



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

**Date:** 03/17/2014

**Committee:** House Education

**Department:** Education

**Person Testifying:** Kathryn S. Matayoshi, Superintendent of Education

**Title of Resolution:** HCR 046/HR 27 URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO TAKE NECESSARY STEPS TO REINFORCE INSTRUCTION REGARDING AMERICAN CIVICS.

**Purpose of Resolution:** Urges the Department of Education to take necessary steps to reinforce instruction regarding American Civics.

**Department's Position:**

The Department of Education (Department) appreciates the intent of HCR 46/HR 27 that urges the Department to emphasize and reinforce instruction regarding American civics prior to entering high school. We are committed to the continuous improvement and enhancement of our social studies programs, including participatory skills to become engaged citizens.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

## ohno2-Rexie

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**From:** Carole Hagihara on behalf of Rep. Isaac W. Choy  
**Sent:** Monday, March 17, 2014 9:10 AM  
**To:** EDNtestimony  
**Cc:** 'Ormorse0@gmail.com'  
**Subject:** Testimony HR 27 and HCR 46

**Importance:** High

Please accept Mr. Morse's testimony as it was emailed to the incorrect committee.

Thank you!

**Carole M. Hagihara**

Legislative Office Manager  
Office of Representative Isaac Choy  
415 S. Beretania Street, Room 404  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Tel: 586-8475 Email: [c.hagihara@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:c.hagihara@capitol.hawaii.gov)

Member Website: <http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/memberpage.aspx?member=choy&year=2014>

Capitol Website: [www.capitol.hawaii.gov](http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov)

**From:** Richard Morse [mailto:0rmorse0@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 16, 2014 12:28 PM  
**To:** AGRtestimony  
**Cc:** Rep. Isaac W. Choy  
**Subject:** Testimon HR 27 and HCR 46

To Roy M. Takumi--Chair, House committee on Education; and  
Takashi Ohno--vice Chair, House Committee on Education  
Hawaii State Legislature.

March 16, 2014

Re: Testimony: In support of HR 27 and HCR 46, URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO TAKE NECESSARY STEPS TO REINFORCE INSTRUCTION REGARDING AMERICAN CIVICS.

Dear Mr. Takumi and Mr. Ohno and Committee members,

My name is Richard Morse, and I advocate strongly for this measure for all the reasons mentioned in these resolutions.

As a native of Hawaii, I am concerned about the future of our state. I see, more and more, expressions like "equity" and "social justice", entering the

vernacular. These ideas are embedded in our current education system-- Common Core. And while there may be some merit to these *socialist* notions, they are not the principals that make the United States the most successful nation ever.

The United States of America is founded on '*individual liberty*' and '*equal opportunity*' for each person. These are quite different from '*equity*' and '*social justice*'--if not the antithesis.

I believe that our generation--yours and mine--will be counted as a *failure*, in the eyes of future historians, if we do not make *extra* effort to teach our children the ideas that are so beautifully imbedded in the tenets upon which our nation was founded; as well as the remarkable story surrounding them.

Mahalo for receiving my testimony.

Richard Morse

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[morse4gov](http://morse4gov)

**ohno2-Rexie**

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 16, 2014 1:33 PM  
**To:** EDNtestimony  
**Cc:** amyathomas@hotmail.com  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for HCR46 on Mar 17, 2014 14:00PM

**HCR46**

Submitted on: 3/16/2014

Testimony for EDN on Mar 17, 2014 14:00PM in Conference Room 309

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Amy Perruso	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments: Dear Committee Members, I am writing in strong support of HCR 46, a resolution which, if adopted, would reflect the state legislature's understanding of the crisis facing civic education in the state of Hawaii. We have a tsunami of change confronting our citizenry, and as a high school social studies teacher, I can testify from years of experience in the classroom on a day-to-day basis that we are most definitely not doing enough to equip our young people to grapple with these problems in a democratic fashion. Passing this resolution is the least lawmakers can do, to show that they at least understand that there is a terrible problem that has emerged as a consequence of overzealous attention paid to technical knowledge at the expense of civic knowledge and skills. Thank you, Dr. Amy Perruso

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**ohno2-Rexie**

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 16, 2014 7:20 PM  
**To:** EDNtestimony  
**Cc:** wgcb16@aol.com  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for HCR46 on Mar 17, 2014 14:00PM

**HCR46**

Submitted on: 3/16/2014

Testimony for EDN on Mar 17, 2014 14:00PM in Conference Room 309

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
cheryl	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I am writing in strong support of HCR 46, a resolution which, if adopted, would reflect the state legislature's understanding of the crisis facing civic education in the state of Hawaii. We have a tsunami of change confronting our citizenry, and as an elementary school teacher, I can testify from years of experience in the classroom on a day-to-day basis that we are most definitely not doing enough to equip our young people to grapple with these problems in a democratic fashion. Passing this resolution is the least lawmakers can do, to show that they at least understand that there is a terrible problem that has emerged as a consequence of overzealous attention paid to technical knowledge at the expense of civic knowledge and skills. It is not enough to start in high school, we must help our keiki learn from an early age the importance of civics and the connections and links to us, our past and our future.

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**ohno2-Rexie**

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 16, 2014 1:51 PM  
**To:** EDNtestimony  
**Cc:** coreyrosenlee@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for HCR46 on Mar 17, 2014 14:00PM

**HCR46**

Submitted on: 3/16/2014

Testimony for EDN on Mar 17, 2014 14:00PM in Conference Room 309

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Corey Rosenlee	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Children deserve to have a well rounded curriculum. Currently with our drive to get higher test scores we are neglecting all subjects other than math and reading. Social studies, science, art and music are being neglected. As a parent I want my child not just to learn to a test, but to think and dream. As a social studies teacher I have seen how our narrowing if curriculum has created a generation they do not know the basics of history, geography and civics. This trend must end. As legislators I hope you will take the stand to give our children a well rounded curriculum.

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Please vote for Resolution HCR 46/HR 27 that urges the Department of Education to take the necessary steps to reinforce instruction regarding American civics." This action is desperately needed, because:

1. As you probably know, there are very few benchmarks in grades K-6 that support civics knowledge/dispositions;
2. There are none in grade 7 that support civics knowledge/dispositions
3. Research shows that students who are exposed to a strong civics curriculum are more likely to be civically engaged adults who vote
4. Only 38 percent of Americans surveyed can name all three branches of government, and a third can't name a single one, according to the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg Public Policy Center.

There are few things more important than understanding how to speak up for and take action to support your beliefs and the needs of those around you. Our keiki deserve this help!

Thank you.

Mara Miller

**ohno2-Rexie**

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 16, 2014 6:33 PM  
**To:** EDNtestimony  
**Cc:** mitzie.higa@ewamakai.org  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for HCR46 on Mar 17, 2014 14:00PM

**HCR46**

Submitted on: 3/16/2014

Testimony for EDN on Mar 17, 2014 14:00PM in Conference Room 309

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Mitzie Higa	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I support Resolution HCR 46/HR 27 that urges the Department of Education to take the necessary steps to reinforce instruction regarding American civics for SO many reasons. I am a National Board Certified Teacher. As a former 5th grade teacher and Kindergarten teacher (I am now a Curriculum Coordinator at Ewa Makai Middle School), I believe civics education begins in Kindergarten with class rules, school rules, home rules, and understanding the roles of police, the fire dept. etc. and every citizen. It is vital that we help our keiki understand the value and purpose of government because it is VITAL to our democracy. I taught We the People in 5th grade, connecting it to our ELA standards for persuasive writing and to our social studies standards regarding colonies and The Revolutionary War, but it SURE would have made it easier for other teachers to make the connection if we had more civic standards. My 5th graders were ENGAGED in civic action. They even spoke at a town meeting to change a dangerous traffic situation in front of our school and now, several years later, these same students are active in their schools in student council, Leadership, and their communities. Some of my former students are now in college yet, they are fighting for a/c in public schools for the students who came after them. They care; they "get it", and we need to promote this type of civic engagement through our curriculum standards in our schools. Other reasons: 1. There are very few benchmarks in grades K-6 that support civics knowledge/dispositions; 2. There are none in grade 7 that support civics knowledge/dispositions 3. Research shows that students who are exposed to a strong civics curriculum are more likely to be civically engaged adults who vote 4. 38 percent of Americans surveyed can name all three branches of government, and a third can't name a single one, according to the Annenberg Public Policy Center at the University of Pennsylvania. Thank you, Dr. Mitzie Higa Ewa Makai Middle School

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**LATE**

I support Resolution HCR 46/HR 27 that urges the Department of Education to take the necessary steps to reinforce instruction regarding American civics because:

1. There are very few benchmarks in grades K-6 that support civics knowledge/dispositions;
2. There are none in grade 7 that support civics knowledge/dispositions
3. Research shows that students who are exposed to a strong civics curriculum are more likely to be civically engaged adults who vote
4. According to the Annenberg Public Policy Center at the University of Pennsylvania, only 38 percent of Americans surveyed can name all three branches of government, and a third can't name a single one.

Thank you for reading, and I hope to see you at the hearing.

Isis Usborne  
Senior at Mililani High School  
Student of Amy Perruso  
Member of Hawaii We the People Team

ohno2-Rexie

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 17, 2014 7:12 PM  
**To:** EDNtestimony  
**Cc:** ddsmith96@gmail.com  
**Subject:** \*Submitted testimony for HCR46 on Mar 17, 2014 14:00PM\*

**LATE**

**HCR46**

Submitted on: 3/17/2014

Testimony for EDN on Mar 17, 2014 14:00PM in Conference Room 309

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Daniel Smith	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments:

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**From:** Jason Duncan <duncan.civic.education@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 18, 2014 11:07 AM  
**To:** EDNtestimony  
**Subject:** HCR 046 Testimony - Jason Duncan

**LATE**

As a teacher in Hawaii public schools the past 10 years I witnessed a severe lack of focus on civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions in our public schools. As a 8th grade teacher for 7 years I continually saw my 8th grade students come into the classroom with not even the most basic knowledge on how government works. They had no idea what the Declaration of Independence was or the foundational reasons for the American Revolution information they were suppose to receive in elementary school. Now as I te acher high school I see students still lack skills and knowledge and by 11/12th grade their apathy and disdain for government has settled in. The bottom line - we need to make a more concerted effort to teach and reinforce a strong civic education curriculum in the K-12 setting. What's happening now with testing such as the multiple choice End of Course Assessments in United States History and soon coming World History is teachers moving away from strategies that require the inquiry, discourse, dialogue, and problem solving skills, and project based strategies needed to be an active citizen in a representative democracy. Therefore, I urge you to please support HCR 46 and any other further efforts that require the Hawaii Department of Education to make a stronger effort to make civic education an integral part of the K-12 education experience.

Best Regards,

Jason Duncan  
Mililani High School