

SCR69

Date: 03/28/2011

Committee: Senate Education
Senate Energy and Environment

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Kathryn S. Matayoshi, Superintendent of Education

Title of Resolution: SCR 069/SR 042 REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO REPORT ON THE FEASIBILITY OF INCLUDING ENVIRONMENTAL CURRICULA AT EACH GRADE LEVEL

Purpose of Resolution: Requests the Department of Education to report on the feasibility of including environmental curricula at each grade level.

Department's Position: The Department of Education (Department) does not support SCR 69/SR 42 as currently written.

Knowledge and behaviors necessary to have citizens contribute effectively to the preservation of Hawaii's environment are already embedded within the Department's standards-based system and General Learner Outcomes (GLOs).

Through the delivery of K-12 standards-based instruction especially in science and social studies and in other content areas, students demonstrate proficiency in understanding that science, technology and society are related (Science Standard 2), that responsible civic actions are practices of good citizenship (Social Studies Standard 5), that there are effects from changes to the environment (Social Studies Standard 7) and that there are costs related to decisions regarding the use of limited resources (Social Studies Standard 8). The six GLOs are an integral part of school culture and serve as the over-arching goals of standards-based learning for all students in all grade levels. The self-directed learner,

complex thinker and community contributor are desired student outcomes. A feasibility study for appropriate environmental education curricula at each level is unnecessary at this time as environmental education is currently embedded in our state standards and demonstrated through the GLOs.



For the Protection of Hawaii's Native Wildlife

HAWAII AUDUBON SOCIETY

850 Richards Street, Suite 505, Honolulu, HI 96813-4709

Phone/Fax: (808) 528-1432; hiaudsoc@pixi.com

www.hawaii Audubon.com

**TO: Committee on Education
Senator Jill Tokuda, Chair
Senator Michelle Kidani, Vice Chair**

**Committee on Energy and Environment
Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair
Senator J. Kalani English, Vice Chair**

HEARING: Monday, March 28, 2011; 1:15 p.m., Conference Rm. 225

**Re: SCR69 – REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO
REPORT ON THE FEASIBILITY OF INCLUDING
ENVIRONMENTAL CURRICULA AT EACH GRADE LEVEL.**

Testimony in Support

Chairs Tokuda and Gabbard, and members of the Committees. On behalf of the Hawaii Audubon Society we offer this testimony in support of SCR69.

The Hawaii Audubon Society was founded in 1939, and is the oldest conservation organization in Hawaii. The Society has over 1,500 dedicated members statewide working together to further the Society's primary mission of the protection of Hawaii's unique ecosystems including native wildlife and habitats. The sad fact is that Hawaii has the highest number of listed threatened and endangered species in the nation.

On the Mainland, one of the latest movements in education is the integration of different subjects and disciplines in presenting information to students in the classroom. This concept is very appealing in environmental education as well. The study and understanding of many environmental issues involves different elements of science. Since science is a challenging subject for many students, educators often look for ways to improve the chances of students being able to grasp key concepts. It is becoming popular for educators to integrate subjects of math, science, and technology with different aspects of the humanities in order to help students gain a better understanding of these subjects, and effectively apply the concepts in real world situations.

Environmental issues offer a perfect opportunity for educators to use this approach since many of the solutions to current environmental problems call on interdisciplinary resources. Providing an environmental education curriculum, in our classrooms would allow students to synthesize this information on their own and apply this interdisciplinary understanding when it is appropriate.

The Audubon Society along with other environmental organizations promotes environmental education. Our experience shows that environmental education makes people aware of environmental issues, and develops a greater understanding of the relationship between humans and their surrounding environment.

We commend Senator Gabbard for introducing this resolution and would urge the committees to vote for its passage.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "G. Massengale". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "G" and a long, sweeping tail.

George Massengale, JD
Legislative Analyst