

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
GOVERNOR



KATHRYN S. MATAYOSHI
SUPERINTENDENT

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

Date: 02/03/2014

Committee: House Education

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Kathryn S. Matayoshi, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: HB 2596 RELATING TO AIR CONDITIONING IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

Purpose of Bill: Appropriates \$25,000,000 to the Department of Education for the design and construction of electrical upgrades and installation of air conditioning units in public school classrooms, beginning with those priority schools identified by the Department. Effective July 1, 2014.

Department's Position:

The Department of Education supports this bill. This initiative can augment the DOE's overall plan to address heat abatement in the classrooms. Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on this bill.



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TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON EDUCATION

Wil Okabe
President
Joan Kamila Lewis
Vice President
Colleen Pasco
Secretary-Treasurer
Alvin Nagasako
Executive Director

DATE: MONDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2014

RE: H.B. 2596 - RELATING TO AIR CONDITIONING IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

PERSON TESTIFYING: WIL OKABE
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

The Honorable Chair Roy Takumi, The Honorable Vice-Chair Takashi Ohno and the Members of the Committee:

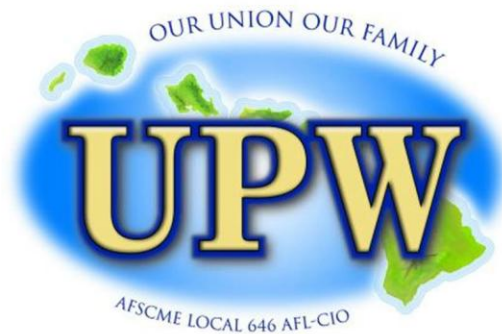
The Hawaii State Teachers Association (HSTA) **supports HB 2596** relating to Air-conditioning in public school facilities.

HSTA is the exclusive representative of more than 13,500 public and charter school teachers statewide. As the state affiliate, of the 3.2 million members of the National Education Association, HSTA believes that schools need air conditioning and that the condition of the schools physical plant impacts the health, safety, and welfare of students and staff members.

Our public schools are hot. At times, the heat index inches closer to 100 degrees during the summer, fall and spring. Students and teachers who work in these schools try to keep cool without the benefit of air conditioning in the classroom. At times, when a classroom becomes unbearable, teachers resort to turning the lights off, purchasing their own fans, and water breaks are frequent (if there is a water fountain available at the school) to name of few of the strategies to keep students comfortable as temperatures soar. Other schools are rotating students into air-conditioned libraries or computer labs to cool off, and some are even changing the day's lesson to avoid the heat and fatigue related to the environment.

It is well known that many of our educational facilities are in a state of decay, neglect, and/or deterioration. The association supports funding to modernize, expand, replace, and/or maintain these facilities with air conditioning in order to provide a safe, healthy, and effective teaching and learning environment for students and employees. The association further believes that the community, parent/guardians, students and education employees must be effectively involved in the development of the plans to modernize, expand and/or replace air-conditioning units.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **support of HB 2596**.



THE HAWAII STATE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
The Twenty-Seventh Legislature
Regular Session of 2013

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

The Honorable Rep. Roy M. Takumi, Chair
The Honorable Rep. Takashi Ohno, Vice Chair

DATE OF HEARING: Monday, February 3, 2014
TIME OF HEARING: 2:00 P.M.
PLACE OF HEARING: Conference Room 309

**TESTIMONY ON HB2596 RELATING TO AIR CONDITIONING IN PUBLIC
SCHOOLS**

By DAYTON M. NAKANELUA,
State Director of the United Public Workers, AFSCME Local 646, AFL-CIO

My name is Dayton M. Nakanelua and I am the State Director of the United Public Workers, AFSCME, Local 646, AFL-CIO (UPW). The UPW is the exclusive representative for approximately 11,000 public employees, which include blue collar, non-supervisory employees in Bargaining Unit 01 and institutional, health and correctional employees in Bargaining Unit 10, in the State of Hawaii and various counties. The UPW also represents about 1,500 members of the private sector.

The UPW supports HB2596 that appropriates \$25,000,000 to the Department of Education for the design and construction of electrical upgrades and installation of air conditioning units in public school classrooms, beginning with those priority schools identified by the Department. Effective July 1, 2014.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

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Honolulu, Hawaii 96813



Telephone: 808 926-1530
Contact@HEECoalition.org

House Committee on Education
Representative Roy Takumi, Chair
Representative Takashi Ohno, Vice Chair

February 3, 2014

Dear Chair Takumi, Vice Chair Ohno, and Committee Members:

This testimony is submitted in support for HB2596, appropriating \$25 million to the Department of Education for the design and construction of electrical upgrades and installation of air conditioning units in public school classrooms.

The Hui for Excellence in Education (HE'E) is a diverse coalition of over 40 parent and community organizations dedicated to improving student achievement by increasing family and community engagement and partnerships in our schools. Our member list is attached.

We understand that there are schools in our state that are not air-conditioned, and in some areas, temperatures in classrooms can get up to over 90 degrees fahrenheit. From a parent and family perspective, a child's environment is extremely important for learning. Not only are exceedingly hot temperatures bad for a child's well being, but also, does not contribute to a positive learning experience. We also realize that funding air-conditioning for our schools is an extremely expensive and a complicated proposition. At a recent meeting, we heard DOE facilities personnel describe the costs for air conditioning and ongoing maintenance, and also the costs to prepare the infrastructure to make air conditioning viable and worth the investment. It is a large undertaking since most of our facilities are older and were originally not designed to have air conditioning. Nevertheless, we think that attention needs to be focused on this issue of cooling classrooms. The DOE is working hard to address the issue and is exploring many options, not just air conditioning, to make our classrooms comfortable for students. Therefore, the Coalition supports the appropriation of \$25 million to the Department of Education, but more broadly for heat abatement, which includes air conditioning. It is going to take a long-term view to address all of our schools, but this appropriation is a good start and is an indication that having our students in comfortable environments for learning is a priority.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify and for your consideration. Our support of this bill represents a 75% consensus or more of our membership.

Sincerely,

Cheri Nakamura
HE'E Coalition Director

HE'E Member List

Academy 21
After-School All-Stars Hawaii
Alliance for Place Based Learning
*Castle Complex Community Council
Center for Civic Education
Coalition for Children with Special Needs
*DOE Windward District
*Faith Action for Community Equity
Fresh Leadership LLC
Girl Scouts Hawaii
*Good Beginnings Alliance
Harold K.L. Castle Foundation
*Hawaii Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice
Hawai'i Athletic League of Scholars
*Hawai'i Charter School Network
*Hawai'i Nutrition and Physical Activity Coalition
*Hawaii State PTSA
Hawai'i State Student Council
Hawai'i State Teachers Association
Hawai'i P-20
Hawai'i 3Rs
Head Start Collaboration Office
It's All About Kids
*INPEACE
Joint Venture Education Forum
Junior Achievement of Hawaii
Kamehameha Schools
Kanu Hawai'i
Keiki to Career
Kupu A'e
*Leaders for the Next Generation
Learning First
McREL's Pacific Center for Changing the Odds

Our Public School

*Pacific Resources for Education and Learning
*Parents and Children Together
*Parents for Public Schools Hawai'i
Punahou School PUEO Program
Teach for America
The Learning Coalition
US PACOM
University of Hawai'i College of Education
YMCA of Honolulu
Voting Members (*)



46-063 Emepela Pl. #U101 Kaneohe, HI 96744 · (808) 679-7454 · Kris Coffield · Co-founder/Legislative Director

**TESTIMONY FOR HOUSE BILL 2596, RELATING TO AIR CONDITIONING
IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

**House Committee on Education
Hon. Roy M. Takumi, Chair
Hon. Takashi Ohno, Vice Chair**

**Monday, February 3, 2014, 2:00 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 309**

Honorable Chair Takumi and committee members:

I am Kris Coffield, representing IMUAlliance, a nonpartisan political advocacy organization that currently boasts over 175 local members. On behalf of our members, we offer this testimony in support of House Bill 2596, relating to air conditioning in public schools.

Studies show that the percentile gap between conditioned and non-conditioned environments can exceed 10 points on achievement tests, clearly evincing the impact of a comfortable environment on student success. In a longitudinal analysis contained in “Effects of the Physical Environment on Student Learning,” Glen I. Earthman of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University found that students between 4th and 9th grade at demographically similar schools showed increased gains in reading vocabulary, total math, problem solving, math procedures, pre-writing, and editing at schools with air conditioning, when compared with peers from non-conditioned schools. Moreover, Earthman demonstrated that the longer and more consistently students are exposed to thermal conditioning, the better and more stable their performance gains tend to be. Conversely, students exposed to thermal conditioning for only short or intermittent periods of time demonstrated lower achievement levels compared to their peers. These finds are supported by U.S. Department of Education sponsored research and facilities maintenance positions, which state that proper thermal conditioning systems lead to better attitudes toward learning, fewer disciplinary problems, and sustained achievement (McGuffey 1982, Cash 1993).

While we applaud the Hawaii State Department of Education for requesting \$25 million in supplemental funds to cool local classrooms over the next year, we note that previous DOE estimates of the cost to provide air conditioning at all schools currently lacking and needing such systems have soared past \$1.5 billion. Thus, if policymakers' goal is to improve air conditioning facilities systemwide—in which temperatures at some classrooms regularly and persistently surpass 100 degrees—a long-term fiscal plan of action is imperative. We, thus, encourage committee members to support similar measures pending this year that call upon the department to plan for future air conditioning installation, given that \$25 million covers approximately 1.7 percent of the department's overall cost projection. In conversations with photovoltaic companies, advocates have learned that employing off-grid DC-powered air conditioners, operated entirely (100 percent) from photovoltaic modules that store energy in power-saving batteries, may cost between \$15,000 to \$30,000 per classroom, a savings of 70 to 85 percent from DOE projections of \$115,000 to \$200,000 per classroom (discounting monthly per-classroom lease payments that could be offset by energy savings). We recognize that such a plan would need to be thoroughly vetted by state financial advisors, department officials, and policymakers, but believe that the possible revenue savings brought about by renewable energy technology are significant enough to warrant strong consideration for inclusion in the department's already robust renewable and sustainable energy programs, which will ultimately allow appropriations for facilities upgrades to be managed more strategically.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

Sincerely,
Kris Coffield
Legislative Director

To Rep. Takumi and members of the House Education Committee,

My name is Corey Rosenlee and I am a teacher at Campbell High School. I strongly support HB2596. I would like to take you into one of the rooms at Campbell D110. The room has four cinder block walls. Two of the walls have no windows. The other two walls only have window slits at the very top. This is a good design for an oven not a classroom. Classrooms are hotter than the outside, then you add 30-40 bodies warm bodies and poor air circulation, and our classrooms become hot sweaty pits. This year at Campbell temperatures in the classrooms reached over 90 degrees, with a high temperature of 95 degrees. At Waiialua High, Lahainaluna High, and Honowai Elementary teachers at these schools snapped pictures of their classrooms reaching over 90 degrees.

Ask yourself as a parent would you hold a birthday party for twenty 6 year olds on a hot day indoors, and just open the windows a little bit?

As a society one of our greatest responsibilities is to give our children a quality education, and a quality education begins with a quality learning environment. Putting children in a classroom at 95 degrees for 6 hours a day is a way you make a cake not a scholar.

Studies show that the lack of ac impacts student behavior, ability to concentrate and test scores. With test scores increasing by 10 points when students learned in an ac vs. a non-ac room.

In the past it has been suggested to just buy fans. I have had 12 fans in a room, and that is not uncommon. First of all, teachers are already buying and putting their own fans in the classrooms and second it doesn't work. One student once asked me if the fans were heaters because they were just blowing and circulating hot air. High school students, due to the heat, would argue who should get the fan. I am a good teacher, but when it gets that hot there is nothing I can do. After being in these enclosed hot rooms all day the kids start putting their heads down. That is why this issue angers me so much. Our major private schools understand this problem and they put ac in their classrooms. Because there is no way a Punahou parent would tolerate their child in a 90 plus degree classroom. But that this is exactly what we do to public school children. We cram them into hot and crowded classrooms with 40 kids in 90 degree temperature that is not conducive to learning and then we call that a quality public education in Hawaii. This is not fair and that is not right, our public school children deserve better and this needs to change. Our keiki deserve better. Please pass HB2596 and give our students a quality learning environment. Thank you.

ohno2-Rexie

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Friday, January 31, 2014 10:24 PM
To: EDNtestimony
Cc: sherrianwitt@aol.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HB2596 on Feb 3, 2014 14:00PM*

HB2596

Submitted on: 1/31/2014

Testimony for EDN on Feb 3, 2014 14:00PM in Conference Room 309

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
sherrian witt	Witt Counseling Service	Support	No

Comments:

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ohno2-Rexie

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Friday, January 31, 2014 9:19 AM
To: EDNtestimony
Cc: mendezj@hawaii.edu
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HB2596 on Feb 3, 2014 14:00PM*

HB2596

Submitted on: 1/31/2014

Testimony for EDN on Feb 3, 2014 14:00PM in Conference Room 309

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Javier Mendez-Alvarez	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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