain for planning how about looking at and adopting what has been proven over a long range and look at having various work places go on a longer 4 day work week 10 hour day and longer complementing four day 8 hour school day and look at a brilliant idea of shutting down plants and footprints that encompass energy savings that will amount to way more savings than a 20 % payroll cut to lousy teachers salaries to begin with.
281.	nicole west	hon, HI	Hawaii's educational system is already in the toilette and now you want to take away more learning opportunities? It doesn't make sense. There must be a better way.
282.	Denni Grace	Haiku, HI	
283.	Laura Bach Buzzell	Honolulu, HI	16 year old daughter at home, instead of learning in school those days. Decreasing aptitude for all students
284.	chris beal	Louth, United Kingdom	
285.	stephanie strong	haiku, HI	
286.	Jennifer Michaels	Haiku, HI	
287.	Carolyn Aoki	Waipahu, HI	
288.	Kim Ora-a	Makawao, HI	

	Name	From	Comments
289.	Jodilyn Kunimoto	Hilo, HI	The future of education, our keiki, and the state are at stake here. It's time the legislature, puts money where it will count most!
290.	Lina Garcia	Kaneohe, HI	It saddens my heart and disgust arises as we are unfairly punishing the children. Hawaii is already noted as low educational standards. We can only hope that these 17 days will not prevent kids from one day filling seats in the gov. offices and will be smart enough to never repeat this unjust horrible act of denying proper education.
291.	Agnes Agnesa	Bangkok, Thailand	
292.	Amy Donald	Niceville, FL	My son was a student in the Hawaii public school system for 2 1/2 years. I believe in Hawaii's ability to give a proper education to our children but cutting classtime by 17 days is not it!! These kids are given more and more requirements each year, expected to study harder, be smarter, and be "super kids"! All this while their educational benefits keep diminishing. Cutting days cuts education! I thought we were to support education..not take it away. Cutting days...IS cutting education.
293.	Sheila Kitamura	Honolulu, HI	Someone needs to be accountable for this! Why don't they raise our sales tax to help cover the shortfall, ours is one of the lowest in the nation! Now everyone will suffer! Crime will increase and families will have to stretch their already thin budgets to pay for childcare on furlough days!
294.	Evan Yashiki	Honolulu, HI	
295.	DeAnda Start	Honolulu, HI	Hawaii's children already suffer a lack of education taking away 17 full days of school will continue to lower the scores. Why can't we start school the day after labor day and end school in june. it worked for us why not our children.
296.	Dustin Grable	Kailua, HI	
297.	Laurie Williams	Kailua, HI	I think the Hawaii government is sending a terrible message to Hawaii keiki by cancelling school days. Please let the children know school is too important to miss!!
298.	E. Otani	Kihei, HI	
299.	Christina Anderson	Ottawa, Canada	
300.	Taylor Pritchett	waikoloa, HI	TayTay:D
301.	Tim Hultquist	Wailuku, HI	Keeping kids out of school is the absolute wrong way to "balance the budget". Our children deserve better than this!!
302.	Charli Johnson	Kailua-Kona, HI	Our school system is one of the worst I've seen. My child's school is currently in reconstruction due to bad test scores. Closing the schools is so not going to change that.

	Name	From	Comments
303.	Jill Gilboy	Honolulu, HI	Impose a state a lottery to balance the budget therefore not to impact our children's education. Money from the lottery would go directly to education and give our kids the textbooks, after school programs, art and music classes etc., that they so desperately need.
304.	adora hinrich	keaaau, HI	Please comment on how the DOE furlough days affect you and your family. Mahalo!
305.	Zhi yong Ju	Honolulu, HI	No Furlough Days for Hawaii's Children!!!
306.	Kay Twyman	Pearl City, HI	Hello, I'm a Senior at Moanalua High School. Furlough mostly affects me in my A.P. Language class. That's less days of instructional time for us to learn, gain knowledge, and prepare for the final exam. On top of this my mom is a teacher, and that's less income coming in. My education and her pay check has been robbed. I feel as though my rights as a student has been violated, because it say's in our student bill of rights that students are entitled to have a say in Board of Education decisions. Not once were we asked for our opinion our thoughts and feelings, concerning accepting furlough. Legislature never asked for any of our suggestions in regards to finding other possible solutions to the economical deficit. instead furlough was dumped upon us in our front yards, like garbage. furlough is trash, it's a method that needs to be thrown away. for the sake of present and future students and educators.
307.	C R	Aiea, HI	
308.	Caley Coloma	Hilo, HI	Put CHILDREN first! Don't make them suffer for the states bad budgeting.
309.	Selena Medeiros	Ahualoa, HI	
310.	Lanakila Mangauil	Honoka'a, HI	I am a teacher and it impacts my ability to afford what i need to live in this already over inflated economy! I find it also very difficult to teach effectively in such time restraints. I can feel the hardship on our local families already, this has made it far worse!
311.	Meghan Makanani	Ookala, HI	What I don't understand is that satistics prove when our kids are involved in school- it helps with self-esteem and help prepare them for a pono, productive life- when we take school away from them- it can lead to boredom and a lessing of community involvement. We will be paying drastically in the future- in terms of crime, drug use, and grown ups who will be a burden instead of a contributing members of our communities. Our problem as a society is that we are only looking at Now instead of our future- We need to stop being shortsighted and take care of our children- and their children. Mahalo nui loa.
312.	Angela Johns	Kapolei, HI	Please comment on how the DOE furlough days affect you and your family. Mahalo!
313.	Lisa Berthoud	kamuela, HI	

	Name	From	Comments
314.	Felisha Ponsell	Brunswick, GA	
315.	James Small	Naperville, IL	
316.	Melissa Stamper	Lacey, WA	
317.	geoff staton	hilo, HI	
318.	Celeste Staton	Volcano, HI	This furlough situation has caused scheduling, financial and educational demise for my family. We suffer loss of income and additional expense. This is unfair and illegal. We did not cause the problem. Our children are getting the message that Education is not valued and falling behind in their progress toward being productive citizens of our future.
319.	Joey Passos	Honolulu, HI	
320.	kelly kahawai	Hilo, HI	I believe we are doing a grave injustice to our children here in the State of Hawaii by allowing these furlough days to continue. We are already on the lower end of the spectrum in the nation regarding educational standards. This is going to affect our future as well as the future of the keiki in Hawaii. It is unacceptable to take away valuable learning days in order to balance the budget. There has to be other areas the governor can cut funds, like starting from the top. I hope more residents in the State of Hawaii will speak out about this. There is strength in numbers!!
321.	Christina Harper	Hilo, HI	
322.	Theresa Mock	Hilo, HI	Both of my children are denied the expected time to be educated in Hawai'i. My son would benefit from tutors and in class sessions but is deprived of nearly a month of educational days per year. Politicians platforms are based on the importance of education yet while elected they appear to deprive those in the educational arena.
323.	Mireille Ellsworth	Hilo, HI	
324.	T Warren	Ewa Beach, HI	It affects the quality of education not just to my kids but all of Hawaii's kids. I cannot believe the state can make the future of the kids suffer. Think about it, they are our future leaders ...now with the least amount of education in the world.

Sen. Will Espero

From: kawika liu [redacted]
Sent: Friday, October 30, 2009 7:13 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Furlough Fridays

Aloha,

As the parent of a kindergartener with special needs, I am very concerned about the impact of furlough Fridays on her education and the other children in the DOH system. These cuts will further disadvantage children in a system which is already severely underfunded. I urge the legislature to and Governor to come together and find equitable means of balancing the budget which involve both budget cuts and revenue raising measures.

Mahalo.

Kawika Liu

[redacted]
Honolulu, HI 96826

Sen. Will Espero

From: Elaine Eisenstadt [mailto:elaine@hawaii.com]
Sent: Friday, October 30, 2009 7:05 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Furlough Fridays

Please do whatever is necessary to find the funds and rescind furlough Fridays. Our budget shortfall should not fall on the backs of our children. It is shameful if this is allowed to continue.

Sincerely,
Elaine Eisenstadt
Makawao

Sen. Will Espero

From: Jeff Cicatko [mailto:jeff@hawaii.com]
Sent: Friday, October 30, 2009 7:02 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: October 30th Hearing

Categories: Print Big Island

The Education system should never have been on the chopping block. Please find another way to save this money. Our children are the future and the Furlough Fridays are compromising that.

Thank you for your consideration,
Jocelyn Cicatko

Hawai'i State PTSA



every child. one voice.

To: Senator Colleen Hanabusa, Senate President
Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair
Senator Will Espero, Vice Chair
Senator Norman Sakamoto, Chair, Education Committee

From: Valerie Sonoda, President Hawaii State PTSA

Date: October 30, 2009; 12:30 pm

Subject: Support of Special Senate Committee to Consider Approaches to Teacher Furloughs

The Hawaii State PTSA opposes a newly two-year ratified teacher contract that requires educators to take 17 or 21 unpaid furlough days off, and result in decreased instruction time.

We are concerned that furlough Fridays will result in the children of Hawaii losing significant educational hours targeted towards student achievement, placing Hawaii at the bottom with the lowest or 163 days of school in the United States.

We understand Hawaii's current governmental shortfalls, however, today over 60% of Hawaii's public schools have not met average yearly progress under Federal Legislation, "No child Left Behind or NCLB". We feel reducing instructional time will only add to the challenge of meeting AYP, and for many special needs children, the state will not be able to meet IDEA requirements and may result in severe unintended consequences.

We strongly encourage our legislators to consider the following options:

1. Request HSTA to consider reducing winter break to one week instead of 3 weeks.
2. Request HSTA to consider reducing spring break to one week instead of 2 weeks.
3. Introduce legislation to mandate 180 school days.
4. Introduce legislation to designate monies from the bottle bill to " earmark" funding for education similar to how funds are earmarked for state highways.
5. Do not increase taxes, since Hawaii citizens are already experiencing the wrath of a bad economy and doing so may discourage spending even more.

We appreciate your consideration and thank you in advance in your attempt to find other ways to manage spending to avoid balancing budgets on the backs of Hawaii's children. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Much Aloha,

Valerie Sonoda
President

4. 17 furlough days= appx 10% of a cut of instructional time. Would this correlate to a 10% decrease in test scores? I don't know, but I know I am not willing to take that chance- but what is one day a week?

I could go on and on with the list and go into special needs children, stress on the teachers, the making of an animosity mosh pit of leaders, educator and parents, all of which should be focusing on the needs of "all our children".

This has become a political finger wagging war and we are neglecting to see what really counts- our future.

So what can we expect to see with the drop in education class time, nutrition for kids that really need it, a decrease in programs for special needs children, ill feelings of adult parties involved, stress in households, at risk kids with less supervision, less nurturing time, less esteem building... As I said before I don't have a crystal ball, but I do have a very logical brain and it appears to me that we will be paying two and three fold down the road in other areas perhaps (delinquency, learning programs, drop out, family problems, health problems, rehab, skills building...). One way or the other we are going to pay. But either we pay a reasonable amount now or take the chance of paying huge later.

The bottom line should be a two-fold focus- 1 Our kids, shame on us for putting them up on a political chopping block, and 2) Our Future, what we do now will shape our future as Hawai'i and as humans.

Please develop laws that ' earmark' public funds for education in our state similar to funds that are ' earmarked' for our highways without an increase in state taxes especially in a current turbulent environment where Hawaii citizens have lost jobs or experienced decreased work hours.

From the bottom of everything I am, please do not show our children that they are nothing more than a bargaining chip. We are their mentors and heroes and how they see us counts.

Mahalo for the opportunity to give testimony and reflect the concerns of not jsut myself.

Sincerely,

Lynn Soots

MEd Education and Counseling
Positive Education Foundations
1-808-206-9858
1-808-224-7551



Kanu Hawai'i

1050 Bishop Street, #504, Honolulu, HI 96813
Tel: (808) 206-8446 · Fax: (808) 356-8198 · Email: friends@kanuhawaii.org
<http://www.kanuhawaii.org>

October 30, 2009

Senator Will Espero
Chair, Senate Committee on School Furloughs

RE: Support for a Special Session to Immediately Address Furlough Fridays

Kanu Hawai'i is a nonprofit organization working to build a social movement of a more sustainable, compassionate and resilient Hawai'i. I cannot claim to speak on behalf of our entire 8,300+ statewide membership. I can tell you that thousands of Kanu members have voiced their outrage about Furlough Fridays. This inspired us to begin a concerted effort to reach out to the full membership, educating them about the problem and possible solutions, and encouraging them to get involved.

Over the past few weeks, members of Kanu Hawaii volunteered to support the petition and rally calling for an immediate alternative to Furlough Fridays. Members have been gathering signatures, collecting letters to elected officials, and supporting Hawaii Education Matters - the parent group that is leading the charge to get furlough days back for keiki. We have members on Kaua'i, Moloka'i, and Hawai'i Island holding rallies or gathering petition signatures today.

In issue briefs shared with our members, Kanu Hawai'i has offered this possible solution: (1) The Legislature could call a Special Session to find more funding for schools, using a fraction of the Rainy Day and/or Hurricane Fund to restore *some* furlough Fridays, and keeping a prudent portion in reserve for future needs; (2) The DOE and teachers' union could use non-class-time (e.g., planning days or holidays instead of class days) to restore the remaining Fridays; and, (3) the Governor could support the release of new funds and a new teachers' contract.

This would require all parties to soften past positions and compromise.

This suggestion has met with resistance from Legislators for a variety of reasons. Among the more reasonable concerns: Next year the fiscal picture will be worse than this year, and that a complete picture of revenues and other budget priorities should be considered before carving something out for education.

As we consider this argument, we might also consider the possibility that education is a different kind of priority, on a different plane from other interests and spending items...

For one thing, it is an unparalleled investment in our future as a State. Cutting 17 days will have serious consequences for kids. There's strong evidence that less time in class (especially a 10% cut in class time) will set kids back in their learning. Sadly, our students already lag the rest of the nation (among the bottom 5 states in reading and math). They've shown some improvement in recent years, but cutting school time now will put our kids hopelessly behind others who they will have to compete against in the future. Practically speaking, cutting 17 days of school may also disqualify us for federal funds through the Race To The Top Program next year.

There's also a moral imperative to prioritize education. When families experience hard times, parents do whatever it takes to safeguard the long-term well being of their children. They put aside their own dreams, sacrifice things that they want or need for the sake of their children, and do everything they can to preserve investments in their kids' future. The same principle must hold in a good society. How we treat our keiki, and how we decide this issue, will say a lot about the moral character of our community.

For these reasons, it is unacceptable to close schools for 17 days this year and more next year.

As a community we will face some hard fiscal choices ahead. They will demand hard conversations about our priorities, where to cut and by how much, and whether and how to raise more public revenues.

To date, this budgeting conversation has too often been a priority-less and leader-less process. The result has been across-the-board cuts, guided by a philosophy of "spread the suffering around equally." This must end.

Good leaders like you must help guide these decisions, rather than simply encouraging every interest group to fight for our piece of the pie. Good budgeting must have leaders who step forward and say: "After careful thought and listening, here are what I think our priorities should be" rather than "Get ready to fight for your share -- and, good luck."

I implore the Legislature to reclaim its leadership role in this area, and set some courageous priorities.

Mahalo for the work you do for our people and our State.

James Koshiha
Executive Director
Kanu Hawai'i



Sen. Will Espero

From: Jeff D. Hood [j hood@hawaii.gov]
Sent: Friday, October 30, 2009 6:45 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Furlough Fridays

Categories: Print Big Island

Aloha,

I am deeply concerned about the closure of school on Furlough Fridays, and the impact it will have on our children. Please convene a Special Session of the Legislature to address this issue and find an alternative. Mahalo.

Respectfully,

Jeff D. Hood

Sen. Will Espero

From: 800-775-0022@verizonwireless.com
Sent: Friday, October 30, 2009 6:44 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Oct 30th hearing testimony

Without furloughs, public school students STILL do not have enough instructional time. Some college freshmen from Hawaii public schools are finding this out..Where is the \$13,000 per child being spent?

Sent from my Verizon Wireless BlackBerry

Sen. Will Espero

From: Vickie Bisho [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, October 30, 2009 6:29 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Furlough Fridays

"I am deeply concerned about the closure of school on Furlough Fridays, and the impact it will have on our children. Please convene a Special Session of the Legislature to address this issue and find an alternative. Mahalo."

Vickie Bisho

Sen. Will Espero

From: Jeannine Johnson [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 7:25 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: SPECIAL SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONSIDER APPROACHES TO TEACHER FURLOUGHS

Aloha Sen. Espero,

My son is currently enrolled as a freshman in Kaiser High School and will be on furlough for the second time tomorrow. I am outraged that everyone involved with this issue (from the Governor, Pat Hamamoto, Board of Education, and Department of Education, to the teachers and their union) thought it would be OK to deprive my son of 10% of his instructional time. I believe they do NOT care about Hawai'i keiki in public schools because their children all go to private schools.

I would respectfully request that the Legislature mandate that teacher professional days, teacher institute days, planning and collaboration days, and waiver days be substituted for the furlough days. If these days are not enough, I would then wholeheartedly suggest that Legislators give back their raises and the DOE cut some of their top-heavy administrators before teachers and instructional days are cut.

Mahalo,

Jeannine

Jeannine Johnson
[REDACTED]

Honolulu, Hawai'i 96821
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
"PUPUKAHI I HOLOMUA"
(Unite in Order to Progress)

Sen. Will Espero

From: Katy Hawaii [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 7:40 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Oct. 30th Hearing Testimony-A 6th Grader's View Point

Categories: Print Big Island

Fed up With Furloughs

I speak for classmates of Kainalu Elementary's 6th grade and myself when I say that Furlough Fridays are unfair. Furlough Fridays are stealing from our education and our futures. Over the years Hawaii's money has been improperly budgeted, this is not students' faults! Yet this is being taken out on us. That is like my little brother taking a dozen plates, smashing them, then me having to glue every single microscopic piece together! I consider myself a very self motivated student, and I have been trying to do work on Fridays like I would at school to keep my grades up. Though this has been very hard, and most students have not been trying to learn over Fridays at all! If this continues, it will greatly damage our chances of success. If Hawaii's children are Hawaii's future, Hawaii's future is not looking very good. My goal for my 6th grade year is to earn the Presidential Academic Award, I don't know if that will be possible with 17 less days of school. I want to be accepted into Harvard and become a lawyer, I don't know if that will be possible with 17 less days of school.

Sincerely, Katy Graham

Sen. Will Espero

From: Brendan Poff [mailto:brendan.poff@hawaii.gov]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 7:48 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Furlough Days

Categories: Print Big Island

SPECIAL SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONSIDER APPROACHES TO TEACHER FURLOUGHS

Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair
Senator Will Espero, Vice Chair

NOTICE OF MEETING

DATE: Friday, October 30, 2009
TIME: 12:30 p.m.
PLACE: Auditorium
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

You need to figure this out. We are a national embarrassment. If you end up firing 1000's of teachers, this problem only gets worse. Overloaded classrooms are no better and perhaps worse. Research the studies on class sizes. Education should never have been on the chopping block. I don't think it sends a good message. Approach the Feds and ask for their input. Where did the stimulus money, meant to help education and protect against these very things, go? Find the money. Find it quickly and don't mess this up.

Sen. Will Espero

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 7:56 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Redirect the half%

Categories: Print Big Island

Temporarily re-direct the 1/2% for rail. Rail will happen and will not compromise Federal funds for this worthy project. The next Governor will be sure of it. Aloha/David Sent on the Sprint® Now Network from my BlackBerry®

Sen. Will Espero

From: Kalei Ah Sing [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 7:15 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Written testimony: Special Senate Committee to consider approaches to teacher furloughs
Categories: Print Big Island

Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair

Senator Will Espero, Vice Chair

NOTICE OF MEETING

DATE: Friday, October 30, 2009
TIME: 12:30 p.m.
PLACE: Auditorium

State Capitol

415 South Beretania Street

Dear Senators,

I am deeply concerned about how furloughs will be affecting our children education over the next 2 years. I have a 5 year old son who just started kindergarten in August of this year who is just thirsty for knowledge, and at a time in his life were his brain is like a little sponge just waiting to be saturated with new information the State decides to implement furlough days because of budget cuts. Hawaii is rank one of the lowest in the Nation when it comes to test scores and now we are also one of the states in the Nation with the shortest school year (163 school days) . I feel that furloughs are just setting up our children to fail. It is hard enough to keep most of our children in school and now we are going to reduce their week week to 3.5 days? How is that helping our situation?

I feel the decision to implement furlough days was done prematurely without first presenting all the facts to the parents. Now, I understand that the country is in a recession. I know that the DOE was forced to do cut backs but what I don't understand is **WHERE IS THE JUSTIFICATION TO CUT OUR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION?** Show me the account books and records of all the other programs DOE had to cut before they decided that there was nothing else to do but cut our children's education time in the classrooms. The DOE has MANY departments that they oversee, and I feel that they should have cut all the departments possible to save the children's instructional time in the

classroom. **As a direct quote from Senator Fred Hemmings "the DOE is our state's single largest budget item (over \$2 billion dollars) and has enough money to get the job done. The problem is not money but rather mismanagement. The people of Hawaii should not be extorted by the DOE/Union bosses"** Where has all the money gone? If DOE does have a budget of \$2 billion where did it go?

If furloughs are inevitable then why can't the furlough's be implemented on non instructional days? Like during the breaks (fall, winter, spring)? Why can't PC days and Waiver days be counted toward furloughs?

I am requesting that the Senate investigate other alternatives that can be taken to end furlough days and get our children back into the classroom where they belong.

Sincerely,

Kalei Chandler-Ah Sing
Mother of Elijah Stietzel (5 yrs old who attends Kainalu Elementary)

Sen. Will Espero

From: Marisa and Armando [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 6:51 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: OCT 30th HEARING TESTIMONY

Categories: Print Big Island

Hello,

My children attend public school here in Honolulu (Kahala Elementary and Kaimuki Middle Schools). I am very concerned that they are not getting the education they are entitled. In the United States, our children are supposed to have opportunities for a quality education. I fear they are being short-changed by the recent Friday furlough days.

We are a military family and fear that once we leave the island in two years, that my children will be far behind their mainland classmates. I have several friends that lived here for three years and they encountered precisely that problem. It took their children an entire school year on the mainland to catch up. Do we really want Hawaii to have that reputation?

Please help us restore a normal five day week for our public school children!! They deserve it and need it.

Thank you for your attention,

Cristian Rodriguez (11 years old, 6th grade)
Maya Rodriguez (8 years old, 3rd grade)
Major Armando Rodriguez, USAF
Marisa Rodriguez, student at University of Hawaii Manoa

[redacted]
Honolulu, HI 96816
arod@att.net

Sen. Will Espero

From: Hannah Seem-Parsons [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 6:32 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Concerning Furlough Fridays

Dear All,

I am upset by Furlough Fridays for the following reasons;

First and foremost I believe that all of Hawaii's children deserve to have a QUALITY education. If mainland schools have 180 mandatory school days to learn and we have 163, Hawaii's children are already behind! How can Hawaii's seniors compete for college scholarships? How can our public schools compete for federal funds? How can our students do well on standardized tests if we push them to learn more, but give them less time? The fact is they cannot. Giving our students more time off will not these goals. If anything we need MORE school, not LESS. Hawaii is not ranked well in the area of education and we need to change that! Today's learners are tomorrow's future- what kind of future would you like Hawaii to have?! What kind of future would you like your children to have?! We determine the future by our actions today!

Secondly, it is no secret that Hawaii (and the rest of the United States) is facing an economic calamity. Here in Hawaii we worry about variables that would affect tourism, and other major economic contributors. These are valid concerns, but what about future job seekers already here? Furlough Fridays are not going to help them, or our economy.

If Hawaii's children are not educated sufficiently they will be forced to choose menial jobs that do not pay well at home, or will look elsewhere (the mainland) for jobs after graduation. Those left here will be challenged to support their families financially. Poor families equal low economic boosts and high dependence on welfare and other state assistance. Poor families mean more dependence on tourism, and less on self sustainment. Let us not give our economic power away! Educate our children so they can give back financially and intellectually to our beautiful state!

Perhaps you think I am exaggerating the effect of Furlough Fridays? I am not. Furlough Fridays already affect us in negative ways! For example, my family, like many other families, have two choices on Furlough Fridays-have one parent stay home with our children or find alternate care. If I

stay home with my children I am not working. I am not earning money and my buying power (to invest back into our economy) is greatly diminished. How many good jobs do you know will let their employees off every other friday? Not very many! So to keep a good job many families have to find alternate child care.

Thankfully there are agencies pulling together to give working parents options for this dilemma! However they cost additional money! Let's say both my husband and I work on Furlough Fridays and pay someone else for child care- we still have diminished buying power at the end of the day!! Diminished financial ability to support our family means diminished economic power to invest back into our community. This, in turn, negatively affects our already unstable economy! Let's choose not to do this to ourselves, our children and our economy! Let's choose to educate our young people, support working families, and end Furlough Fridays!

Thank You!

Sincerely,
Hannah Russell
Kailua, HI
~~hannahrussell@yahoo.com~~

Sen. Will Espero

From: Sherri Fujita [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 6:29 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Testimony: APPROACHES TO TEACHER FURLOUGHS Friday, October 30, 2009

SPECIAL SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONSIDER APPROACHES TO TEACHER FURLOUGHS

Friday, October 30, 2009
12:30 p.m

I live in Hilo, Hawaii. I have 2 elementary school children attending public school. I am strongly against cutting the budget for the DOE. The governor claims to be blameless in this debacle, but this blame is clearly hers stemming from her decision to limit funding for education. The US Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, wrote that he has already made \$105 million available to Hawaii and that Hawaii is eligible for \$52 million more later this year. In total, he said that Hawaii's schools and students are scheduled to receive more than \$500 million from the Recovery Act.

Why is this money not being used for our schools? This is obviously the purpose of this money--but the governor chose to use it for something else. It seems like she is using this situation to force the BOE to make structural changes and to cut back on what she considers a bloated system and to break the union. This may or may not be true, however, this kind of change cannot be forced in this somewhat primitive, and clumsy way.

I would prefer to use the Federal money as it was intended, and if necessary raise general excise tax. I do not favor using the hurricane fund. Families such as mine with children are being indirectly taxed by forcing us to pay out of pocket for tutoring services for our children. Families who cannot afford this will end up with children even further behind. I work at Hawaii Community College where we have well over 50 developmental/remedial math and English classes full to bursting.

I would like to see, first, funding restored to the DOE so that furlough days are eliminated. Then a system put in place to re-examine the structure of the BOE/DOE to see how it could be streamlined and our education system bettered.

The cuts to the DOE are a false economy in any case, what money may be saved now, will have to be spent in spades to make up for short-comings either by paying for remedial classes at the community college level, in unemployment pay-outs, and increased funding for prisons, drug treatment and the police force.

Regards
Sherri Fujita
[REDACTED]
Hilo, HI 96720

Sen. Will Espero

From: Mary Reuter [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 6:23 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: October 30th Hearing Testimony

Categories: Print Big Island

Mary Renee Reuter's Testimony:

I am a student at the University of Hawaii, a former educator at Kuponon Learning Center on King Street, and four months pregnant with my first child. I think that sacrificing our keiki's time in school as a solution to the budget crisis is absolutely appalling.

I'm aware of the complexities with balancing the budget in this fiscal situation, but it seems that every venue should be explored and every option tried before we start hacking away the quality of our children's education.

It seems that the legislature thinks that the education of Hawaii's children is disposable and unimportant. When parents everywhere are telling their students to do their homework and stay in school, what kind of message does this send to children when their own representative are voting to keep them OUT of school because of the State's shortcomings when it comes to balancing the budget? It's absolutely inexcusable.

Maybe if our test scores were the highest in the nation. Maybe if the quality of our public education was so good it could handle a few days off temporarily. But it's not. We already have the lowest test scores in the nation. Our public schools are failing and they need help. But what is the States response? They cut funding! They show no respect to teachers and the good quality teachers that could really help our children leave because they can't afford to live here on a teacher's salary.

An educated public is essential for a functioning democracy. Has the State and the Governor forgotten what they learned in elementary school? Education comes first. Children are our future and we as a community and as a State must always consider the nourishment of their minds a top priority. Not tourism. Not development. Education. With out an educated population, how are our future elected officials supposed to know how to run the State? Or will they all just come from Iolani and Punahou? That doesn't sound like equal opportunity to me.

If the public school system is fine how it is then I propose that all public officials must be required to send their children and grandchildren to public school. Then I guess we'll see how fast it becomes a priority. I think the State knows in it's heart that this isn't fair. To sacrafice the young, to sacrafice those that have the softest voice, those that can't even vote yet, shows cowardice. Please be better role models for our keiki and rethink the decision to furlough fridays.

-Mary Renee Reuter

595 University Ave. Honolulu, HI 96822
(808) 255-1255

Sen. Will Espero

From: William Marshall [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 6:10 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: October 30 testimony

Aloha: I am a UH Manoa nursing instructor in public health nursing. The reason why you do not under any circumstances want to keep children from attending school 5 days a week is because school offers a safe, loving, supportive, nutritious, learning environment. Our children need this environment to grow into healthy caring adults of skillful intelligence. Teachers, school staff, health aides, public health nurses and parent volunteers work hard to provide a supportive learning environment for the keiki. My student nurses implement health and peer education projects in many public and private schools on Oahu. The children and staff hunger for health knowledge and skills.

Do not furlough or retrench teachers and school staff. Put the money into our keiki now so we won't have to intervene later in their lives.

We love our keiki. We care for our keiki. It's the Hawaiian way. We love the staff who educate and care for our keiki too. You understand this. I know you do. Please reconsider your actions. I know you can do it. Thank you.

Mahalo and Aloha,

Professor Willie Marshall MSN, RN, PHN UH Manoa School of
Nursing and Dental Hygiene. [redacted]

(sent from my phone)

Sen. Will Espero

From: Patricia Tsukimura [mailto:patricia@shafter.k12.hi.us]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 8:20 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: meeting about furloughs

Categories: Print Big Island

Furloughs are already having a profound effect on the education of our students. As Student Services Coordinator at our school, I work closely with parents of children with special needs. Many of them are concerned with the lack of service hours for their children. These students are already performing below grade level peers, and the fear is that, without adequate instruction, they will fall even further back. Some parents are even considering asking the Army for a transfer to another state, where there is a longer school year.

I would support a temporary (1-2 yr.) small increase in the General Excise Tax, to be targeted to support public education programs. I would also support using a portion of a special fund, such as the "hurricane fund", to go towards funding public education.

With the guidance of our dedicated teachers, students work diligently to learn skills and work habits that will help them to become productive members of our community. Please find a way to fund public education more adequately, and allow our children to receive the comprehensive education that they so richly deserve.

aloha,
patty tsukimura
(h [REDACTED])
(shafter elementary school) 808-932-9500, ext. 23

From: Allison Mikuni [mailto:allisonmikuni@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 4:39 PM
To: Sen. Brian Taniguchi
Subject: Repeal Furlough Fridays! Please restore lost classroom time!

Dear Senator Taniguchi,

I'm a parent of two children at Kahala Elementary School, I live in Palolo Valley and I use a post office box in Moiliili.

I'm writing to you to express my viewpoint that furlough Fridays should be repealed and make a plea to restore lost classroom time. This is a devastating blow to education of our State's children and I am concerned that there will be significant social costs and long-term implications.

I recommend all parties [Legislature, Governor, HSTA, DOE, BOE] come together and make concessions to correct this situation. If everyone could give a little bit here and there, we could find a solution to restore the 16 furlough days to instructional days before they are lost forever.

Mahalo,
Allison Mikuni

From: bellinger miyoko [mailto:~~bellinger.miyoko@hawaii.gov~~]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 4:17 PM
To: Sen. Brian Taniguchi
Subject: Special Session

Senator Taniguchi,

I am a parent in your district. I am deeply concerned about the closure of schools for 17 days, and the impact it will have on our children. Please convene a special session of the legislature to address this issue and find an alternative solution.

Mahalo,
Miyoko Bellinger

**PETITION TO CONVENE A SPECIAL SESSION
OF THE HAWAII STATE LEGISLATURE TO
RESTORE TEACHING DAYS**

We, the undersigned residents of the State of Hawaii, believe that the education of Hawaii's children is one of the most important priorities for the State of Hawaii. We request that Governor Linda Lingle and the Hawaii State Legislature restore any teaching days that will be lost due to the planned furloughing of teachers and other Department of Education personnel. We are in favor of convening a Special Session of the Hawaii State Legislature to explore a variety of options to accomplish this goal, including using the Hurricane Relief Fund, raising the general excise tax, or other alternate means, if necessary, to restore these teaching days this 2009-2010 school year.

Name	Address (or e-mail address)
<u>Sanja Cabebe</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>[Signature]</u>	<u>2</u>
<u>Solita Diaz</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>David [Signature]</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>[Signature]</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>[Signature]</u>	<u>2</u>
<u>Brandon Brown</u>	<u>20</u>
<u>[Signature]</u>	<u>20</u>
<u>[Signature]</u>	<u>18</u>
<u>[Signature]</u>	<u>46</u>
<u>Debra Merrill</u>	
<u>Hele [Signature]</u>	
<u>[Signature]</u>	
<u>[Signature]</u>	

Please mail petitions to Katie Vercelli at 5434 Makaloa
vercellix2@aol.com by October 23, 2009. Mahalo for

**PETITION TO CONVENE A SPECIAL SESSION
OF THE HAWAII STATE LEGISLATURE TO
RESTORE TEACHING DAYS**

We, the undersigned residents of the State of Hawaii, believe that the education of Hawaii's children is one of the most important priorities for the State of Hawaii. We request that Governor Linda Lingle and the Hawaii State Legislature restore any teaching days that will be lost due to the planned furloughing of teachers and other Department of Education personnel. We are in favor of convening a Special Session of the Hawaii State Legislature to explore a variety of options to accomplish this goal, including using the Hurricane Relief Fund, raising the general excise tax, or other alternate means, if necessary, to restore these teaching days this 2009-2010 school year.

Name

Charlene Takamoto
[Signature]
[Signature]
[Signature]
[Signature]
[Signature]
[Signature]
DUELANE RITA
RAY TATA
DAVID CAHILL
Charmaine L. Kilmer
SCHONMICKI KUNITA
Sherry Rae Tavita
Anela Kama'ea
Suena Giminiz

Please mail petitions to Katie Vercelli at 5434 M
vercellix2@aol.com by October 23, 2009. Mahi

**PETITION TO CONVENE A SPECIAL SESSION
OF THE HAWAII STATE LEGISLATURE TO
RESTORE TEACHING DAYS**

We, the undersigned residents of the State of Hawaii, believe that the education of Hawaii's children is one of the most important priorities for the State of Hawaii. We request that Governor Linda Lingle and the Hawaii State Legislature restore any teaching days that will be lost due to the planned furloughing of teachers and other Department of Education personnel. We are in favor of convening a Special Session of the Hawaii State Legislature to explore a variety of options to accomplish this goal, including using the Hurricane Relief Fund, raising the general excise tax, or other alternate means, if necessary, to restore these teaching days this 2009-2010 school year.

Name

Address / e-mail address

Evan Silberstein
Jaime Schmidt
Anna Set
Noah Schmidt
Christian Schmidt
Kaya Yadao
Kristen Yadao
Ellie
River Owen
Rain Owen
Ryder Owen
Sasha Owen
Makani

Please mail petitions to Katie Vercelli at 5434 Makaloa Street, Kapa'a, HI 96746 or email her at vercellix2@aol.com by October 23, 2009. Mahalo for your support!

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Name

James and Stephanie Ramsey
 Blane and Eden Baxter
 Carolyn Fischer
 Christian Wood
 Gregg Wood
 Bob & Bernie Ramsey
 Ted Tander
 Kalili Pavao
 Jennie Manuwa
 Lestee-Joy Penn
 Michelle Antonio 17
 PAUL JANSEN
 Connie Salcedo
 Meadow Lay

54
 14
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 6
 54
 75
 54

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vercellix2@aol.com by October 23, 2009. Mahalo for yo

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Name

Jay Tateishi

CLARITA REMIGIO

CHRIS NAKAMURA

Laurie CHOW

Ada Okasaki

Wilma Akidna

Margie Loo

Edward Dui

CLEVE SWIGEMITSU

Keith Konishi

Fred Ancheta

Keith Poon

Carolyn Carreiro

MARITES YANO

Please mail petitions to Katie Vercelli at ~~5424 Mahalo Street, Honolulu, HI 96746~~ or email her at vercellix2@aol.com by **October 23, 2009**. Mahalo for your support!

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Name

Ruth S. Maroia
Debra L. Ricke
Paige M. Krest
Kahalaoni Gratz
Harry Kaperky
Jack Bacon 420

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Name

Luz Jimenez
Pamela Simpson

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Sen. Will Espero

From: Chun, Marva [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, October 30, 2009 8:45 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Teacher Furloughs

I strenuously object to reducing the number of education days. Teachers should be using holidays and teach workdays instead. When I explain this to relatives on the Mainland they simply don't believe what has occurred. It makes me want to give up on the public school system.

Marva Chun | Director, PMO | Project Management Office | [Hawaii Pacific Health](#) | 55 Merchant St. 23rd Floor, Honolulu, Hawaii, 96813 |
Office: (808) 535-7180 | [REDACTED]

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Sen. Will Espero

From: Rotolo, Jill [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 3:27 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Teacher Furloughs

Here's my input for tomorrow's committee meeting:

I absolutely can not believe this has happened. Our state's test scores are way behind the U.S. mainland and standards, yet we have now approved an additional 17 days of school closure. Unbelievable. Instead of cutting teachers, perhaps we should be looking at why schools have 3 and some have 4 principals / vice principals. Get rid of some of these positions! Admin positions can also be combined. Seriously shake up the BOE and DOE. Perhaps we as a state should begin looking at a lottery system with the funds going to support our school system. Why this state continues to let Vegas take Hawaii's money is beyond me. Pat Hamamoto does NOT have the interest of our children first. She needs to go. This whole thing was to upset the parents in order for the unions to get what they want. In the private sector, we are all taking pay cuts and pay freezes, but happy to still have a job. These teachers must understand this. We in the private sector have 10-12 hour days including commutes. Teachers arrive at 7:30 and are home by 4pm. Yes, they take work home. But guess what? So do we in the private sector! Our government needs to make this right and start giving priority to our children's education. These children will be working in those State offices in the future. They need an education! Perhaps all of our government decision-makers should have their own children in the public school system. Step up to the plate. Stop making Hawaii the laughing stock on the mainland!

(While we're discussing this issue, please also consider reinstating full school days on Wednesdays. I never could understand this...with home room time, lunch and recess, there's not much going on in school on Wednesdays. AND school should run until 3pm. AND stop showing movies to my kids in the classrooms when they should be learning something!)

Sen. Will Espero

From: Julie Zaner [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 9:13 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Teacher fuloughs

My children attend a private Catholic school on Maui, yet I am still very disturbed by the "furlough Fridays" for teachers. There must be some other avenues, some other unnecessary spending that can be routed towards the education budget. How will our children be competitive with students in other states? What kind of long term and wide reaching affects will this have? Something must be done. Please make an exhaustive search to find another solution.

Mahalo,
Julie Zaner

To: Senator Colleen Hanabusa, Senate President
Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair
Senator Will Espero, Vice Chair
Senator Norman Sakamoto, Chair, Education Committee

From: Theresa House

Date: October 29, 2009

Subject: Support of Special Senate Committee to Consider Approaches to Teacher Furloughs

As a member of the Hawaii State PTSA I oppose a newly two-year ratified teacher contract that requires educators to take 17 or 21 unpaid furlough days off, and result in decreased instruction time.

I am concerned that furlough Fridays will result in the children of Hawaii losing significant educational hours targeted towards student achievement.

While I understand Hawaii's current governmental shortfalls, today over 60% of Hawaii's public schools have not met average yearly progress under Federal Legislation, "No child Left Behind or NCLB". I feel reducing instructional time will only add to the challenge of meeting AYP, and for many of my friends of Special Needs children, IDEA requirements and that may result in severe unintended consequences.

I strongly encourage our legislators to find ways to replace furlough Fridays with other non-instructional days and seriously consider using a portion or all of the state's hurricane fund/rainy day fund to support the return of education instructional days to the children of Hawaii Public Schools.

Please develop laws that ' earmark' public funds for education in our state similar to funds that are ' earmarked' for our highways without an increase in state taxes especially in a current turbulent environment where Hawaii citizens have lost jobs or experienced decreased work hours.

We beg you to listen to our cry for help and find other ways to manage spending to avoid balancing budgets on the backs of Hawaii's children. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Much Aloha,

Theresa House
Parent

Sen. Will Espero

From: Tammy Moseley [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 9:17 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: "October 30th Hearing Testimony"

Dear Senator Will Espero,

I am a Mother of two 6th Graders at Kainalu Elementary in Kailua. Both of my children have Learning Disabilities and are in the SPED program.

My daughter Alexandria has just recently be diagnosed with Dyslexic after 7 years (2 years of 1st Grade) of her falling further and further behind her class mates due to her troubles in reading and math. Now she is in 6th grade is just starting to read at a 4th Grade reading level. Me and the children's father had to go out of the Special Education System, to a private Pscologist to get some understanding (of what her specific problems were) and she was diagnosed as Dyslexic But because our DOE system will not recognize it specifically and just call it a Learning disabilty the school is not really equiped to help her. She only starts to improve now (to a fourth grade reading level) after we sought outside help and got her into private tutoring. Something that other state DOE systems offer.

My son Xavier, on the other hand is ADHD and the school was more than happy to have him diagnosed by the DOE Psychologist and recommend a medication to solve all his problems. While I admit the medication helps him to stay on task. He still is very challenged to catch up with his fellow sixth graders, he is still very far behind and this school year is very important to him as he is moving on to middle school where he will have less support. Missing more school instructional time, imposes a further challenge.

The Facts of the Matter:

1 - Hawaii had the shortest instructional hours than any other State according to US Department of Education. Even with the 178 days before the Furlough Fridays. The Average **Instructional hours per day** on the mainland is 6 hours equalling. Minimum of 991 instructional hours per calendar year.

Here in Hawaii the whole school day is 6 hours and then you have to take out time for lunch and recess. Plus we are the only State that has Early release on Wednesdays which makes that day a little over only 4 hours of instructional time. Now you take into account that you are taking away 17 full days . And our instructional hours per year are coming up short of 899 hours a year. Almost a hundred hours less them the Minimun of the Nation.

Is there really any wonder why we are so behind the rest of the nation.

2 - Now on the subject of Stimulus moneys that we air marked for Education. According to what I have read on the US DOE website. If the money is not put towards improving our Education system (which is certainly not happening) , then we may not be able to get any further federal funding in the Future. I wonder how many people realize this. I noticed that the subject has not been raised and I feel that the withholding of such facts is Criminal. This should be addressed to the people.

3- By cutting back on Education thinking that it is some quick fix to a struggleing economy, you are instead sabotoging the Economy and insuring that it continues to decline. Reason for Present problems are due to not enough revenue from Taxes? Could it be because we have a very high level of uneducated people in this State.

A result of a Education system that never has proper funding to help the children that need extra help. Resulting in a high drop out rate. And a lower secondary education rate.

Does it not make perfect sense that if you have a good Education system, you have more people graduating from High School and going to good colleges. After earning degrees in various fields, they get higher paying jobs, which in turn brings in higher revenue for the State to collect.

How much money can the state expect to collect from someone who works at Mc Donalds. Well if your state education System does not shape up soon, thats about all it is going to be getting.

4 - Many parents cannot afford extra day care expenses that the State has just suddenly thrown at them. So what sill happen is more children will be un supervised and will be getting into trouble. There will be more chances for these unsupervised children to get mixed in with the wrong influences. This will unbdoubtly lead to more crime, more children getting mixed up in drugs, and for so many homeless children more chances of being hungry.

My point is that not only my children, but also many others in Kainalu and across all the Islands really cannot afford to miss anymore school. What we truly need is **MORE SCHOOL!** By doing so, you are hindering all efforts that parents like me are making to help our children prepare for a challenging world ahead. A world that requires a decent education to get a decent job. Furthermore, the Furloughs will most defintely cause more harm to more people than the will help any one of us. It was a foolish decision, and one that was not fair to Hawaii on so many levels.

I could probably keep on going. But I think that the most important things have been addressed, and I Pray to GOD! That this Governemt starts to think about the Future and not just look for some quick fix.

Tammy Moseley
382-8394

Sen. Will Espero

From: Karla Schade [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 9:49 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: October 30th Hearing Testimony

Dear Senate:

We are deeply disappointed in our government's choice to sacrifice our children's education and future. Furloughing on instructional days in our schools is an unacceptable cut. Educating the future of Hawaii should be protected at all cost. How else will we broaden our economy so that we are not as reliant on tourist revenue in future times of crisis.

Furlough Fridays in schools need to be re-addressed. We do not want them for our children or Hawaii's children in our schools.

Karla and Aaron Schade

Windows 7: I wanted more reliable, now it's more reliable. Wow!

Sen. Will Espero

From: Maureen O'Connell [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 7:54 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: October 30th Hearing Testimony

Sen. Will Espero, state lawmakers, educators and parents:

As the parent of a public school third-grader, I urge the Hawaii Legislature to quickly RESTORE ALL INSTRUCTIONAL DAYS.

I need not elaborate as to why. You know why it's the right thing to do.

Slicing away about one month from the school year is clearly unfair to Hawaii's public schools kids. They deserve better from the state's adults.

Thank you for your careful attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Maureen O'Connell

Sen. Will Espero

From: Chris [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 10:19 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: To the Special Senate Committee studying teacher furloughs...

To: Senator Colleen Hanabusa, Senate President
Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair
Senator Will Espero, Vice Chair
Senator Norman Sakamoto, Chair, Education Committee

From: Chris Braden, President
Pomaika'i PTSA (on behalf of 570 students, 1125 parents)

Date: 10-29-09

Subject: Support of Special Senate Committee to Consider Approaches to Teacher Furloughs

As a member of the Hawaii State PTSA I oppose a newly two-year ratified teacher contract that requires educators to take 17 or 21 unpaid furlough days off, and result in decreased instruction time.

I am concerned that furlough Fridays will result in the children of Hawaii losing significant educational hours targeted towards student achievement.

While I understand Hawaii's current governmental shortfalls, today over 60% of Hawaii's public schools have not met average yearly progress under Federal Legislation, "No child Left Behind or NCLB". I feel reducing instructional time will only add to the challenge of meeting AYP, and for many of my friends of Special Needs children, IDEA requirements and that may result in severe unintended consequences.

I strongly encourage our legislators to find ways to replace furlough Fridays with other non-instructional days and seriously consider using a portion or all of the state's hurricane fund/rainy day fund to support the return of education instructional days to the children of Hawaii Public Schools.

Please develop laws that ' earmark' public funds for education in our state similar to funds that are ' earmarked' for our highways without an increase in state taxes especially in a current turbulent environment where Hawaii citizens have lost jobs or experienced decreased work hours.

We beg you to listen to our cry for help and find other ways to manage spending to avoid balancing budgets on the backs of Hawaii's children. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Much Aloha,
Chris Braden
Parent

Sen. Will Espero

From: Emily Bradshaw [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 10:24 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: October 30th Hearing Testimony

I feel that education in the state of Hawaii has been handled short-sightedly in the past few months. The state has tried to solve fiscal problems by compromising the education of our children. To use language more significant in the realm of education, I can't think of a more RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT than NO LEARNING ENVIRONMENT! Denying children of school attendance 17 days per year teaches kids that if the economic situation is difficult, education goes on the chopping block.

I also would not support a cut in teachers' pay. It is time to decide what OTHER projects might be postponed.

The one good thing that has come out of these poor decisions is the increased focus on and discussion about education. I hear many people talking not only about the Furloughs, but about education in general. I think that the issues motivating me to write this testimony go beyond furloughs. My kids don't just need to be in school longer. They need to be in school better. Even with determined teachers and increased attention to reading and math, more than 50% of the 6th graders at Laie Elementary school had failing scores in these subjects. The problems that exist existed before the question of furloughs came about, but the furloughs excacerbate an already difficult situation.

I support a special session of congress and some out-of-the-box thinking and solutions for our children's education.

Emily Bradshaw

Sen. Will Espero

From: donald choy [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 10:24 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: October 30th Hearing Testimony

Hi Senator Espero,

I am writing this letter because I am outraged because of furlough Friday's. My son attends Mililani Middle School and I feel his education is already being compromised because of the multi-track system. There is a lot of "down time" because they have to setup and break down the classrooms every five weeks. He is already losing instructional time because of this. Now, they want my child to give up 17 school days. I'm sorry, but I can no longer keep my silence and watch my son's education get chipped away.

I work for a private company and we have furlough days for a few years now. However, our furlough days falls on holidays, so that the impact on patient's are kept to a minimum because the clinics are already closed on those days. I don't understand why the parties involved in this case instead choose days to maximize the effects of the furlough onto our children by taking instructional days away. What were they thinking of??? Definitely not our children. If the DOE was a private school they would be out of business. People would take their business elsewhere. Our children are not scapegoats. They are the future of Hawaii. We need to invest in them and not put budget problems directly on them. I believe if everyone works together for the betterment of our children a solution can be found without putting our great State further into financial troubles.

Sincerely yours,

Laverne K. Choy

Sen. Will Espero

From: Pier Sircello [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 10:28 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Teacher Furloughs 10/30/09 12:30 pm

RE: Teacher Furloughs meeting on 10/30/09 at 12:30 pm

I would like to suggest that the Legislature get a task force together to go through the DOE budget to find places where they can cut funds in order to reinstate teachers, staff and students on furlough days. In the past 30 years the public school enrollment has stayed exactly the same while the budget has gone from about 267 million to 2.5 billion dollars. Student achievement has not gone up in that time. Hawaii is still ranked 47th nationally. The DOE has not been held accountable for how they are using the funds from the state budget, but it would seem that since non teaching staff has gone from approximately 4,000 to 10,000 while teaching staff has gone from approx. 9,000 to 11,000 that most of the funds are NOT being used at the school and the classroom level. I did some research to also find out that there are 412 non teaching job titles within the DOE. Some of those jobs are such things as: Clerk, heavy truck driver, cabinet maker, program analyst and so on. These are the kinds of jobs and job titles that need to be struck from the DOE so that there is money on the budget for not only 5 days of school per week, but also for more school hours in the day and/or more than 180 school days per year. Not only are we not keeping up with other countries in the number of days our children go to school, but we, in Hawaii are lagging far far behind the mainland in hours per week that our children go to school even without the furloughs.

I hope that in the future, not only will the legislature find money to put our kids back in school 5 days per week, but soon the legislature will need to make laws that order the schools to make sure our kids are in school from 8 am until 3 pm 5 days per week, just like on the mainland, and laws that add a few days to the school year on top of that. Hawaii is falling fast behind the reforms that states on the mainland are making, and our children will have a very hard time competing in the larger world very soon if the legislature, Governor, BOE and the HSTA don't find ways of smartly funding our schools.

Please don't keep throwing money at a DOE that is clearly dysfunctional. Before you add any new funds please make some stipulations on how funds are spent, with some oversight. When I talk to people about the DOE, I am really starting to see how angry everybody has gotten over the furloughs and how really dysfunctional most people feel the HSTA and DOE and BOE are. I think if education reforms are not made soon in Hawaii people will start to really rebel against their elected officials.

Sincerely,

Pier Sircello
Hilo, HI 96720
[REDACTED]

Sen. Will Espero

From: Cynthia Jordan [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, October 30, 2009 8:15 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: request for special session re: furlough fridays

Aloha,

I am deeply concerned about the closure of school on Furlough Fridays, and the impact it will have on our children.

Please convene a Special Session of the Legislature to address this issue and find an alternative. Mahalo.

Cynthia Jordan

[REDACTED]
Kailua HI 96734

Phone: [REDACTED]

Sen. Will Espero

From: Richard Forster [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, October 30, 2009 8:24 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: October 30th Hearing Testimony

Categories: Print Big Island

Dear Senator Espero,

Please convey to the hearing today that my wife and I are deeply angry that the State of Hawaii has chosen to disregard the importance of public education in its recent decisions to cut school days. We recognize that the fiscal crisis presents huge challenges, but we are sure that any form of cuts to education are misguided. We would be equally concerned by any moves to reduce the number of teachers working for the state as a method of re-instituting the proposed furloughed instructional days. Whichever the State of Hawaii decides to balance its books, it must not do so at the expense of our children and their education.

Thank you,

Richard and Lorinda Forster

[REDACTED]
Honolulu HI 96822

Sen. Will Espero

From: J M Reyes [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 10:39 PM
To: senespero@captiol.hawaii.gov
Cc: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: OCTOBER 30TH HEARING TESTIMONY.

Who has the best interests of the Hawaii students at heart? Not the governor, not the school superintendent, heck not even the HSTA and teachers themselves! Hawaii public school system is one of the lowest ranking in the nation and now, thanks to Furlough Fridays, has the shortest school calendar in the entire US. Does anyone care? We, the parents, do! Hence this email to you Senator Espero. BE our voice in the senate and put a stop to this non-sense and find a resolution that will not punish the keiki of today and tomorrow.

**Concerned parent of 2 public- school educated children,
Mylene Reyes**

Sen. Will Espero

From: Jennifer Moy [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 10:19 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: October 30th Hearing Testimony

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: Shelbie Kauilani Ahakuelo [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thu, October 29, 2009 3:35:50 PM
Subject: RE: Senate Hearing Tomorrow - Autoforwarded from iBuilder

October 29, 2009

From: Shelbie K. Ahakuelo [REDACTED]
To: Senate
Re: Senate Hearing for Hawaii Education

Dear Senate,

I am reaching out to you in concern for the education of our children here in Hawaii. In the song, "The Greatest Love of All", George Benson sings of how, "The children are the future...teach them well and let them lead the way....". These words resound in my mind over and over.

In every election campaign, our leaders consistently say that they are going to do what it takes to improve our education in the school system here in Hawaii, but what always happens? Are the promises our politicians make just a ploy to get votes? I feel so discouraged to vote in the elections because of the disappointments that I see time and time again. My parents told me since I was little that, "a person is only as good as their word". In my life I have made mistakes in which I could not live up to my own words although in my heart I wanted so much to do the right thing. Perhaps there is a chance the situation our state is in can turn around and do what is, "PONO", for the sake of our children and the future of Hawaii.

Sincerely,

Shelbie K. Ahakuelo

To: Senator Colleen Hanabusa, Senate President
Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair
Senator Will Espero, Vice Chair
Senator Norman Sakamoto, Chair, Education Committee

From: Goretti Perdue

Date: 10-30-09

Subject: Support of Special Senate Committee to Consider Approaches to Teacher Furloughs

As a member of the Hawaii State PTSA I oppose a newly two-year ratified teacher contract that requires educators to take 17 or 21 unpaid furlough days off, and result in decreased instruction time.

I am concerned that furlough Fridays will result in the children of Hawaii losing significant educational hours targeted towards student achievement.

While I understand Hawaii's current governmental shortfalls, today over 60% of Hawaii's public schools have not met average yearly progress under Federal Legislation, "No child Left Behind or NCLB". I feel reducing instructional time will only add to the challenge of meeting AYP, and for many of my friends of Special Needs children, IDEA requirements and that may result in severe unintended consequences.

I strongly encourage our legislators to find ways to replace furlough Fridays with other non-instructional days and seriously consider using a portion or all of the state's hurricane fund/rainy day fund to support the return of education instructional days to the children of Hawaii Public Schools.

Please develop laws that ' earmark' public funds for education in our state similar to funds that are ' earmarked' for our highways without an increase in state taxes especially in a current turbulent environment where Hawaii citizens have lost jobs or experienced decreased work hours.

We beg you to listen to our cry for help and find other ways to manage spending to avoid balancing budgets on the backs of Hawaii's children. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Much Aloha


Goretti Perdue.
Parent

To: Senator Colleen Hanabusa, Senate President
Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair
Senator Will Espero, Vice Chair
Senator Norman Sakamoto, Chair, Education Committee

From: Robert Perdue

Date: 10-30-09

Subject: Support of Special Senate Committee to Consider Approaches to Teacher Furloughs

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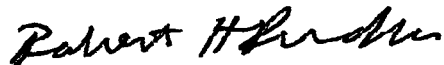
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Much Aloha



Robert H. Perdue
Parent

Sen. Will Espero

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 10:48 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Testimony for Special Senate Committee to consider approaches to teacher furloughs.

Testimony for: Special Senate Committee to consider approaches to teacher furloughs.
Date: Oct. 30, 2009
Time: 12:30 pm
Name: Arlene 'Lani' Twomey

Background: I was born, raised and have lived my entire adult life in Hawaii. I am a single mother of two children - both attended private school for their entire education. They have now graduated.

Governor Lingle and Legislature, please do the right thing for our children and community. Do not play politics at our children's and community's expense. End these furloughs, give our children 180 days of schools per year, do not rob from the Hurricane Fund to pay the teachers and do not layoff teachers.

What a shameful situation the HSTA, Board of Education, DOE and teachers have created for our children and our State's future. The message given to our children, community and even the nation is that it is more important for the teachers to avoid a pay cut than it is to educate our children - how shameful and selfish.

It's time the union stood up and did the right and moral thing. I know it's not easy. I myself was laid off after 27 ½ years with my employer - 2 ½ years short of a full retirement. I was able to find another job, but took a big hit to my salary (30%), lost 3 weeks of vacation per year, and will incur a much reduced pension, including the loss of lifetime medical coverage. Eight years later I'm still making significantly less than I did. My hours were not reduced. I continue to work 50-60 hours a week.

My brother, who also works here in Hawaii, was able to retain his job, but he and his peers had to take a significant pay cut. His hours were not reduced.

My office mate's husband also lost his job. He was able to find another within the company, but he also had to take a significant pay cut. His hours were not reduced.

There are many, many of us who have had to take significant pay cuts - without reducing our hours.

It's time the teachers stood up and did the right and moral thing. It's time to put politics aside. It's time the teachers taught our children a real life lesson - that is, in tough times, we all work together and do what is best for our children and community.

The teachers should take a true pay cut to make up for the reduced budget - no reduction in classroom hours, no robbing the Hurricane Fund, which is meant for an emergency, no forcing of fellow teachers to lose their jobs, but instead a pay cut - just as many of us in the private sector have done over the past years.

This is the time for the teachers and their union to show that they truly care about our children and community. The self respect they will feel for doing the right thing and the respect and aloha they will get from all of us in the community will help to lead this State

thru its fiscal problems and even more importantly, pull this community together. Please show respect, kokua and aloha for our children and community. Do the right thing.

Aloha

Sen. Will Espero

From: Jennifer Moy [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 10:49 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: October 30th Hearing Testimony

To the Special Senate Committee to consider approaches to teacher furloughs

Meeting date: October 30th, 12:30pm

Dear Senators Taniguchi and Espero,

Thank you for hearing our input on the current teacher furlough situation. I am a public school parent from Alewa heights whose son is in kindergarten at Kahala Elementary on a GE. The depth of the budget crisis facing our State right now is such that I have sympathy for leaders who must make hard decisions. I do not know what the best solution to the terrible loss of 17 school days is. But I do expect that it will involve compromise.

I support a special session of the legislature to address this issue now. The current agreement between the DOE, HSTA and Governor is very bad for children. If these parties returned to the table and sought to compromise there is a chance that a large percentage of these lost days could be restored before too much damage is done.

I will have great respect for leaders who weigh all the issues involved and prioritize the education of Hawaii's children as an essential service.

Mahalo,

Jennifer Moy

Mom and founding member of Hawaii Education Matters

Sen. Will Espero

From: rhonda ruidas [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 10:36 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Teacher Furloughs Frida, Oct. 2009 12"30

Aloha Sen Espero,

I am a very concerned mother of 3 children ranging from 1st grade to 9th grade. It is hard enough to keep children motivated to learn especially when in most family situations both parents have to work and sometimes two jobs. We need the state and teachers **full time** to help our children to succeed. With the "No child left behind" laws they are pushing children harder and harder to get through all that they are required too. Even if they can't spend as much time as needed on subjects that the children are supposed to learn, the teachers must still push forward. Many teachers have expressed that even if a child doesn't learn their studies in the time frame allotted, to bad they have to move on. How sad for our children.

I was in a meeting last week for my high school student and learned that our children in HI are average in "language" but far below the expected level in Math. So buy loosing 17 days of being in school learning, they are expected to learn the same amount of studies required in even less time. Will we succeed in improving our test scores when loosing 17 days of school? I think not! I hope we do not loose even more children that need the extra help.

We reach out to you to help our children succeed not fail. Please hear us! Our children are our future.

Mahalo,

Rhonda Ruidas
Lahaina, HI

Mahalo,

Rhonda

Sen. Will Espero

From: Bob Stauffer [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 9:10 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: suggestion on school furloughs.

29 Oct

Aloha Senators,

I suggest the sides go into negotiation to explore taking all furlough days on designated holidays.

Child-care is already arranged on these holidays, and using them would cause the least disruption.

There are not enough designated holidays, of course, but the remaining days could be slated for periods during Christmas and Spring breaks, which students are already away from school and so child-care would already have been arranged.

Thank you.

Aloha,

Bob Stauffer

Sen. Will Espero

From: Joan Craft [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 11:11 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Special Senate Committee to Consider Approaches to Teacher 10/30/2009

To: Senator Colleen Hanabusa, Senate President
Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair
Senator Will Espero, Vice Chair
Senator Norman Sakamoto, Chair, Education Committee

From: Joan A. Craft

Date: October 29, 2009

Subject: Support of Special Senate Committee to Consider Approaches to Teacher
Furloughs

As a member of the Hawaii State PTSA I oppose a new two-year teachers contract that requires educators to take 17 or 21 unpaid furlough days off, and result in decreased instruction time.

I am shocked and sadden that it has come to this. I recently took my son out of private school. I was very upset that there was no air conditioning in class rooms but now I really understand how little this state cares for its children.

While I am aware that we are in a recession I know you can not fix the economy by educating our children less. Actions taken must make sense.

Find other ways to manage spending to avoid balancing budgets on the backs of Hawaii's children. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Much Aloha,

Joan A. Craft

Parent of a seven year old boy named Kaulike



Progressive Democrats of Hawai'i

<http://pd-hawaii.com>

2457 Lamaku Pl, Honolulu, HI 96816

email: info@pd-hawaii.com

tel: 808.265-1334

October 30, 2009, 12:30 p.m.

Special Senate Committee to Consider Approaches to Teacher Furloughs

Josh Frost

Co-Chair Progressive Democrats of Hawaii

Aloha Senators,

I am here, testifying before you today, on behalf of the Progressive Democrats of Hawaii (PDH)

Let me begin by applauding those Senators who have signed the petition to convene a Special Session of the Legislature to immediately address the financial crisis that continues to plague our state. I believe those Senators truly understand the immediate urgency resulting from the teacher furloughs and that this issue cannot wait to be addressed by the Legislature during the next regular session.

When times were good, our Department of Education (DOE) was struggling to provide a decent education for our children. Test scores in Hawaii repeatedly posted below the national average. And now that the DOE, put between a rock and a hard place by our Governor and this Legislature, has been forced to shorten the school year by 17 instructional days, making our school year the shortest in the nation. This unfortunate and shortsighted decision will only serve to compound problems already facing our state's educational system.

While the State looks at these as cost savings measures, all the government is really doing is shifting costs on to parents, students, and employers who are already struggling through these hard times. With children out of school two Fridays a month, parents are forced to look for costly alternatives such as daycare, or taking time off of work to look after their children who should be in school learning.

As our economy shrinks, citizens look to the State to provide stability and solutions. While the Governor works to shrink the State's payroll by furloughing teachers and other State employees, she may find savings to close the budget gap, but what she is doing for certain is exacerbating an already troubled economy by reducing income for its employees, as well as its revenue stream through taxes by decreasing salaries. This is a wrongheaded and shortsighted strategy for dealing with our budget crisis.

We urge the Legislature to convene a Special Session so that alternative and reasonable solutions can be suggested and debated. Among the options which might be considered are:

- ~ Tapping the Rainy Day Fund for some short-term budget relief
- ~ Tapping the Hurricane Fund



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~ Raise the General Excise Tax 0.5% to 1.0% to increase tax revenues and evenly distribute the burden across all sections of our residents. Additionally, certain exemptions, such as on food, could be included to ease the burden on those low-income families.

~ Create a tax on such products like sugary beverages, like soda, on fast food and other unhealthy products. This would have the dual effect of creating another 'sin tax,' in addition to tobacco and alcohol.

Funds raised by these options could be used as matching funds against funds being offered by the federal government, funds the Governor has not bothered to apply for.

During this financial crisis, the Federal government is working to improve the situation by stimulating the economy through increased spending. This tactic injects money into the economy by putting it in the hands of consumers and by creating jobs for workers. By cutting spending, the Federal stimulus cannot work to their full potential and cuts its benefits. And meanwhile, we are cutting spending on worthwhile projects, like educating our children.

There are better and more effective methods available to us to solve these difficult problems and I thank you for not sitting idly by while the situation worsens and the education and future of our children is threatened. It is up to you, and your fellow legislators to immediately convene a Special Session and work quickly deal with these problems.

Mahalo for calling this hearing and for your time.

Josh Frost
Co-Chair
Progressive Democrats of Hawaii

To: Legislative Members present at the special hearing on education, 30 October 2009

Re: Seventeen “furlough Friday” instructional days are unacceptable

Fr: Bryan Nakamura, offender reentry specialist and counselor for youth offenders

My name is Bryan Nakamura, and I work as a culture-based anti-recidivism practitioner in both youth and adult corrections. I am against the so-called ‘furlough Fridays, because it will exacerbate problems (that a lot of money was already wasted/spent on) and is an incorrect measure to handle a budget crisis.

Most of the wards my co-workers and I come into contact with in the Hawai'i Youth Correctional Facility are incarcerated for crimes that started with truancy. Things are a lot different these days. Incarcerated teens--or most any youth--have virtually no chance as adults in the workforce without a high-school diploma, and it seems beneath the dignity of many modern-day youth to work menial jobs. So just what do you think they will end up doing for a living with no high school diploma or even illiterate?

Public education is provided for the HYCF wards by Olomana School in a special curriculum where these incarcerated kids can earn their high school diplomas. Olomana is an excellent alternative school with a dedicated staff and faculty, including a few lifelong educators and the current DOE teacher of the year. Some wards are 17 or 18 and have only enough credits for a high school sophomore, but the structure of mandatory attendance allows a determined student in the HYCF to graduate. Having a high school diploma could be the last chance for a HYCF ward to be able to succeed in adult life.

We must remember that most adjudicated juveniles' trouble began with truancy or poor prioritization of education by the kids' parents. Also, that the entire State of Hawai'i Department of Education operates as one large school district, so a highly-prioritized budget for public schools is mandatory or has to be restructured so the (smaller) school districts can be less centralized and more self-sufficient. I believe the state has to look elsewhere to keep schools not only just running, but to improve them as well—the plan for DOE ‘furlough Fridays’ is absolutely not supposed to happen.

Hawai'i already has the least amount of instructional days and ranks very low in education among 50 states. This would be tantamount to a ‘dumbing down’ of the next generation of our society by the state/DOE and firmly rooting itself in public education mediocrity. With 17 school days'/furlough, we can say goodbye to efforts to bring DOE public education up from its less-than 20% rating compared to the rest of the nation's public schools and federally mandated, compliant and effective Special Education. We'll possibly be saying hello to 'No Child Left Behind', lower graduation rates and an overpopulated Youth Correctional Facility and Detention Home. That number of missed instructional days is bound to cause more trouble across the board and through cultures and classes of kids who have a right to public education; six hours of unsupervised video games is not a very good substitute for a day of school OR public safety...

Sen. Will Espero

From: Diane Todd [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 11:29 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Special Senate Committee on Furlough Fridays

Dear Committee members,

I strongly support a special session to find a solution to furlough days for public school students and I hope that you will too.

I feel it is vital that all parties come together and resolve this situation which has resulted in Hawaii's children having the shortest time in school in the nation.

Compromising our children's education is not an option, and I believe in the long term, ignorance costs far more than education.

I would ask that you consider public opinion, which is reaching an unprecedented level of concern over Hawaii's children being the most poorly educated in America, and ask Senator Espero to call for a special session.

Most sincerely,

Diane Todd

Sen. Will Espero

From: Wendi Goodwin [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 11:39 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Furlough days

My name is Wendi Goodwin. I am the mother of 2 school age children. My son Tyler is in the 3rd grade and my daughter Hannah is in the 2nd grade at King Kamehameha the III school on Maui. My children need to have the best education possible for their future. Without the proper education (which includes the amount of time you spend in school) you truly have no future. This furlough is hitting all levels of education from Kindergarden to 12th grade. The Children don't want this. The furlough is hurting all our children in so many ways. I can't imagine funds not being available in any other areas besides education. Where are our priorities? Our children need to be educated not punished. Please hear our pleas and let our children go to school without furlough days and without a lesser education than they deserve.

My children want to go to school. They want the fullest education they can get. What example are we setting for them to look upon now and in the future? What message are we sending out? Where are our priorities? Our children are the future. Please let us make it the best possible with the best education our beautiful Sate of Hawaii can provide. Lets teach our children that they do come first. Find the money elsewhere!

I wish I could appear in person and share my feelings and facts. I hope you will do all you can to make this horrific situation cease.

Very truly yours,

Wendi Goodwin

THE TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE

INTERIM OF 2009

SPECIAL SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONSIDER APPROACHES TO TEACHER FURLOUGHS

Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair

Senator Will Espero, Vice Chair

NOTICE OF MEETING

Sen. Will Espero

From: Kaimana Pine [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, October 30, 2009 1:26 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Special Session, for our keiki, kuleana on both sides...

Aloha e Senator Espero,

I'm concerned about the lost of 17 school days and would like if the Legislature would convene a Special Session to address this issue and find an alternative. **Mahalo nui** for taking the time to address this issue, for those who stand up now have the honor to acknowledge the concerned and motivated.

I also feel that now those who spoke up on both sides made it clear who will be shouldering the kuleana, public and government.

Mahalo nui,

-Kaimana Pine

"Love, respect, and a willingness to work"

-uncle William Aila Sr. As he talks about the spirit of youth at MA'O Organic Farms.

(1) 808 [REDACTED]
Text "kaimana" to 50500

MALAMA I KA 'AINA - Please consider the environment before printing this email.

Sen. Will Espero

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, October 30, 2009 7:21 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Furlough Fridays

I am deeply concerned about the closure of school on Furlough Fridays, and the impact it will have on our children. Please convene a Special Session of the Legislature to address this issue and find an alternative.

Mahalo,

-Forest

Sen. Will Espero

From: Ellen Finnerty [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, October 30, 2009 7:14 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: October 30th Hearing Testimony

I am very concerned about the future of Hawaii. A powerful message has been sent to the schools, the teachers and other members of the community. I feel this sends a message that tells the children that school is not important. Luckily my child is in the gifted program and exceeds standards. But I look around at the other students in her class that need a voice. Some children struggle so hard with reading- a third grader who is not doing well in the 4th grade as self esteem is very likely to sink with it. Studies show that this is a crucial point for intervention. How can you have an intervention when there is so much pressure on the teachers and even fewer days to make things happen.

Being an education major made me realize how much school gave to me. It helped me with my self esteem, social skills and for me too, it was the only hot meal on my table every day. I see kids who are not seeing good modeling at home and school is their only chance to rise above what surrounds them. It is for them I speak, it is for them I cry.

Please find alternatives. You know the homeless areas, you see the tents. You KNOW they are depending upon us- don't forget them. Let's break bad cycles.

Ellen Finnerty
Mother of one student at Wheeler Elementary Student at Chaminade University of Honolulu
Student at Leeward Community College

Sen. Will Espero

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, October 30, 2009 7:22 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: OCTober 30, 2009 FURLOUGH SESSION

Dear Senator Espero,

I am writing to you as a citizen who happens to work for the State of Hawaii.

I am concerned with the Governor's Furlough plan. I don't think it was a thought out and well planned decision. Our Governor has not taken into account:

- 1- Families may have 2 or more members employed by the State of Hawaii. In most cases, spouses and couples. The furlough is not just a cut for one member of the household, but for two members in the household.
- 2- Children are losing time in the classroom. Our children is Hawaii's future. Their lives are being impacted in a negative way. They are not learning anything on these furlough days. Yes some families can afford to hire private teachers on the furlough days, but some cannot.
- 3- With the furlough Fridays, some parents have to call in sick or quit their jobs to stay home with their children. It is impacting our economy much worst than if taxes were raised.

Furlough's are always better than layoffs, but why are we being threatened with only these two options? I am sure that there are other options. We CANNOT follow California. They are a bad example, and are in extreme debt. They are led by an actor. We should follow the more prosperous states as Oregon or Washington.

My family will seriously be affected by the furlough's. Both me and my partner are State employees, with children in school. It is very difficult to manage in this economy already, and now with the children needing child care, and both us losing income, who knows how we will make it. We are not the only one's in this situation. Many households that I know of, are in the same situation. These furloughs seem as if they may be protecting the rich and the hard working middle class citizens.

I hope our elected Senator's, as yourself, will step in and provide relief.

There are always other options. For instance, abolishing the income and excise tax systems and creating a sales tax system. Tax 8-10% on all sale items except for food. This way no cheating on income taxes or excise taxes. All proceeds to the State of Hawaii. Just an idea.

Sincerely,

Dawn P. Clemente

Sen. Will Espero

From: Darlow, Lori [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, October 30, 2009 7:27 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Furlough Fridays

Dear Senator,

I am disturbed by the implementation of furlough Fridays. This is my son's first year in school. He is so excited and is soaking up everything that is being taught at Iroquois Point Elementary.

We moved to Hawaii two years ago after my husband's retirement from serving in the Air Force for 20 years to live out a dream. We knew at that time that the education system in Hawaii didn't have the best reputation, but we figured we'd be able to supplement along the way with workbooks and challenging Josh daily with puzzles and real world lessons.

However, I never thought we'd be faced with supplementing practically a month's worth of education. Right now is such a fragile time for any student, let alone a kindergartener. Now is the time to build a solid foundation for his future academic career and I fear that foundation will be severely compromised with furlough Fridays.

Also, another concern of mine has to do with the auxiliary staff at the schools. Is it true that cafeteria and custodial staff still work on furlough Fridays? There just has to be another way for our children to get the education they deserve and need to survive in this world.

I've spoken to teachers who feel their "enrichment days" are a waste of time and would be better spent teaching than sitting around 'sharing' ideas. Governor Lingle mentioned that she would not even consider raising taxes. I've honestly been amazed that the taxes here are so low, especially with all the problems here. I would completely support an increase to an even 5% (to me that makes more sense than 4.712??).

If there is no way around furlough Fridays (which I think is insane), then I would rather my son have extended Christmas and summer vacation. That would be far easier to arrange for care and provide less interruption in learning for our keiki.

I am no economist, but it seems to me that placing the financial burden on parents for the states short-comings will prove to be disastrous and will severely compromise the future for our children. Please help to end this nonsense.

Respectfully,
Lori Darlow

Lori Darlow | Document Control Specialist | Actus Lend Lease

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Schofield Barracks, HI USA 96857
[REDACTED]

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Sen. Will Espero

From: Kaimana [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, October 30, 2009 7:27 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: School Furloughs

Respectfully, I state my continueing concern that we have shortchanged our children first in trying to be financially responsible. It is no different than buying gas for your car instead of food for your child. The message we are giving an entire generation of young hopeful innocent minds is that they do not matter. They are our only hope for the future and we are telling them that we hold no value to their optimism, hope, faith and courage. I am a single parent of a twelve year old daughter. It is my kuleana to make certain she understands that it is always up to her to make the best of situations, to learn from adversity and to find the lessons in all things. Do the actions of our State government show care for the children.

The Children come first, it has always been this way and should always be this way. Otherwise we have no right to be parents.

Kaimana Nakamura
Maui, Hawaii

--



"Dream as if your heart knows no boundaries; Believe as if your heart knows no malice" - A. Robledo

~O ka Maluhia no me oe~
Peace be with you

Sen. Will Espero

From: Lee Roy [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, October 30, 2009 7:42 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: stop furlough Friday

I feel very strongly about the special session addressing the Furlough Friday that has closed our schools. I will be going to work today and having my 2 kids home alone all day is just not right. Please address this problem and get Hawaii's kids back in school! Thank you, Lee Brooke Roy

Sen. Will Espero

From: Meredith & Zoe [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, October 30, 2009 7:19 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Furlough Friday

Aloha,

I am a concerned parent writing to you to request that the legislature re-visit the decision to allow DOE teachers to be furloughed 17 school days during the year. I feel this negatively impacts my child's education, which in turn will negatively impact our future. If our children are not properly educated how can they be expected to have the skills and knowledge to make decisions that will affect us all in the future? There must be another solution and it is up to lawmakers to find it. That is why you are elected by us, the parents. Mahalo for your time.

Sincerely,
Meredith Trockman

Sen. Will Espero

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, October 30, 2009 7:47 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Concern over Furlough Fridays

Dear Senator Espero,

I am a parent from Hawaii Kai, with grave concern over the situation of the "Furlough Fridays." Budget reductions should be found in other ways, we shouldn't deprive our kids of classroom time. It only deepens the divide between the haves and have-nots in our state, and takes it out on the innocent children who most need our support and nurturing. Please convene a Special Session to come up with other solutions.

Thank You,

Lurana O'Malley

--
Lurana Donnels O'Malley
Director of Western Theatre
UHM Dept. of Theatre and Dance
808-956-9609
FAX 808-956-4234

Sen. Will Espero

From: Jervis, Raynette [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, October 30, 2009 7:53 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Furlough Fridays - please convene a Special Session

Importance: High

I am proud to say that my success as an individual was built on a strong foundation of public school education and I am deeply concerned about the closure of school on Furlough Fridays, and the impact it will have on our children. Please convene a Special Session of the Legislature to address this issue and find an alternative. Mahalo!

raynette.jervis@westin.com director of human resources the westin maui resort & spa
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

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Sen. Will Espero

From: John Saporito [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, October 30, 2009 7:59 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: October 30 Furlough Friday Hearing

Senator,

I am enjoying my 40th year of teaching. As an educator, I am deeply concerned about the closure of school on Furlough Fridays, and the impact it will have on our children. Please convene a Special Session of the Legislature to address this issue and find an alternative. Mahalo.

John Saporito

Sen. Will Espero

From: Sean Connelly [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, October 30, 2009 8:02 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Testimony against furlough friday

Aloha, thank you for the time to read my comments. I am a product of the Hawaii public school system, and felt my education had been negatively affected during the 2001 teacher's strike (i was a sophomore). On record, the strike lasted 17 days, however, it occurred right after spring break, leaving a total of 27 days. During this time, I missed out on very important algebra II lessons, which left the teacher unable to complete her total lesson plan. While this seems insignificant, it catalyzed a chain reaction throughout the rest of my high school. In trigonometry, the teacher had to review some of the lessons we missed toward the end of algebra II, which left us short on time to cover the very end of her lesson plan toward the close of the year. This transferred over to calculus, when the teacher had to cover some of the trigonometry we had missed because the previous teacher was reviewing what students had missed during the strike. Of course, the calculus teacher was unable to cover the end of her lesson plan because she had run out of time. When I entered college and took college level calculus on the mainland, I needed to take weekly tutoring classes in trigonometry and math because my skills just weren't up to par. I managed to score highly in the class, but I noticed the areas I had most difficulty in were those I had not covered in high school, because the teacher had "run out of time."

Mind you, I wasn't just the average student...I was valedictorian of my graduating class in 2003. When valedictorians of our public high schools are struggling, I can only imagine how difficult it is for other students who struggled even before the strike.

School has always been important to me, and I believe education is the core of our survival. The government has created a system that favors competition above cooperation, that honors the survival of the richest and the most educated (above the masses of the poor and uneducated)...yet we don't even value the well being of our schools? Furlough fridays will have a negative affect that will amplify exponentially throughout the lives of each student. We can't expect all parents to have the resources to protect their children during these fridays.

Why not impose a community reciprocity tax for hotels and tourists?
Why not require filthy rich private developers to pay special education takes?

Why not send a special volunteer task force of students and community members to delamp each and every public school so that energy savings can go to fill the deficit?

There are more options that furlough fridays,

Thank you.

--

Sean Connelly, D.Arch, LEED AP
[REDACTED]

We live in conversation, rhythm, and relationship with the world

Sen. Will Espero

From: Jeff Bloom [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, October 30, 2009 8:06 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero; Sen. Norman Sakamoto
Subject: Please convene a Special Session of the Legislature to address Furlough Fridays

Senators Espero and Sakamoto,

I am deeply concerned about the closure of school on Furlough Fridays, and the impact it will have on our children's education. We already have one of the shortest school days in the nation and now have the shortest school year/number of teaching days in the country. Even the Secretary of Education was moved to express his opinion in the Advertiser. I know there are other solutions besides closing school. I trust the legislature will do the right thing and find a solution that will keep our keiki in school to continue their education. Please convene a Special Session of the Legislature to address this issue. Mahalo.

Jeff Bloom

Sen. Will Espero

From: Larson [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, October 30, 2009 8:07 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero; Sen. Fred Hemmings; Sen. David Ige; Sen. Norman Sakamoto; Sen. Dwight Takamine; Sen. Brian Taniguchi; Sen. Jill Tokuda; Sen. Shan Tsutsui
Subject: Kamali'i Elementary

We are having a very unique problem at our school. Our school principal has dictated that our school policy with regard to the furlough days is to do nothing. While other schools around the state are actively working to protect the children and preserve their right to a good education our Principal is taking the opposite approach. She will not meet and discuss any of these issues with parents she is not already friends with or who do not support her ideas.

We desperately need some intervention. At this point we have varying groups of parents doing different things to alleviate the problem for their individual families. Some have already removed their children, others are in the process of making arrangements at other schools (this number is growing rapidly) and others are starting a petition to have this Principal removed - but none of these sound right to me. I see no reason why the Principal should not be REQUIRED to here parental complaints/suggestions. Additionally, it is the belief of all the parents that we are and should be active participants in our children's educations and no one person should be allowed to make those decisions for us.

We were told to go to our SCC and that this group in particular was responsible for being the gateway between the Principal and the community. Sadly we found at the meeting that our SCC is not properly formed and is only willing to follow the directives of the Principal. No matter how many suggestions, offers or requests we made each of them was met with a resounding NO. This is not acceptable in a democratic society! Our Principal cannot be allowed to act as a dictator and force her will upon those least capable of defending themselves.

I have been further informed by parents and teachers that the reason for this unwillingness to compromise on our Principals behalf is that she has a plan for our school to be a model school. This may be well and good but I couldn't say since the principal has made no effort to explain her plan. Any school plan should be an inclusive plan that takes into account all parties involved not just the agendas of one. I would venture a guess that all our public schools had some sort of plan going into this school year but that all changed the day the furloughs were announced. Other schools are actively pursuing ways to lessen the effect of these furloughs on our children yet our school sadly is not.

Principal Auvil is also actively disseminating misinformation not only to parents but teachers as well. She has stated that doing "furlough packets" violates the teachers contracts. She has stated that the teachers being hired privately on Fridays to teach our kids is in violation of the teachers contracts. She has stated that any effort to recapture full school days on our now half day wednesdays is not within her power and again would be illegal because the half days were instituted because the teachers were working 90 minutes per week too much and the furlough days don't count as removing educational minute from the students week- WHAT??

Lastly, while sifting through the bureaucracy that is our DOE and BOE I found that Bruce Anderson was our Superintendant. Initially we could not reach him at all but once I got through he seemed very irritated by my requests for assistance and firmly stated that unless teachers filed complaints nothing would be done. Why can my complaints not be addressed?

What is going on? Why do we parents not have a voice? Don't our taxes pay the salaries of all these individuals? Should we hold a rally, hire attorneys and institute a no tax paying regime that will go around and solicit as many tax paying parents as possible, offer those parents legal representation against the government and a valid defense against paying state taxes? I don't know anymore. This tactic seems very extreme and detrimental to our state in it's entirety, but to be perfectly honest people are tired of being ignored. This is no joke, the damage to our keiki will not be immediate but it will last a lifetime!

We expect you and the rest of your coworkers to step up and do the right thing, do something! How far do you really want this to go? We will not be ignored for much longer, efforts will become drastic and far-reaching. We are asking for your help now so this does not destroy our communities. Find the money somewhere else! A government overhaul should yield millions if not billions. Teachers don't have aides why should you. Each and every government official is at the end of their proverbial rope right now, it's your choice to hang yourselves or not but the mob has begun to form and they are looking for someone to string up. Is it going to be you? One of your colleagues? No one knows but officials will be held accountable and not one of you is safe from scrutiny, yet.

Thank you,

Heather Larson

Sen. Will Espero

From: Mary Lardizabal [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, October 30, 2009 8:35 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Testimony

Categories: Print Big Island

Aloha...my name is Mary Lardizabal. I was selected as Kauai's Teacher of the Year for 2009. I teach a wonderful and incredible choir and ukulele program at Kapa'a Middle School. I am truly disappointed in the decision that Governor Lingle has taken to cut education. I do not teach for the money, so I was willing to take the pay cut, however, as a teacher and a parent of 2 children, my heart is aching for the many students who are being deprived of the best education that we are obligated to give to our students. We are already facing a challenge with the economy and we must deal with the emotional and hardships that our families have to face everyday. It has been a struggle the last couple of weeks to keep my students on task. I continue to work 24/7 and will not stop...even with the furloughs. And the disruption of the furlough Friday schedule is outlandish.

Our children want to learn. They do not look forward to a 'day off'. They know what their future holds! and at this point, it does not look hopeful.

I pray that Governor Lingle will support our educational system and convene a special session to re-evaluate this whole process.

For the future of our children...Mahalo..Mary Lardizabal

Sen. Will Espero

From: Ananda Stone [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, October 30, 2009 8:27 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Furlough Fridays

Aloha,

I am deeply concerned about the closure of school on Furlough Fridays, and the impact it will have on our children, parents, teachers and the entire community.

Please convene a Special Session of the Legislature to address this issue and find an alternative.

Our keiki should be last to be affected by an economic crisis. Furlough Fridays is an unacceptable recourse, for bad economic times.

Mahalo,

Ananda Stone

(single mom of 2 boys)

Sen. Will Espero

From: Craig Springbett [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, October 30, 2009 8:35 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: October 30th Hearing Testimony

Senator Espero,

Please help to reinstate teaching days that have been lost to Furlough Friday's.
Our keiki should not be the ones to suffer for our state budget deficit. They are our state's future and I believe
this sends a poor message
that education is not important. Mahalo,

--
Craig Springbett
Real Estate Broker
Re Max Honolulu

[REDACTED]
Kapolei, HI [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Sen. Will Espero

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, October 30, 2009 8:35 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: October 30th Hearing Testimony

Aloha Senator Espero and others:

I, like so many others, am absolutely appalled that our state would even consider passing on the consequences of our financial crisis to our children. That is absolutely what we are doing today by having Furlough Fridays in our public schools because they take away crucial instructional days. Yes, economic ties are difficult right now. However, how has education become the focus of our cuts? While other budgets remain untouched and completely off the negotiating table, our state is attacking public education at all levels! Education should always remain a priority and instructional days should be restored immediately!

Thank you for your consideration,
Angela Krattiger

To: Senator Colleen Hanabusa, Senate President
Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair
Senator Will Espero, Vice Chair
Senator Norman Sakamoto, Chair, Education Committee

From: Michael Moriyama

Date: October 30, 2009

Subject: Support of Special Senate Committee to Consider Approaches to Teacher Furloughs

As a member of the Hawaii State PTSA I oppose a newly two-year ratified teacher contract that requires educators to take 17 or 21 unpaid furlough days off, and result in decreased instruction time.

I am concerned that furlough Fridays will result in the children of Hawaii losing significant educational hours targeted towards student achievement.

While I understand Hawaii's current governmental shortfalls, today over 60% of Hawaii's public schools have not met average yearly progress under Federal Legislation, "No child Left Behind or NCLB". I feel reducing instructional time will only add to the challenge of meeting AYP, and for many of my friends of Special Needs children, IDEA requirements and that may result in severe unintended consequences.

I strongly encourage our legislators to find ways to replace furlough Fridays with other non-instructional days and seriously consider using a portion or all of the state's hurricane fund/rainy day fund to support the return of education instructional days to the children of Hawaii Public Schools.

Please develop laws that ' earmark' public funds for education in our state similar to funds that are ' earmarked' for our highways without an increase in state taxes especially in a current turbulent environment where Hawaii citizens have lost jobs or experienced decreased work hours.

We beg you to listen to our cry for help and find other ways to manage spending to avoid balancing budgets on the backs of Hawaii's children. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Much Aloha,



Michael Moriyama
Parent

Sen. Will Espero

From: Atina Pascua [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, October 30, 2009 8:40 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: End Furlough Fridays

Dear Legislators,

I am deeply concerned about the closure of school on Furlough Fridays, and the impact it will have on our children. Please convene a Special Session of the Legislature to address this issue and find an alternative. Mahalo.

Atina Pascua
Wahiawa, HI
96786

Sen. Will Espero

From: LIZ KINSLER [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, October 30, 2009 8:38 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Furlough Fridays for our keiki

I am writing to encourage the senate to hold a special session to address the loss of instructional days in our public schools.

As a parent of 2 public school children, a tax payor and a member of the board of PTA at Enchanted Lake Elementary school,

the special session should be in acted to address the loss of instructional days.

As seen last week with the turn out of parents, children and teachers, the public is speaking out strongly that they do not agree with the children missing school. It is the childrens right as Americans to recieve an education and it is your duty as elected officials to follow the requests of the people who voted for you to protect our future.

The furloughs are not a solution and are not acceptable.
Please help and do the right thing.

Liz Kinsler,

[REDACTED]
Kailua, HI 96734

Sen. Will Espero

From: Fithian Jones [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, October 30, 2009 8:44 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: please call a "Furlough Friday" legislative session

Categories: Print Big Island

"I have a fifteen year old grandson who goes to school at Roosevelt High. He is right on the fence about whether or not to take his education seriously, or just slide by. As his Tutu, I am worried about the impact of closing one more day of school. Our education system is in real jeopardy as it is, and these Fridays off will deep-six whatever chances our Hawaiian children might have to compete with their peers around the world once they graduate.

Please convene a Special Session of the Legislature to address this issue and find an alternative.

My family and I are counting on you to do the right thing.
Mahalo Nui Lo,
Fithian Jones
96746

Anne Carroll

[REDACTED] • Kailua, HI • 96734-0561

October 26, 2009

Will Espero
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 207
415 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Senator Espero:

I am writing in regards to your suggestion to raid the Hurricane Relief Fund to bail out the HSTA's disastrous 17-day furlough decision. Surely there are better ideas than penalizing homeowners who paid into the fund. Will you also charge renters a special fee to bail out the HSTA's decision? And what about taxing parents, who actually send their kids to public school?

With a budget of \$2.4 billion, the DOE employs 47,000 people, and only 13,500 are teachers. Charter school budgets have been cut to less than \$6000 per student, while public schools receive more than \$10,000 per student and are still at the bottom of the testing heap. Charter schools make do with less, why can't public schools? Throwing more money at the already bloated DOE has only increased its bureaucracy.

Raiding the Hurricane Relief Fund (HRF) won't help matters when the DOE is unable to account for the money it does have. My husband and I didn't pay into the HRF so it could be squandered away on a dysfunctional DOE system dictated by unions. We have scrimped and saved to send our kids to a small private school, in spite of the fact that my husband was unemployed for 4 months, because we don't have faith in the public school system. Why should our hard-earned money be used to bail out Hawaii's failing public schools when we don't even send our kids to public school? If anything, return our money that we paid into the HRF so we can make ends meet. The HSTA made a despicable decision to sacrifice children's education, and is now trying to hold the public hostage. Please don't give into the union tactics of putting themselves first and students last by raiding the Hurricane Relief Fund. State workers should have just taken an across the board pay cut, like the rest of Hawaii's working public.

Sincerely,



Anne Carroll

Sen. Will Espero

From: Julia Myers [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, October 30, 2009 9:10 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: End Furlough Fridays

Legislators:

At Chaminade University where I work, I have helped others here to offer biology workshops on the next 3 furlough Fridays for college bound juniors and seniors in high school. We will be announcing this today (hopefully.) We couldn't scramble as fast to get this to happen as Kama 'aina kids and other groups, but we are excited to offer it. As much as I feel that my 7 year old is being shortchanged, I know that the high school students, especially those who may already be deprived of college prep courses, adequate teaching, and adequate facilities such as science labs, may be much more impacted. We are trying to attract Native Hawaiian students to our programs, and inadequate preparation is a huge issue.

I just uploaded this page yesterday:

Furlough Friday Biology Workshops at Chaminade University

<http://www.chaminade.edu/ug/furlough-fridays.php>

My comments as a concerned parent:

Please end furlough Fridays. If it is true that there are nearly as many DOE employees as teachers in the classroom, then there is way too much money spent in the wrong place. My son who is 7 would like to see his teacher in class today, but she's not there! The most basic principle of education is a teacher - PRESENT -- with students. The education funds are not to give administrators a job, but to put teachers in front of kids, like my son! I think we could put even more teachers into the schools with that money. I think it is important for our leadership to lead in this circumstance, instead of all the shots being called by union negotiators. My son's education should not have anything to do with meetings held by unions behind closed doors. That's completely irresponsible. If anything, I want to have a say, and it should be public.

Most parents who care have already voted with their feet and put their kids in private school. You have the responsibility to speak out for kids whose parents do not care, can't take time off to come to a hearing, or are not literate in English.

Julia Myers
zip code 96817
Web Media Outreach Director
Chaminade University

Sen. Will Espero

From: pua hanawahine [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, October 30, 2009 9:15 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: OCTOBER 30th HEARING TESTIMONY

Another Friday and my children are home once again due to Furlough Fridays. As a married mother of 3 school age children I am utterly disgusted with the choices our Governor and other law makers have made. To balance the budget of our state on the backs of our PUBLIC school children is an outrage! What kind of example are we showing our children? What do we expect the next generation to produce if we back seat education?

I strongly oppose Furlough Fridays and do believe that there are other ways to solving our financial problems. Stop blaming each other, Stop pointing fingers and show the leadership our state needs and deserves. Listen to our teachers, ask for there input. They are the front line and defense for our children. Forcing our teachers and giving them ultimatums does not work. Let their TRUE voices be heard. I will always be fighting for my children's education and believe that education is the key to their success!!!

Aloha & Mahalo for your time,
Pua Hanawahine

Sen. Will Espero

From: micheline [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, October 30, 2009 9:13 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Furloughs

The last thing teachers need is another day off. We are in a recession , people are loosing their job everywhere, why can they take a pay cut? Have them vote again, I think the union are to blame.

Micheline Okazaki

Sen. Will Espero

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, October 30, 2009 9:18 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Furlough Friday

Aloha Senator -

I'm a parent of two children in public school AND I absolutely love and support our public school system.

With the state of our economy, I understand something needs to be done otherwise, the State of Hawaii will be in far worse a situation than now.

Where Furlough Fridays are not ideal, I'm willing to do whatever it takes to ensure continued education with my kids when school is not in session.

But I did want to write to let you know how sad I am for the teachers. When Furloughs became a reality, thousands of hard working teachers were severely affected economically. Teachers don't make a lot to begin with, but the teachers of Hawaii given their hearts and souls to their students. I'm saddened to see this happen to them. Many teachers in our school have spouses who teach, so those families are doubly hit :(

Secondly, I feel for the working parents who have to stress and struggle over child care. For a family of 3, Furlough Friday can add up to a tremendous economic burden :(I have a flexible job, so I don't fall in this category BUT for those without any flexibility, I know this creates so much chaos in their lives.

Lastly, I feel for the kids BUT I do believe as long as parents are willing to work with their kids on days off and ensure they are doing something productive, they'll fare out okay.

Regardless, was wondering, to make up for "lost time" on Fridays, maybe extend the school day by 30 minutes each day (MTThF) and 1 hour on Wednesdays which is usually an early release day?

In all honesty, the Furloughs don't affect me personally, but I know there are many disappointed parents out there so I wanted to show my support for them.

I believe in the public school system and I believe our teachers are top notch :) I hope we can do something to help salvage the spirit and morale of our very hard working teaching professionals.

Sincerely,
Jennifer *Metrose*

Sen. Will Espero

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, October 30, 2009 9:38 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: October 30th Hearing Testimony

Aloha,

My daughter is six years old, and is at a point where she is a little behind the curve of first graders in her school. I read to her every night, but missing one day per week is really hindering her chances to catch up with the other children. I learned of this at the parent/teacher conference yesterday. I work full time, and now need to question whether I skip work or skip my daughters daily education needs on Fridays.

It is my sincere hope that the state will reconsider the furloughs, I can't believe Linda Lingle and Duke Aiona both supported this action, and I voted for both of them. Our children's education is the most important thing!! We should not abandon it because of poor decision making.

sincerely,

Bobby Harper (R) (BIC)
Hawaii Realty Group
(808) 349-3200
(808) 685-7653
[REDACTED]

October 30, 2009

Aloha,

My name is Wendy Lynch and I am the proud parent of two wonderful daughters. My youngest is in 1st grade and my oldest is in 5th grade at Aikahi Elementary in Kailua.

My family chose to move here over living on the mainland. We chose to move to Hawaii despite the stories we had heard regarding the sorry state of the public educational system here.

We moved here from Virginia last year and chose to live in an expensive neighborhood, way above our allotted housing allowance so we could be close to Aikahi Elementary. We did this so that our girls could attend what we heard was one of the best public schools on Oahu.

We choose Aikahi over private school because we mistakenly believed our daughters would get a good education there. If we had known our girls would be facing 163 days in school versus 180 we would have spent less on rent and sent them to a private school. Now we can not afford private school because we are locked into a three year lease.

Last year I worked in the Special Ed department at Aikahi Elementary until I was laid off and informed funding was no longer available for my part time position or for 2 other part-timers at the school. I wondered how instructional time could be taken away from Special Ed kids. Are these not the kids that need extra help the most?

Not only do these Special Ed children have a higher teacher student ratio now due to last years layoffs but now they don't have school on most Fridays! This is appalling! This school year all our kids are suffering due to a shortened school week.

Being a military family we've had our children in three different public schools and I've taught at a handful of schools all over the nation as well. I would rank Hawaii's educational system as the worst we've encountered. In general mainland schools have more than 180 school days. Now Hawaii has taken away an additional 17 days from an already shortened year. How are these kids going to get into and be prepared for college?

Our daughters 5th grade teacher informs us now she has to cram in all school material into a 3 ½ day school week. As an educator I know children can not learn as well when material is being crammed into them. They can not retain all of the information they are being taught.

We are setting up our teachers to fail our children. Our children are becoming stressed as a result of this force feeding of information. I'm certain teachers are also being over stressed as a result of trying to fill in 180 days worth of school material into 163. We need to support our teachers, not take away from them. Teaching our children must be the #1 priority for Hawaii.

Today's Honolulu Advertiser states that a public opinion poll of 900 residents surveyed this year showed only 60% support the 5.5 **BILLION** commuter rail line. If surveyed I believe that more people support education than the rail line. We can afford to put off the rail line until Hawaii's economy improves. We can't afford to put off educating our young.

My family has fallen in love with Hawaii – its people, culture, warm weather and spectacular scenery. Unfortunately we are learning that children here are not viewed as important members of this society. Instead they are pawns in this bureaucratic system to be moved around at will as though they are pieces in the game of life.

By taking away 17 days of their school year Hawaii is teaching their children that they are not important. We need to give back to our ohana by giving our children the best possible public education, not a substandard one. Let's demonstrate our kokua by taking care of our keiki.

Thank you for your time and attention on this important matter.

Mahalo,

Wendy Lynch

[REDACTED]

Kailua, HI 96734

[REDACTED]

Sen. Will Espero

From: Terry Skinner [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, October 30, 2009 9:42 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Today's Senate Hearing

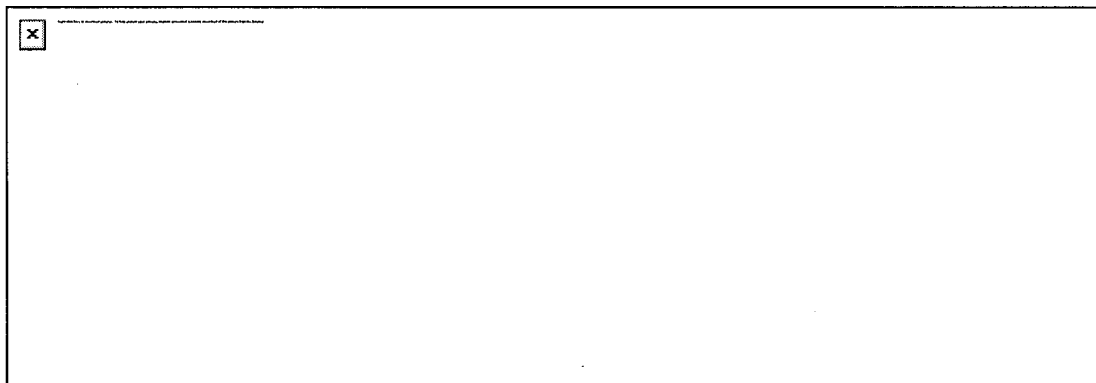
Please seriously consider and implement an alternative to the public school teacher furloughs.

R/S,

Ana Skinner

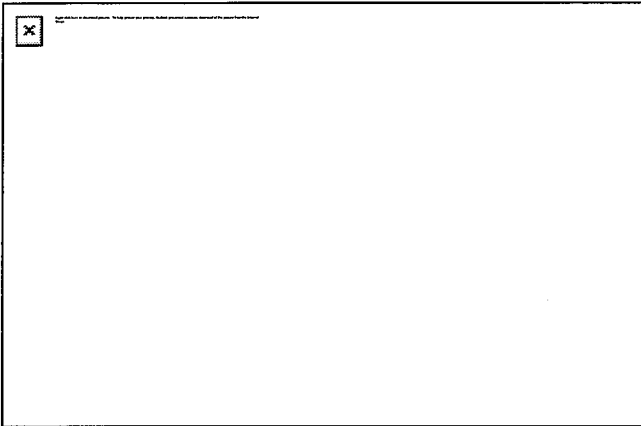
From: Hawaii Education Matters [mailto:Hawaii_Education_Matters@mail.vresp.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 14:09
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Senate Hearing Tomorrow

[Click to view this email in a browser](#)



October 29, 2009

Aloha parents and supporters!



Senate Hearing Tomorrow

Last Friday we marched at the State Capitol and gave Hawaii's children a voice. The Governor admitted she would be in favor of a return to the table to talk, and public opinion began to sway those in the senate and the legislature.

Now, we need your help again. To be an effective vehicle for change, we must keep our attention focused on our political leaders.

There is a HEARING is taking place THIS FRIDAY, October 30th at 12:30p at the STATE CAPITOL AUDITORIUM to consider alternatives to the public school teacher furloughs. We must show our support for a special session by being there! You can:

- 1) Give a 4 minute or less testimony to support a special session.
- 2) Join us without speaking to pack the hearing with supporters.

Learn more about our drive for a special session at our updated website:

[Hawaii Education Matters](#)

Can't make the hearing?

Your written testimony is powerful too!

Send written testimony via email today to Senator Will Espero at: senespero@capitol.hawaii.gov. The subject line should read: "October 30th Hearing Testimony".

The Senator will present your written statements at the hearing. Thank you for speaking up for our Keiki!

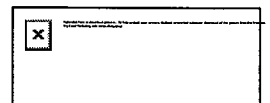
Mahalo,

Your team at Hawaii Education Matters

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Sen. Will Espero

From: Family [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, October 30, 2009 9:43 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: SPECIAL SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONSIDER APPROACHES TO TEACHER FURLOUGHS Friday, October 30, 2009 12:30 p.m

To: Senator Colleen Hanabusa, Senate President
Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair
Senator Will Espero, Vice Chair
Senator Norman Sakamoto, Chair, Education Committee

From: Brenda Schmaldienst

Date: October 30, 2009

Subject: Support of Special Senate Committee to Consider Approaches to Teacher Furloughs

As a member of the Hawaii State PTSA I oppose a newly two-year ratified teacher contract that requires educators to take 17 or 21 unpaid furlough days off, and result in decreased instruction time.

I am concerned that furlough Fridays will result in the children of Hawaii losing significant educational hours targeted towards student achievement.

While I understand Hawaii's current governmental shortfalls, today over 60% of Hawaii's public schools have not met average yearly progress under Federal Legislation, "No child Left Behind or NCLB". I feel reducing instructional time will only add to the challenge of meeting AYP, and for many of my friends of Special Needs children, IDEA requirements and that may result in severe unintended consequences.

I strongly encourage our legislators to find ways to replace furlough Fridays with other non-instructional days and seriously consider using a portion or all of the state's hurricane fund/rainy day fund to support the return of education instructional days to the children of Hawaii Public Schools.

Please develop laws that ' earmark' public funds for education in our state similar to funds that are ' earmarked' for our highways without an increase in state taxes especially in a current turbulent environment where Hawaii citizens have lost jobs or experienced decreased work hours.

We beg you to listen to our cry for help and find other ways to manage spending to avoid balancing budgets on the backs of Hawaii's children. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Much Aloha,

Brenda Schmaldienst
Parent

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, October 30, 2009 12:10 AM
To: Sen. Brian Taniguchi
Subject: furlough days

Senator Taniguchi,

Furlough days for Hawaii's public school students are unacceptable and unfair to the weakest members of society. Please do something to reinstate the school days.

Sincerely,

Gladys Nakahara

From: **Lurana O'Malley** [REDACTED]
Date: Fri, Oct 30, 2009 at 7:47 AM
Subject: Concern over Furlough Fridays
To: senespero@capitol.hawaii.gov

Dear Senator Espero,

I am a parent from Hawaii Kai, with grave concern over the situation of the "Furlough Fridays." Budget reductions should be found in other ways, we shouldn't deprive our kids of classroom time. It only deepens the divide between the haves and have-nots in our state, and takes it out on the innocent children who most need our support and nurturing. Please convene a Special Session to come up with other solutions.

Thank You,

Lurana O'Malley

--

Lurana Donnels O'Malley
Director of Western Theatre
UHM Dept. of Theatre and Dance
808-956-9609
FAX 808-956-4234

TO:

**SPECIAL SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONSIDER APPROACHES TO
TEACHER FURLOUGHS**

Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair

Senator Will Espero, Vice Chair

Testimony from Mike Okazaki, Honolulu, Hawaii.

October 30, 2009

Dear Legislators:

It is often said the Chinese character for crisis is "danger" and "opportunity." This crisis presents an opportunity for the State to finally make good on its Constitutional duty (Art. X, Sec. 1) to "support" and "control" public education in a meaningful and effective fashion. It is a disgrace that success in this state is often a matter of having the ability to attend a private school. That our leaders would even consider closing schools for 17 days reflects a systemic apathy towards public education in this state. This has got to stop.

Hawaii will never achieve its full potential as a vibrant economic center unless the public schools are geared for success. These are my ideas, which I believe could garner widespread support among Democrats, Republicans, and Independents.

Mandate a 180-day school year. Follow the other states by enacting legislation setting forth the number of required classroom days per year. Make it 180 days. The State should set the education standard, negotiate with the unions to implement it, and then raise the standard.

As it stands now, the length of the school year has been determined by collective bargaining under HRS Chapter 89 to be 163 days. This is not only absurd, it is likely an unlawful circumvention of the rulemaking/legislative process that is generally required when making policy changes that affect rights of the public.

Reinvigorate the Summer School Programs. I would prefer a longer school year, but that will probably have to wait. Instead, the state should reinforce the summer existing school program, which I believe is largely tuition-funded. The state should offer up to 20 additional instruction days to those families that want it. The summer school program can be funded mostly by tuition, with a waiver program for kids on reduced fee lunch. A fee of \$250 per student would appear reasonable. Each complex should have one school at each level (ie., elementary, middle, and high school) that offers a rigorous 9-2:30 pm program. The teachers can be teachers from any public school who want to earn extra money over the summer.

Extend the School Day by Adding Study Hall. School gets out at 2pm on most days and at noon on Wednesdays, which is really quite absurd. At the very least, 2-3 pm can simply be study hall, with lower paid study hall monitors and parent volunteers. Maybe

it can be integrated into the A-plus system, which is already at the elementary schools. Kids can read or do homework.

Create BOE Charter Schools. Enact a "BOE charter school" option for each and every public school. This could be done by amendment to HRS Chapter 302B. These schools will be under the BOE (and will not have to negotiate separately with the teachers), but they will have many of the benefits of charter schools, such as leeway relating to school curriculum, instruction, and spending. Call it Charter School "light." For these schools, the PTA will perform many of the functions of a local school board. This relatively simple change will pay dividends in school pride, parent excitement, and student motivation.

Incorporate Organized Fundraising. The State should promote fundraising and private/public partnerships. Start a public school non-profit foundation similar to the UH Foundation to fundraise and accept donations. In addition, allow each High School to have its own non-profit fundraising arm. There are many proud public school graduates that would love to give to their school. Alumni given shouldn't be limited to Iolani and Punahou.

Ensure that High Achievers Have Classes. Lastly, mandate that each high school offer AP courses.

Reward Success. Encourage schools such as Kaiser High School, Niu Valley Middle School, Hahaione Elementary School, and Campbell High School that have pursued the International Baccalaureate Program for their students. If they succeed, others will follow.

Streamline the DOE. Consider hiring an outside consultant to determine how the DOE can become more efficient, with an emphasis on determining what services DOE should provide and what services can be left to the schools or simply eliminated. It may be worth the cost. Perhaps the consultant can work with Marion Higa's office.

Marlene Uesugi

From: Hammond, Len G Mr CIV USA IMCOM [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, October 30, 2009 8:49 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Friday Furloughs (UNCLASSIFIED)

Importance: High

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Caveats: NONE

Senator Espero,

I would like to comment on the Friday Furlough for teachers. I don't understand why a scheduled school day had to be chosen for the furloughs. Why weren't those paid holidays, Fall and Spring breaks used as furlough days instead? That would still achieve the cost savings but not impact on classroom time. I hope that common sense can prevail over politics and union squabbling to achieve a resolution acceptable to all concerned.

Len Hammond
[REDACTED]
Mililani, HI 96789
[REDACTED]

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Caveats: NONE

Sen. Will Espero

From: dick tracy [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, November 01, 2009 10:07 PM
To: All Reps; All Senators; BOE_Hawaii@notes.k12.hi.us; news@kitv.com
Subject: school furloughs vs cost of keeping small schools open

What ever happened to the plans on closing small schools? Unfortunately, we may not be able to afford the luxury of keeping small school open when you balance the expenses incurred by:

- all state workers being furloughed
- all Hawaii students losing 34 days of education over two years
- potential law suits against our state

We move effectively and efficiently on closing small schools now.

Looking at the financial plans of "School Documents Online," (<https://iportal.k12.hi.us/SDO/AFPViewP.aspx>) if small schools are closed, about an estimated \$766,000 could be saved per school from personnel positions such as:

Principal & Vice

Principal:	\$300,000
SASA	\$50,000
School Health Aide	\$32,000
Curriculum Coordinator	\$64,000
SCCC	\$64,000
Registrar	\$64,000
1 Counselor	\$64,000
Student Activities	
Coordinator	\$64,000
School Librarian	\$64,000

(Note: estimating calculations for average teacher's salary is about \$64,000 as used by Hawaii's Weighted student formula – this assumption needs to be verified)

\$766,000 multiplied by a possible 25 school closures would be a substantial savings for the state. These funds could be applied to all schools to reduce the furlough days for the 2nd year (2010 – 2011).

This does not take into account the savings incurred by having 1 teacher per 32 students.

Small schools may have one or more teachers (whose average yearly salary is about \$60,000) who have classes with as few as 4 – 10 students per class. (This can be confirmed by class enrollment registration records.)

There is also savings from electricity, H.S.A. exam costs, custodial, school supplies, etc that can add to substantial savings if these schools are consolidated with other schools.

Many teachers are already meeting with students outside of school hours to make up for lost time incurred by the Furlough Fridays. We cannot afford the luxury of carrying the financial burden of small schools during these crisis times. It is time to move on closing small schools.

CLOSING SCHOOLS

The Hawaii Department of Education is studying whether to close small schools in these areas:

Phase 1

Oahu

- » Kaaawa, Hauula, Waiahole
- » Enchanted Lake, Kaelepulu, Keolu
- » Waialua Complex
- » Kaimuki/Waiialae elementary schools
- » Kalihi elementary schools

Maui

- » Keanae School

Molokai

- » Maunaloa, Kualapuu, Kaunakakai

Phase 2

Oahu

- » Nuuanu/Palama elementary schools

» Central Honolulu middle schools

» Kaneohe elementary schools

Maui

» Kekaulike Complex elementary schools

Big Island

» Hilo/Hamakua high schools

» Honaunau/Hookena

» Hilo area elementary schools

Phase 3

Oahu

» Moanalua elementary schools

» Hawaii Kai elementary schools

» Pearl City Complex elementary schools

Big Island

» Kohala High/Kohala Middle/Kohala Elementary

Molokai

» Molokai High/Molokai Middle schools

Kauai

» South Kauai elementary schools

Sen. Will Espero

From: scuba steve [mailto:scubasteve@ymail.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 8:59 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: restore teacher furloughs days

Before giving the DOE any money, audit the DOE from head to toe. It's ridiculous for us to be allowed to have vacant positions funded during this financial crisis. Every year, year after year, our director is always trying to spend hundreds of thousands at the end of the year. 89-day hires are a joke. Unqualified persons used as place holders for position are nothing more than expensive general laborers. I and all my children have been through Hawaii's public education system and I appreciate the public service it provides. After 13 years of seeing the system from the inside, I want someone to light a fire under the asses of these asses that run an inefficient and wasteful system. Do not give them another cent until they are cut bare to the bone and I will do my part by not voting for any incumbent Board member.

October 30th Hearing

Flora [REDACTED]

Good Afternoon,

I am pleased that there is continued attention given this most important matter, education for our children. I wrote an email to Gov. Lingle early on expressing my disappointment with the decision to close school on Friday. It is to say at the very least OUTRAGEOUS!!!! Education to our people should be hands off when it comes to balancing the budget. Cutting salaries to legislators seldom comes up on the chopping block. Why? Maybe dismantle the ferry terminals and see if the DOD or DOT can refund some money. Get creative and think of another way!

Let's do the real math on the cost of taking away a school day from our keiki. Kids who are idle find ways to gain attention and usual its negative. Uneducated people don't usual get or create jobs that are worthwhile. Then we have to important talent from the mainland while we ship our criminals/prisoners to mainland prisons that we created because we don't value good education. This is insanity! Now parents have to take a day off from work or pay for care, lose money, pay less taxes cause their not working therefore less money to put into our local economy. I'm no economist but seriously people common sense can tell this is a BAD IDEA! We must not allow this "Furlough Fridays to continue. Shame, shame on Lingle and those who moved forward with this idea in the first place.

Stop cutting education in all aspects and taking from our most precious teachers and children who deserve much more than they receive, not less. Stop Furlough Friday now!!!!

Mahalo,

Flora Tobby

Good Luck today, hope our kids, our communities WIN!!!

Lee McIntosh [redacted]

Dear Sirs,

My suggestion is to ask the DOE to go over their expenditures line by line and cut waste, and to start following state procurement law. If the DOE can't track this information, then they need to upgrade their accounting software and practices immediately. If the DOE insists on furloughs, then why not simply cut the school year short so that students can have their summer vacation back to spend with family and friends? That, in my opinion, would be the best solution the DOE has available with the information they have released publicly. But how can the Legislature adequately address this issue unless it is to give them more funding? I ask that you please refrain from raiding special funds or raising taxes to give the DOE more funding because they have failed miserably in successfully educating Hawaii's students with the vast amount of funding that they have already received in the past.
Thank you for considering my statement...

Lee McIntosh

Apple PC Card FAQ- <http://pccardfaq.com>

My CarT@@Ns- <http://cartoonistforchrist.org> GopherLee (help feed the dog)-
<http://gopherlee.com> Webmaster of the web sites below:

Hawaii Mac Nuts MUG- <http://hawaiimacnuts.org> eBay id: November1981 Facebook profile:

<http://facebook.com/november1981>

Cartoonist, Violinist, Mac User

Oct. 30, 2009

To: The Honorable Senator Espero and his Committee on the Furloughs for Teachers /State Employees

From: Geri O'Leary/ [REDACTED]

As I prepare this testimony, I am assuming that the legislature has already decided that furloughs for teachers and other State employees that work with students in the DOE (ie, principals, speech/language pathologists, diagnostic team members, occupational therapists and physical therapists), is not a viable solution and too costly to students.

Are there any alternatives to the furloughs?

Teachers and State employees working in the DOE (HGEEA, Professional Unit 13) receive 21 days of Sick Leave each year. Instead of cutting salaries, why not agree to changing the contract and temporarily reduce the number of Sick Leave days. The cost to the employee would hurt less than a reduced salary and yet the State could save money. For some in Unit 13, Vacation Leave could also be reduced by a few days.

Why not give an small financial incentive so more senior employees would retire early? Furloughs and pay cuts only reduce an employee's "high three", so senior employees about to retire will have to work longer to make up the loss in the high three by the furloughs or reduced pay. A small financial incentive such as an increase of 2 or 3 percent when figuring the "high three" might be enough to encourage senior employees to retire early.

Instead of furloughs or a reduction in salary, why not take a temporary "Budget Deficit Deduction" from the employee's pay. If only a deduction, the employee's base pay would not change and the taxes that the State, and Federal government , as well as, the amount paid into Social Security, would not change. For example, instead of taxes on \$65,000 (base pay), a pay cut, might mean that taxes would only be paid on \$59,000 (reduced pay due to pay cut). Multiply this by 63,000 plus employees and it seems like the State is losing badly needed tax revenue. The benefit to the employee would be, that while paying slightly more taxes, their base pay would not be reduced and it would not affect their "high three" configuration if they retire in the next three or four years.

What are the reasons for not using the Rainy Day Fund (if not now, when? How much worse does the state of affairs have to get before using this?)

What about the Hurricane Fund (How much money is left in this fund? Rumor has it that the governor has already spent large sums of this account. Is this true?) When the hurricane fund was initiated, it was not possible for an individual to purchase hurricane insurance; however, in recent years, hurricane insurance has become available for individuals to purchase, so why not use the fund to offset the budget deficit? If there is a hurricane, wouldn't FEMA step in to assist?

What happened to the stimulus money granted to the State? Could any of this be used to offset the budget deficit?

Why not increase the GET/sales tax by 2 percent for the next 2 or 3 years? That way, all people in the state and those who visit would help offset the budget deficit, not just 60,000 State employees and their children. That way, truly everyone would share in the pain.

Of course, these suggestions are only financial "bandaids". One of the real questions is how do we pay for the cost of education and not hurt students and teachers. Is DOE inflated with middle management positions both at the State and District levels; positions that should be cut to preserve teacher positions or positions of those who have direct contact with students? Should the legislature come up with a funding source that is primarily for the education of students? Many Mainland states have a lottery and it's proceeds are targeted solely for the use of education. Is it time to rethink this issue.

Has the legislature been apprised by more than one economist of what the trickle down effect will be with over 60,000 State employees receiving a substantial pay cut either through furloughs or a pay cut? I, for one, know that I will not be shopping, going to restaurants, beauty salons, movie theaters, charitable events etc. Again, multiply this by 60,000 employees and what will the impact be. We need to be doing something that will stimulate spending and thus, help businesses and generating needed tax revenue. Furloughs, layoffs and pay cuts don't seem to be the answer.

Thank you for this opportunity to share my thoughts on this issue. The legislature has a tough job ahead of them and I will pray that you receive the wisdom and guidance needed to make less harmful decisions than those made in the past few months.

SPECIAL SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONSIDER APPROACHES TO TEACHER FURLONGHS, OCT 30,
2009, 12:30 PM

Crouch Maj Alan F [REDACTED]

Fri 10/30/2009 12:19 PM

Sen. Will Espero

To whom it concerns:

I am among many parents of children affected by the 17 furlough days prescribed for this school year. I object to the decrease in instructional time spent with my children. An increase in homework is not sufficient to help my children learn how to learn and prepare themselves for more difficult subjects. My children need to be instructionally stimulated and challenged more than 3½ days per week.

Please consider other alternatives to help decrease this year's DOE operating expenses or meet the necessary costs of continued operation - without furloughs - by drawing from other funds. I recommend the hurricane response funds be strongly considered, as they can be replenished at a later time. I also recommend temporary pay cuts for those who work in education, primarily for non-instructional billets, but include reduction in teachers' pay if necessary. This is not the right answer in the long term, but I ask you not sacrifice the children's needs now, as it will have long-lasting negative effects.

Respectfully,

Maj. Alan Crouch, USMC, father of two public school children, grades 5 and 9.

Aloha, Sen. Espero!

Mahalo for accepting comments regarding Furlough Fridays.

I am sure by now you have heard a lot of testimony and received a ton of email regarding how appalled Hawaii is over the current state of our educational system. I will just add my voice to the many others without specifying reasons for how horrendous this situation is for Hawaii's students.

The ground swell of dissatisfaction will be heard and we won't settle for our keiki being short sheeted in education.

I am greatly disheartened to hear Gov. Lingle has gone to China for more tourists instead of addressing this important issue. I am assuming she feels our children can only benefit from low paying, servile jobs generated by the tourist industry since they won't have a decent education.

Respectfully,

Teri Heede



Kapolei, HI 96707

Dear Senators,

I am deeply concerned about how furloughs will be affecting our children's education over the next 2 years. I have a 5 year old son who just started kindergarten in August of this year who is just thirsty for knowledge, and at a time in his life where his brain is like a little sponge just waiting to be saturated with new information the State decides to implement furlough days because of budget cuts. Hawaii is rank one of the lowest in the Nation when it comes to test scores and now we are also one of the states with the shortest school year (163 school days). I feel that furloughs are just setting up our children to fail. It is hard enough to keep most of our children in school and now we are going to reduce their school week to 3.5 days? How is that helping our situation?

I feel the decision to implement furlough days was done prematurely without first presenting all the facts to the parents. Now, I understand that the country is in a recession. I know that the DOE was forced to do cut backs but what I don't understand is **WHERE IS THE JUSTIFICATION TO CUT OUR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION?** Show me the account books and records of all the other programs DOE had to cut before they decided that there was nothing else to do but cut our children's education time in the classrooms. The DOE has MANY departments that they oversee, and I feel that they should have cut all the departments possible to save the children's instructional time in the classroom. **As a direct quote from Senator Fred Hemmings "the DOE is our state's single largest budget item (over \$2 billion dollars) and has enough money to get the job done. The problem is not money but rather mismanagement. The people of Hawaii should not be extorted by the DOE/Union bosses"** Where has all the money gone? If DOE does have a budget of \$2 billion where did it go?

If furloughs are inevitable then why can't the furlough's be implemented on non instructional days? Like during the breaks (fall, winter, spring)? Why can't PC days and Waiver days be counted toward furloughs?

I am requesting that the Senate investigate other alternatives that can be taken to end furlough days and get our children back into the classroom where they belong.

Sincerely,

Kalei Chandler-Ah Sing
Mother of Elijah Stietzel (5 yrs old who attends Kainalu Elementary)

Jill Tamashiro [REDACTED]

To Whom It May Concern:

I am concerned about the closure of school on furlough Fridays and the impact it will have on Hawaii's children. Please convene a Special Session of the Legislature to discuss this issue and find alternatives.

Thank you-
Jill

Lois Yamauchi [REDACTED]

Dear Senators:

I am a parent of children in our Hawai'i public schools, a Hawai'i public school graduate, and an professor of education at the University of Hawai'i. I write to express dismay about the teacher furloughs that have been used to "solve" the budget crisis in our State.

I find it disheartening that anyone would think that reducing our children's education by 17 days was the best solution to our economic crisis. It is clear that our children deserve the best education possible and reducing our school year to one that is fewest in the nation is not the answer to our problems.

I know that solutions are difficult. I do not think it would be wise to reduce teacher pay or to lay off educators. Instead, I think we should increase income taxes so that everyone pays for public education. As a parent with children in public schools, I view these furlough Fridays as a tax on parents and children. Parents are the ones who are now faced with paying for high quality programs for our children on those 17 days. Sadly, children are the ones who bare the burden of our State's economic crisis. Their school week is reduced. Their programs are canceled. Important "extras" like second language instruction, art and music have been cut. Teachers are rushing to get through the curriculum, with little time to assess and re-teach as needed.

Hawai'i has a long legacy for supporting the broader collective. I have confidence that we can, as a State and community, work together to solve this problem and to put back the valuable learning time that our children are now missing.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. Please contact me at 375-3917, should you have any questions.

Aloha,

Lois A. Yamauchi
Manoa citizen

Ann Allred [REDACTED]

If we have to have furlough days, why not clump them at the end of the year??
What we have now is so humbug.

We are being very shortsighted in not doing better in educating our children.

I told my 5th grade daughter that Hawaii now had the fewest number of school days a year
and she said "That's embarrassing!"
it really is.

Can Bishop Estate help with educating the rest of Hawaii's children who go to public
schools?

Ann Allred

Laie, HI

Windows 7: It works the way you want. [Learn more.](#)



Aloha

"I am deeply concerned about the closure of school on Furlough Fridays, and the impact it will have on our children. Our states 48th in the standings as the lowest in the United States. That is embarrassing, then have the Governor take back her actions on the issue is a slap in the face to the people and Children of the State of Hawaii. There are other ways to generate income instead of depleting families incomes. Like increasing the tax on goods. Many other States have taxes on goods as high as 8%. Just a small increase across the board to 5% would be a better alternative. Please convene a Special Session of the Legislature to address this issue and find an alternative. There are better ways to solve the debt our State is in. Listen to the people you work for not the special interest groups or people who lobby for money that doesn't benefit the Whole. Do the right thing, PONO. Mahalo."

Mahalo

Create A Blessed Day!
Enthusiastically,
Anella Mark
OperationLifestyle.com

Gail Yamanaka [redacted]

Senator Espero,

Here is my option for furloughs to keep the children in school. We should give the teachers unpaid holidays instead of furloughs since holidays are when both teachers and students stay home. Holidays are probably part of the contract so it may be complicated to do this, but can't an "exception" or "amendment" be made to do this? There aren't 17 holidays to match the furlough days but at least it will surely cut down the amount of furlough days.
Can this option be considered?

Mahalo!

Gail Yamanaka

Jean Bevanmarquez [redacted]

We simply must figure a way out of closing schools! I read in the paper this week about stimulus funding for schools...why isn't Hawaii accessing this?

It is embarrassing when I speak to friends and family on the mainland about this - they say, you're kidding! I painfully reply, no, idiot governor and school superintendent that let this happen.

I would rather see anything else close. Schools are too important to the kids - not to mention the hassle it imposes on employed parents to find other arrangements for their kids when they are working!

Fix this idiocy, please.

Jean Bevanmarquez

[redacted]

Kealakekua HI 96750

Resident of Mōnaunāu (just above the elementary school)

Lawrence Boyd [REDACTED]

Aloha Senators,

Unfortunately I couldn't make the hearing today. I have attached my Power Point Presentation. The following points will help you understand it:

- 1) I and others have found that Hawaii tax revenues have a short term response as in a recession that is more than twice the fall in the economy. In other words a one percent decline in the economy creates a two percent or greater fall in tax revenues. I believe this short run response has eluded the Council on Revenues in their forecasts.
- 2) Governor Lingle focused on furloughs/wage cuts as a means of meeting the shortfall.
- 3) As a result her cuts disproportionately effected education. The General fund cuts to DOE were in the 9 to 10 percent range and for UH they were 12 percent. The average cut was 6 percent. This disproportionately high cuts to education has been the problem and the furloughs are a result.
- 4) The economic impact is serious. Because of the way these cuts were carried out (furloughs) it maximized the effects on the economy. As these furloughs are enacted there will be a further (and unnecessary) decline in the economy of 1 to 1.6 percent. (I would say most economists believe the state's economy up to this point has declined in the 1 to 3 percent range). This will lead to a further decline in tax revenues, caused by the cuts not the economy, of \$60 to \$80 million annually. In addition this will lead to an increase of almost 1 percent in our unemployment rate caused by layoffs in the private sector.

In any case the committee was on the right track in investigating this since even the use of the \$80 million in the Hurricane relief fund would have reduced these effects by 25 percent.

Cheers

Sen. Gary Hooser wrote:

> Aloha Dr. Boyd,

>

> Thank you for the email and offer to present a power point at the committee hearings on the school closing. As I am not a member of that committee, I have forwarded your request to the vice-chair Senator Will Espero whom I encourage you to contact directly. gh

>

> Gary L. Hooser

> Senate Majority Leader

> Hawai'i State Senate

> Seventh Senatorial District - Islands of Kaua'i & Ni'ihau

> Office: (808) 586-6030 Toll Free: 274-3141, ext. 66030

> Fax: (808) 586-6031 Email: senhooser@capitol.hawaii.gov

>

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> -----Original Message-----

> From: Lawrence Boyd [mailto:lboyd@hawaii.edu]

> Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 11:51 AM

> To: Sen. Gary Hooser

> Subject:

>

> Dear Senator Hoosier,

> I would like to address the committee hearings on the school closing.

> I have a brief power point presentation that analyzes the effect of

> the governors cuts on the economy. They reduce economic growth by one

> percent, increases unemployment by half a percent and reduces tax

> revenues by \$60,000,000.

> Cheers

>

> -----

> Lawrence W. Boyd Ph.D.

> Associate Specialist, Economist

> Center for Labor Education

> and Research, University of Hawaii-West O'ahu

> 96-043 Ala Ike

> Pearl City, HI 96782-3366

> Phone: 808-454-4780\

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Phone: 808-454-4780\

To whom this may concern,

I am writing in regards to the school furlough days. I am completely against these furloughs. I think that anyone who was in their right mind would be against these as well. Bottom line is that education should never be compromised! These children are entitled to a fair and good education. Every taxpayer pays for that right! I am absolutely floored that anyone would believe that school furlough days are the answer to a state deficit...again, education CANNOT and SHOULD NOT be compromised. What kind of example does that set for our future leaders? That education doesn't matter, that building and repairing airports is more important, that even though they are children they have to sacrifice because of our economic mistakes? That is ludicrous.

Our children will be competing with kids all across the nation for college and our state government is putting them at a disadvantage. Most local schools are barely passing AYP and No Child Left Behind tests and still the state wants to take away more classroom time. I haven't even discussed all the young children that will be at home ALONE because there is nowhere else for them to go on these days. More teenagers will be getting into trouble because they are unsupervised and all the children that are on Free/Reduced lunch programs will have to go an extra 17 days without food. Yes, sometimes the only meal that these children get is the one at school !! And for children with disabilities these furlough days are not just days missed in class, they are vital days for development and skill.

We know that the money was and is continuing to be mishandled by the DOE. Approximately \$11,000 is allocated per student in Hawai'i yet only about \$4000 actually makes it to the classrooms. Too much money is going to administration and not enough is going to where it was intended...the students. This is absolutely criminal to say the least.

I will not stand by and allow this to happen anymore. Education should always come first. Everyone knows this and if they don't then they need to set their priorities straight. It is time that the government do what is right. Do not threaten to lay off teachers in order to reinstate the missed school days...that is not the answer! Do what is right and just ...give children and teachers back the education they deserve!
Sincerely, Nannette Lara

nannette lara [nannette_lara@yahoo.com]

Roxanne Darling [redacted@barefeetstudios.com]

Dear Senator,

I am very disappointed that our keiki are paying the price for grown-ups not being able to think outside the box. Please convene a special session of the legislature to address this problem of Furlough Fridays! We have so many creative thinkers here in Hawai'i that I know for certainty we can devise a better solution together.

I realize it takes courage to undo a decision, however there are great rewards for those who can lead us out of old solutions to old problems. You have my support for calling a special session to give this challenge another look.

Aloha and mahalo,

Roxanne

--

Roxanne Darling
[redacted]

Read Our Blog: <http://www.barefeetstudios.com>

Watch Our Show: <http://www.beachwalks.tv>

Find Me on Twitter: <http://www.twitter.com/roxannedarling>

Link on LinkedIn: <http://www.linkedin.com/in/roxannedarling>

Join the Social Media Club: <http://www.smchawaii.org>

My Personal Blog: <http://www.inthetransition>

Jennifer Chandler [redacted]

Dear Senator Espero,

I write to ask for your help in seeking an alternate solution to our state's economic crisis.

I cannot believe that the first place that we are going for budget cuts is to deplete our future before it has even happened. Because that's what they are - our children are our future. I cannot state it any more plainly than that.

We are a state that is already 47th in the nation with regard to test scores. How can we deprive our children of the education that they deserve? As a parent of a child at Noelani Elementary, I do everything I can to get him the best educational experience possible - I work with him on his assignments, I volunteer with the PTA, I even serve as room mom and make waffle dogs at the school

fundraiser. But I cannot do everything. I have a demanding career but I manage to invest every spare minute of every day into helping my child succeed. Why is my 8 year old bearing the brunt of this economic crisis? Why does a child need to pay for our mistakes as a society?

But my child cannot go to college without a proper elementary school education. He is in third grade - this will be his first year taking standardized tests. How can you expect his teacher to squeeze the preparation for this immense test taking experience into a shorter school year? We already expect too much of our school teachers. They are underpaid and overworked. And this situation is placing even more of a burden of them, yet school teachers are the backbone of our society. They are the ones who continue to imbue our children with virtues like diligence, curiosity, citizenship. Why did they need to be the ones to bear the brunt of our economic crisis? Why do our school teachers pay for our mistakes as a society?

There must be another way and I urge you and our other leaders to be creative and resourceful in coming up with an alternate solution. I am always open for discussion and can offer ideas if you like. Thank you for taking the lead on this.

Warmest regards,
Dr. Jennifer Chandler

~~(800) 270-7712~~

Karen Harp [REDACTED]

I am deeply concerned about the closure of school on Furlough Fridays, and the impact it will have on our children. Please convene a Special Session of the Legislature to address this issue and find an alternative. Mahalo."

Karen Harp
Director, Career Services
Chaminade University
[REDACTED]

From: Nia_Lovell/HOLUALOA/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us
[mailto:Nia_Lovell/HOLUALOA/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us]
Sent: Monday, November 02, 2009 8:09 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Furloughs

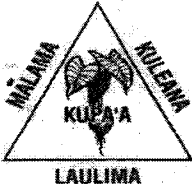
I am deeply concerned about the closure of school on Furlough Fridays, and the impact it will have on our children. Please convene a Special Session of the Legislature to address this issue and find an alternative. Mahalo

Your Honorable Senator Espero,

I strongly support efforts to end school furlough Fridays.
The DOE needs to be held accountable for cutting costs where possible, but we need to get kids back in school right away.

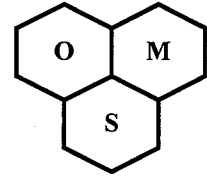
Aaron Isgar

Aaron Isgar [REDACTED]



COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOLS-HAWAI'I

"Where 'Ohana Is More Than A Word"



94-366 Pupupani Street, Suite 303 Waipahu, Hawai'i 96797 Phone: (808)671-4900 Fax: (808)671-4800 E-Mail: cishawaii@aol.com

October 30,2009

To: Special Senate Committee
From: Fay Uyeda, Executive Director
Communities in Schools-Hi
Re: Approaches to Teacher Furloughs

I am a retired Department of Education (D.O.E.)employee with over 30 years of service, recipient of the Outstanding D.O.E. Employee, established first Substance Abuse Center on a School Campus . But all of that is only relevant to those who need "credentials" to prove expertise. The important thing for you to understand is that I like many others know there are solutions but a change of HEART needs to occur. We have been FURLOUGHED WITHOUT PAY ,TURNED OFF LIGHTS, AIR CONDITIONING, STAGGERED PAYMENTS, AND FOUND WAYS TO CONTINUE TO SERVE.

WHY DO WE DO IT? HOW CAN WE NOT?

I once asked the principal of a school I was at, "what do the principals discuss? I see our failure and attendance rate increasing above the 30% line. I consider that appalling at a school like ours. I have studied the where failures are occurring and it is across the board. Is this happening at other schools? If it is ,it is systemic and not a limited target population addressed by a singular division within the Department.(CSAP) Aren't the principals concerned."

His reply was , "Yes, there is a concern but on the mainland in some cities the rate of drop-outs and failures is 50%." This was in 1989. That is why I took up an offer to start a program that would address the problem. Never was money the issue but the changes in the system that has become less and less about the children and their families.

I went on a Leave Without Pay from the D.O.E. in 1990 to establish ,(then called Cities in Schools).

I willingly left the D.O.E, because I hoped that I could innovate change from the outside of a System that had begun to implode, mainly because it had (like most governmental departments) become political and self-serving. Most "old timers" entered "public service", ie. teaching, social work, etc. to serve.

Although, like many institutions we had a culture that was often disconnected , most employees at the school level, which included everyone had a sense of loyalty to the students and school that was there to nurture them. In the late 60s from a failure rate and at-risk population of about 5-15% we saw the gradual rise to 20% to 35%,with some schools(reporting honestly) may have gone to 40%. A study of actual failure and drop-out rates needs to be done by an unbiased outside source.

The appalling fact is that elementary schools are failing with increasing numbers of them experiencing "detention and suspension." Why is this happening? What messages do parents and school personnel convey to students about learning, overcoming problems, etc.

The messages we are sending our children are::

- 1) All problems are rooted in Money.
- 2) All solutions are dependent on Money.
- 3) Think "Me" not "We".
- 4) Your "boss" is the union and don't speak out for what you believe if it is against the majority or you Will be considered a "scab" and worse.
- 5) Who cares if your family does not have electricity because dad lost his job and mom's hours have been cut.
- 6) Don't be a teacher because the pay is low.(publish the pay and days off every month)
- 7) If you are poor and undereducated, the government will find money so you can go to programs to help you and your school meet the standards.
- 8) If you need help, wait till you get into a special contracted program to help the "at-risk" kids.
- 9) We the "enlightened public" of a democracy cannot solve our problems. Wait for the government To bail us out.
- 10) Don't ask questions. Wait for the answers.

What should the messages be?

- 1) We have the answers and we are the answers.
- 2) We need to make stone soup with and for the education of our children.
- 3) All who depends on schools need to be responsible for them.
- 4) We are in a crisis and DON'T WAIT FOR THE POLITICIANS, OFFICIALS OF THE DEPARTMENTS. THEY ARE BROKEN.

SOLUTION: COMMUNITIES(ANYONE WHO CONSIDERS THEM A STAKEHOLDER IN THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN) NEED TO:

MISSION: PROVIDE LEARNING FOR STUDENTS

- 1) REQUEST A MEETING W/ THE PRINCIPAL OF SCHOOL.
**Elect Facilitators made up of different stakeholders-parent, school, community,business"
- 2) PEOPLE WHO ATTEND SHARE WHAT THEY BRING TO CONTINUE NURTURING THE CHILDREN IN ALL WAYS-INTELLECTUALLY, SOCIALLY, PHYSICALLY,EMOTIONALLY,ETC.
Ie. PARENTS MAY OFFER 20 HOURS A WEEK TO HELP SUPERVISE AND ASSIST THOSE PROVIDING LEARNING ACTIVITIES WHILE FURLOUGH OR ANY OTHER TIMES WHEN SCHOOLS ARE SHUT DOWN.

***Need to realize that we are able to provide what is needed but the fracturing of our society is not an Economic but a Social ,ethical one. What if teachers,and there are some, who want to provide learning Activities at no cost on furlough days? Could they?

If the only criteria was to continue providing education and all related services to students, why couldn't teachers give their time along with other community members. At our best, we give up sick leave to our colleagues with devastating illnesses. WHAT LESSONS FOR OUR STUDENTS TO LEARN BY SEEING EXAMPLES BY OUR PARENTS,TEACHERS, DOE LEADERS!!!

What if every Board member volunteered at his/her areas school to keep school open on one of furlough days.

I will end here because we are all busy. But we in the private sector stand ready to be part of the solution. But besides more meetings, we need to act. We know the solutions have done the solutions because we Are rooted in the values of this place-Hawai'ii!

I invite you to call upon us. It is an opportunity to go beyond listening. Unfortunately, our most at-risk areas will only suffer more but because we are all connected , generations will continue to pay. I ask that you ask yourselves how your children will deal with in your face crisis.

With all of our knowledge, why do we continue to fracture our society with insular thinking? It is lunacy that we are thinking of “raiding the hurricane fund” when we all know we are due for a devastating occurrence and have been blessed with time.

Has money blinded our leadership to only define problems and solutions by a budget? What price for generations who only learn that money is the answer to everything and not consider themselves to be the solutions with others who care enough?

We need Public Servants to Serve. Time to Kukulū Kumuhana—Pool all the resources toward one goal-not different agendas.

Our generation was taught that “when you give, no talk about what you give or did-just do um! “ That is aloha.

Please call 292-7687 anytime—literally. We are part of the solutions.

**“You supposed to know you have the strength to do what is right”
Kupuna Malia Craver**

Aloha pumehana,

“Aunty” Fay Uyeda
Executive Director, Communities in Schools

October 30, 2009

To: Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair
Senator Will Espero, Vice Chair
Special Committee of the State Senate to Address Teacher Furloughs

From: Rose Schilt, Public Health Advocate

Re: In Support of Government Action to Stop Furloughs

Hawaii loves its children, and is deeply pained by the dreadful impacts of the expedient plan to furlough children, youth and teachers to help balance the state budget. In your leadership roles, we implore you to listen to children and parents, to call your colleagues back into session to be key players for better solutions, and to bring all stakeholders together in a collaborative manner for education, not vacation. The furloughing of children and teachers has sent ripples of dissent and confusion through all levels of our island society.

Furloughs endanger the education of all public school children, among whom the poor and most vulnerable are already over-represented. Future public costs will increase as a result of the furloughs; these costs will cut across several areas including judicial, welfare, labor, corrections, and health systems. These costs would represent an undermining of our island social fabric.

As you work to decide upon this opportunity, here are some suggestions we have heard being discussed in the community:

- * *Call the legislature back into session.* This is perceived as a crisis in the community, and elected leadership is needed now to bring all stakeholders back to the table and create a win/win solutions for Hawaii's public school children and youth, and teachers.
- * *Questionable use of Hurricane Fund.* Using the Hurricane Fund will lower bond ratings for Hawaii, and expertise needs to be consulted before this impact is realized.
- * *Modest tax on soda.* A public health, prevention and future cost-saving measure.
- * *Modest increase in the Hawaii state excise tax.* Furloughs and lay-offs are functioning like tax cuts, and further undermine the spending in our economy at many levels. Presented properly, the public would abide a tax increase. We have lower taxes than many states with better educational outcomes.
- * *Revisit using stimulus money for education.* The public does not understand why education was not a priority in this regard.
- * *Educational start-up project for young college graduates.* Develop a project to bring new blood into classrooms, save some teacher time, and possibly increase innovation.

I have worked as a classroom teacher in high school, am a former foster parent, and also am the successful product of public education. Public education is crucial to our democracy, and many in our community feel passionate about children and about the role of education and democracy.

Our children are sailing into the future, with or without furlough days. Children are patient, but each and every day they have to continue growing up. Although the situation is becoming more complicated by the day, momentum and support are increasing for your leadership and action. Please consider seizing the opportunity now to create the best opportunities possible within the constraints of these tough times. We can and must do better for the minds and hearts of our children, and the future of our islands!

Wade Shimoda

While making decisions about where the State of Hawaii can cut its spending, people need to realize that a furlough day at a school IS NOT THE SAME as a furlough day for other State functions.

The effect upon the children that the schools serve IS NOT EQUAL to the effect upon the people that other State offices serve.

Take, for example, an office like the Dept. of Health office that provides birth certificates. When it is closed for a day, no one loses anything. A person wanting to get a copy of his/her birth certificate will just schedule his visit on a day that the office is open. For that office, the furlough day ^W_A^H be just like a holiday or weekend day.

On the other hand, each furlough day taken away from the students will NEVER be replaced. The children can't reschedule that day to another day. It is gone FOREVER.

The furloughs are essentially a theft of intellectual property. The children are the victims and the State is the criminal.

October 30, 2009

Aloha Senator Hanabusa and committee,

May I introduce myself as a parent of a 1st grader at Ka`elepulu Elementary School who is deeply concerned about the decisions and actions of the Governor, DOE, and HSTA in choosing to take 17 days of class time away from our children. It was certainly a hasty and short sighted way to solve a fiscal problem that will have a detrimental effect on the future of Hawaii in so many ways. Our children should have no less opportunity than those that have the means to go to private schools.

As you may already know Hawaii's school's reading and math scores are one of the lowest in our nation. Taking time away from the classroom will not help matters. We will be tasking our underpaid teachers to work harder in less time and for less money to achieve more than they already are.

Since this decision was made without the better interest of the children I believe it is yours and other lawmakers' responsibility to stand up and amend this problem. Please consider calling a special session of the legislature so that a solution can be made without losing more class time. There has been discussion of using funds from the Hurricane Relief fund, the rainy day fund and the federal stimulus money earmarked for education to solve the immediate problem for this school year. You are also tasked with proposing that Hawaii mandate BY LAW that there be a minimum days/hours of school required. This should be done so that a situation such as this may not ever happen again.

Consider this a great opportunity to help serve those that cannot fight for themselves...our children.

Many thanks for your time and consideration.

Mahalo,

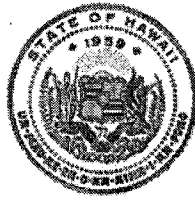
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kim Williams". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Kim Williams

Graduate Kailua High School

Graduate of University of Hawaii at Manoa, BA Biology

Linda Lingle
Governor



Vanelle Maunalei Love
Executive Director

Charter School Administrative Office

1111 Bishop Street, Suite 516
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Tel: 586-3775 Fax: 586-3776

FOR: Input on Teacher Furloughs and the Loss of instructional Days
DATE: Friday, October 30, 2009
TIME: 12:30 p.m.
COMMITTEE(S): Special Senate Committee to Consider Approaches to Teacher Furloughs
ROOM: State Capitol Auditorium
FROM: Roger McKeague, Deputy

Informational Testimony

Chair Taniguchi, Vice Chair Espero, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today to provide information on the teacher furloughs and the loss of instructional days. The Charter School Administrative Office and the Charter Schools are keenly aware of the current fiscal crisis facing our state. Indeed, due to funding challenges, the charter schools have been forced to cut their budgets and to strictly manage their spending prior to the current crisis.

While, much of the following data is subject to Local School Board approvals and is subject to change, we would like to provide the committee with this update. To date, we can provide the following tentative plans of the Charter Schools:

- Of 31 Charter Schools, more than half plan not to impose furloughs.
- At least four will follow the DOE furlough schedule.
- At least 7 plan to impose some number of furloughs less than the DOE.
- Several are still negotiating their supplemental agreements, with the unions, analyzing whether DOE will be paying for Special Education Services, working on their budgets and watching the legal proceedings to see if furloughs will become necessary.
- Many of the charter schools have reduced staff in the past and current school years to accommodate the reductions in funding in each of the last few years and the current year's restrictions.

With respect to Special Education, I am sure that many here today will discuss the issues related to whether furloughs will violate the law in preventing services to special needs students required by their Individual Education Plans. We share that concern.

The charter schools are faced with an additional complication in this, however. The charters receive funding to cover regular education costs in the per pupil amounts. However, by law, all special education costs are specifically funded to the Department of Education and DOE must pay for the costs of the Special Education teachers, educational assistants, and Article VI

employees at the charter schools, despite being employees of the charter schools themselves. We are now faced with a situation where many charter schools chose to stay open for all their students. Now the DOE is saying that they will not pay for the SPED staff of non-furloughed schools. The charter schools have already been cut and restricted just like everyone else. This would be an additional cut for the SPED students and will impact the regular ed budgets. Essentially, this approach would require charters to pay for SPED out of Regular ed funding. Schools have been told to go ahead and open but to just not provide SPED services on furlough days. This is a grave concern for us.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.

To: Senator Colleen Hanabusa, Senate President
Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair
Senator Will Espero, Vice Chair
Senator Norman Sakamoto, Chair, Education Committee

From: Calvin Endo

Date: October 30, 2009

Subject: Support of Special Senate Committee to Consider Approaches to Teacher
Furloughs

As a member of the Hawaii State PTSA I oppose a newly two-year ratified teacher contract that requires educators to take 17 or 21 unpaid furlough days off, and result in decreased instruction time.

I and members of our Waianae High School PTSA are concerned that furlough Fridays will result in the children of Hawaii losing significant educational hours targeted towards student achievement. Our student member said that many students on our campus would like to see the Furlough Fridays stopped so they can get the proper education they know they need.

While I understand Hawaii's current governmental shortfalls, today over 60% of Hawaii's public schools have not met average yearly progress under Federal Legislation, "No child Left Behind or NCLB". I feel reducing instructional time will only add to the challenge of meeting AYP, and for many of my friends of Special Needs children, IDEA requirements and that may result in severe unintended consequences.

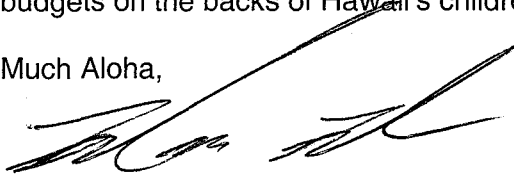
I strongly encourage our legislators to find ways to replace furlough Fridays with other non-instructional days and seriously consider using other fund like the state's hurricane fund/rainy day fund to support the return of education instructional days to the children of Hawaii Public Schools. A committee should go over the DOE budget to see what line items could be shift over to the schools instead of being kept to pay overhead costs. Being on the first Student Weighted Committee I know there were a lot of line items that should have gone to the schools that was kept under DOE overhead control. A special computer program should be used to track every dollar budgeted and spent by this State like the Navy has for the shipyards.

We also need to give the Governor back the authority over the DOE, the largest State department. There needs to be legislation to make this into law.

Please develop laws that ' earmark' public funds for education in our state similar to funds that are ' earmarked' for our highways without an increase in state taxes especially in a current turbulent environment where Hawaii citizens have lost jobs or experienced decreased work hours.

We beg you to listen to our cry for help and find other ways to manage spending to avoid balancing budgets on the backs of Hawaii's children. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Much Aloha,



Calvin Endo
PTSA President Waianae High School



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
DIGITAL PHOTO AVAILABLE

Contact: Kapono Ryan krayan@chaminade.edu
(808) 735-4797 or cell (808)429-2972

**CHAMINADE UNIVERSITY HOLDS FREE FURLOUGH
FRIDAYS' WORKSHOPS FOR STUDENTS
-- HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS CAN EXPERIENCE COLLEGE EARLY,
STARTING NOVEMBER 6--**

HONOLULU – October 29, 2009 –In response to Hawaii's public school furloughs, Chaminade University announced that it will hold **three free half-day events for high school students** on **Fridays, Nov. 6, Dec. 4, and Dec. 11**, on its campus, located at 3140 Wai'alaie Avenue, Honolulu, Hawaii 96816. Each of the scheduled Fridays will include a biology workshop from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m., lunch from 12 to 1 p.m., and an optional campus tour following lunch.

Presented by Chaminade University's biology department and sponsored by Chaminade University's office of admissions, the program is aimed at high school students interested in a science, pre-health or nursing major in college. It is geared for students interested in college, giving them the opportunity to have an academically-focused morning, sample an introductory-level college course and get an overview of basic techniques for DNA and bacterial cultures.

Workshops will be held in Chaminade University's newly renovated science labs. Students may attend one, two or all three events. Juniors and seniors are especially welcome. Everything is free. Because space is limited, those interested should contact Chaminade Admissions as soon as possible at admissions@chaminade.edu or at **(808) 739-8340**. Go to www.chaminade.edu for more information.

Workshop topics scheduled are:

- **Friday, Nov. 6 – WEAR / WHERE ARE YOUR GENES:** Students will learn about the history, role and importance of DNA. They will also extract their own DNA and take it home as a souvenir.
- **Friday, Dec. 4—GERMS ON ME, PART 1:** Students will learn introductory concepts in disease prevention and bacteriology. They will also conduct experiments by culturing their own bacteria.
- **Friday, Dec. 11—GERMS ON ME, PART 2:** This workshop will reinforce the concepts in disease prevention and bacteriology. The experiments will build upon the bacterial experiments performed the week prior. Students will examine bacteria grown in culture dishes and learn techniques to identify the type and possibly strains of bacteria. (Please note: this workshop is NOT limited to those students who participated in Germs on Me, Part 1.)

Celebrating more than 50 years of educating students for life, service, and successful careers, Chaminade University offers a liberal arts curriculum with day, evening, online and accelerated courses. The main campus is located in Kaimuki at 3140 Wai'alaie Ave., Honolulu, HI 96816, with 10 satellite locations around Oahu military bases and Catholic parishes and schools. For more information, visit the Chaminade University website at www.chaminade.edu or call (808) 735-4711.

###

To Whom It May Concern,

My ideas for buffering the Furlough Friday situation are as follows:

Create an across the board (for all public schools) school day shift allowing a four day school week beginning Monday and ending Thursday. Lengthen the day from 8am-3pm. This will reduce lost instruction time and create stability for students, teachers, and parents. The teachers can use Fridays for their meetings and conferences by adding it to the routine, it allows for greater flexibility.

A second option extends from the idea of using the College of Education students at UH Manoa. To graduate with a teaching degree, each student must perform a certain number of hours of internship. Why not utilize this resource as school student - teacher ratios are no longer matching to the benefit of all. The hours could be put towards their degrees and help them to graduate. UH is cutting back on courses, etc. So these students need alternatives. Here is one they have yet to realize.

Thank you for listening to my ideas and I hope to see them realized.

A. Kawailani Ono
L. Kawailani Ono

Sen. Will Espero

From: Lee McIntosh [mailto:lee@cartoonists.com]
Sent: Friday, October 30, 2009 11:15 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Teacher Furloughs

Dear Sirs,

My suggestion is to ask the DOE to go over their expenditures line by line and cut waste, and to start following state procurement law. If the DOE can't track this information, then they need to upgrade their accounting software and practices immediately. If the DOE insists on furloughs, then why not simply cut the school year short so that students can have their summer vacation back to spend with family and friends? That, in my opinion, would be the best solution the DOE has available with the information they have released publicly. But how can the Legislature adequately address this issue unless it is to give them more funding? I ask that you please refrain from raiding special funds or raising taxes to give the DOE more funding because they have failed miserably in successfully educating Hawaii's students with the vast amount of funding that they have already received in the past.

Thank you for considering my statement...

Lee McIntosh

Apple PC Card File <http://www.pearl.com>
by Cartoons - <http://www.cartoons.com> - <http://www.governorlee.com> (help feed the dog)-
<http://www.masterofthenet.com> - <http://www.hawaii.com>
<http://www.nuts.mug> - <http://www.haimagnuts.org> - <http://www.november13.com> - <http://www.facebook.com/november13>
<http://www.cartoonists.com>

Sen. Will Espero

From: Jill Tamashiro [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, October 30, 2009 12:03 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: In support of a Special Session for furlough fridays

To Whom It May Concern:

I am concerned about the closure of school on furlough fridays and the impact it will have on Hawaii's children. Please convene a Special Session of the Legislature to discuss this issue and find alternatives.

Thank you-
Jill

Sen. Will Espero

From: Kalei Ah Sing [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, October 30, 2009 11:53 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Cc: Christy
Subject: Written testimony: Special Senate Committee to consider approaches to teacher furloughs
Categories: Print Big Island

Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair

Senator Will Espero, Vice Chair

NOTICE OF MEETING

DATE: Friday, October 30, 2009
TIME: 12:30 p.m.
PLACE: Auditorium

State Capitol

415 South Beretania Street

Dear Senators,

I am deeply concerned about how furloughs will be affecting our children's education over the next 2 years. I have a 5 year old son who just started kindergarten in August of this year who is just thirsty for knowledge, and at a time in his life where his brain is like a little sponge just waiting to be saturated with new information the State decides to implement furlough days because of budget cuts. Hawaii is rank one of the lowest in the Nation when it comes to test scores and now we are also one of the states with the shortest school year (163 school days). I feel that furloughs are just setting up our children to fail. It is hard enough to keep most of our children in school and now we are going to reduce their school week to 3.5 days? How is that helping our situation?

I feel the decision to implement furlough days was done prematurely without first presenting all the facts to the parents. Now, I understand that the country is in a recession. I know that the DOE was forced to do cut backs but what I don't understand is **WHERE IS THE JUSTIFICATION TO CUT OUR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION?** Show me the account books and records of all the other programs DOE had to cut before they decided that there was nothing else to do but cut our children's education time in the classrooms. The DOE has MANY departments that they oversee, and I feel that they should have cut all the departments possible to save the children's instructional time in the classroom. **As a direct quote from Senator Fred Hemmings "the DOE is our state's single largest budget item (over \$2 billion dollars) and has enough money to get the job done. The**

problem is not money but rather mismanagement. The people of Hawaii should not be extorted by the DOE/Union bosses" Where has all the money gone? If DOE does have a budget of \$2 billion where did it go?

If furloughs are inevitable then why can't the furlough's be implemented on non instructional days? Like during the breaks (fall, winter, spring)? Why can't PC days and Waiver days be counted toward furloughs?

I am requesting that the Senate investigate other alternatives that can be taken to end furlough days and get our children back into the classroom where they belong.

Sincerely,

Kalei Chandler-Ah Sing
Mother of Elijah Stietzel (5 yrs old who attends Kainalu Elementary)

Date: October 30, 2009

To: Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair
Senator Will Espero, Vice Chair

From: Gary McCurdy
Math Instructor / Kahuku High School

Re: Special Senate Committee to Consider Approaches to Teacher Furloughs

I have been teaching Intermediate and High School mathematics for 23 years now. Prior to a mid-life career change to teaching, I had worked 20 years for Pan American Airways. In those earlier years, I thought that my friends who were teachers had it made in the shade. They got off work early in the afternoon, had long holiday breaks and summers off. Little did I know then that just to remain in one room with 30 or more 7th or 8th graders, let alone to actually teach them something, was an act deserving of "combat pay".

I have since discovered that teaching is an incredibly rewarding profession, just not in monetary terms. Only two years ago did my salary as an educator finally catch up to that of the top paid dishwashers 23 years ago in the kitchen at Pan Am. The "incredible reward" of teaching is in being there when students learn something new, seeing the light go on, and knowing that you helped make that learning possible. This learning is essential to the future that we surely all want for our children and for our society. Not once have I voted to ratify a new teacher contract over the past 23 years. I found that teaching was the hardest, most demanding, time consuming work I had ever done and quickly decided that teachers deserved much more respect than that shown by the meager salaries offered. The job is not over at 3:00 pm. The job is not over at midnight. It is 24/7. Dedicated teachers are often said to have no life of their own, which of course is not true. Teaching is their life, and they deserve our respect for it.

Respect has certainly reached a new low with the latest teacher contract in effect. However there is one big difference. Now we are disrespecting the students. It is ludicrous to take any instructional days away from the school year if we harbor any hope of improving the education of our children. The fact that the teachers voted to ratify is difficult to understand. Maybe the 80% felt that layoffs would have a greater negative impact on education by increasing class size. Two of my classes that started the year with 45 and 39 students have been split this week. The learning environment is now greatly improved needless to say. The satisfaction of seeing students learn, being there when the light goes on, is now occurring more often. This is thanks to a principal who values and respects students first and knows that class size counts. Moreover, class size is especially important in effectively teaching mathematics.

Mahalo for you efforts to fix the current unacceptable situation in which we find ourselves. Our children are counting on you.

From: Marisa and Armando [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 6:26 PM
To: Sen. Brian Taniguchi
Subject: Please help restore a normal school week for my public school kids

Hello Mr. Taniguchi,

My children attend public school here in Honolulu (Kahala Elementary and Kaimuki Middle Schools). I am very concerned that they are not getting the education they are entitled. In the United States, our children are supposed to have opportunities for a quality education. I fear they are being short-changed by the recent Friday furlough days.

We are a military family and fear that once we leave the island in two years, that my children will be far behind their mainland classmates. I have several friends that lived here for three years and they encountered precisely that problem. It took their children an entire school year on the mainland to catch up. Do we really want Hawaii to have that reputation?

Please help us restore a normal five day week for our public school children!! They deserve it and need it.

Thank you for your attention,

Cristian Rodriguez (11 years old, 6th grade)
Maya Rodriguez (8 years old, 3rd grade)
Major Armando Rodriguez, USAF
Marisa Rodriguez, student at University of Hawaii Manoa

[REDACTED]
Honolulu, HI 96816
[REDACTED]

From: Jonathan Whitney [mailto:jonathan@hawaii.edu]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 8:44 PM
To: Sen. Brian Taniguchi
Subject: Concerned about effect of Furloughs on Kids

Dear Senator Taniguchi,

I am a constituent in your district. I am deeply concerned about the closure of school for 17 days, and the impact it will have on our children. Please convene a Special Session of the Legislature to address this issue and find an alternative solution.

Mahalo,

Jonathan Whitney

Honolulu, HI 96822

Phone: (808) 955-1234



COMMUNITY CHILDREN'S COUNCIL OF HAWAII
1177 Alakea Street · B-100 · Honolulu · HI · 96813
TEL: (808) 586-5363 · TOLL FREE: 1-800-437-8641 · FAX: (808) 586-5366

October 29, 2009

The Honorable Brian Taniguchi, Chair
Special Senate Committee on Teacher Furloughs
The Honorable Will Espero, Vice Chair
Special Senate Committee on Teacher Furloughs

Senator Taniguchi, Senator Espero, and members of the Committee

The Legislative Committee of the seventeen Community Children's Councils of Hawaii appreciates this opportunity to provide input into the questions regarding possible options for teacher furloughs.

We are aware of the anxiety facing many families whose children require special education and related services. We know the Department of Education is addressing mechanisms to effectively provide the services in their child's Individual Educational Program (IEP). The uncertainty of exactly how this will be provided for their child has created some anxiety and need for reassurances. The pending decision of Judge Ezra adds additional uncertainty for their child's education and plans for child care; yet most recognize that furloughs or layoffs will be necessary unless additional funds can be provided.

The CCCs and others with whom we work have long advocated the use of other sources of funds such as the "rainy day" and "hurricane" funds. We also supported an increase in the General excise Tax dedicated for education with the understanding that the base allocation for the Department of Education would not be lowered during positive tax years and has happened in other states. We also note that if funds are provided for teacher salaries on furlough days; school expenses need to be added into the funds.

We recognize that the State is facing extremely tight fiscal constraints at this time. However, cutting additional educational staff rather the furloughs will have a negative impact on student learning. Education for all our students should be a high priority. We wish you well in your present endeavors.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide input into this special process.

Sincerely

Tom Smith, Co-Chair
CCC Legislative Committee

Jessica Wong-Sumida, Co-Chair
CCC Legislative Committee

To: Special Senate Committee to Consider Approaches to Teacher Furloughs
From: Malcolm Kirkpatrick
In re: DOE budget
2009-10-30

How the Legislature and the DOE can address the projected revenue shortfall depends on what caused the shortfall. If the shortfall is a natural (though extreme) instance of the business cycle, then it might make sense to use special funds, like the hurricane relief fund. If government policy caused the downturn in business activity then it is reasonable to suppose that legislators and government administrators must address problems in government policy. Regardless, the Legislature has an obligation to use tax revenues effectively and to avoid waste.

Here are two links to US government sources of school system finance data. Search "Public Elementary-Secondary Finance Data".

[This source](http://www2.census.gov/govs/school/07f33pub.pdf) gives a Hawaii DOE total revenue figure for fiscal year 2007 (latest available) of \$2,985,593,000.00 and a 2007 enrollment of 180,728 (Table 1). The table calls this figure "total revenues", which would include construction (capital improvements) and gives a per-pupil budget of \$16,519,814.00. By some magic of accounting, the table gives a per-pupil budget of \$11,060.00. This table also contains a figure for total current expenditures of \$2,199,604.00. <http://www2.census.gov/govs/school/07f33pub.pdf>

[This source](http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2009/2009337.pdf) gives a "total revenues (2007)" figure of \$2,950,803.00. Search "Revenues and Expenditures for Public Elementary and Secondary Education: School Year 2006-07 (Fiscal Year 2007)". <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2009/2009337.pdf>

One response which the legislature might consider is load shedding. Just as a hospital in a budget pinch could save money through greater use of outpatient care, the DOE could reduce costs to taxpayers by reducing the age at which students may take the GED. In Switzerland, students may leave school for apprenticeship programs after sixth grade. In Germany, students who intend a non-academic career may leave school before the end of Hochschule, for apprenticeship programs. It does not take 12 years at \$15,000/pupil-year to teach a normal child to read and compute. Most vocational training occurs more effectively on the job than in a classroom.

The DOE could reduce its demands on taxpayers by adopting policies more friendly to homeschoolers.

Richard Arkwright was homeschooled. James Hargreaves was homeschooled. Thomas High was homeschooled. Thomas Edison was homeschooled. Bertrand Russell was homeschooled. Yehudi Menuhin was homeschooled. Benjamin Franklin attended school for two years and apprenticed at age 12. Abraham Lincoln attended school sporadically for two years. David Farragut joined the US Navy at 9, went to sea at 11, and commanded his first ship at 15. Robert Fitzroy, the Beagle captain who took Charles Darwin around the world and founded the British Weather Service attended the Admiralty school from age 12 to 14 and went to sea.

I tutored Eugene So from 3rd through 6th grade. His parents homeschooled him after 7th grade, which meant that they went to work and Eugene went up to the University and sat in on Math classes. He took the GRE before he turned 17 and entered the UH Math program as a graduate student. He earned his MS (Math) before he turned 19. He shipped high school and college, and saved Hawaii taxpayers tens of thousands of dollars.

Short of radical modifications to compulsory attendance policies, I suggest that the Legislature eliminate programs (and staff) outside of school complexes, such as the Ellison Onizuka Space Center and the Teacher Standards Board. The Space Center is dead weight, and the Teacher Standards Board inflicts expensive and counter-productive credential requirements across the DOE.

Cutting non-school programs, however, is like looking for quarters under the sofa cushions. You will likely not find enough to cover the shortfall. It will also be politically difficult, as the people who occupy these high-paid, do-nothing jobs got these jobs in the first place through political clout.

"What works?" is an empirical question which only an experiment can answer. Numerous small school districts or a competitive market in education services will provide more information than will a State-monopoly school district. A State-monopoly provider is like an experiment with one treatment and no controls, a retarded experimental design. The Legislature put itself in this box when it allowed Senator Sakamoto to kill decentralization in conference. The Legislature nailed the box shut when it killed the Governor's decentralization proposal and passed Act 51, which further centralized DOE functions. I cannot honestly say that I sympathize with your discomfort, as the Majority has for years sacrificed students, parents, taxpayers, and real classroom teachers to politically connected construction contractors and to the HSTA/HGEA/UPW/UHPA cartel.

Whatever the legislature decides, it will likely not solve the problem of the revenue shortfall or of waste in the Hawaii DOE. Hawaii (and the US) has not hit bottom yet and the parasites responsible will ride this collapsing enterprise into the ground. Parents should homeschool. This does not require that parents sacrifice an income. Nothing in Hawaii Revised Statutes requires that homeschool instruction occur between 8 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. It is perfectly legal to extend daycare to age 18.

Thank you for this chance to testify.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Melinda [unclear]", written over a horizontal line.

October 30, 2009

To: Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair
Senator Will Espero, Vice Chair
Special Committee of the State Senate to Address Teacher Furloughs

From: Rose Schilt, Public Health Advocate

Re: In Support of Government Action to Stop Furloughs

Hawaii loves its children, and is deeply pained by the dreadful impacts of the expedient plan to furlough children, youth and teachers to help balance the state budget. In your leadership roles, we implore you to listen to children and parents, to call your colleagues back into session to be key players for better solutions, and to bring all stakeholders together in a collaborative manner for education, not vacation. The furloughing of children and teachers has sent ripples of dissent and confusion through all levels of our island society.

Furloughs endanger the education of all public school children, among whom the poor and most vulnerable are already over-represented. Future public costs will increase as a result of the furloughs; these costs will cut across several areas including judicial, welfare, labor, corrections, and health systems. These costs would represent an undermining of our island social fabric.

As you work to decide upon this opportunity, here are some suggestions we have heard being discussed in the community:

- * *Call the legislature back into session.* This is perceived as a crisis in the community, and elected leadership is needed now to bring all stakeholders back to the table and create a win/win solutions for Hawaii's public school children and youth, and teachers.
- * *Questionable use of Hurricane Fund.* Using the Hurricane Fund will lower bond ratings for Hawaii, and expertise needs to be consulted before this impact is realized.
- * *Modest tax on soda.* A public health, prevention and future cost-saving measure.
- * *Modest increase in the Hawaii state excise tax.* Furloughs and lay-offs are functioning like tax cuts, and further undermine the spending in our economy at many levels. Presented properly, the public would abide a tax increase. We have lower taxes than many states with better educational outcomes.
- * *Revisit using stimulus money for education.* The public does not understand why education was not a priority in this regard.
- * *Educational start-up project for young college graduates.* Develop a project to bring new blood into classrooms, save some teacher time, and possibly increase innovation.

I have worked as a classroom teacher in high school, am a former foster parent, and also am the successful product of public education. Public education is crucial to our democracy, and many in our community feel passionate about children and about the role of education and democracy.

Our children are sailing into the future, with or without furlough days. Children are patient, but each and every day they have to continue growing up. Although the situation is becoming more complicated by the day, momentum and support are increasing for your leadership and action. Please consider seizing the opportunity now to create the best opportunities possible within the constraints of these tough times. We can and must do better for the minds and hearts of our children, and the future of our islands!

Measure: Special Senate Committee to Consider Approaches to Teacher Furloughs
Date: Oct. 30, 2009
Time: 12:30 p.m.

Testimony:

I am strongly opposed to teacher furloughs and closure of public schools in HI as a method of meeting the state budget shortfalls.

Although I do not currently have a child in K-12 (she is currently in preschool) I can see the deep negative impact that this is having and will have on our community, our children, and the future of our state.

Education IS our future, and these measures bankrupt that future irreparably (we can never regain lost time and opportunities) in favor of a quick fix for today. Teachers are the heroes of our community because they shape our children and thus to a great extent our society. Yet they are already severely underpaid. State workers in general should not bear the brunt of this economic crisis, and if forced to will further erode our spending base, with additional negative repercussions on our economy. I strongly feel that increased taxation and drawing on emergency funds are much better options.

Please call a Special Session of the Legislature to address this issue and find an alternative solution.

Shannon N. Bennett, PhD.

Assistant Professor,

Asia-Pacific Institute of Tropical Medicine and Infectious Diseases Department of Tropical Medicine, Medical Microbiology and Pharmacology John A. Burns School of Medicine

651 Ilalo Street, BSB 3rd Floor

Honolulu, HI 96813

Phone: (808) 692-1603

Fax: (808) 692-1979

sbennett@hawaii.edu

Furloughs

Douglas Friend [REDACTED]

Please do all you can to prevent the loss of teaching days to the education-deprived children of Hawaii.

It is beyond belief that our public school children, already near the bottom of the educational score, should be further handicapped .

Get real and find another way.

DATE: Friday, October 30, 2009

TIME: 12:30 p.m.

PLACE: Auditorium, State Capitol, 415 South Beretania Street

The purpose of this email : is to provide public input regarding the options available to address the issue of teacher furloughs and the loss of instructional days in our public schools.

As a provider of special education services to the Maui County I would like to inform the State of HI of the negative impact of their decision to furlough teachers and reduce instructional days for students. This decision has had a significantly a negative impact on our agency, our workers, our parents and our children.

We will support of any use of alternative funding to support maintaining instructional days.

The negative impact is far reaching and has harmed:

1. Parents
2. Teachers
3. Employers
4. Children

The real harm is being done to those with the smallest voice “**our children**” and our future generations.

The very last thing that we should be doing is reducing our children’s education.

This decision should not stand!

Doug Harr, Ph.D. | Branch Director, Maui

www.nursefinders.com

O 808.244.4700

2200 Main Street Suite 650 • Wailuku, HI 96793-1640

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Dear Senator Will Espero,

I am a mother of a 3rd grader who goes to Ma'ema'e Elementary School.
I believe taking 17 days out of their school days is very wrong.
Our future depends on how we educate our children now.
In the future, they will be sitting there as you are now to decide all the
important things about our life.

Education is the seed potatoes.
Even at the time of famine, we can't touch the seed potatoes.
We have to find other ways to survive.
Please find the way to save our future.

Sincerely,

Eri Toyama Lau

, Honolulu, HI 96817



Dear Senator Espero:

I am deeply concerned about Friday Furloughs in our schools and the multifaceted impact it will have on our kid's education and the community at large. While in some areas of government a day of "Friday" service can be delayed or rescheduled, Friday Furloughs in our schools means LOST education time for our kids, and a COMPOUND PROBLEM for the community. Parents face the burden of finding and paying for alternative care and educational programs, teachers face the challenge of regaining the attention of kids returning from a 3-day weekend and squeezing lessons into what is left of the school week, and others in the community will find that the parents, schools, and educated populace they depend on for business-as-usual will not be there for them.

The other states in our nation have found better solutions to their economic problems than 4-day school weeks. Please convene a Special Session of the Legislature to address this issue and find an alternative solution.

Mahalo

Victor Lubecke

[REDACTED]
Honolulu, HI 96815

Aloha Senator Espero,

I am a parent of two public school children. I am testifying in favor of addressing teacher furloughs and the loss of instructional days in our public schools. I am deeply concerned about the closure of school for 17 days, and the impact it will have on our children's education. Please convene a Special Session of the Legislature to address this issue and find an alternative solution.

Mahalo,

Lori Matsushita

Enchanted Lake Elementary School

[REDACTED]

From: **Lurana O'Malley** <~~omalley@hawaii.gov~~>
Date: Fri, Oct 30, 2009 at 7:47 AM
Subject: Concern over Furlough Fridays
To: senespero@capitol.hawaii.gov

Dear Senator Espero,

I am a parent from Hawaii Kai, with grave concern over the situation of the "Furlough Fridays." Budget reductions should be found in other ways, we shouldn't deprive our kids of classroom time. It only deepens the divide between the haves and have-nots in our state, and takes it out on the innocent children who most need our support and nurturing. Please convene a Special Session to come up with other solutions.

Thank You,

Lurana O'Malley

--

Lurana Donnels O'Malley
Director of Western Theatre
UHM Dept. of Theatre and Dance
808-956-9609
FAX 808-956-4234

Special Senate Committee to consider approaches to teacher furloughs
October 30, 2009
12:30pm State Capitol Auditorium
Beretania Street, Honolulu Hawaii

My name is Julia Price and I and my husband, Dr. Richard Price, currently have four children attending public schools in the state of Hawaii. Our youngest children attend kindergarten and first grade at Kahala Elementary, our 11 year old attends Kaimuki Middle School, and our 16 year old is a Junior at Kalani High School. I am a stay at home mother who volunteers in the schools. My husband is an emergency physician who works at WCCHC and runs the ED at Kahuku Hospital. We support public education, and to our right as tax payers to receive a high quality public education for our children.

I am nothing less than appalled at your decision to cut instructional hours for the public school children in Hawaii. Hawaii public schools are currently not well regarded in terms of preparing students for nationally recognized standardized testing. Wealthy and college educated parents in Hawaii generally send their children to private schools, leaving the less affluent and educated families to utilize the public school system. Cutting instructional hours for public education is perpetuating the division between the these two groups of children, those in private schools and those in public schools, the haves and the have-nots.

Minorities, including Native Hawaiians, are particularly affected by public education furloughs as these children score lowest on standardized testing and are considered most "at risk" in terms of educational success. Public school budgets cuts have severely impacted many educational programs, such as art, language, technology, enrichment, and the availability of teaching educational aids in designated classrooms. The mandated Junior Kindergarten program has no state support, guidelines, instructional curriculum, evaluation criterion, or teacher support staff for the youngest of learners. In short, the State of Hawaii has made it an abominable practice to short change the children of Hawaii. My message is "Shame" on you in positions of public trust for not fully supporting the education of every child in Hawaii. How dare you balance the state budget by mortgaging the education of our children, the very future of our state.

To truly impact Hawaii's future, we should be pouring money and resources into our public schools, developing educated minds and future leaders instead of turning out the marginally educated, ill equipped the harsh economic realities awaiting them when they finish high school. It is short sighted and negligent of the state leaders to further cut education in Hawaii and I implore you to rethink your position of implementing teacher furloughs immediately, before another instructional hour is lost.

Respectfully,

Julia Price
[REDACTED]
Honolulu, Hawaii 96816
[REDACTED]

To the members of the Special Senate Committee,

I recently returned to Hawaii after spending my working career with the University of Wisconsin. As a former student of Kuhio Elementary and Washington Intermediate Schools (eons ago), I was saddened to see the sorry state of Hawaii's public education system and the seeming lack of political will to address DOE's fiscal challenges.

I moved from a very high-tax state (I paid four times more in property taxes for a less expensive house in Madison, Wisconsin, than I do here for a little condo). But I knew that my Wisconsin taxes were going to support a great public education system, at the K-12, and the university and technical college level. My taxes also supported, among other things, wonderful parks, safe neighborhoods, strong public services for senior citizens and the needy--all things that make for a stable, vibrant and liveable community.

I believe that the strength of our state and our nation depends on the quality of education and training that we can provide to all of our citizens--children and adults.

Supporting public education with public funds is for the public good. The strength of Hawaii's future depends on providing a strong educational foundation for our trades people, service workers, educators, professionals, entrepreneurs, and public servants, including our legislators.

I appreciate the Senate Special Committee's efforts to seek funding solutions to restore more instructional days.

It takes a village to raise a child. Especially in these tough economic times, we depend on you, our Hawaiian village elders, to demonstrate the foresight, wisdom, and political courage to increase public funding (including raising taxes) to restore critical public services, especially education, that are for the long-term common good of all of us.

Aloha,

Patricia Takemoto

October 30 hearing testimony

Shimoda, Wade [REDACTED]

While making decisions about where the State of Hawaii can cut its spending, people need to realize that a furlough day at a school IS NOT THE SAME as a furlough day for other State functions.

The effect upon the children that the schools serve IS NOT EQUAL to the effect upon the people that other State offices serve.

Take, for example, an office like the Dept. of Health office that provides birth certificates. When it is closed for a day, no one loses anything. A person wanting to get a copy of his/her birth certificate will just schedule his visit on a day that the office is open. For that office, the furlough day be just like a holiday or weekend day.

On the other hand, each furlough day taken away from the students will NEVER be replaced. The children can't reschedule that day to another day. It is gone FOREVER.

The furloughs are essentially a theft of intellectual property. The children are the victims and the State is the criminal.

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To: Senator Colleen Hanabusa, Senate President
Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair
Senator Will Espero, Vice Chair
Senator Norman Sakamoto, Chair, Education Committee

From: Rachel Moriyama
[REDACTED]
Kailua, Hawaii 96734

Date: October 30, 2009

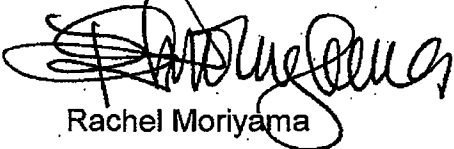
Re: Special Senate Committee to Consider Approaches to Teacher
Furloughs

As the parent of two children and a member of the Kainalu Elementary School PTA and the Kailua Intermediate School PTA, I oppose the newly ratified two-year teacher contract that requires teachers to take 17 or 21 unpaid furlough days, and results in decreased instructional time. I am extremely concerned that Furlough Fridays will result in the children of Hawaii losing significant educational hours targeted towards student achievement. In addition, as the parent of a special needs child, I am very concerned that as a result of these Furlough Fridays, my son is not receiving the special education services required by his current IEP.

I hope that you and your colleagues will work to find ways to end Furlough Fridays. Suggestions have been made to schedule the furlough days on non-instructional days, and to consider using a combination of federal education stimulus funds, the State's hurricane fund and/or rainy day fund, and layoffs of DOE administrative staff to keep the public schools open and to return all instructional days to the children of Hawaii.

I appreciate your efforts to address this serious problem as quickly as possible. Every instructional day lost cannot be replaced and sets our children further and further behind. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Very truly yours,


Rachel Moriyama

Honorable Senator Espero: Honorable committee members:

I am a parent of 3 children, who are attending DOE schools on Oahu. I applaud your statement that cutting school days is "unacceptable". I respectfully submit the following testimony for today's hearing: Let's stop the furlough-versus-layoffs-whose-fault-is-it debate and instead look for ways to avoid cuts to our children's education.

We should question the premise that some form of cut is inevitable given the state's revenue shortfall. While the shortfall can be verified through the decline in tax collection, the inevitability of cuts in education is not a FACT but a CHOICE. It is a choice we make implicitly when we decide on what we will spend our tax dollars. (Here I lump the state and federal taxes altogether because functionally they are equivalent in their effect—money gone to fund government services.)

At this very moment, money is being spent at the rate of around one billion dollars a day in the name of national security. Granted, security is the most basic service of a government. Look how the citizenry in Pakistan is reacting to the recent attacks inside its borders. The argument for going into debt at \$1B a day is that, unless we stop Al Quaeda abroad, we and other countries will suffer terrorist attacks likened to those recent ones that hit Pakistan and those that have occurred elsewhere and in the U.S. on 9/11.

Are our memories so short that we forgot the folly of engaging in expeditionary wars in order to prevent predicted, political scenarios? The Vietnam War was fought to prevent the fall of the whole of Southeast Asia to Communism and to honor our commitment to the ASEAN treaty. The Iraqi war was authorized to nip the "clear and present" danger of WMD being in the wrong hands. Now the latest reasons for increasing spending in Afganistan, according to U.S. Senator McCain, is that we cannot get out without losing honor, the potential suffering that will descend upon the Afgan people if we got out, and the predicted risk to our national security when the Taliban and Al Quaeda join forces. The fact that predicted, political scenarios have always been found to be on the "wrong side of history" makes the benefit of continued spending on the two current wars dubious. How does this relate to our debate here?

When we fund the wars and yet cut our children's education we have made a choice of spending money on discretionary activities of questionable value over spending it on our children's learning, which is, without a doubt, necessary and beneficial.

I propose that we petition our congressional delegation and President Obama to somehow divert some of the war money towards our children's education. It has been reported already the harm that can come to our nation with neglect of education. (Read "Nation at Risk".) Make no mistakes about this. It is a certainty that cutting contact hours will hurt our children's education and, ultimately, their earning potential! Instead of burning money on activities that have dubious benefit, let's invest it in our children's education, which we definitely know will reap benefits many times over. Rather than taking money from their education and burdening them with more war debts, let's give them the education they deserve and need, without which they will be less able to pay for the war debts they will be saddled with. There is no dishonor in choosing to honor the commitment to our children's welfare.

I thank the committee for your attention. End of testimony.

Senator Espero, thank you for your stance.

Concerned parent,
Patrick Yim

[REDACTED], Honolulu, HI 96818, Phone: [REDACTED]

As the parent of a toddler, I am looking towards the public school system to see what is in store for us in the future. I am deeply concerned about the closure of school on Furlough Fridays, and the impact it will have on our children and our society. I am concerned for not only my child who isn't even in the public school system yet, but all children. Education is so important to bring up the leaders and workers of tomorrow. I was born and raised in Hawaii, and attended a public elementary school. I would like the same for my child. We can not afford to send our child to private school, and frankly, will consider moving to the mainland to a better school district if that is the only option. Please convene a Special Session of the Legislature to address this issue and find an alternative.

Mahalo,
Sarah Falzarano
[REDACTED]
Kailua, HI 96734

To: Senator Colleen Hanabusa, Senate President
Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair
Senator Will Espero, Vice Chair
Senator Norman Sakamoto, Chair, Education Committee

From: Dawn Young

Date: October 30, 2009

Subject: Support of Special Senate Committee to Consider Approaches to Teacher Furloughs

As a member of the Hawaii State PTSA I oppose a newly two-year ratified teacher contract that requires educators to take 17 or 21 unpaid furlough days off, and result in decreased instruction time.

I am concerned that furlough Fridays will result in the children of Hawaii losing significant educational hours targeted towards student achievement.

While I understand Hawaii's current governmental shortfalls, today over 60% of Hawaii's public schools have not met average yearly progress under Federal Legislation, "No child Left Behind or NCLB". I feel reducing instructional time will only add to the challenge of meeting AYP, and for many of my friends of Special Needs children, IDEA requirements and that may result in severe unintended consequences.

I strongly encourage our legislators to find ways to replace furlough Fridays with other non-instructional days and seriously consider using a portion or all of the state's hurricane fund/rainy day fund to support the return of education instructional days to the children of Hawaii Public Schools.

Please develop laws that ' earmark ' public funds for education in our state similar to funds that are ' earmarked ' for our highways without an increase in state taxes especially in a current turbulent environment where Hawaii citizens have lost jobs or experienced decreased work hours.

We beg you to listen to our cry for help and find other ways to manage spending to avoid balancing budgets on the backs of Hawaii's children. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Much Aloha,


Parent

Sen. Will Espero

From: Emily Aguilera [mailto:emilys@comcast.net]
Sent: Friday, October 30, 2009 11:31 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: school furloughs

I'm a mother of three school aged children and the school furloughs have created a terrible hardship for our family. One of our kids has very involved special needs and school is the only place where she can have fun and get the care and attention she requires. Please convene a Special Session of the Legislature to address this issue and find an alternative.

Emily Aguilera

From: Lisa Rosenlee

Dear Senate Committee,

My name is Lisa Rosenlee, and I reside in Ewa Beach. I am testifying here as a parent of public school student. My daughter is a 1st grader at Holomua Elementary and my niece goes to Campbell High school. As a parent of public school students, I believe that cutting 17 instructional days from our school year is unacceptable. There is no other state in the nation that has allowed this sort of drastic cuts in education to happen and many states are facing even greater state budget deficits than Hawaii. There are many parties that are culpable for this, but I think it is pointless to placing blame or pointing figures at any particular union, or governmental entity right now. The fact is that there are 17 furlough days planned this academic year and the next and our public school kids are going to have the shortest school year in the nation. The question now for me is what to do with this crisis. I think it is unconscionable to just let this continues to happen to our school kids and cut away their future because we the grown ups lack courage or imagination to deal with this issue.

Right now, the only governmental entity that can do something about it is the legislature and the Governor; the legislature needs to propose a legislation to find an alternative funding to keep our teacher teaching and our kids learning in the classroom and the Governor also needs to be willing to approve the measure. As quoted in the paper that the Governor when asked about whether she is willing to look into other funds such as the "Hurricane Relief Fund" to deal with the situation, she says and I quote "I really want to at least get through this next quarter before we even begin to talk about it"(Start Bulletin, 10/29). It is unfortunate that the Governor did not see the urgency of this issue and is willing to put the future of our public school kids in the back burner. All the parents of public school kids don't have the luxury that the Governor has to put this issue off and wait unless next quarter. There are at least 4 furlough days already planned before the end of this year and parents need to find ways to cope with the furlough days. Whether the parents put the kids at the YMCA or leave them with the grandparents, the fact is those kids need to be in the classroom in the first place.

So I urge the legislature and the Governor to take on the issue immediately and have the courage to put our kids put to the classroom, not to the Mall.

Thank you.

October 30, 2009

Aloha,

My name is Wendy Lynch and I am the proud parent of two wonderful daughters. My youngest is in 1st grade and my oldest is in 5th grade at Aikahi Elementary in Kailua.

My family chose to move here over living on the mainland. We chose to move to Hawaii despite the stories we had heard regarding the sorry state of the public educational system here.

We moved here from Virginia last year and chose to live in an expensive neighborhood, way above our allotted housing allowance so we could be close to Aikahi Elementary. We did this so that our girls could attend what we heard was one of the best public schools on Oahu.

We choose Aikahi over private school because we mistakenly believed our daughters would get a good education there. If we had known our girls would be facing 163 days in school versus 180 we would have spent less on rent and sent them to a private school. Now we can not afford private school because we are locked into a three year lease.

Last year I worked in the Special Ed department at Aikahi Elementary until I was laid off and informed funding was no longer available for my part time position or for 2 other part-timers at the school. I wondered how instructional time could be taken away from Special Ed kids. Are these not the kids that need extra help the most?

Not only do these Special Ed children have a higher teacher student ratio now due to last years layoffs but now they don't have school on most Fridays! This is appalling! This school year all our kids are suffering due to a shortened school week.

Being a military family we've had our children in three different public schools and I've taught at a handful of schools all over the nation as well. I would rank Hawaii's educational system as the worst we've encountered. In general mainland schools have more than 180 school days. Now Hawaii has taken away an additional 17 days from an already shortened year. How are these kids going to get into and be prepared for college?

Our daughters 5th grade teacher informs us now she has to cram in all school material into a 3 ½ day school week. As an educator I know children can not learn as well when material is being crammed into them. They can not retain all of the information they are being taught.

We are setting up our teachers to fail our children. Our children are becoming stressed as a result of this force feeding of information. I'm certain teachers are also being over stressed as a result of trying to fill in 180 days worth of school material into 163. We need to support our teachers, not take away from them. Teaching our children must be the #1 priority for Hawaii.

Today's Honolulu Advertiser states that a public opinion poll of 900 residents surveyed this year showed only 60% support the 5.5 BILLION commuter rail line. If surveyed I believe that more people support education than the rail line. We can afford to put off the rail line until Hawaii's economy improves. We can't afford to put off educating our young.

My family has fallen in love with Hawaii – its people, culture, warm weather and spectacular scenery. Unfortunately we are learning that children here are not viewed as important members of this society. Instead they are pawns in this bureaucratic system to be moved around at will as though they are pieces in the game of life.

By taking away 17 days of their school year Hawaii is teaching their children that they are not important. We need to give back to our ohana by giving our children the best possible public education, not a substandard one. Let's demonstrate our kokua by taking care of our keiki.

Thank you for your time and attention on this important matter.

Mahalo,

Wendy Lynch

[REDACTED]

Kailua, HI 96734

[REDACTED]

My Speech on Furlough Days

Rhiannon Brennan

Furlough Fridays is a bad thing. It is taking 17 days of our school learning time. The other states don't have that. Only ours, it is not really fair to us in Hawaii. Even though kids like staying home, it is taking their learning time away. Parents need to go to work everyday. Have you ever thought of what parents should do with their children while they are at work? They can have people watch them from childcare, but they need to pay them money. I know that the economy is bad and schools can't pay teachers to teach children. They shouldn't take off of school, especially 17 days. That's a lot of days off. My mom is really concerned and angry, I am also because my school learning is taken away. We don't have much of a school year. Thanks a lot.

Name:
Address:
City, State, Zip:

Dr Jennifer Chandler
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

Dear Senators & Representatives,

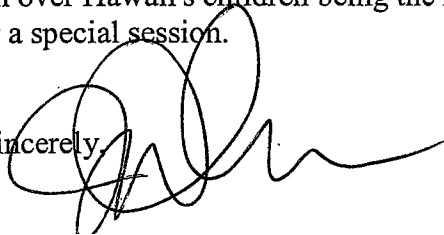
I strongly support convening a special session to find a solution to furlough days for public school students and I hope that you will too.

I feel it is vital that all parties come together and resolve this situation which has resulted in Hawaii's children having the shortest time in school in the nation.

Compromising our children's education is not an option, and I believe in the long term, ignorance costs far more than education.

I would ask that you consider public opinion, which is reaching an unprecedented level of concern over Hawaii's children being the most poorly educated in the nation, and please call for a special session.

Most sincerely,



Name:
Address:
City, State, Zip:

Karen Lattanzi
~~_____~~
Honolulu, HI 96816

Dear Decision Makers,

I strongly support convening a special session to find a solution to furlough days for public school students and I hope that you will too.

I feel it is vital that all parties come together and resolve this situation which has resulted in Hawaii's children having the shortest time in school in the nation.

Compromising our children's education is not an option, and I believe in the long term, ignorance costs far more than education.

I would ask that you consider public opinion, which is reaching an unprecedented level of concern over Hawaii's children being the most poorly educated in the nation, and please call for a special session.

Most sincerely,

Name:

Kayako Barker

Address:

~~879 Kapiolani St.~~

City, State, Zip:

Honolulu 96816

Dear Representatives + Senators

I strongly support convening a special session to find a solution to furlough days for public school students and I hope that you will too.

I feel it is vital that all parties come together and resolve this situation which has resulted in Hawaii's children having the shortest time in school in the nation.

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Most sincerely,

Kayako Barker

Name:

C. Parsons-Nakagawa

Address:

~~1234 Kono Ave.~~

City, State, Zip:

Honolulu, HI 96815

Dear

Representatives and Senators,

I strongly support convening a special session to find a solution to furlough days for public school students and I hope that you will too.

I feel it is vital that all parties come together and resolve this situation which has resulted in Hawaii's children having the shortest time in school in the nation.

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Most sincerely,

C. Nakagawa

Name:
Address:
City, State, Zip:

Carolyn Vierra
~~1000 Waiholo St~~
Honolulu, HI 96821

Dear Representatives & Senators

I strongly support convening a special session to find a solution to furlough days for public school students and I hope that you will too.

I feel it is vital that all parties come together and resolve this situation which has resulted in Hawaii's children having the shortest time in school in the nation.

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Most sincerely,

Carolyn Vierra

Name:
Address:
City, State, Zip:

Goob Hee Lee
[REDACTED]
HON. HI. 96822

Dear _____,

I strongly support convening a special session to find a solution to furlough days for public school students and I hope that you will too.
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I would ask that you consider public opinion, which is reaching an unprecedented level of concern over Hawaii's children being the most poorly educated in the nation, and please call for a special session.

Most sincerely,

Name:
Address:
City, State, Zip:

JOO YI.
[REDACTED]
HON, HI. 96822

Dear _____,

I strongly support convening a special session to find a solution to furlough days for public school students and I hope that you will too.

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Most sincerely,

Name:

Jae Woo Lee

Address:

[REDACTED]

City, State, Zip:

HON. HI, 96822

Dear _____,

I strongly support convening a special session to find a solution to furlough days for public school students and I hope that you will too.

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I would ask that you consider public opinion, which is reaching an unprecedented level of concern over Hawaii's children being the most poorly educated in the nation, and please call for a special session.

Most sincerely,

Name: Jongem Lee
Address: ~~10 [redacted] Ave~~
City, State, Zip: Honolulu, HI 96816

Dear Reps and Senators,

I strongly support convening a special session to find a solution to furlough days for public school students and I hope that you will too.
I feel it is vital that all parties come together and resolve this situation which has resulted in Hawaii's children having the shortest time in school in the nation.
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Most sincerely,

Name:
Address:
City, State, Zip:

Nancy Badin
~~2018 Kameh St. #1051~~
~~Hon. HI. 96826~~

Dear Representatives,

I strongly support convening a special session to find a solution to furlough days for public school students and I hope that you will too.

I feel it is vital that all parties come together and resolve this situation which has resulted in Hawaii's children having the shortest time in school in the nation.

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Most sincerely,

Nancy Badin

Name:
Address:
City, State, Zip:

VICTOR LUBECKE
~~██~~
HONOLULU HI 96815

Dear Governor Lingle,

I strongly support convening a special session to find a solution to furlough days for public school students and I hope that you will too.

I feel it is vital that all parties come together and resolve this situation which has resulted in Hawaii's children having the shortest time in school in the nation.

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Most sincerely, 

Name:
Address:
City, State, Zip:

Emilia CAZIN
~~900 OAHU RD.~~
HON. HI. 96825

Dear Senators, house rep.

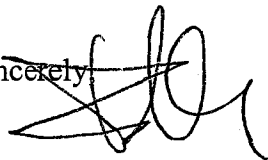
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Most sincerely



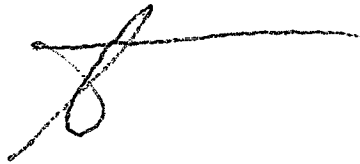
Name:
Address:
City, State, Zip:

Antoine CAZIN, M.D.
~~1000 Kalia Road, Apt. 113~~
Hon. HI. 96816

Dear _____,

I strongly support convening a special session to find a solution to furlough days for public school students and I hope that you will too. I feel it is vital that all parties come together and resolve this situation which has resulted in Hawaii's children having the shortest time in school in the nation. Compromising our children's education is not an option, and I believe in the long term, ignorance costs far more than education. I would ask that you consider public opinion, which is reaching an unprecedented level of concern over Hawaii's children being the most poorly educated in the nation, and please call for a special session.


Most sincerely,



Name: Young, A. Kim
Address: [REDACTED]
City, State, Zip: Hon. HI. 96826

Dear Governor Lingle,

I strongly support convening a special session to find a solution to furlough days for public school students and I hope that you will too. I feel it is vital that all parties come together and resolve this situation which has resulted in Hawaii's children having the shortest time in school in the nation. Compromising our children's education is not an option, and I believe in the long term, ignorance costs far more than education. I would ask that you consider public opinion, which is reaching an unprecedented level of concern over Hawaii's children being the most poorly educated in the nation, and please call for a special session.

Most sincerely, 

Name:

Elaine Vuong

Address:

[REDACTED]

City, State, Zip:

Honolulu, HI 96816

Dear

Governor Lingle

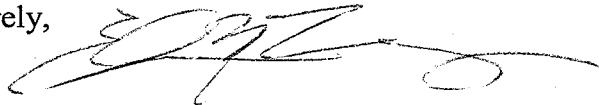
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Most sincerely,



Name:

Jodie Chung

Address:

~~1000 Kalia Road~~

City, State, Zip:

Aiea HI 96721

Dear

Governor Fingle

I strongly support convening a special session to find a solution to furlough days for public school students and I hope that you will too.

I feel it is vital that all parties come together and resolve this situation which has resulted in Hawaii's children having the shortest time in school in the nation.

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Most sincerely,

Jodie Chung

Name:
Address:
City, State, Zip:

GERALDINE ROJALES
~~777 777 777~~
Honolulu Hi 96825.

Dear Legislators & Representatives & Senators

I strongly support convening a special session to find a solution to furlough days for public school students and I hope that you will too.

I feel it is vital that all parties come together and resolve this situation which has resulted in Hawaii's children having the shortest time in school in the nation.

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I would ask that you consider public opinion, which is reaching an unprecedented level of concern over Hawaii's children being the most poorly educated in the nation, and please call for a special session.

Most sincerely,

Geraldine

Name:

James Fong

Address:

~~1000 [REDACTED] St~~

City, State, Zip:

Honolulu, HI

96821

Dear _____,

I strongly support convening a special session to find a solution to furlough days for public school students and I hope that you will too.

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Most sincerely,

James Fong

Name:

OLGA BORIC-LUBECKE

Address:

[REDACTED]

City, State, Zip:

Honolulu, HI 96815

Dear Senators and Representatives,

I strongly support convening a special session to find a solution to furlough days for public school students and I hope that you will too.

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Most sincerely,

Olga Boric-Lubecke

From: KellieHoule [mailto:kelliehoule@gnm.edu]
Sent: Saturday, October 31, 2009 9:27 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: school funding

Greetings,

We just moved here from Montana and had high hopes that the schools here would be more willing to work with us when it came to our son and implementing an IEP for him. I am pleased to say the school and their staff have been very professional and swift in helping our son with his special needs. Now with the furloughs I fear we made the mistake in bringing our son here for a better education.

May I suggest that Hawaii allows gambling to offset the states school funding problem? It worked for Montana and it can work here. They only allow business with liquor or cabaret license to have a limit of 20 gaming machine pure establishment. Some places have limited live poker. That could be limited here as well. I think it is worth looking into.

I am to begin student teaching in the Spring Semester to finish my B.A. in Elementary Education and was so looking forward to teaching here as well. I fear if funding isn't found and they start firing teacher the class sizes will grow to an unproductive size and in the end more teachers will quit and the students will be left behind.

Thank you for your time,

Kellie

P.S.

Just one last thought before anyone decides to fire teachers and increase classroom size. They should spend a day in a classroom when instruction is taking place and see how hard it is to move around and get things done with 30 students. Gone are the days when student just sit in rows and receive the information given. Talk to your teachers.

Thanks again....

From: Steven Sofos [mailto: [REDACTED]]
Sent: Saturday, October 31, 2009 7:19 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero; Sen. Colleen Hanabusa; Sen. Norman Sakamoto; Sen. Suzanne Chun Oakland; Sen. Sam Slom; Sen. Jill Tokuda
Subject: Furloughs

You legislators gave yourselves a 31% pay raise in 2009.

No one in the private sector received a pay raise in 2009 of that magnitude, if any received pay raises at all. In fact most business people took a pay cut, including most of the public employee unions.

If you truly wanted to help the children of Hawaii, you would give back the pay raise and take at least a 20% pay cut, to show "good faith" to the people and children of Hawaii, and allocate that money to the schools.

Lastly, I seriously doubt that any of you would do that since many of your fellow legislators have stated previously, "we deserved the pay raise".

S. Steven Sofos, CPM
President/CEO
Sofos Realty Corporation
600 Kapiolani Blvd. Suite 200
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Tel: (808) 522-5995
Fax: (808) 522-5969
Cell: (808) 285-5999
www.sofosrealty.com



From: Dawn Webster [mailto: [REDACTED]]
Sent: Friday, October 30, 2009 2:09 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Cc: jwebster@chaminade.edu
Subject: End Furlough Fridays

My husband, Dr John Webster and I would like to add our voices to the call for a special session of the Legislature to discuss ending the Furlough Fridays. The children of this state deserve better.

Dawn Morais Webster Ph.D.
CEO, Loomis-ISC

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Sunday, November 01, 2009 1:42 PM

To: Sen. Will Espero

Subject: Furlough

I am deeply concerned about the closure of school on Furlough Fridays, and the impact it will have on our children. I teach at a high on the Big Island and my 10th graders need as much time in the classroom getting ready to meet the challenging yearly HSA assessment. Please convene a Special Session on the Legislature to address this issue and find an alternative.

Yours truly,
Shirley McCoy
Teacher

From: Moana Nikou [redacted]
Sent: Sunday, November 01, 2009 11:26 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero; Amy Kunz; Moana Nikou; Azadeh Rezaie Nikou; Steve
Subject: October 30th Hearing Testimony

Dear Senator Will Espero,

I have a five-year-old son at Aikahi Elementary School in Kailua.

My family and I wish you and the rest of the legislative body know that, we have been around long enough to recognize the dirty tricks our politicians often play with our lives and the gambles they wage with our monies. The Governor in concert with both the Republican and Democratic legislators should all be ashamed of themselves for targeting education first. Our children are the future of this great State and Nation.

If you do not have enough money to cover your own less than efficient performance and bad decisions, you must first consider the alternatives, such as increasing our taxes, cutting administrative positions, or tapping into the federal stimulus funds. You must not, however, allow yourselves to touch our public education.

You should all be ashamed of yourselves. Governor you should be impeached for even suggesting the firing of our public teachers and slicing our already underfunded public education with the senseless concept of F. Fridays.

In the next election, I will make a point to vote only for those who support our public education in these testing times. You have my word.

Respectfully,
Moana Rumi Nikou

From: ATELAITE [mailto:ATELAITE@HAWAIIANISLANDS.GOV]
Sent: Saturday, October 31, 2009 4:18 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero; Sen. Will Espero
Subject: furlough Friday

I just want to voice my opinion on furlough Friday. I don't think that my children need to suffer their education because you guys in office cannot find another alternative for this big mess that you all created. You guys need to fire those in office who sit around doing nothing and use that money to pay teachers to educate the future of our country. Don't you think that you want to give our children the same opportunity that you got when you were a kid going to school everyday of the year. Put yourself in our shoes and see where you'd be if you had furlough when you were growing up. Be considerate of other people and try to build up the future generations of Hawaii. Who knows, we might be raising another United States of America President in our little Island right now. Think twice about this ridiculous furlough idea and let's work together as educated citizens of Hawaii. You guys keep up with this furlough and Hawaii will stay at the bottom of the education pool forever. Use your heart and not your head. Mrs. Millern on furlough Friday. I don't think that my children need to suffer their education because you guys in office cannot find another alternative for this big mess that you all created. You guys need to fire those in office who sit around doing nothing and use that money to pay teachers to educate the future of our country. Don't you think that you want to give our children the same opportunity that you got when you were a kid going to school everyday of the year. Put yourself in our shoes and see where you'd be if you had furlough when you were growing up. Be considerate of other people and try to build up the future generations of Hawaii. Who knows, we might be raising another United States of America President in our little Island right now. Think twice about this ridiculous furlough idea and let's work together as educated citizens of Hawaii. You guys keep up with this furlough and Hawaii will stay at the bottom of the education pool forever. Use your heart a

Sen. Will Espero

From: Albert Yuen [a. yuen@hawaii.gov]
Sent: Friday, October 30, 2009 3:34 PM
To: All Senators
Subject: Hurricane Fund

Please do not use the Hurricane Fund to balance the budget....not the intended use of the Hurricane Fund.

Doing so will cause ua to loose confidence in you....and our votes.

Mahalo,

Albert & Audrey Yuen

Sen. Will Espero

From: stacey sharpe [staceysharpe@juno.com]
Sent: Saturday, October 31, 2009 10:32 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Our Future is in their hands

I believe that children are our *future*, *teach* them well and let them *lead* the way, show them all the beauty they possess inside...give them a sense of pride...make it easier, let the children's laughter, remind us how we used to be.



Stacey

Sen. Will Espero

From: Karen Edgeworth [mailto:karen.edgeworth@hawaii.gov]
Sent: Friday, October 30, 2009 5:50 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Furloughs

Categories: Print Big Island

I found this article on MSNBC dated 10/30. Why can New York use their stimulus money to save education, but not Hawaii?

"Schools Are Where Stimulus Saved Jobs, New Data Show," originally appeared in The New York Times.

*Richard Edgeworth
Hanalei, HI*

Sen. Will Espero

From: Pat Morse [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, October 30, 2009 11:02 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Teacher Furloughs

Categories: Print Big Island

To the members of the Special Senate Committee,

I recently returned to Hawaii after spending my working career with the University of Wisconsin. As a former student of Kuhio Elementary and Washington Intermediate Schools (eons ago), I was saddened to see the sorry state of Hawaii's public education system and the seeming lack of political will to address DOE's fiscal challenges.

I moved from a very high-tax state (I paid four times more in property taxes for a less expensive house in Madison, Wisconsin, than I do here for a little condo). But I knew that my Wisconsin taxes were going to support a great public education system, at the K-12, and the university and technical college level. My taxes also supported, among other things, wonderful parks, safe neighborhoods, strong public services for senior citizens and the needy--all things that make for a stable, vibrant and liveable community.

I believe that the strength of our state and our nation depends on the quality of education and training that we can provide to all of our citizens--children and adults.

Supporting public education with public funds is for the public good. The strength of Hawaii's future depends on providing a strong educational foundation for our trades people, service workers, educators, professionals, entrepreneurs, and public servants, including our legislators.

I appreciate the Senate Special Committee's efforts to seek funding solutions to restore more instructional days.

It takes a village to raise a child. Especially in these tough economic times, we depend on you, our Hawaiian village elders, to demonstrate the foresight, wisdom, and political courage to increase public funding (including raising taxes) to restore critical public services, especially education, that are for the long-term common good of all of us.

Aloha,

Patricia Takemoto

November 2, 2009

Dear Senators on the Special Senate Committee Concerning Teacher Furlough Days,

I am the proud parent of two little girls, ages 5 and 7, who currently attend Ahuimanu Elementary School in Kaneohe. I am also an attorney and my husband a program manager. I believed my children could obtain a good education in our public schools provided my husband and I supported our school and worked closely with our children, teachers and administrators. To this end, and despite our extremely busy schedules, I volunteer my time as the Fundraising Chair for the PTO and my husband is the SCC President. Unfortunately, I have come to find out our efforts are completely wasted.

Since discussion of the furlough days began, my husband and I have been involved in many discussions pertaining to same. I have been involved in signing petitions and watched the entire special session testimony on October 30, 2009 with great interest. I was terribly disappointed in the testimony received from the BOE and in the misinformation fed to the committee.

Our SCC has worked tirelessly to have our waiver days converted to instructional days only to be told that the teachers had either overruled the decision (approval requires a 2/3 vote by the teachers before it can even be submitted to BOE) or the BOE denied the requests. The SCC has only been successful in converting 2 of the days.

I understand your role is extremely limited and will not regale you with my complaints concerning how this situation has been mishandled by the BOE, DOE, Governor, our school, teachers, etc. My intent is to simply let you know our children need the 17 days back regardless of how it is accomplished. My preference would be for the senate to pass emergency legislation mandating a minimum number of instructional days per year. In addition, I would request a full audit to find out why we do not have the funds for our children's instructional days.

Between various holidays, waiver days, etc. My children were in school for only 12 days in October. They will only be in school for 14 days in November and, in December, they will be in school for 11 days. That is a total of 37 days for a three month period. This is completely unacceptable!

While my husband and I are in a position to transfer our children to private school next year, many families do not have that opportunity. Even still, I struggle with the decision as I feel I am turning my back on other children who need support, but I am unwilling to sacrifice my own children when no one else seems to care. I understand the decision makers have little invested in our public schools as their children attend private schools, but it is our responsibility to ensure every child gets a solid education which will allow them to be successful adults and compete in the work force regardless of their socio-economic status. I am confident the horrific decisions we are making today will end up costing us much more in the long run as we deal with a lost generation. The struggles and repercussions were already discussed by others at the October 30, 2009 hearing. You are in a position to change this fiasco, please do so for the sake of our children.

Respectfully,
Nathalie S. Pettit, Esq.

[REDACTED]

From: Robert Tellander [redacted]
Sent: Monday, November 02, 2009 11:54 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Cc: brickwood08@gmail.com
Subject: Furloughs for the Common Good

Aloha,

In sitting through the entire session of the Special Senate Committee to Consider Approaches to Teacher Furloughs and having given testimony myself, I came to these conclusions:

1. The DOE is incompetent and needs to be audited and culled. Upper management is either lying or uninformed about what they are doing. The textbook for management appears to be **A Broken Trust**.
2. The watch dog agency, BOE, appears to be helpless, and devoid of educational leadership. I presume the Union picked all the members and paid for their campaigns. The Legislature needs to investigate this and force those with a conflict of interest to resign.
3. The Governor's Office needs to assume control and direct operation of the State School System and undertake its reorganization under an emergency mandate to rectify the education budget .
4. Although structurally sidelined, like anxious parents, both the Hawaii State House and Senate cannot do much but pay the bills. The reason for this is structural, not just legal. The extra-legal political party system and its legislative caucuses should re-articulate what the public should expect from an educational system. Reform is needed top-to-bottom because all you have now is a control system that favors those who already exceed expectations because of economic and dominant culture advantages: they can read and write English; they expect to be the best. The normed assessment standards make them role models for those who lack their advantages. In short, the system is unfair, inflexible, institutionalized, and expensive. As a public embarrassment, the inability for leadership to articulate the common good in terms of education and to right the wrongs, reveals that our state government also does not function, nor purport to do what it is suppose to do, as well.
5. Parents are frantic because they, as in medical care, expect services that produce positive results. Denying their keiki seventeen days in the classroom reveals their ignorance, as well. Seat time does not increase the abilities of the under prepared. It merely alienates them and turns inquiry into boredom, while it makes heroes out of the socially advantaged students. The Media reports the parental anger, but it does not understand the problem, either. Worse, it does not perceive that as its investigative function. Instead, they sell advertising; they do now deliver insight.
6. Teachers in a controlled, top-down system, that claims educational omnipotence, must therefore be held accountable. With 25% of the teachers on payroll, not teaching in the classroom, we have control of the teachers and the system, but we do not have vision to provide better outcomes nor innovation to meet students' actual educational needs. It's time to alter the

curricula, rethink instruction, and change how we do assessment. (I have been invited to participate in the reworking of these areas at the Hongwanji Mission School accreditation process.) In our public schools, this would be impossible. Who are we protecting? Certainly, not the students and their teachers.

7. Finally, we need to focus on students as participants in the inquiry process, as discoverers of their own new insights, a participants in a shared process that not only validates them, but helps those who have never been validated for anything, by including them in the learning process.

Below, I list my written testimony to the Senate Committee, that was not heard in total because of time restraints:

FURLOUGHES FOR THE COMMON GOOD

Furloughs keep benefits, sustain careers, and preserve the *status quo*. They retain costly health care for staff, reduce services and productivity for the public, and do not change the institutionalized structure of the services offered. Consequently, we have bundled all our educational and medical care problems in a locked, "back room" and expect them to become "productive assets" once the economy revives enough to reactivate them and restore the systems to full production.

Both the State's Public Education System and the Medical Care System do not offer what they purport to give: Care and enhanced human outcomes. Instead, they have opted for a system of **control** that rewards the healthy and the well-behaved with an enhanced status as role models. The ill and incapacitated become "burdens" that the system must carry. Similarly in public education, the "No Child Left Behind" Program merely identified which behind was attached to which child. It judged them as inadequate and told the educational systems that under their **control** this inadequacy persists. Instead of relating to the patient and to the student, the system responded by demonstrating that the cultural factors beyond their control caused the problem. Blame, thus, was deflected; the problems were not addressed.

In our medical care system, the poor and ill are told that they must take better care of themselves and not to expect miracles in the emergency room. And certainly not, if they lack health insurance.

The medical care system and the public educational system have both become the willing victims of the economic system.

After years of hearing "government cannot do anything right," we have come to believe it. Conversely, private, free market solutions will produce better and more efficient outcomes. Acting on that assumption, we have created two systems of essential care that we cannot now afford to operate.

We in Hawaii, like those on Wall Street who believe that profit best defines the "common good" and who nearly destroyed the economic system in this simplistic quest, now face the task of redefining health care away from the medical **control** model and now too must refocus education on the needs and abilities of the student and not their **control**.

Contrary to what the vested interest saw in furloughs, they now have become a beneficial means where we can question and rethink our public services. Obviously, if "no services on Fridays" makes no appreciable difference, we should not restore that option when the financial means is restored.

More importantly, we need to test the capacity of our administrators--our public service leaders. If they cannot improve services during these difficult times, we should let them go and replace them with others who can. In so doing we reduce our service costs to only functional and beneficial services lead by those who make that happen.

FURLOUGHES IN PUBLIC EDUCATION

In public education we need to focus on what we do and whether the outcomes merit its continuation. In short, we need to validate what actually enables students to grasp new ideas and determine how they can create their own

valid insights and apply them meaningfully to overcome that which defines their incapacity. Now we use a normed standard that favors only those who conform to it. In short, we want them to become more than "normal."

On Fridays, we should invite back all the keiki to tell all school principals and their support staff orally and/or on questionnaires, "What in the current curricula, do they **not** understand?" Any good administrator should be able to translate those perceived needs and curricular flaws into something where the students themselves could teach each other new insights at the subsequent Friday gathering, in the absence of teachers who normally act as "curricular **control** agents."

FURLOUGHS IN PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES

Similarly, health care must be extended beyond the medical model. Screening should be done at each public school of the students' vital signs to see who is **not** well. Rather than prescribe drugs to the clusters of sick students to mask their symptoms, discover from them how they became ill. By moving away from the medicated muffling of symptoms toward public health, where illness has real origins and victims can participate in recognizing them and preventing them so others in their community do not become victims, as well, we venture into the field of "health care."

Kaiser and HMSA need such data to make valid maps of disease by zip code clusters on the island to enhance their diagnostics and to screen out psychosomatic illness. They should supply a nurse practitioner/staff to collect the data on Fridays. Otherwise, Public Health Officers should collect the data and sell it to medical care practitioners, or use the data as evidence of misdiagnosis by them during any pandemic illness.

In both these examples, note that we seek to create common and beneficial solutions to problems that can be achieved through inquiry, discussion, cooperation and common action (help) and thus improve the climate of learning in our schools where currently, the survival of the most socially fit poisons the ability of others by preventing them from participating in the learning process, and dealing similarly and effectively with their health problems to overcome massive, possibly benign, neglect.

CONCLUSION

Therefore, I support furloughs as an opportunity to improve the lives of all citizens who use and need public services. I do not, however, support furloughs as a holding pattern to preserve the *status quo* in our public health services and educational systems.

Robert Tellander

Honolulu, HI 96815-2002

November 2, 2009

Dear Senators on the Special Senate Committee Concerning Teacher Furlough Days,

I am the proud parent of two little girls, ages 5 and 7, who currently attend Ahuimanu Elementary School in Kaneohe. I am also an attorney and my husband a program manager. I believed my children could obtain a good education in our public schools provided my husband and I supported our school and worked closely with our children, teachers and administrators. To this end, and despite our extremely busy schedules, I volunteer my time as the Fundraising Chair for the PTO and my husband is the SCC President. Unfortunately, I have come to find out our efforts are completely wasted.

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Respectfully,
Nathalie S. Pettit, Esq.

(██████████)

Sen. Will Espero

From: Amy Kunz [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 10:25 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: OCTOBER 30TH HEARING TESTIMONY - Teacher Furloughs
Attachments: Testimony October 30 - Kunz.doc

Amy S. Kunz
[redacted]
Kailua, HI 96734
808-261-0000

October 29, 2009

Dear Senator Brian Taniguchi and Senator Will Espero,

RE: Teacher Furlough Solutions Public Hearing; Friday, October 30, 2009

I am a mother of a kindergartener at Aikahi Elementary. I am concerned about the Teacher Furlough program that has been implemented due to the budget crisis. It is unreasonable to think that the long-term impacts on our students and their diminished educational opportunities will positively offset the short-term budget relief. Our children will have to suffer the impacts of a lesser public education for the balance of their lives.

I recommend the following as solutions:

- I call for an audit of the Department of Education and will personally volunteer my time to assist with this venture. We need to look at eliminating costs at the top and consider consolidating some lower-enrollment schools. This will secure money for the teachers and keep our kids in school. Education must be a priority.
- I call for a special session to address the needs of our students. Waiting for general session is simply too long to wait.
- I call for an increase in the General Excise Tax on the outer islands and a deferral of the Oahu increase from rail to education.
- I call for the State to set a minimum number of education days in the State of Hawaii that is in line with other States to allow our children to be competitive and achieve greatness in the future.
- I call for consistency between schools by mandating the extension of the Wednesday release time and utilizing collaboration days as instructional days. Allowing each school to petition only increases the necessity for overhead to manage these requests.

The children are the State's future. We should not punish them because the economy is bad or because of poor planning, budgeting and oversight.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Amy S. Kunz

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Sen. Will Espero

From: Ron & Margaret Graham <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 1:38 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: October 30th Hearing Testimony

Dear Senator Espero,

Below is an email outlining my concerns about school furlough days, and Senator Hemmings standardized response. I would be grateful if you would include my email as testimony at tomorrow's hearing.

Warm regards,

Margaret Graham

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Sen. Fred Hemmings <senhemmings@capitol.hawaii.gov>
Date: Thu, Oct 29, 2009 at 8:24 AM
Subject: RE: Special Session on Furlough Days
To: Ron & Margaret Graham <[REDACTED]>

Thank you for writing. The problems with public education in Hawaii are not new and have been caused by years of DOE mismanagement and exploitation by the union bosses. Furlough Days could have easily been taken on nonteaching days. The unions and DOE are holding our kids hostage. The Senate will convene an ad hoc committee to investigate alternatives which I will serve on. For the record, the DOE is our state's single largest budget item (over \$2 billion dollars) and has enough money to get the job done. The problem is not money but rather mismanagement. The people of Hawaii should not be extorted by the DOE/Union bosses. We can solve this problem by doing what is best for students, parents, and classroom teachers.

Aloha,

Senator Fred Hemmings

State of Hawaii

PS: Public input and testimony will be taken this Friday, Oct. 30, 2009 at 12:30 p.m., the State Capitol Auditorium. For instructions regarding testimony and input please click on this link:
http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/session2010/hearingnotices/HEARING_SCTF_10-30-09_INFO_.HTM

From: Ron & Margaret Graham [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 4:31 AM
To: Sen. Fred Hemmings
Cc: davisol@small.com
Subject: Special Session on Furlough Days

Good morning Senator Hemmings,

I am a constituent in your district. I am deeply concerned about the closure of school for 17 days, and the impact it will have on our children. Please convene a Special Session of the Legislature to address this issue and find an alternative solution.

Above is the wording suggested to me in an email I received from a fellow mom at Kainalu Elementary, but I want to add my personal plea. My husband's and my primary goal in life is to raise our two children to be successful members of society. Can this be achieved while utilizing Hawaii's public education system as it currently stands? I believe being able to reach your potential regardless of whether your family can afford private school is a fundamental part of being an American, and I hope you feel the same way.

We moved here from Oregon this summer and my husband has been hired as a Math Teacher at Kalaheo High School. In theory, we should be the most afraid of reversing the furlough days that lead to layoffs for new teachers. But, as we have taught our children, those who have the most to contribute, will ultimately have a place at the table. Senator Hemmings, if you fight to restore the school days taken away from the children of Hawaii and that leads to the layoff of my husband, our family will still be grateful to you.

Warm regards,

Margaret Graham

[redacted]

Kailua, HI 96734

September 30, 2009

Dear Senator Espero,

Thank you for your help with urging your fellow legislators to pull together and address the current Educational Crisis and **calling for a Special Session Now!!**

To All Legislators,

As our elected officials, and leaders of our state, we look to you for the courage and tenacity to pull together and address tough issues that face our state. We come to you to today ask for your focus and experience to appropriately address the issue of our current educational crisis. **We look to you to lead by example.**

Your action is needed NOW, as each day lost is one that the kids will never get back. Each Friday that the kids do not go to school sends a clear message (a WRONG message) that our state leadership believes that their education does not matter.

Only a special session will clearly signal that our state leadership is truly in step with the priorities of the citizens it serves. State leadership has already said they are regretful of the teacher furlough decision. We all agree the 17 Furlough days, which result in a reduction of instructional time to the tune of 10%+, are unconscionable and should never have been agreed upon. This must be fixed now and we are calling on you to do so.

We are all deeply embarrassed about how Hawaii, the state of Aloha, currently appears to the rest of the United States. No other state has thrown the brunt of their budget pitfall into the laps of their students. School districts in states including Georgia, North Carolina, Florida, and New Mexico have worked out deals where teachers take unpaid days off, but most of those furloughs are not on school days and they're limited to fewer than five days annually. It is unfathomable that Hawaii is saying that it is ok for our children to miss 17 days of school due to teacher furloughs. **By doing nothing, you are by default, saying it is ok to skimp on our keiki's education.**

The deadline to apply for millions of federal dollars that is set to go towards educational reform is the end of this year. **If you wait till the upcoming session to deal with this most pressing issue, you will jeopardize this significant new funding source.** Even Bill Gates is getting behind Educational Reform, and we'd be fools to take a path in the other direction.

Any idea that includes a compromise from all parties is a good solution. The point here is **not to pass the buck**, and not to pass blame, but to come together to find viable solutions. As our leaders, we expect you to build consensus and group together to come up with ideas on how to fund as many instructional days as possible, towards the goal of returning 180 days to our keiki.

Here's one idea/solution:

- Use part of the Hurricane fund, Rainy Day fund, Recycling fund and any other fund that currently carries a balance. If there is not enough support to re-allocate these special funds, request to "borrow" the funds. Use this funding to immediately restore as many furlough days as possible.
- Ask the teachers/union to schedule some, not all, but some of the furlough days on non-instructional days. Also, ask the teachers to extend the school day.
- Also, ask the DOE to form a committee of top teachers whom will be responsible for working side by side with DOE staffers to develop and implement ways to reduce school expenses. For every dollar saved, half of the savings could go to increase teacher salaries (or to get more teachers) while the other half could be used to pay back the "loan" from the Hurricane Fund.

Quite honestly, I believe most parents will buy into any creative solution that is offered up, as long as it includes concessions from each and every party to this issue. **But it is clear that the solution MUST come from the Legislature, who must agree to work in good faith with the DOE, the BOE and the Union.**

Teacher Furloughs negatively impact at least 200,000 residents in Hawaii every Friday and do irreparable harm to our keiki. We know better, we agree that we must do better, and **we are counting on our Legislative Leaders like you to stand up and say "we CAN do better"!**

Sincerely,
Celia Molina



~~Email: celia.molina@hawaii.gov~~

~~Phone: (808) 586-0000~~

p.s. Looking further ahead, we must do better to treat public education as one of the top priorities of our state. State of Hawaii must make efforts to get in step with the Federal Government, where there is a big calling for lengthening classroom time and increasing teacher pay. While we may not be able to fund these efforts given the budget constraints we face today, we must be committed to doing so in the near future. To do so, it is **vital that the Legislature make Public Education its own Committee.** Education deserves to have a concerted focus and should not be paired with Public Housing. The new Chair of the Public Education Committee should be positioned to work hand in hand with the Department of Education and the Teacher Unions to develop a comprehensive plan that will work towards creating stability and a growing revenue stream for improved education. Going forward, public education will only be faced with increased costs as we need more teachers, we will need to lower class sizes and lengthened time in the classroom. The federal government is gearing up to support these efforts, and at the state level we must do the same. **Here are some thoughts on revenue streams:**

**** Offer a State Lottery** with revenues which directly feed education.

**** GE Tax increase** which directly funds public education.

**** Partner with the military** – form a task force to review the impact of the changing and more transient military population's effect on the SOH Public School system. Consider going back to the DOD system.

ira staab [REDACTED]

I am deeply concerned about the closure of school on Furlough Fridays, and the impact it will have on our children. Please convene a Special Session of the Legislature to address this issue and find an alternative.

Mahalo, Ira