



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

Date: 01/29/2014

Committee: House Education

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Kathryn S. Matayoshi, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: HB 1797 RELATING TO VOTING.

Purpose of Bill: Requires the department of education to provide seniors at every public school with voter registration information prior to graduation. Requires the department of human services to provide young adults who are in the young adult voluntary foster care program with information on voter registration and authorizes the department to assist young adults with registering to vote.

Department's Position:

The Department of Education (Department) supports the proposed language in Section 2 of HB 1797.



**STATE OF HAWAII
OFFICE OF ELECTIONS**

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SCOTT T. NAGO
CHIEF ELECTION OFFICER

TESTIMONY OF THE
CHIEF ELECTION OFFICER, OFFICE OF ELECTIONS
TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
ON HOUSE BILL NO. 1797
RELATING TO VOTING

January 29, 2014

Chair Takumi and members of the House Committee on Education, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill No. 1797. The purpose of this bill is to require the Department of Education to provide public school seniors with voter registration information prior to graduation and to similarly require the Department of Human Services to provide such information to young adults in the young adult voluntary foster care program.

We consider having these opportunities to be able to easily register to vote to be an important part of ensuring that all qualified residents are able to exercise their right to vote.

As it relates to Section 2 of the bill, we would ask that the committee include language, similar to that which exists in Section 3 of the bill. Specifically, we would propose the addition of the following language: "The department may also assist students with voter registration." This language would affirm that such assistance could be provided.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill No. 1797.

RICKY R. WATANABE
County Clerk

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TESTIMONY OF RICKY R. WATANABE
COUNTY CLERK, COUNTY OF KAUA'I
TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
ON HOUSE BILL NO. 1797
RELATING TO VOTING
January 29, 2014

Chair Takumi and Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill No. 1797. This Bill would require the Department of Education to provide seniors at every public school with voter registration information prior to graduation. Additionally, the Bill would require the Department of Human Services to provide young adults who are in the young adult voluntary foster care program with information on voter registration and authorizes the department to assist young adults with registering to vote.

We support the intent of this Bill but take no position. However, we wish to note that it is crucial for voter registration information and related services to be delivered uniformly statewide to help establish an informed electorate comprised of individuals from a wide array of socio-economic backgrounds.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify on House Bill No. 1797.

RICKY R. WATANABE
County Clerk

HAWAII YOUTH SERVICES NETWORK

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Daryl Selman, President
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Aloha House
American Civil Liberties Union of Hawaii
Bay Clinic, Inc.
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Honolulu
Big Island Substance Abuse Council
Blueprint for Change
Bobby Benson Center
Catholic Charities Hawaii
Child and Family Service
Coalition for a Drug Free Hawaii
Courage House Hawaii
Domestic Violence Action Center
EPIC, Inc.
Family Programs Hawaii
Family Support Hawaii
Hale Kipa, Inc.
Hale 'Opio Kauai, Inc.
Hawaii Behavioral Health
Hawaii Student Television
Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies Coalition
Hina Mauka Teen Care
Hui Malama Learning Center
Kaanalike
Kahi Mo'ohala Behavioral Health
KEY (Kualoa-Heeia Ecumenical Youth)
Project
Kids Hurt Too
Kokua Kalihii Valley
Life Foundation
Marimed Foundation
Maui Youth and Family Services
Palama Settlement
P.A.R.E.N.T.S., Inc.
Parents and Children Together (PACT)
Planned Parenthood of Hawaii
REAL
Salvation Army Family Intervention Svcs.
Salvation Army Family Treatment Svcs.
Sex Abuse Treatment Center
Susannah Wesley Community Center
The Catalyst Group
The Children's Alliance of Hawaii
Waikiki Health Center
Women Helping Women
YWCA of Kauai

January 23, 2014

To: Representative Roy Takumi, Chair
And members of the Committee on Education

Testimony in Support of HB 1797 Relating to Voting

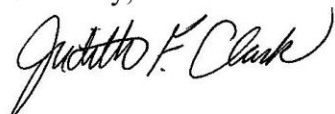
Hawaii Youth Services Network (HYSN), a statewide coalition of youth-serving organizations, supports HB 1797 Relating to Voting.

Hawaii has one of the lowest voter turnout rates in the country. In the past few elections, only about 40% of the state's registered voters have participated in the primary election. And that's only about 36% of all the people in Hawaii who are eligible to vote, registered or not. We do better in the general election, but turnout has still been in the 50 percent range in non-presidential years and a bit above 60 percent in presidential election year.

Providing high school students and youth in foster care with encouragement and assistance with voter registration, in settings where they feel comfortable, will help young people form the habit of voting and increase their participation in the election process.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,



Judith F. Clark, MPH
Executive Director



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COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Wednesday, January 29, 2014, 2:00 p.m., Conference Room 309
HB 1797 RELATING TO YOUNG ADULTS VOTING
TESTIMONY

Susan Irvine, Legislative Committee, League of Women Voters of Hawaii

Chair Roy M. Takumi, Vice-Chair Takashi Ohno, and Committee Members:

The League of Women Voters of Hawaii supports HB 1797 which requires the DOE to provide seniors at public schools with voter registration information and requires the DHS to provide young adults in the young adult voluntary foster care program with such information and authorizes the department to assist young adults with registering to vote.

As pointed out in HB 1797, voter turnout for young adults in Hawaii is one of the lowest in the country. This cannot be good for the future of our democracy. For this reason, the League of Women Voters would like to strongly endorse the effort to provide voter registration to our young adults. We would encourage providing this information to seniors in ALL our high schools, public and private, as all our young potential voters need this information. The County of Hawaii Office of Elections has a commendable outreach program for all schools that wish to participate. The DOE should be encouraged to work with our State Office of Elections on this matter.

Revising HRS Chapter 346 to require the DHS to provide voter registration information to young adults in foster care is a commendable endeavor also. However, the League is unclear on how the DHS would further "...assist young adults with voter registration." This provision needs clarification or removal.

We urge you to pass this bill providing voter registration information to our youth. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.