

# LATE TESTIMONY

Aloha e Rep. Marcus R. Oshiro, Chair, Finance Committee  
Rep. Marilyn B. Lee, Vice Chair, Finance Committee  
And Committee Members

**Mahalo for this opportunity to speak in STRONG SUPPORT of HB 2875.**

I have two daughters that have been in the immersion program since 2003. Prior to their arrival, my husband and I predetermined their educational pathway. We committed to giving them the educational opportunity that was not available to us or our parents. We decided to enroll them in Punana Leo o Wai'anae, Ke Kula Kaiapuni o Nanakuli and currently at Ke Kula Kaiapuni o Waiau.

We acknowledge that this is not a path often traveled or easy to navigate and comes with numerous challenges. However, we find it very rewarding and comforting to know that we, primarily them, are perpetuating our native language, cultural traditions and practices. We recognize that some of the best things in life are those that we have to really work at, struggle with and even, fight for.

Today, I am fighting for my children's, and all the Hawaiian Language students, right for a fair and equitable measurement of their education. They are taught in 'olelo Hawai'i ONLY, from kindergarten to fourth grade, have a very limited exposure in the fifth grade, and a little more each year thereafter.

This is why I feel very strongly that they should be assessed in the language that they are being taught in, especially when their exposure to English is so limited! As you may know, a straight language translation doesn't always convey the content or message equitably; and therefore shouldn't be considered for assessment purposes.

The 'Aha Kauleo Kaiapuni Hawai'i, or the Hawaiian Language Immersion Advisory Council, reconvened in 2012 and committed to the development of these assessments, at no cost, to the Department of Education this year. They are ready and willing to work with the Department of Education in providing an Assessment that will properly measure their level of proficiency in meeting State and Federal standards.

Again, I ask you to pass HB2875 and allow for a true measurement of academic achievement.

Mahalo nui loa me ha'aha'a,  
Kapua Keliikoa-Kamai