

Date: 03/23/2012

Committee: Senate Education

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Kathryn S. Matayoshi, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: SCR 132/SR 69 Requesting the Office of the Governor to Convene a Working Group to Examine the Possible Reorganization of the Department of Education's Adult Education Program to Better Align Portions of the Program With Departments or Agencies of the State or Counties Rather Than the Department of Education

Purpose of Bill: Requests the Office of the Governor to convene a working group to examine the possible reorganization of the Department of Education's Adult Education Program to better align portions of the program with departments or agencies of the state or counties rather than the Department of Education.

Department's Position:

The Department of Education (Department) is in agreement with SCR 132/SR 69 that because of the severe shortfall of funding for the adult education program, it would be appropriate to explore possible structural reorganization of the program. However, the Department feels that the specific issues of adult education and its reorganization would be better and more efficiently addressed by the Department and not by a workgroup of state and county agencies, University of Hawaii, officials, and affected public employee representatives. The Department recognizes the need to improve its efficiency and has submitted a plan to reduce the number of adult education schools from ten (10) to four (4) while maintaining statewide services. The Department is currently awaiting approval of its \$2.5 million supplemental budget request and will make adjustments to the number of schools remaining based on approved funding. During this period, the Department will continue to review alternative means for the delivery of services including the management structure of its adult education schools.

The Department remains committed to providing adult education services and will continue to consolidate its programs and management structure in order to maintain statewide services during fiscally challenging times.

Erin Conner

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Friday, March 23, 2012 2:08 PM
To: EDU Testimony
Cc: mitchell_otani@notes.k12.hi.us
Subject: Testimony for SCR132 on 3/23/2012 1:15:00 PM

Testimony for EDU 3/23/2012 1:15:00 PM SCR132

Conference room: 225
Testifier position: Oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Mitchell Otani
Organization: Kalani High School
E-mail: mitchell_otani@notes.k12.hi.us
Submitted on: 3/23/2012

Comments:

Testimony is opposition to Senate Concurrent Resolution 132

Chairperson Tokuda and members of the Senate Committee on Education: Thank you for the opportunity to testify in opposition to SCR132, which requests the Office of the Governor to convene a working group to examine the possible reorganization of the Department of Education's Adult Education Program to better align portions of the program with departments or agencies of the State or Counties rather than the Department of Education.

My name is Mitchell Otani and I am the Principal of Kalani High School. Kalani High, located in East Honolulu, is one of six public high schools in the Honolulu District. Our teaching and learning expectations and goals are based around the concept of developing 21st century competencies and skills among all our students.

At Kalani High, student achievement is our number one priority. We continue to assess and monitor the way instructional services are delivered to the students. We analyze many sources of data and their implications for change in our curriculum and instruction. Our teaching staff is committed to providing students with challenging, integrated and relevant learning experiences that result in high student achievement. We set high expectations and provide all students with challenging curricula and effective teaching and assessment practices that elevate the bar of achievement. While NCLB presents challenges to our school, we are committed to educating the whole child and providing them with a well-rounded education that enables them to be productive citizens in society. In SY 2010-2011, 120 students enrolled in and completed 145 running start classes (for dual credit) at Kapiolani Community College. Ninety-four percent of our graduates enroll in 2 or 4 year programs of studies at universities or community colleges.

Although the challenges of educating high school students have increased in the past ten years, systems are in place at Kalani High to meet these challenges head on. Hardworking, dedicated, knowledgeable teachers, an effective, efficient support staff and ideas, innovations and input from all stakeholders have resulted in a challenging and meaningful curriculum that fulfills the school's purpose and results in high student achievement of the standards. Quality instruction that engages students is delivered throughout the day to all students and we continue to examine the strengths, the needs and the resources available to help all students be successful.

Yet, despite all of our efforts, there is a pocket of students that fall through the cracks. These students, oftentimes through no fault of their own, become alienated to school. They do little work, become disenchanted with the curriculum, and see no connection between what is being taught and their immediate future. They are unable to make meaning of the curriculum at hand and seek to drop out and move on to another phase of their lives. We cannot, in good faith, allow these students to drop out without having a safety net to help them become productive, contributing members of society.

Yes, the Department of Health, the Department of Human Services, and many of the other State Departments, have programs that might be able to align well with the Department of Education's Adult Education program. Yes, a working group may be a good start to help our legislators understand the complexity of what the Department of Education's Adult Ed program does and help to better coordinate services to our struggling families. But if Senate Concurrent Resolution 132 is meant to serve as a springboard to the elimination of the Department of Education's Adult Education Program, then I must voice strong opposition to the resolution.

In your resolution, you state that the DOE's Community School for Adults provides a much needed service to the community and that the program is a vital public resource at a time when securing a job has become more difficult for many adults. Furthermore, you acknowledge that the program offers a number of courses that assist people who have dropped out to improve their skills. I also believe that the adult education population is an extremely resilient and hard working example of a people seeking to make a better life for their families.

How do we respond when kids don't learn? What do we do when the traditional vehicle for educating the child is unable to overcome the many challenges that the individual faces. I believe that we are judged and measured by the way we respond when kids are in need. We need to look for options and examine every path that we need to take to provide for our citizens. The options of aligning services is a great idea but please take measures to ensure that the Department of Education's Adult Education is and will continue to be an option that will be used to enable our students to transition to higher education programs or the workforce. Let us do whatever it takes to keep the Community Schools of Adults open for failure to do so will result in more costly measures in the future to fix the problem. For our kids - Failure is not an Option.

Thank you for taking the time to read this testimony.

Senator Jill Tokuda, Chair
Senator Michelle Kidani, Vice Chair
Committee on Education

Department of Education, Community School for Adults

March 23, 2012

Oppose Senate Concurrent Resolution 132, Requesting the office of the Governor to convene a working group to examine the possible reorganization of the Department of Education's Adult Education program to better align portions of the program with departments or agencies of the state or counties rather than the Department of Education.

As a curriculum coordinator for the ESL program at Moanalua/Aiea Community School for Adults, I would like to express my opposition to the Senate Concurrent Resolution 132 described above. The working group, as described in the resolution, appears to be lacking representation from any of the Community School for Adults. The administrators, teachers, coordinators as well as students all should have a voice in any decision that may impact the delivery of needed services and programs for the adults in specific communities throughout the state.

We at the community school provide critical and needed services to a diverse group of adults, many who are characterized as "non-traditional". Who best could understand their varying needs but the individuals who provide these critical services and programs. Representatives from the community schools in this working group, therefore, would be essential in order to be the "voice" for these "non-traditional" students.

The typical ESL student registers for our classes to learn English through reading, speaking and writing in order to improve their ability to assimilate into our American society. Many of them move on to obtain a high school diploma. A number of them are newly arrived from their native country and are seeking to achieve the American dream of economic independence. However, upon arrival to Hawaii, they often do not have the resources to attend the community colleges and/or other post-secondary training programs. The Adult Community School offers them the opportunity to take the first step in achieving further educational and training opportunities. A representative from the Community School on the task force would ensure that this group of student's needs would be heard and considered.

I repeat my opposition to S.C.R. 132 based on the reasons stated above.
Thank you for this opportunity to submit this written testimony.

Dora Yoneshige
ESL Curriculum Coordinator
Moanalua/Aiea Community School for Adults

Erin Conner

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, March 22, 2012 10:46 PM
To: EDU Testimony
Cc: kndi2hono@gmail.com
Subject: Testimony for SCR132 on 3/23/2012 1:15:00 PM

Testimony for EDU 3/23/2012 1:15:00 PM SCR132

Conference room: 225
Testifier position: Oppose
Testifier will be present: Yes
Submitted by: Kendi Ho
Organization: Individual
E-mail: kndi2hono@gmail.com
Submitted on: 3/22/2012

Comments:

Please do not support SCR 132 that proposes to move the Adult Community Schools from the DOE to the Community Colleges. The proposal does not address the needs of our target population and endangers their future as well as our economy.

I am currently a Low Beginning ESL (English as a Second Language) Instructor at McKinley Community School for Adults (MCSA). I was a Bridge Instructor and Teaching Assistant at Kapiolani Community College (KCC) to help our ESL and GED students transition to entry-level medical careers e.g. Long-term Care Certified Nursing Assistants and Medical Assistants. I have also taught various levels in a private language school in Vietnam, so I am well aware of how survival language skills can change the quality of life in a foreign country.

SCR 132 raises the question: Can the working group reorganize the adult education program within the University of Hawaii Community Colleges (UH CC) to better align the program with state and county agencies? The answer is no.

1) UH CC is limited in its physical resources to reach the Adult Community School target population effectively. Their campuses cannot offer classes with flexible enrollment, variety of locations and schedules as the Adult Community Schools currently do.

2) UH CC inherently imposes larger physical, language, and attitudinal barriers to our students since many of our students have lower language and academic skills than the UH CC population. The notion of going to a college campus and paying tuition is beyond many of our students' imagination. Our students need a bridge to the Community Colleges. The Adult Community Schools is that Bridge.

Unfortunately, SCR 132 fails to address the needs of our students because it fails to recognize whom the Community Adult Schools serve. Some of our students are parents or grandparents with children or grandchildren in school. Some of our students are working in low-level jobs that require little or no English skills e.g. waiter, cook, server, stock room clerk, housekeeper, business owner, etc. As mentioned previously, they need the flexibility of location and time that the UH CC cannot provide.

SCR 132 also ignores how the Adult Community Schools are effectively serving our students. We and many of our community partners have not been invited to the discussion table.

I urge the members of the Senate to read the student letters as if you lived in a foreign country and didn't speak the language. I can't tell you how my quality of life improved because I could tell the bus driver in Vietnamese when to stop or tell the electric bill collector that he charged me twice. Yet, my experience is different from some of my students, because I am literate in my first language and there was a transfer of literacy skills. Some of our students have little education in their first language and struggle to read and write that are different from other students who are educated.

SCR 132 is driving the state of Hawaii towards social injustice by excluding services to semi literate and or lower language learners who may have lower or no academic language or skills. This exclusion also will negatively affect Hawaii's economy since future jobs will be in higher skilled labor. From the Executive Summary of America's Perfect Storm Three Forces Changing our Nation's Future (Jan. 2007)

Employing demographic projections combined with current skill distributions, we estimate that by 2030 the average levels of literacy and numeracy in the working-age population will have decreased by about 5 per cent while inequality will have increased by about 7 percent. Put crudely, over the next 25 years or so, as better-educated individuals leave the workforce they will be replaced by those who, on average, have lower levels of education and skill. Over this same period, nearly half of the projected job growth will be concentrated in occupations associated with higher education and skills levels. This means that tens of millions more of our students and adults will be less able to qualify for higher-paying jobs.

Please support the Adult Community Schools within the DOE by rejecting the notion of reorganization proposed in SCR 132. Our students need the Adult Community Schools. Our community needs the Adult Community Schools. Adult Community Schools are effective at reaching and serving the community in ways that the UH CC inherently cannot. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Kendi Ho

Erin Conner

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Friday, March 23, 2012 10:23 AM
To: EDU Testimony
Cc: agenaj003@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: Testimony for SCR132 on 3/23/2012 1:15:00 PM

Testimony for EDU 3/23/2012 1:15:00 PM SCR132

Conference room: 225
Testifier position: Oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Kazuo Akena
Organization: Individual
E-mail: agenaj003@hawaii.rr.com
Submitted on: 3/23/2012

Comments:

Sorry, submitted incorrect "Testifier Position." Should have been "OPPOSE."

Erin Conner

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Friday, March 23, 2012 2:11 AM
To: EDU Testimony
Cc: lafamilia.ross@gmail.com
Subject: Testimony for SCR132 on 3/23/2012 1:15:00 PM

Testimony for EDU 3/23/2012 1:15:00 PM SCR132

Conference room: 225
Testifier position: Oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Richard Ross
Organization: Individual
E-mail: lafamilia.ross@gmail.com
Submitted on: 3/23/2012

Comments:

I oppose the possible switch from the current DOE community schools to another venue. The decentralized system meets the needs of the target population better, and the options (UH, community colleges, DLIR, DHS) would sway the process to entities who are less able to handle these special groups.

Erin Conner

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, March 22, 2012 8:16 PM
To: EDU Testimony
Cc: stellaliao1007@yahoo.com
Subject: Testimony for SCR132 on 3/23/2012 1:15:00 PM

Testimony for EDU 3/23/2012 1:15:00 PM SCR132

Conference room: 225
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: stella
Organization: Individual
E-mail: stellaliao1007@yahoo.com
Submitted on: 3/22/2012

Comments:

I would like to study English to communicate with my friend in Hawaii.

Erin Conner

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, March 22, 2012 5:16 PM
To: EDU Testimony
Cc: jshulu800@gmail.com
Subject: Testimony for SCR132 on 3/23/2012 1:15:00 PM

LATE TESTIMONY

Testimony for EDU 3/23/2012 1:15:00 PM SCR132

Conference room: 225
Testifier position: Oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Ai-Ling Chiang
Organization: Individual
E-mail: jshulu800@gmail.com
Submitted on: 3/22/2012

Comments:

From: emmanuel vourlas <vourlasemmanuel@gmail.com>
Subject: **Honolulu Adults School**
Date: March 22, 2012 4:03:44 PM HST
To: tokuda@capital.hawaii.gov.

LATE

Thunyatorn Vourlas
1221 Victoria St. #1502
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814

3-22-2012

Dear Mrs. Jill Tokuda
Chair of the Senate Committee on Education

I am a student at ⁺McKINLEY COMMUNITY SCHOOL FOR ADULTS. My name is Thunyatorn Vourlas. I am from Thailand and I came here 4 years ago. I have attended this school since 2008. I have completed ESL 1, 2, 3, 4, now I studying ESL 5. I am writing this letter because I am hearing a lot of people talking about closing schools.

I think that adults school are important because they provided us with a chance to study the English language. To live in the United States and enjoy all the things that this country has to offer is wonderful. Our schools provide many opportunities which are free for everyone who want to attend. This allows immigrants to get jobs and earn money to support their families.

Sincerely yours

Thunyatorn Vourlas