



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

Date: 04/10/2013

Committee: Senate Ways and Means

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Kathryn S. Matayoshi, Superintendent of Education

Title of Resolution: SCR 120,SD1 REQUESTING THE BOARD OF EDUCATION AND DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO EVALUATE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A PLAN TO PROMOTE GREATER AWARENESS OF DYSLEXIA AND PROVIDE COMPREHENSIVE SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS WITH DYSLEXIA AND OTHER LITERARY CHALLENGES

Purpose of Resolution: Dyslexia; Board of Education; Department of Education

Department's Position:

The Department of Education (Department) supports SCR 120,SD1, as long as it does not impact or replace priorities set forth in the Executive Budget for Fiscal Biennium 2013-15 and is aligned with the Department's Strategic Plan priorities and implementation.



S E A C
Special Education Advisory Council
919 Ala Moana Blvd., Room 101
Honolulu, HI 96814
Phone: 586-8126 Fax: 586-8129
email: spin@doh.hawaii.gov

April 10, 2013

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Advisory Council**

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Dr. Daniel Ulrich
Ms. Cari White

Jan Tateishi, Staff
Susan Rocco, Staff

Senator David Y. Ige, Chair
Committee on Ways and Means
State Capitol
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: SCR 120 SD 1- REQUESTING THE BOARD OF EDUCATION
AND THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO EVALUATE
THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR TEACHING READING
IN HAWAII SCHOOLS AND TO MOVE FORWARD WITH
APPROPRIATE IMPLEMENTATION

Dear Chair Ige and Members of the Committee,

The Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC), Hawaii's State Advisory Panel under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), **supports** SCR 120 SD1 that requests the Department of Education and the Board of Education to evaluate its dyslexia awareness efforts, professional development, and classroom supports for students with dyslexia, other learning disabilities and literacy challenges.

This resolution resulted in large part from the recommendations in the *Comprehensive Plan for Teaching Reading in Hawaii Schools*, prepared by the Dyslexia Working Group which included two current members of SEAC. The report generated by this resolution will give the Department, the Board and community stakeholders baseline information from which to enhance the Department's capacity to address the needs of students with dyslexia and other literacy challenges on a statewide basis using evidence-based practices.

We look forward to continued participation and to receiving the report. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this important legislation. If you have any questions, I will be happy to answer them.

Respectfully,

Ivalee Sinclair, Chair

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Wednesday, April 10, 2013
9:51 AM
Conference Room 211

**TESTIMONY TO
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS**

RE: SCR 120, SD1

Dear Chair Ige, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committees:

My name is Ryan Masa. I am the President of the Hawai'i Branch of the International Dyslexia Association (HIDA), a Hawai'i non-profit corporation. HIDA has dedicated itself for thirty years to its mission of increasing awareness of dyslexia in the community, providing support for dyslexics, families and educators, and promoting teacher training and improving literacy for struggling readers throughout Hawaii.

HIDA supports SCR 120, SD1 – requesting the Board of Education and Department of Education to evaluate the Comprehensive Plan for Teaching Reading in Hawaii Schools and the move forward with appropriate implementation.

HIDA is quite familiar with SCR 120, SD1, as we had the honor of having representation on the Working Group created pursuant to 2010 Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 110 (SCR 110) that met at least monthly for three years and submitted both the *Comprehensive Plan for Teaching Reading in Hawai'i Schools* (Comprehensive Plan) and the draft legislation for HB 675. This Working Group also included the Hawai'i Department of Education (HIDOE), University of Hawai'i System (UH), Teacher Education Coordinating Committee (TECC), Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC), and several other organizations committed to improving literacy for **all students** in Hawaii. The passage of SCR 120, SD1 would be an important step toward implementing the Comprehensive Plan and improving literacy instruction in Hawaii schools.

We strongly support all provisions of the resolution, with particular enthusiasm for ones requesting various stakeholders to move forward with appropriate implementation of the Comprehensive Plan. We look forward to learning more about the evaluation that the Board of Education and Department of Education are requested to conduct; as well as reviewing the written report requested from the DOE. The effort to improve literacy in our state is a large one; therefore, we also support the request to coordinate with the University of Hawaii and Hawaii Teachers Standards Board – both valuable and important stakeholders in improving the educational outcomes for struggling readers.

Dyslexia and other literacy challenges affect up to 15-20% of the general population. Of all students diagnosed with a specific learning disability, 85% have an issue pertaining to reading and language processing, making it by far the most common learning disability. The condition does not discriminate – it exists across gender, ethnicity, and all levels of intelligence and socioeconomic status.

This concurrent resolution is not simply about diagnosis though; it is about helping all struggling readers. Specifically, while sections of SCR 120, SD1 relating to dyslexia awareness, literacy specialists, and professional development for educators are essential to improve reading instruction for students with dyslexia, they will also improve reading instruction for students with other literacy challenges. It is widely known that 41% of Hawaii public school fourth graders and 32% of its eighth graders scored *below basic* on 2011 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) exam. These statistics, which rank Hawaii toward the bottom of the nation, should be shamefully unacceptable to all of us.

As has been written before, we must remember that *statistics are human beings with the tears wiped off*.

At this prevalence, dyslexia and other related literacy challenges impact more children than any other cognitive or physical childhood condition. Reading is foundational and should be valued as a right, not as a luxury determined by luck.

Reading might be best thought of as a "gateway skill." Proficiency in reading grants a student access to other content knowledge, as most academic subjects are mediated through digital or printed text. Without this skill, most content (and by extension, education and career opportunities) become increasingly inaccessible to that student. It has been widely documented that struggling readers, for a variety of reasons, often related to the effects of persistent school failure, disproportionately face poor academic, health, and economic outcomes (e.g., high school and college graduation rates, substance abuse, delinquency, unemployment, incarceration, etc.). When we do not properly teach a child to become a proficient reader, we do not only cheat them out of a skill, we steal something much more precious – their opportunities and aspirations.

What is most frustrating about the current epidemic of inadequate reading levels is that the appropriate instructional methods have been widely known and accepted for decades. The Comprehensive Plan reflects this well-established scientific knowledge and national best practices. One application is the school-based programs of HIDA's Odyssey Project. HIDA has administered this program in Hawaii public schools for several years, which includes three elements of the Comprehensive Plan – dyslexia awareness, professional development, and a "literacy specialist." The Odyssey Project data reports students making significant gains in reading achievement, along with lowering the number of special education referrals because appropriate identification and intervention were provided early. HIDA is confident that similar improvement would occur in all Hawaii schools if the Comprehensive Plan is adopted and implemented with fidelity.

Taken together, the dire state of literacy in this state, and nation, has migrated over whatever equivocal line separates an educational crisis from a public health one. We have a moral imperative to act on behalf of these children and their families. Our current situation is untenable and rises to the level of warranting legislative attention. Several other states have statutes regarding literacy and this would be a wonderful opportunity for Hawaii to lead.

We thank the Senate for bringing much needed attention and engagement to the critical issue of literacy in our state. We look forward to continuing to work with the Legislature and other public and private stakeholders in serving the needs of Hawaii's struggling readers.

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



HAWAII LEARNING RESOURCE

Building Skills. Cultivating Minds. Transforming Lives.

April 8, 2013

TO: Committee on Ways and Means, Senator David Y. Ige, Chair, Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair

RE: SCR 120, SD1, Thursday, April 11, 9:30 a.m.

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I am writing on behalf of Hawaii Learning Resource in support of SCR 120, SD1 regarding a comprehensive plan for teaching reading in Hawaii schools.

As a nonprofit dedicated to helping academically struggling students, their parents and their teachers, Hawaii Learning Resource sees first-hand how important it is to provide the right help at the right time to students and educators. This legislation will help to ensure that students and educators have access to effective instruction and teaching methods that are proven to be effective in helping not only students with dyslexia, but all students who struggle with reading.

Hawaii Learning Resource strongly supports implementation of SCR 120, SD1 to help struggling students in our schools. Helping struggling students achieve reading success will help their learning process and help them succeed in school and ultimately in life.

Sincerely,

Toni A. Stylos
Director

Hawaii Learning Resource, 501(c)(3)



Learning Disabilities Association of Hawaii

245 N. Kukui Street, Suite 205

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Board of Directors

March 21, 2013

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RE: Testimony in Support of SCR 120
Hearing before the Senate Education/Higher Education Committees
Friday, March 22, 2013
State Capitol Auditorium

Dear Chair Tokuda, Chair Taniguchi and members of the Committees:

I am submitting this testimony in support of SCR 120.

Directors

Rachel Moriyama

Steven Nagata, Esq.

Paul Singer

Allene Suemori, Esq.

Frederick W. Tucher

Sam K. Yee

Catha Combs

Leslie Novosel

Learning Disabilities Association of Hawaii (LDAH), its Board, Staff and the parents of children with disabilities we serve are each and all dedicated to determinations that increase the likelihood of assuring the rights of individuals with disabilities. Learning Disabilities make up the single largest category of disabilities, with dyslexia at the forefront of troubles for Hawaii's young students. It would be a disservice not to address the needs of individuals with dyslexia as made increasingly possible through SCR 120. LDAH supports SCR 120.

As an agency that advocates on behalf of the needs and rights of children, students and young adults with disabilities, we are frequently working to address the needs of those who are experiencing the trials of dyslexia. Statistics clearly demonstrate that dyslexia and other learning disabilities, when unaddressed, negatively contribute to almost every aspect of an individual's life, i.e., educational failure, drug addiction, joblessness, incarceration, etc. Appropriately address dyslexia and the same individuals have the promise of educational success, positive community involvement and general successfulness throughout life.

For over one year, LDAH has served on the committee identified to develop a plan for Hawaii to appropriately address the individual and system-related needs as pertains to the effects of dyslexia, under SCR 110. We are committed to doing our part to improve the lives of persons with disabilities, including learning disabilities and dyslexia.

Executive Director

Michael K. Moore

Note: this testimony is written on private time and without the expenditure of federal or other restricted funds.

Please support SCR 120. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Michael K. Moore
Executive Director
Learning Disabilities Association of Hawaii
Hawaii's Parent Training and Information Center

April 9, 2013

VIA online

RE: Testimony in Support of SCR 120, SD1 – Relating to Education
before the Ways and Means Committee

April 10, 2013 04-10-13 9:51AM in conference room 211.

Dear Members of the Senate Ways and Means Committee:

I am submitting this testimony in support of SCR 120, SD1.

I am a practicing pediatrician in Hawaii for more than 25 years. I have always felt helpless to the many parents who came for guidance and direction, for their children with reading problems. Guiding them to get DOE testing led to disappointing results. Many months later, these families were still struggling to help their children read.

Two years ago, I discovered that my own son had dyslexia. After coping with the shock, I immediately shifted into researching dyslexia to help my son. The past 2 years of learning about dyslexia have led me to the profoundly appalling conclusion that our schools and teachers are poorly equipped to recognize or help children with reading problems.

NIH funded Dyslexia research centers state that 1 in 5 of all people, have some form of dyslexia. This number stunned me. Leaving me breathless. Leaving me speechless. I continue to think about this number every day. How could so many children and adults who have reading issues not be identified? How could so many children and adults with reading issues not be helped? With such prevalence, why do most teachers and educators know almost nothing about dyslexia?

Current neurobiology now demonstrates brain wiring differences in dyslexics. With proper reading programs, the young brain can be taught to use more efficient reading pathways. In other words, if started in the early years, we could literally change the brain wiring for reading. There may be a small window of opportunity to help reading fluency and comprehension. Why are we missing this? Shouldn't every teacher be knowledgeable about dyslexia? Shouldn't it be a requirement for all teachers to understand this very common problem? I dream of a day when all teachers will know more than I about dyslexia.

Please support SCR 120, SD1.

Sincerely,

Lillian Fujimoto, MD
Straub Mililani Clinic
95-1249 Meheula Pkwy
Mililani, HI 96789

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Cc: orchid1oin@aol.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for SCR120 on Apr 10, 2013 09:51AM
Date: Tuesday, April 09, 2013 9:39:11 AM

SCR120

Submitted on: 4/9/2013

Testimony for WAM on Apr 10, 2013 09:51AM in Conference Room 211

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
David Matsuura	Individual	Comments Only	No

Comments: Tuesday April 9, 2013 Testimony in Support of SCR 120 SD1 Hearing before the Senate Ways and Means Committee Wednesday, April 10, 2013 State Capitol Auditorium Conference Room 211 Dear Chair Ige, Vice Chair Kidani and members of the Committee: I am submitting this testimony in support of SCR 120. As a former State Senator and a parent of children affected with dyslexia, I strongly encourage support for SCR 120. Over the years, my family and I have endured many frustrating educational experiences. Yet, I also recognize that individuals affected with dyslexia may enjoy a creative mind or talent that others consider a gift. Unfortunately, not all individuals with dyslexia are afforded the educational opportunity to reach their academic potential and thrive as lifelong learners. In 2010, I was encouraged by the passage of Senate Concurrent Resolution 110 that established a Working Group to develop a comprehensive plan to improve awareness and support for persons with dyslexia. After three years, it appears that the Working Group has fulfilled its task with the development of a Comprehensive Plan that will benefit all students. The passage of SCR 120 is a necessary entry point in setting forth a framework for the Working Group's Comprehensive Plan to Teach Reading to Students in Hawaii. In House Bill 675, I also supported changing the definition of dyslexia, as recommended by the Hawai'i Branch of the International Dyslexia Association (HIDA), to reflect the definition previously defined by the Working Group and aligned with the Comprehensive Plan. The acceptance and use of this definition will be significant in developing a common language among students, parents, and educators. Due partially to advances in technology and changes in global industry, literacy demands are rising, making learning to read absolutely critical for all students and the top priority for all schools. Thus, the Legislature, Department of Education, and schools must become innovative and resourceful in order to acquire reading or literacy specialist. I thank the committee for their interest in making literacy a priority for all students, including those affected with dyslexia. Thank you for this opportunity to write in support of SCR 120. Sincerely, Former, State Senator David Matsuura

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ELIZABETH ANN ISHII
841 Bishop Street Suite 850
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Phone: 522-5133
Facsimile: 522-5144
Email: EAIshii@lawcsilc.com

April 8, 2013

RE: Testimony in Support of SCR 120
Decision Making Hearing before the Senate Ways & Means Committee
April 10, 2013, 9:51 a.m.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am submitting this testimony in support of Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 120.

I want to disclose that I participated in the Working Group meetings that went on for three years pursuant to 2010 Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 110. I was assisting the representative from the Hawaii Branch of the International Dyslexia Association (HIDA). However, I am submitting this testimony as an individual and not based on any affiliation with either the Working Group or HIDA.

In 2003, I discovered my nine year old son has dyslexia. I had suspected something might be wrong for several years before that because, although he was considered one of the best students, there were odd things gaps in his skills. For example, he didn't have a precise concept of time – everything was either “yesterday” or “a long time ago.” He couldn't rhyme words. He could read big words in a sentence like “argument” or “extra-terrestrial,” but routinely missed “she” or “this.” I was always told at parent-teacher conferences, “it's developmental, he's one of our best students.” Then, when my son was in the fourth grade, he started asking me why he wasn't smart anymore. My upbeat child, the perennial teacher's pet, was always sad. The week before Christmas, I came home and he was crying pretty hysterically. The teacher had told him in front of the class that he and the other “bad boys” couldn't go to the Christmas party because they hadn't learned to sing the first two lines of *Here Comes Santa Claus* in Hawaiian for the Christmas play. He had been practicing all afternoon and couldn't do it. I told him to take a bath, eat dinner, and I would help him. We tried for over an hour. He couldn't do it. He couldn't remember the order of the sounds. I told him it didn't matter (of course it didn't matter), and that I would take him to Dave & Busters on the day of the party. Yes, I complained to the teacher, school, everyone. And while they agreed he could go to the party, they didn't think it odd that a straight “E” student couldn't memorize two lines in Hawaiian.

Amazingly, it was a stranger who first mentioned the word “dyslexia.” I told him about *Here Comes Santa Claus* and some of the other odd things I'd observed over the years and he said, “have him tested for dyslexia; I have dyslexia and I can't do those things

either.” A private psychologist ran the tests and confirmed the diagnosis. My son could not read. He had been “picture reading” – memorizing written words by how they look. He memorized the written word “stegosaurus” by its attributes in the same way he recognized a picture of the dinosaur with rows of plates on its back. In the fourth grade there were simply too many words to memorize. I told the teachers and counselor and they literally couldn’t believe it. The counselor told me my son would have to fall behind by two years before they could get him services. I didn’t even know what that meant, but I knew it wasn’t anywhere good enough. So I moved my son to a private school. It wasn’t that the teachers and counselor in my son’s public school didn’t care or didn’t want to help him. The contrary was true. They just didn’t know what to do for him.

Fast forward a couple of years. My son was on track and I was volunteering at HIDA. I am not an educator so I was pretty much only good for handing out dyslexia brochures at education fairs. People, mostly mothers, would come to the HIDA booth and take a few brochures without meeting my eyes. I would ask, “can I help you?” Frustration, desperation, and anger would roll off them as they would tell me how they’ve been trying for years to get help for a child because he can’t read and he’s a junior and what is he going to do after school? I would talk about language therapy tutoring, IEPs and special education, HIDA’s seminars, and assistive technologies. And I would say I believed the DOE is working to improve the situation. Some would stay for well over an hour, writing down everything I said. Some would look at me like I just didn’t get it - who will hire their daughter if she can’t read? I’d pack up the display and cry on the drive home - pretty certain none would get help for their children.

I know the fundamental problem is that most schools and teachers are simply not equipped to teach reading to struggling readers, especially those with dyslexia or other reading disabilities. They don’t have the expertise and resources. That has to change because it seems there are almost as many struggling readers as there are children who don’t struggle with reading. And as it stands, only a very small percentage of those struggling readers have alternatives outside of public school.

SCR 120 starts the process of improving reading and literacy instruction in public schools and requires the Department of Education, University of Hawaii, and the Hawaii community to acknowledge that reading instruction should be one of the highest, if not the highest priority, of education. Please support it because children should never have to wonder why they “aren’t smart anymore,” and all children should have the opportunity to learn to read.

Thank you for your consideration.

Very truly yours,



Elizabeth Ann Ishii

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Cc: gakiona@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for SCR120 on Apr 11, 2013 09:30AM
Date: Saturday, April 06, 2013 8:36:44 AM

SCR120

Submitted on: 4/6/2013

Testimony for WAM on Apr 11, 2013 09:30AM in Conference Room 211

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Gary Akiona	Individual	Support	No

Comments: My grandson, Maximus is dyslexic and is currently being privately tutored in the MSL method, which allows him to keep up with his 2nd grade class. Please support .

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Cc: jlouis@hawaii.edu
Subject: *Submitted testimony for SCR120 on Apr 10, 2013 09:51AM*
Date: Monday, April 08, 2013 2:36:05 PM

SCR120

Submitted on: 4/8/2013

Testimony for WAM on Apr 10, 2013 09:51AM in Conference Room 211

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jamie Louis	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Cc: mendezj@hawaii.edu
Subject: *Submitted testimony for SCR120 on Apr 11, 2013 09:30AM*
Date: Friday, April 05, 2013 1:12:25 PM

SCR120

Submitted on: 4/5/2013

Testimony for WAM on Apr 11, 2013 09:30AM in Conference Room 211

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

Comments:

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Cc: jtulang@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for SCR120 on Apr 10, 2013 09:51AM
Date: Monday, April 08, 2013 4:38:06 PM

SCR120

Submitted on: 4/8/2013

Testimony for WAM on Apr 10, 2013 09:51AM in Conference Room 211

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Julie Tulang	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I support the need for help with students reading and experiencing success.

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Testimony in Support of SCR 120 SD1 – relating to education

April 6, 2013

I am submitting this testimony in support of SCR 120 SD1

My name is Lina Kikuta and I am a substitute teacher with the Hawaii Department of Education and am also a private tutor for children with dyslexia. I became interested in tutoring dyslexic children because there is really little help for these children in public or private schools. I am not dyslexic and to my knowledge no one in my family is.

When I am substituting in the classroom, I can't help noticing the many dyslexic children in the public schools and I know that identifying them is difficult for a classroom teacher. Teachers have told me that they don't know how to help the children. Some of them have no other alternative but to ignore the signs and hope the child will somehow learn to read on his/her own. Reading is so very important for a child to learn and the Legislature, Department of Education and schools should make it a very high priority. Having literary specialists available in schools makes sense. How can we expect to have productive citizens if we haven't given them the opportunity to learn through reading?

I have been tutoring children with dyslexia for three years. I have taken Orton-Gillingham classes, purchased tools and literature at my own expense to help the children I tutor. I am presently under the tutelage of a Fellow with the Academy of Orton-Gillingham Practitioners and Educators. Prior to learning about dyslexia, I tutored without knowing what challenges a child with dyslexia faces. I can see a difference the specialized teaching makes. The child becomes more confident, uses strategies, and is eager to read more. The child becomes uplifted because of the structured lessons.

I have looked at the *Comprehensive Plan to Teach Reading to Students in Hawaii* that was written by the SCR 110 Working Group, and see that the members, including the DOE, UH and other groups responsible for educating Hawaii's children, agreed that to improve reading instruction in public schools, we have to implement practices like the ones which address dyslexia awareness and literacy instruction as they relate to teacher preparation programs, teacher licensure requirements, professional development for educators, and reading programs in public schools.

.

Sincerely,

Lina Kikuta

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Cc: mhiga@dyslexia-hawaii.org
Subject: Submitted testimony for SCR120 on Apr 10, 2013 09:51AM
Date: Monday, April 08, 2013 6:51:48 PM

SCR120

Submitted on: 4/8/2013

Testimony for WAM on Apr 10, 2013 09:51AM in Conference Room 211

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Margaret Higa	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments: I am submitting this testimony in support of SCR 120, SD1. I am the parent of two dyslexic children and the executive director for the Hawai'i Branch of the International Dyslexia Association (HIDA). I have witnessed my own children's frustrations as they struggled to learn and keep up with their peers in classrooms in which their teachers had little or no understanding of dyslexia and only used traditional teaching methods. I have listened to the heart-breaking stories of parents whose high school aged children are reading at a 3rd grade level, even after years in a special education classroom, and told that a "certificate of completion" will be "okay" since they don't meet the requirements for a high school diploma. I have listened as parents, their voices quivering, related to me their anger and desperation when they are told by their child's teachers: "She's just lazy. If only she would try harder." Or, "Dyslexia? That's just reading backwards, right?" Dyslexic children can and do learn when taught with appropriate teaching methodologies. I respectfully request your support of SCR 120, SD1 as I believe it is an important step in the right direction to continuing the dialogue and equipping our schools and teachers with the knowledge, expertise and professional development to improve reading instruction for all struggling readers in Hawai'i schools. Time is critical; too many children are failing to learn and realize their potential. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SCR 120, SD1.

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Dear Senators,

I am a MSL, Orton-Gillingham Tutor for children with dyslexia and other learning disabilities in the Leeward and Central Oahu Districts. I teach them individually (1 on 1) in my home in Waikale and occasionally travel to their homes as well. I have been doing this for about 7 years now and previously taught Special Education in the public schools. I am writing to you all because I see the desperate need for children with reading and writing problems to get the help, within their schools. They come to me often very despondent because they feel like a total failure in school and aren't getting better with the way they are taught by their regular education teachers and/or special education teachers. Parents have shown me their progress reports over the years and it's appalling to see how little growth in reading and writing skills they have made! Many of them stay at the same reading level for years! That is totally unacceptable to me!

I have read the "Comprehensive Plan for Teaching Reading in Hawaii Schools", that HIDA has worked on for many years, and think there will be much hope for these children if it is adopted. I say this with confidence because I use the methods they prescribe and it really works! Every single one of my students that have graduated from my Orton-Gillingham program have successfully reached grade level or even better! The special training I received to teach, using this MSL approach, has been totally worth it! If the public schools all adopt this plan, I might be out of job but it would truly make me happy! I'm only tutoring these children because the schools aren't doing their job right, in teaching reading and writing skills to children with dyslexia and other language disabilities.

So, I ask you to please support SCR 120 SD1! Thank you very much for your time and consideration on this very important matter! I can only pray that both SCR 120 SD1 and HCR95 HD1 pass!

Sincerely Yours,

Pam Johnson

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Cc: pascualp011@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for SCR120 on Apr 10, 2013 09:51AM
Date: Tuesday, April 09, 2013 7:13:56 AM

SCR120

Submitted on: 4/9/2013

Testimony for WAM on Apr 10, 2013 09:51AM in Conference Room 211

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Patricia Pascual	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Please push this very important measure forward to give every student in our schools a real chance to learn to read. What could be more important? I've taught grades 1-6 for more than 40 years, and wish I had know more about the frustrations of dyslexia. Now I have a granddaughter who has shown me how it lowers self esteem, makes them feel different, and misunderstood, makes them reluctant to go to school. I had to home school her in order to get the help she needed, pay for private testing and tutoring. HIDA is an organization that know what it is talking about and work for our kids every day. Pass SCR 120 SD 1. Thank you! Patricia Pascual

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Cc: peggy.brandt@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for SCR120 on Apr 10, 2013 09:51AM
Date: Monday, April 08, 2013 9:29:28 PM

SCR120

Submitted on: 4/8/2013

Testimony for WAM on Apr 10, 2013 09:51AM in Conference Room 211

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Peggy Brandt	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I am writing in support of passage of SCR 120. I am a counselor who has worked both in the DOE and (currently) at Assets School. I have seen first-hand the emotional toll that dyslexia and related learning disabilities wreak on individuals and families. As I have worked at Assets and have seen how correct instruction can heal, it has brought to mind many times the students I saw at the DOE who were having difficulty with reading. The only solution was to refer them for Special Education, and there was not any particular hope that this would be of assistance. Many of the individuals I am recalling as I write this did not graduate from high school, nor even achieve a true middle school education due to their difficulties. I am hopeful that with the passage of SCR 120 there will be other, viable, options that will be available to students with challenges in reading. I urge you to pass this measure, as it will surely benefit all.

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To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Cc: ScottF2009@hotmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for SCR120 on Apr 10, 2013 09:51AM
Date: Monday, April 08, 2013 11:18:49 AM

SCR120

Submitted on: 4/8/2013

Testimony for WAM on Apr 10, 2013 09:51AM in Conference Room 211

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Scott Fujiwara	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Dear Members of the Education and Higher Education Committees: I am submitting this testimony in support of Senate Concurrent Resolution 120. I wish I could also testify in person, but I have classes on Wednesday. I am a senior at Hanalani School, and I am dyslexic. I am lucky; I read and write well enough to be graduating from high school and moving on to college. I know there are a lot of other dyslexic students who won't have that opportunity. I went to a public elementary school in Mililani and everything seemed fine until the 4th grade. I don't recall much, but that's when I found out I wasn't really reading. I thought I was reading like the other children, but that wasn't the case. I couldn't "sound out words," or find them in a dictionary, or spell, or tell how many syllables there were, or read a single sentence out loud without making mistakes. That's really hard to understand when you know you are smart. And it's even harder to keep believing you're smart. My mother said my school counselor suggested I move to a private school because he honestly did not think my public school would be able to help me. So I transferred to Hanalani where the principal had dyslexia. I went to multi-sensory language tutoring after school for about three years – at first 3 times a week until I could go once a week. It was a lot of extra work, but I learned to read and write pretty well. It's still not easy – I read much more slowly and inaccurately than my friends. But it's easier in high school because everyone uses electronic dictionaries and spell-check, and nobody asks me about syllables anymore. Though I didn't realize it growing up, as I said, I am lucky. My parents could afford to send me to a private school and private MSL tutoring. They could take off from work in town, pick me up after school in Mililani, and drive me to meet my tutor near the stadium. My mother could read textbooks to me when I was just too tired to complete the assignment. They could help me understand when dyslexia was making something difficult – like memorization, taking notes, and reading pages of instructions. I think that's one of the toughest things – it's hard to tell if something is difficult because of the dyslexia or because you're just not trying hard enough. I know not all parents can do as much. Many cannot afford private school and tutoring. Many cannot help their children learn what the school can't seem to teach. So I really do believe the public schools have to do more. They have to be able to teach children like me to read - there are a lot of us. They have to know when children are struggling because of learning differences instead of assuming they are

not trying hard enough. And they should never have to tell parents that they honestly do not think the public school will be able to help their dyslexic child. Please support SCR 120. Thank you. Sincerely yours, Scott Fujiwara

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To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Cc: svoit@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for SCR120 on Apr 10, 2013 09:51AM
Date: Tuesday, April 09, 2013 9:45:48 AM

SCR120

Submitted on: 4/9/2013

Testimony for WAM on Apr 10, 2013 09:51AM in Conference Room 211

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Sue Voit	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Tuesday April 9, 2013 Testimony in Support of SCR 120 Hearing before the Senate Ways and Means Committee Wednesday, April 10, 2013 State Capitol Auditorium Conference Room 211 Dear Chair Ige, Vice Chair Kidani and members of the Committee: I am submitting this testimony in support of SCR 120. I want to disclose that I participated in the Working Group meetings that went on for three years pursuant to 2010 Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 110. I was the representative from the Hawaii Branch of the International Dyslexia Association (HIDA). However, I am submitting testimony as an individual and not based on any affiliation with either the Working Group or HIDA. Over twenty years ago, I discovered my children were affected with dyslexia. I changed my career to help my children and countless others. Due to advances in the fields of education, psychology, and neurosciences, we have gained tremendous knowledge that must be applied to learning and teaching in our classrooms. By adopting SCR 120 today, we can open doors to collaborative relationships among professionals, educators and parents. By using research to guide instructional interventions, we can objectively take scientifically researched-based approaches into classrooms and homes without losing precious time. Students can close academic gaps when university education programs, complexes, schools, and parents have the knowledge, courage, and wisdom to accept dyslexia as an educational condition and lead others to informed practices. In a more enlightened world, individuals with dyslexia and other literacy challenges will realize their potential with self-esteem intact. Thank you for your consideration. Very truly yours, Sue Voit

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RE: SCR 120 SD 1

Hearing: April 11, 2013 9:30 a.m. Ways and Means

As an individual who has worked locally and nationally for over 20 years in the areas of dyslexia, reading disabilities and educational improvement, I strongly support SCR 120.

In the late 19th century, Hawaii had one of the highest literacy rates on earth. Things have changed. Many of Hawaii's keiki, its greatest resource, have for generations struggled to read and yet been deprived of scientifically validated research-based reading instruction. Children who do not master reading do not thrive educationally, socially or economically. Much more is spent on prisons, welfare and social programs for failed students than would be spent on improved instruction for Hawaii's many poor readers (a disproportionate number of whom are Native Hawaiian).

Many states have already addressed this issue in the ways outlined in SCR 120. It is time for Hawaii to do so. In Hawaii we take care of our own; failing to utilize well-accepted, scientifically-based reading instruction, as supported by the National Institutes of Health, reading experts, and leading universities around the world, constitutes educational neglect and perhaps educational malpractice. It is time for action.

SCR 120 is a joint effort crafted by the leading stakeholders in reading education in Hawaii. The development of this document represents years of research and effort and, as a collaborative document, is unique in the history of education in Hawaii. SCR 120 represents the best plan for improved reading instruction for Hawaii's many struggling readers and is Hawaii's best chance to change a long and shameful history of poor reading statistics in our State.

Susan Walker Kowen, J.D.

From: [EDU Testimony](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: FW: Testimony for SCR 120 SD1
Date: Monday, April 08, 2013 4:40:55 PM

-----Original Message-----

From: tarincompany1@hawaiiantel.net [<mailto:tarincompany1@hawaiiantel.net>]
Sent: Monday, April 08, 2013 4:19 PM
To: EDU Testimony
Subject: Testimony for SCR 120 SD1

SCR 120 SD1
Wednesday, April 10, 2013
9:51 AM

Aloha,

My name is Teresa Hale and I am asking that SCR 120 SD1 be voted in as law. I have 4 children, 2 of which are dyslexic, and not receiving the help they need from the public school system. My oldest daughter, 20, graduated from High School unable to read at grade level or spell correctly and struggling with basic math. My younger dyslexic child is 10 and is showing little to no progress in special ed. She is even regressing in some areas. Her special ed teachers are not certified to teach dyslexics and will not use the Sonday System with her, even though the school has it and it has been scientifically proven that Orton-Gillingham derived programs are the most effective way to teach students with dyslexia. I am unsure if this is due to ignorance on the subject or if it is strictly a resource issue. My only option is to enroll her in Assets School at public expense or she will suffer the same fate as my 20 year old.

Mahalo for your Kokua!

Teresa Hale
Sent via BlackBerry from T-Mobile

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Cc: bijou15@live.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for SCR120 on Apr 10, 2013 09:51AM
Date: Tuesday, April 09, 2013 9:30:59 AM

SCR120

Submitted on: 4/9/2013

Testimony for WAM on Apr 10, 2013 09:51AM in Conference Room 211

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Tiffany Otani	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Tuesday April 9, 2013 Testimony in Support of SCR 120 Hearing before the Senate Ways and Means Committee Wednesday, April 10, 2013 State Capitol Auditorium Conference Room 211 Dear Chair Ige, Vice Chair Kidani and members of the Committee: I am submitting this testimony in support of SCR 120. I am writing to advocate for the passage of SCR 120. After working in the public school system for eleven years, I have become convinced that in order to meet the literacy needs of our school population, our public education system needs structure and direction. Reading remediation and literacy should not be left up to the individual whims of department heads, administration, or even budget. Many of our students can't read! They have the ability, they simply have not been provided the curriculum and trained teachers they need to be taught in a different way. Eleven years ago, after graduating from my Special Education Teacher Training Program, I was unprepared to teaching literacy skills to my mostly dyslexic students. I seriously considered giving up and leaving the teaching profession. Then my complex level District Education Specialist (DES) offered Multisensory Structure Language (MSL) training in collaboration with the Hawaii Branch of the International Dyslexia Association (HIDA). Several years ago, I enrolled in HIDA's Certified Level training and practicum. The practicum was invaluable to my professional growth and my students' outcomes. Three years ago, our department created a policy that any student entering our high school reading at a fifth grade level or below would be required to take a reading lab course for two years for remediation of foundational reading skills. Two years later, we had the highest improvement in scores in the state on the HSA. Thirty percent of our special needs population succeeded in passing the Hawaii State Assessment. We were clearly beginning to see progress! I was inspired! The following year, our department head retired and a new individual announced that he was doing away with the 9th grade lab. His feelings were supported by our special education counselor, who felt that "Special Education" students need more electives and should not be held to Common Core Standards. Unfortunately, many middle and high school teachers continue to believe, that if a student has not learned to read proficiently by the fourth grade – it is too late for them. Today, it is extremely disheartening to hear teachers arguing over the existence of dyslexia or if the DOE recognizes dyslexia. We need As a high school special education teacher, I love my job-----really love it. The Working Group's

Comprehensive Plan to Teach Reading to Students in Hawaii is exactly what teachers are looking for to meet the needs of students. I also appreciate that the plan was written collaboratively by members, including the DOE and UH. Please pass SCR 1202 and enable our school system to receive the direction and resources it needs to properly address the needs of our most precious resource; the children. Thank you. Sincerely, Tiffany Thompson-Otani

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To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Cc: valdecorte@hawaiiantel.net
Subject: Submitted testimony for SCR120 on Apr 10, 2013 09:51AM
Date: Tuesday, April 09, 2013 9:35:24 AM

SCR120

Submitted on: 4/9/2013

Testimony for WAM on Apr 10, 2013 09:51AM in Conference Room 211

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Valerie DeCorte	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Tuesday April 9, 2013 Testimony in Support of SCR 120 SD1 Hearing before the Senate Ways and Means Committee Wednesday, April 10, 2013 State Capitol Auditorium Conference Room 211 Dear Chair Ige, Vice Chair Kidani and members of the Committee: I am submitting this testimony in support of SCR 120. My interest in dyslexia is both as a teacher/tutor, and a sister (Tita) to a dyslexic sibling. As a teacher at a very large high school on the Big Island, I have been given the chance to work with many students who are not able to read or write. And, it has been my experience working with these high school students, many have literacy challenges, and their needs are not being addressed. But honestly, what has really made me open my eyes to this literary challenge has been living with a 56 year old dyslexic sister, and witnessing her daily struggles. My Tita has no job, no high school diploma, no husband, no children, no money, no nothing. Currently she is living with me trying to finish off her high school classes, for she wants to do a "do over" and earn her high school diploma. She knows with that diploma, new opportunities can finally open up for her. This lady wants to better herself, and be a contributing citizen in our community. My journey with my Tita has been a short one, but an eye opener. Having been a "hanai" baby, I did not witness all the day to day trials my younger Tita experienced, I was not there. Over a year ago though, I received a phone call from her, she was living on the mainland, and had no job, no money, and she wanted to come home. I sent her money to buy a one way ticket back to the islands, along with some extra for a suitcase, and some money for food and whatever incidentals that she would incur returning to Hawaii. The money I sent was to a friend, who then wrote out a check for my Tita, for she did not even have a bank account. This Tita has been with me over a year now, and I see the same reversals and confusion while she is reading and writing daily. I think, if only someone had seen the signs when my Tita had been in elementary school, something could have been done to help her. It is so disheartening to see an adult struggling each day trying to make sense of simple directions. And I cannot tell you what this has done to me, and my resolve is even stronger than before, to help those students who are literacy challenged. My teaching of our literacy challenged students have been a passion of mine, no one of them should ever have to go through life feeling anything less than they are, terrific individuals who all deserve a fair chance at a great life. Merely surviving is not good

enough. Ask me, and I can tell you from my experience, but if you really want to hear the story first hand, perhaps it would be better to have my Tita talk about what she is going through right now. Yes, this story will have a good ending, and I can tell you my Tita is an inspiration to those teachers and fellow students who are attending night school in Hilo. She won't give up. And when she does earn that high school diploma in her late 50's, many people, those who know her, and those who do not, will all be celebrating!! I urge you PLEASE, my legislatures, pass this bill. It will bring about the many changes that we here in Hawaii need now, not later. Do not wait, all you have to do is think about my Tita, she should have had the help she needed long ago, but where were we when she was asking for that help. We who have no literacy challenges should assist those who have needs. Mahalo nui loa for allowing me to share with you, my experiences about someone who means the world to me, who I view as a hero, and who is dyslexic. Please support SCR 120. Thank you. Sincerely, Valerie Jean De Corte Orton Gillingham Trained Tutor Hilo High School ELL Teacher

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April 10, 2013
9:51 a.m.
Conference Room 211

TESTIMONY TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE
ON WAYS AND MEANS

RE: SCR 120 SD 1

Chair Ige, Vice Chair Kidani, and the members of the committee,

My name is Robert Witt and I am executive director of the Hawaii Association of Independent Schools (HAIS), which represents 99 private and independent schools in Hawaii and educates over 33,000 students statewide.

HAIS supports SCR 120 SD1 which requests the Board of Education and the Department of Education to evaluate the implementation of a plan to promote greater awareness of dyslexia and provide comprehensive support for students with dyslexia and other literary challenges.

A working group created pursuant to Senate Concurrent Resolution NO. 110, regular Session of 2010, submitted to the Senate and House of Representatives Committees on Education the *Comprehensive Plan for Teaching Reading in Hawaii Schools*, which addresses dyslexia awareness and literacy instruction as they relate to teaching preparation programs, teaching licensure requirements, professional development for educators, and reading programs in public schools. The underlying principle of the *Comprehensive Plan* that the SCR110 working group has developed is that, with as much as 20% of the population having dyslexia or other reading disabilities, and much higher percentages reading below basic reading levels, the difficulties of Struggling Readers must, to the greatest extent possible, be addressed in general education classroom.

By asking the Board of Education, Department of Education, University of Hawaii, and Hawaii Teacher Standards Board to evaluate the *Comprehensive Plan*, a dialogue about improving the literacy in Hawaii public schools may truly begin. By asking the DOE to submit a written report to the House Education committee on what exactly the schools are doing to teach reading in a manner consistent with the *Comprehensive Plan*, Struggling Readers, their families, and educators will be able to track and monitor assessments and support available to these students.

SCR 120 SD 1 is an important step towards improving reading and literacy instruction in Hawaii's schools and holds the DOE accountable for the assertion that its existing reading instruction programs are successfully teaching Hawaii's students to read. Commendations to HIDA and the dedicated members of the SCR 110 Working Group for advancing knowledge in this field and serving as a catalyst with policy-makers to create policy in support of such advanced practice.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.