

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair

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HB1596 – Literacy Programs

Testimony in Strong Support

Dear House members,

I am taking this opportunity out of my busy morning when I should be studying for a college test to write you in support of House Bill 1596. I am in strong support of the schools receiving the funding to bring effective literacy programs back into Hawaii elementary schools. As a volunteer for the Rap program for three years I have seen first hand the delight in children's eyes when they are read too. Family's become involved in reading to their young children and you can actually see pride in them when they get their first library card and can pick out their own books to read.

I really don't know why we should have to even lobby to House members to fund reading programs in our schools, this should be a given. Reading is the foundation of all other learning in school. Without a firm base to stand on all other subjects will falter. Our children are our future they should be given the finest education possible to succeed in life. It is up to you to prepare our children to be well-educated and productive citizens. I know you will support this worthy bill because our children can't wait. Than you for considering this vital piece of legislation.

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COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair

Barbara A. Campbell
1487 Hiikala Place #30
Honolulu, HI 96816

HB1596 - Literacy Programs

House Finance Committee
Room 308
200pm

Testimony in Strong Support

I am writing in support of HB 1596 that would support literacy and reading programs in our public schools. As a volunteer for Read Aloud America, I have had the opportunity to talk to parents and kids about the positive effect the Read Aloud Program (RAP) on families. One family reported RAP has had a very positive influence on how they spend their evenings together and how they now enjoy having dinner together and reading stories before bed. These activities are the important foundation for kids to improve their education and future in the workforce by being comfortable with reading. Many of the parents in these schools have not had the benefit of literacy programs and they too are learning the enjoyment of reading.

In our public schools, Read Aloud America draws large crowds of parents and students (anywhere from 300-600 at each of the 6 sessions) and advances the concept of reading through strong family values and the love of reading and being read too. It's truly magical to observe children and families captivated with a good story. Oftentimes, the kids are the ones telling Mom and Dad they all have to go to RAP. Read Aloud America also has a book swap and the families love picking up books to read in between sessions. By supporting Read Aloud America, we are giving our kids and future leaders a better chance at education and stronger values as they grow up.

I encourage you to seriously consider Read Aloud America as the vehicle who will bring literacy across the state to our children and parents. This is a critical problem in the State of Hawaii and for our future success please invest in our children.

Your support is important to our keiki and the families in our public schools. Thank you for giving me an opportunity to express my thoughts with you today.

Mahalo,

Barbara Campbell

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair

Anne E. Biedel, MD
Vice President
Maui Medical Group

HB1596 - Literacy Programs

Testimony in Strong Support

I am writing in support of Read Aloud America program. Having been a part of the program in Lahaina I have a first hand appreciation of how much good we can do to help our kids learn to read. It is a critical part of this program to include parents in the experience with their children. What a great way to empower parents to help their little ones. I hope the government of Hawaii will appreciate and support this effort.

Sincerely,

Anne E. Biedel, MD
Vice President
Maui Medical Group

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair

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HB1596 - Literacy Programs

Re: House Bill 1596 - Testimony in Strong Support

I humbly submit this testimony to offer my strong support of House Bill 1596 to bring effective literacy programs back into Hawaii schools. Reading is the cornerstone of education, which in turn is the key to a productive and prosperous community in which its members can care for themselves and also for each other. To provide families opportunities to engage purposefully in reading and to increase access to literacy programs throughout our community are investments that we must make now if we truly care about the future of the State of Hawaii and, most importantly, its people. Thank you for considering this vital legislation.

Camille Michel
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COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair

**Christina Harrod,
4725 Bougainville Dr #299
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(808) 364-5352**

HB1596 – Literacy Programs

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in strong support of House Bill 1596 which would bring effective literacy programs back into Hawaii Schools. These programs get the parents more involved with the schools, help teach entire families the power of reading, and will help children grow into better prepared, more productive citizens! As a reader myself, I have seen kids grow to love reading. We read some of the Percy Jackson series and the kids were earnestly upset that they couldn't find the next book at the school library but absolutely thrilled that it was at the local library - and they even got their orange slip stamped to potentially win a prize! It makes me so happy, as a future educator, to see kids so eager to learn. Your support is very important. Thank you for considering this vital legislation.

**RAP reader, Christina Harrod,
4725 Bougainville Dr #299, Honolulu, HI 96818, (808) 364-5352**

House Finance Committee
Public Hearing
Thursday, February 27, 2014

Strong Support of HB2565

Dear Chairperson Luke and members,

I write to you in strong support of House Bill 2565.

It's nice to remember our dead by setting up memorials in their name, but without rules and guidelines to follow these memorials will end up popping up everywhere!!!!

HB2565 establishes the Coastal Memorials Task Force to review, evaluate, develop standards, and make recommendations regarding the practice of erecting coastal memorials.

We need to address this issue before it become out of hand. HB2565 is a good start in that direction.

Please support the passage of HB2565.

Regards,



Greg Gomes

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair

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HB1596 - Literacy Programs

Testimony in Strong Support

As parents, grandparents, and long-time educators in local schools, we urge your support for House Bill 1596 to extend funding to Read Aloud America. We know first-hand how effective this fine organization has been in not only enhancing literacy among our state's children but also in bringing families and communities of families together in positive ways. We give House Bill 1596 our very strongest approval and hope you will too.

Thank you,
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COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair

Moana Jenson

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HB1596 – Literacy Programs

Testimony in Strong Support

Aloha, thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts on Read Aloud America in strong support of House Bill 1596. I have been volunteering for the Read Aloud Program (RAP) for the past couple of years, and I can first-hand attest to the program effectiveness in reaching its 10 objectives. The children that I read to have said that they read more since the first day of the program, as well as they love reading more since the program. The children are always sad when it's the last reading session and they want it to keep going. Born and raised on Maui, I was home schooled until high school, and I grew up without a TV and reading was a huge focus in my life, and I am still an avid reader, as well as both of my sisters. My older sister and I are both college graduates, and my younger sister will be graduating in June, and we all attribute much of our educational success to the fact that we are fast readers with high comprehension, due to the fact that we have been reading since we were very little, as well as both of our parents read to us everyday. Reading is a skill that needs practice and nourishment, and with early development and love for it, children are instilled with a wonderful sense of accomplishment, as well as a very useful and practical tool that will help them later in life, whether in college or at work. The first thing I always do when I start my first reading session with the keiki is to introduce myself (I'm 27) and tell them my favorite things to do: surfing, reading, making jewelry and snowboarding. I usually read to 4th or 5th graders, and I see them perk up when I explain that you can be a surfer and love to read too, as some children believe reading is "uncool" and by the end of the 6 week session, the "cool" kids even say that they now love to read. So, in my opinion the program really does work, and I hope it will only keep expanding and being offered in more schools and more often.

Mahalo for your time,

Moana Jenson

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COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair

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HB1596 - Literacy Programs

Testimony in Strong Support

To Whom this may Concern:

Aloha,

2-27-14

My name is George Kahumoku Jr & I am a musician, teacher, writer, artist & a farmer. I was the Principal for an Alternative School in Kona called Hale O Ho'oponono that lasted for 25 years. I have also taught At Risk kids at Lahainaluna High School for almost 20 years. I am the Retired Director of the UHMC Institute of Hawaiian Music & a teacher at the College for over 8 years. As a writer, I have participated & attended Read Aloud's Events here on Maui from the West side in Lahaina at King Kamehameha III Elementary School all the way to the East side at Hana Elementary, Intermediate, & High School. It is amazing to see whole Communities Wrap themselves around this Family Event called "Read Aloud America !" This Event brings families Closer together! There's so much buzz & excitement in the air when we go to a school. You can feel & see the anticipation on the faces of the students as well as the support of the parents! Please support this worthy cause!

Tonight I will be reading from my book "A Hawaiian Life," at Lihikai Elementary School in Kahului on Maui, & you know that I'll come early to get a good parking spot, because Lihikai School Parking Lot will be packed the the Gills with parents, students, teachers and volunteers tonight!!! Why? ?? Because tonight's Free "Read Aloud America" event at Lihikai Elementary shares not only reading, free food and stories, but it conjures up the kind of enthusiasm that stays with our kids for a lifetime of good vibes & warm Fuzzy's. I know that it will be a Celebration for all who attend, a sharing of time & space of things Good & Pono ! Excited?!! You bet I am!

Please Support kids, families, whole Communities! Please help Support Read Aloud America!

You know I've been nominated for The Grammys 6 times, & won 4 Grammys for Best Hawaiian music. My wife Nancy & I have attended the Grammy Festivities in LA at Staples Center with 40,000+ people in the crowd, All 6 times! I want you to know that The Enthusiasm for "Read Aloud America," matches any one of the Grammys Festivities I've Attended!

Sincerely

George Kahumoku Jr

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair

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HB1596 – Literacy Programs

House Finance Committee
Room 308
200pm

Testimony in Strong Support

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in strong support of House Bill 1596 which would bring effective literacy programs back into Hawaii Schools. As a retired teacher and principal, literacy is one of the most important tools for a child's further success. The enjoyment of reading, being able to comprehend, and problem solve comes from literacy. From my experience as an educator, a child who has difficulty in reading by grade 3 most likely will continue to have difficulty in reading in future grades. Literacy is across the curriculum so without a strong background in reading a student's chance for success becomes more difficult. These students often become a behavior challenge as they continue to grow, develop and advance to higher grades and this often leads to low self-esteem.

Read Aloud America draws large crowds of parents and students and advances the concept of reading through family strong family values and the love of reading and being read too. I have had the opportunity to experience first hand the twinkle in they eye of a young girl or boy as they pick their first brand new book. I look in each child's face as a story is being read and note the excitement, smile or seriousness that they express. I see them visiting the book swap table with mom or dad to pick out a slightly used book. I note the dad or mom reading to their child before the program begins. I hear the principal who states, " I have never had so many people in my cafeteria" or the public librarian who states, " our student participation has tripled since RAP begin at our neighborhood school".

I encourage you to seriously consider Read Aloud America as the vehicle who will bring literacy across the state to our children and parents. Literacy is a critical problem in the State of Hawaii and for our future success we must invest in our children.

Thank you for giving me an opportunity to express my thoughts with you today.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair

Matthew Gurewitsch
3415 Kuaua Pl.
Kihei (Maui) HI 96753

HB1596 - Literacy Programs

Testimony in Strong Support

With all due respect and gratitude for advances in the electronic media, reading remains a bedrock skill for every child. Mahalo for this opportunity to testify in strong support of House Bill 1596. The dollars spent on effective literacy programs for schoolchildren in our state will pay back a thousandfold. Literacy programs stimulate children's imagination and widen their horizons. They also promote and deepen meaningful interaction between parents and schools. Effective literacy programs help our children become more creative and independent thinkers, to their lifelong benefit as they grow into responsible citizens and well-prepared members of the workforce in an ever more competitive global economy.

Matthew Gurewitsch

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COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

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HB1596 - Literacy Programs

Re: House Bill 1596 - Testimony in Strong Support

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in strong support of House Bill 1596 which would bring effective literacy programs back into Hawaii Schools. I have been volunteering with the Read Aloud America program for several years, and children are so excited to have books placed in their hands, read to them, discussed with them. They love sharing about the books they have read. These programs get the entire community involved in helping grow our children into lifelong readers, learners, and productive citizens. Your support is very important. Thank you for considering this vital legislation.

Michelle Nevius
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Testimony in Support of HB2565

House Committee on Finance
Thursday 27, 2014

Dear Chair Luke and Members of the House Finance Committee,

The random construction of coastal memorials is an issue that needs your immediate attention. At this point, if unchecked, we will soon be besieged by structures that desecrate the environment. Your assistance in the matter which supports HB2565 is tantamount.

Please see to it that matters as such do not go un-noticed by those who are in positions of authority.

Please support the passage of HB2565.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my plea.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Reden Lagat', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Reden Lagat



STATE OF HAWAII
HAWAII STATE PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM
OFFICE OF THE STATE LIBRARIAN
44 MERCHANT STREET
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

HB 1596, HD1 – Relating to Literacy

Testimony by Richard Burns, State Librarian

The Hawaii State Public Library System (HSPLS) supports HB 1596, HD 1, which would establish a statewide literacy program under the department of human services, and would appropriate funds for its establishment. By utilizing existing programs, and collaborating with nonprofit groups to provide direct services to Hawaii's families, the department of human services will administer a literacy program that supports a bright future for Hawaii's children and families.

While HSPLS supports all legitimate efforts to increase Hawaii's literacy rates and benefit Hawaii's children and families, this Bill specifically mentions Read Aloud America (RAA), an organization with which HSPLS has had a partnership since 2006.

Our libraries and staff have worked with Read Aloud America program participants, and have seen its positive influence in many communities across the state. Your support of this Bill will allow them to continue to work with families to promote reading and reduce illiteracy.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

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Simona Patierno

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HB1596 - Literacy Programs

Testimony in Strong Support

"Re: House Bill 1596 - Testimony in Strong Support"

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in strong support of House Bill 1596 which would bring effective literacy programs back into Hawaii Schools. These programs get the parents more involved with the schools, help teach entire families the power of reading, and will help our children grow into better prepared, and more productive citizens! Your support is very important. Thank you for considering this vital legislation.

Having children relying on readings programs that are fun and educational is nowadays a powerful tool to create a nice foundation to build on.

Simona Patierno

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair

Susan Gurewitsch
3415 Kuaua Place
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HB1596 - Literacy Programs

Testimony in Strong Support

With no disrespect to electronic media, reading remains an essential skill for every child. Mahalo for this opportunity to testify in strong support of House Bill 1596. The investment in effective literacy programs for our schoolchildren is priceless. Literacy programs stimulate children's imagination and widen their horizons, while building meaningful interactions between parents and schools. Effective literacy programs help children become more creative and independent thinkers, to their lifelong benefit as they become responsible citizens and well-prepared members of the workforce in an ever more competitive global economy.

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Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair

Myrna Woolery
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HB1596 - Literacy Programs

House Bill 1596 - Testimony in Strong Support

As a volunteer for the Read Aloud Program, I've witnessed the enthusiastic involvement and motivation of the numerous parents and children in this literacy program. Your support for House Bill 1596 will ensure a successful future for the youth in our schools and provide a great service to the community. Mahalo!

Myrna Woolery
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COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair

Israel Chavez
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HB1596 - Literacy Programs

House Finance Committee
Room 308
200pm

Testimony in Strong Support

Dear Hawaii State Legislators,

I strongly support House Bill 1596 which will strengthen literacy programs for all children in the State of Hawaii. These literacy programs will not only benefit the children, but also increase the connection between the schools and Hawaii's parents/ guardians. The benefits will be seen in real-time, and also multiply as they are passed down to the next generation and produce more educated and productive citizens.

Thank you for your time and attention,

Israel Chavez
1867 Kaioo Dr. #307
Honolulu, HI 96815
808-280-2351

Chair Mele Carroll, Vice Chair Kobayashi, and the Financial Committee,

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in strong support of HB 1596. I believe effective literacy programs in schools will be beneficial to students, parents, teachers, and the community as a whole because it provides a means of communicating effectively and encourages self-expression. The programs will encourage parents to become more involved in schools, therefore fostering a relationship with their children and the school.

I am a single mother to a twelve-year-old boy who is in the sixth grade. He has developed a voracious appetite for reading and writing. As I youngster, I, too, fell in love with words. I loved to be read to by my parents and teachers. In high school volunteered to read to children at the public library. Literary adaptations of Shakespeare (in forms of contemporary plays and in cinema) enabled me to understand and enjoy Shakespeare. I also took theatre classes in high school and college, where I also had an opportunity to be in Shakespearean and contemporary plays.

When my son was in daycare and preschool, I volunteered to read to him and his classmates. He says he wants to become a publisher one day. His HSA 4th grade 2011-2012 school year Reading Score is 412 (exceeds proficiency). His Lexile Score from his 4th grade 2011-2012 school year is 1120L (grades 9 to 10). A two years ago, I was in a Shakespeare play and he helped me run lines, tagged along for rehearsals, and sometimes filled in for missing performers at rehearsal. He is currently studying Shakespeare at school and says he is glad he got the early exposure because he comprehends and appreciates Shakespeare.

I recently signed up as a volunteer reader for Read Aloud America and was happy to share my joy of reading and performance with the students. They asked if I could read to them again at the next session. The enthusiasm expressed by the children in during the program (before and after the group reading sessions) was tremendous. I was so elated to see and hear the children's excitement over books that it nearly drove me to tears of awe and gratitude. I held my composure and took in the scenery of the exhilaration of the children's love for reading.

Literacy is a key to unlocking potential knowledge. As they say, knowledge is power. Let's empower the children to become prepared and productive citizens. Your support is important. Thank you for considering this vital legislation.

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