

# SCR120

Comprehensive Plan for Teaching Reading;  
Dyslexia  
EDU/HRE, WAM



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

**Date:** 03/22/2013

**Committee:** Senate Education/Senate Higher  
Education

**Department:** Education

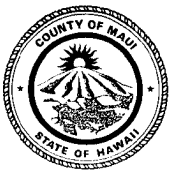
**Person Testifying:** Kathryn S. Matayoshi, Superintendent of Education

**Title of Resolution:** SCR 120 REQUESTING THE BOARD OF EDUCATION AND  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO EVALUATE THE  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR TEACHING READING IN HAWAII  
SCHOOLS AND TO MOVE FORWARD WITH APPROPRIATE  
IMPLEMENTATION

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

**Department's Position:**

The Department of Education (Department) does not support this resolution as it would impact or replace priorities set forth in the Executive Budget for Fiscal Biennium 2013-15. Any decision to require a literacy specialist at every school or to provide services to all schools should be left to the Department and aligned with its Strategic Plan priorities and implementation.



ALAN M. ARAKAWA  
MAYOR

OUR REFERENCE

YOUR REFERENCE

# POLICE DEPARTMENT

## COUNTY OF MAUI

55 MAHALANI STREET  
WAILUKU, HAWAII 96793  
(808) 244-6400  
FAX (808) 244-6411

March 21, 2013



GARY A. YABUTA  
CHIEF OF POLICE

CLAYTON N.Y.W. TOM  
DEPUTY CHIEF OF POLICE

The Honorable Jill N. Tokuda, Chair  
And Members of the Committee on Education  
The Senate  
Hawaii State Capitol  
Honolulu, HI 96813

The Honorable Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair  
And Members of the Committee on Higher Education  
The Senate  
Hawaii State Capitol  
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: Senate Concurrent Resolution: SCR 120, REQUESTING THE BOARD OF EDUCATION AND DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO EVALUATE THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR TEACHING READING IN HAWAII SCHOOLS AND TO MOVE FORWARD WITH APPROPRIATE IMPLEMENTATION

Dear Chairs Tokuda and Taniguchi, and Members of the Committees:

The Maui Police Department is in support of this resolution, as we feel the need for our children and students' ability to read and write correctly is a life skill necessary for the academic challenges and the successful career paths to be encountered by our future generations.

The impact of the illiteracy is self evident, and the incapability to read and write clearly leads to anti-social behavior, ignorance and poor self-esteem, which are key elements associated to substance abuse and criminal consequences.

The Maui Police Department is asking for your support in SCR 120, and we thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

  
GARY A. YABUTA  
Chief of Police



March 22, 2013  
1:50 p.m.  
Conference Room Auditorium

TESTIMONY TO  
THE JOINT SENATE COMMITTEE ON  
EDUCATION and HIGHER EDUCATION

**RE: SCR 120**

Chairs Tokuda and Taniguchi, Vice Chairs Kidani and Kahele and members of the committees,

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 the intent of SCR 120** which requests the Board of Education and Department of Education to evaluate the comprehensive plan for teaching reading in Hawaii schools and to move forward with appropriate implementation.

HAIS supports the efforts of the Hawaii Branch of the International Dyslexia Association (HIDA) to implement recommendations of the Working Group, formed by SCR 110 in the 2010 Legislative Session, as expressed in its Comprehensive Plan.

The three years of inquiry conducted by the Working Group adds significantly to the existing body of knowledge about dyslexia, makes reasonable recommendations for new policy, and thereby advances practice benefitting the significant numbers of children in our schools who have dyslexia. More specifically, the reading specialists and professional development opportunities for teachers will improve reading instruction for all readers, not just students with dyslexia. Struggling Readers are students with dyslexia or other reading disabilities (up to 20% of the population), as well as other students who struggle with reading. In 2011, according to the National Assessment of Educational Progress, 41% of Hawaii's fourth graders and 32% of Hawaii's eighth graders read below basic reading levels.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

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Friday, March 22, 2013  
1:50PM  
State Capitol Auditorium

TESTIMONY TO  
THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION &  
THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

RE: SCR 120

Dear Chair Tokuda, Chair Taniguchi, Vice Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kahele, 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** – 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, 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 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 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.

Testimony on SCR120  
Senate Committee on Education and Committee on Higher Education  
Friday, March 22, 2013, 1:50 PM  
State Capitol Auditorium

Testimony of Lynn Hammonds, Executive Director, Hawaii Teacher Standards Board

Chairs Tokuda and Taniguchi and Members of the Committees:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on SCR120, Requesting the Board of Education and Department of Education to evaluate the comprehensive plan for teaching reading in Hawaii schools and to move forward with appropriate implementation.

The HTSB requires Hawaii based teacher preparation programs to include the teaching of reading for all teacher candidates. The Board currently offers teaching licenses in the fields of Reading and Reading Specialist, and adding Literacy Specialist is on the agenda for the April 19 meeting.

I look forward to working with the Department of Education on the report required in SCR120.

**From:** [mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov)  
**To:** [EDU Testimony](#)  
**Cc:** [MMoore@LDAHawaii.org](mailto:MMoore@LDAHawaii.org)  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for SCR120 on Mar 22, 2013 13:50PM  
**Date:** Thursday, March 21, 2013 1:01:38 PM  
**Attachments:** [SCR120.pdf](#)

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SCR120

Submitted on: 3/21/2013

Testimony for EDU/HRE on Mar 22, 2013 13:50PM in Conference Room Auditorium

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Michael Moore	Learning Disabilities Association of Hawaii	Support	No

Comments:

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**SCR120**

Submitted on: 3/20/2013

Testimony for EDU/HRE on Mar 22, 2013 13:50PM in Conference Room Auditorium

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Lina Kikuta	HIDA	Support	No

Comments:

Testimony for SCR 120

As a supporter and member of HIDA, I am submitting testimony in regards to SCR 120. I am a private tutor specializing in struggling and dyslexic children and am also a substitute teacher with the DOE system. I have had the opportunity to have experienced first - hand seeing children with learning differences in the classroom. Many times, there is no help or person with the expertise to instruct these children. Even though I have made suggestions to the regular teacher about the difficulty a child is encountering, there is very little that can be done to help the children in the public schools. Simply reading instruction is not the best way to help these children. Unless the Special Education teacher has studied the MSL method, the child may not be able to learn how to help him/herself.

I know from my own experience as a tutor that a child with dyslexia needs direct, explicit, and immediate instruction in order to succeed. It is very difficult for a classroom teacher to devote this kind of time to individual students. Dyslexic students need a specific and structured lesson plan and a specialist trained in the MSL method can make a significant difference for these students. I have found that using the MSL method (in my tutoring) has helped improve the child's self-confidence, given him/her strategies to use in the classroom and more importantly, has helped the child's desire to read more.

I would like to see this committee pass this resolution.

March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2013

**RE: Testimony for hearing of SCR 120 on March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1013, 1:50 PM**

To Education Committee:

I am writing in support of SCR 120 Legislation, regarding dyslexia and a comprehensive plan for teaching reading in Hawaii's schools. For the past 12 years, I have been an educator at Assets School, working with hundreds of dyslexic high school students. Each year I have the privilege of teaching these young men and women the learning skills necessary for them to pursue their dreams of college and/or career. I cannot imagine a job more rewarding than seeing struggling readers grow into competent and confident learners. Each year, nearly all of our graduates at Assets High School enroll in college following graduation, and all of our students who apply to college are accepted into programs (which include 4-year mainland universities). These students have these opportunities because they are enrolled in a school that specifically addresses their unique learning needs as dyslexic learners.

As the report states, "Dyslexia and other literacy challenges affect up to 15-20% of the general population." This means there are thousands of underserved dyslexic students across the state of Hawaii, and only a small fraction of these students have the opportunity to be served by Assets School. This legislation will help to ensure that all students have access to effective reading instruction, not just those who can afford it or find it. It will also require that teachers be properly trained to understand dyslexia and implement teaching methods that are proven to be effective.

There are many urgent issues confronting the people of Hawaii. However, I believe that Hawaii's low literacy rates are truly at the root of many of the challenges we face as a state. By passing SCR 120, we are taking an incredible step forward in building a stronger and literate community.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Susan Travis,  
High School Principal  
Assets School  
One Ohana Nui Way  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96818  
stravis@assets-school.net

**From:** [mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov)  
**To:** [EDU Testimony](#)  
**Cc:** [jwagner@assets-school.net](mailto:jwagner@assets-school.net)  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for SCR120 on Mar 22, 2013 13:50PM  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 20, 2013 8:02:59 PM

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SCR120

Submitted on: 3/20/2013

Testimony for EDU/HRE on Mar 22, 2013 13:50PM in Conference Room Auditorium

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jason Wagner	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments: Dear Members of the Committee: My name is Jason Wagner, and I am a teacher and the Dean of Student Activities at Assets School. I am writing in support of House Bill 675. I have worked at Assets for the last 11 years, and in that time, I have worked with many students with Dyslexia and other literacy challenges. I've found that the more the students know about their challenges, the better equipped they are for their transition after high school. They know what accommodations work for them and they practice advocating for those accommodations. Students tell me countless stories of relief after hearing that they had Dyslexia and that there was a reason why things weren't making sense. They also felt relief that they weren't "stupid" or "slow"- labels that maybe weren't directly stated, but possibly implied. It would help if faculty received professional development to further their teaching strategies to reach as many students as possible. Since approximately 15-20% of the population has Dyslexia or another literacy challenge, it would be beneficial for the state to address this issue. Thank you for allowing me to testify on behalf of this bill.

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**EVELYN H. YANAGIDA, PH.D.**  
**Pacific Business News Building**  
**1833 Kalakaua Avenue, Suite 800**  
**Honolulu, HI 96815**

March 20, 2013

RE: Testimony in support of SCR 120  
Hearing before the Senate Education and Higher Education Committees  
3.22.13 1:50 pm  
Auditorium State Capitol

Dear Chair Tokuda, Chair Taniguchi and members of the Committees

I am submitting this testimony **in support** of SCR 120.

I am a licensed psychologist and serve on the professional advisory board of the Hawai'i Branch of the International Dyslexia Association (HIDA). I have been in practice for over 30 years and have evaluated thousands of students for learning disabilities, including dyslexia. Many of the children I assess have been passed on from one grade to the next without anyone identifying, much less remediating, their skill deficits. By the time I see these children they are often discouraged, frustrated and angry which does not bode well for their transition to middle and high school.

Since reading is a fundamental life skill we need to take every possible step to give our keiki the skills to achieve at the level of their potential. Implementing practices like those contained in SCR 120 is a positive step that will increase public awareness of dyslexia and provide badly needed, research-based reading instruction in our public schools.

I concur with HIDA's testimony and ask you to support SCR 120. Thank you.

Respectfully,

Evelyn H. Yanagida, Ph.D., ABPP  
Licensed Psychologist HI-207  
Board Certified in Clinical Psychology

**From:** [Edward Brunner](#)  
**To:** [EDU Testimony](#)  
**Subject:** Support for reading specialists in our public schools  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 20, 2013 10:02:35 PM

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I am dyslexic and so are my three children. I feel that we are very blessed to have been able to provide Ortin-Gillingham tutoring for my children. My children will proceed to higher education goals. I have one son at the University of Washington, on the Dean's List. Unfortunately I do not see this in the future for the children I work with in the middle school I am employed. I work with ELL students. Many struggle with processing issues and none of them are identified as anything other than English language learners. It is so sad to see these bright minds limited by a lack of knowing how to decode the English language.

Sincerely,  
Myfanwy Brunner  
Sent from my iPad

March 18, 2013

RE: Testimony in Support of SCR 120  
Hearing before the Sent Education/Higher Education Committees  
Fricay, 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**

I am the parent of two dyslexic sons. I also tutor dyslexic students and adults. I teach them to read, write, and spell, using multisensory structured language methods (MSL). This means that I break down the English language into manageable pieces, and methodically teach the elements, one by one, from the simplest to the most complex. These methods *work*.

*As The Comprehensive Plan to Teach Reading to Students in Hawai'i* explains, the scientific evidence for the effectiveness of MSL is very strong. Dyslexic students are very capable of learning to read and write. They simply need to be taught their way.

My older son spent two years in classrooms headed by well-meaning teachers, who were doing their best but did not know how to teach him to read, and at the end of that time he could read exactly two words: “cat” and “the.” He then went to Assets School, where he was taught using the Orton-Gillingham method. This method is based on the research of neurologist Samuel Orton and Punahou teacher Anna Gillingham, and is the basis of all the scientifically-valid MSL approaches. It was initially a struggle for him, but he learned how to read and write, then he learned to enjoy reading, and eventually to enjoy writing, too. He graduated from college with a degree in creative writing and has published some of his science fiction and fantasy writings.

Because of our older son’s experience, we recognized the warning signs earlier with his younger brother and started him from the beginning at Assets School. He never had the experience of failing, and it shows. His older brother spent two years thinking he was stupid because other kids could read and he could not. Other kids could see patterns in letters, but he saw a bewildering forest of random sounds. Other kids could make the books talk, but he could not. This level of discouragement seeps into a child’s soul and undoes his self-confidence.

Still, my sons were lucky. They got the sort of teaching they need. Many, many children do not receive the kind of instruction they need. Many, many parents want to help their

children but cannot afford expensive private education. Our schools could become places where all children are able to learn, if all teachers had the knowledge and resources they need.

SCR 120 is a step in this direction. Please support it.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kathy E. Ferguson', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Kathy E. Ferguson  
2154 Booth Road  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Aloha,

I, Vanessa Garcia, am in Support of S.C.R. 120.

I am a mother of 2 young adult sons, ages 18 & 21, that have learning disabilities. I also suffer from Dyslexia. I was layed off from my job of 5 years, in November 2012, and have had a difficult time finding a job. I believe my disability has a lot to do with it.

I have fought for years trying to get the DOE to implement theses much needed Programs for my children as well as others. Please help support the children of Hawaii, so that someday they too, can be included, and accepted as a contributing member of our community.

Mahalo,

Vanessa Garcia



From: [mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov)  
To: [EDU Testimony](#)  
Cc: [bjou15@live.com](mailto:bjou15@live.com)  
Subject: Submitted testimony for SCR120 on Mar 22, 2013 13:50PM  
Date: Thursday, March 21, 2013 11:03:49 AM

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## SCR120

Submitted on: 3/21/2013

Testimony for EDU/HRE on Mar 22, 2013 13:50PM in Conference Room Auditorium

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

Comments: Thursday March 21, 2013 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. 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:** [EDU Testimony](#)  
**Cc:** [mhiga@dyslexia-hawaii.org](mailto:mhiga@dyslexia-hawaii.org)  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for SCR120 on Mar 22, 2013 13:50PM  
**Date:** Thursday, March 21, 2013 11:10:44 AM

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SCR120

Submitted on: 3/21/2013

Testimony for EDU/HRE on Mar 22, 2013 13:50PM in Conference Room Auditorium

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

Comments: I am submitting this testimony in support of SCR 120. 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 public school 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 comforted weary parents, their voices quivering, as they 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 as I believe it is an important step in the right direction to 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.

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To: [EDU Testimony](#)  
Cc: [valdecorte@hawaiiantel.net](mailto:valdecorte@hawaiiantel.net)  
Subject: Submitted testimony for SCR120 on Mar 22, 2013 13:50PM  
Date: Thursday, March 21, 2013 11:12:16 AM

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SCR120

Submitted on: 3/21/2013

Testimony for EDU/HRE on Mar 22, 2013 13:50PM in Conference Room Auditorium

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

Comments: Date: March 21, 2013 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. 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

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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From: [mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov)  
To: [EDU Testimony](#)  
Cc: [orchid1oin@aol.com](mailto:orchid1oin@aol.com)  
Subject: Submitted testimony for SCR120 on Mar 22, 2013 13:50PM  
Date: Thursday, March 21, 2013 12:06:56 PM

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## SCR120

Submitted on: 3/21/2013

Testimony for EDU/HRE on Mar 22, 2013 13:50PM in Conference Room Auditorium

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

Comments: Thursday March 21, 2013 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. 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

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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Date: March 21, 2013

RE: Testimony in Support of SCR 120  
Hearing before the Senate Education/Higher Education Committees  
Friday, March 22, 2013, 1:40 p.m.  
State Capitol Auditorium

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

**I am submitting this testimony in support of SCR 120.**

My first classroom of 32 middle school students was exactly where I wanted to be after graduating college. However, I quickly learned that my eagerness, education and commitment were not enough to reach the students who needed me most – those who could not navigate the printed word, unlock the code of letters and sounds or find meaning through reading.

As a first year teacher, I simply didn't know what to do for eight struggling readers and felt professional failure and helplessness. My principal at the time told me not to worry and just teach to the middle, those on the high end would pick things up anyway and those on the low end were never going to "get it." I wouldn't believe I would have to ignore differences in the classroom and actually allow some students to fail.

Much has changed in the 43 years since my first teaching experience. Teachers are more aware of learning differences and accept the responsibility to reach all students in the classroom. Reading has become a priority with schools expected to meet state and national standards. However, 15% - 20% of our students still struggle with learning to read and teachers are still hungry for more tools and resources to prevent reading failure.

Teachers don't chose to ignore student differences and they do not want children to fail, but without a deep understanding of dyslexia and reading development, they are not prepared to reach all students in their classrooms. In addition, ready access to expert support on the school campus would further increase skills and practice in effective reading instruction.

SCR 120 provides the tools, resources and data teachers need to change the failure rate of dyslexics and struggling readers. We have an opportunity to never again throw up our hands in frustration and allow students to leave our schools without being able to read. We have the opportunity to eliminate the belief that some kids simply can't "get it."

Please support SCR 120. Thank you.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Patricia Jenks". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Patricia Jenks



**From:** [Peggy Brandt](#)  
**To:** [EDU Testimony](#)  
**Subject:** Testimony in Support of SCR 120 Hearing before the Senate Education/Higher Education Committees Friday, March 22, 2013 State Capitol Auditorium  
**Date:** Thursday, March 21, 2013 12:51:44 PM

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

**I am submitting this testimony in support of SCR 120.**

I am a counselor at Assets School and have worked with students with dyslexia for the past seven years. I have seen first-hand the devastating effects it has on the self-esteem, and consequently the mental health of children with it. I have also seen the devastating effects dyslexia has on families of these children.

Reading is fundamental to learning, and learning is fundamental to being a contributing member of our community. Working at Assets, I have had the privilege of seeing the redeeming effects on self-confidence, self-esteem, and mental health on individuals who come to our school and receive appropriate instruction.

I strongly support the State of Hawaii implementing practices like the ones included in the Comprehensive Plan so that children all over our state - not just those who can afford to attend Assets - will have the opportunity to learn how to read.

Reading is fundamental. Please vote in support of SCR 120.

Thank you.  
Sincerely,  
Peggy Brandt  
Senior Counselor, K-8 Program  
Assets School  
808-440-3608

Home address:  
3288 Pamakani Place  
Honolulu, HI 96822  
808-988-1425

March 20, 2013

March 21, 2013

Testimony in Support of SCR 120:

Joint Hearing before the Senate Education/Higher Education Committees

Friday, March 22, 2013, 1:50 p.m. State Capitol Auditorium

Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Chair Senate Education Committee

Senator Brian T. Taniguichi, Chair Senate Higher Education Committee

Vice Chairs and Committee members:

Dear Chairpersons, Vice Chairpersons and Committee Members:

I support SCR 120.

My name is Camille Chun-Hoon. I am a HIDA Board member and the parent of a dyslexic daughter, who had been identified at age 6. Illiteracy is a very serious issue, and I look forward to the day when children like mine, throughout Hawaii, can be identified through early intervention.

Acquisition of reading for her was difficult but was acquired through intervention. The use of specific evidence-based practices directly correlates to improvement in literacy for many students who have language based learning challenges. That is good news. However, the key is to continue moving forward!

Over the past three years, HIDA volunteers have worked so very diligently in efforts working with the Department of Education, University of Hawai'i, etc. in drafting the 100+ page Comprehensive Plan to Teach Reading in Hawai'i Schools. If implemented, it will enable schools to teach reading to children with dyslexia and other reading disabilities in their general classrooms.

I thank the Committee on Education and Higher Education for bringing this issue forward for hearing and urge the Committees to pass this measure in its current form.

*Camille Chun-Hoon*

348-3587

**RE: Testimony in Support of SCR 120 – Relating to Education**  
Hearing before the Education/Higher Education Committees  
Friday, March 22, 2013  
Auditorium at the State Capitol (415 South Beretania Street)

Dear Chair Tokuda, Chair Taniguchi and members of the Committees

**I am submitting this testimony in support of SCR 120**

For over four decades, I have been involved in reading research, clinical practice, classroom teaching, and teacher training. I received my doctorate in Reading and Human Development from Harvard University, and have been an associate professor, a practicing psychologist, a licensed teacher, and Co-Principal Investigator on a multi-year, multi-million dollar research project funded by the National Institutes of Health to investigate the causes and remedies for reading failure in high-poverty, racially diverse schools. I have also served as a board member and officer of the International Dyslexia Association (IDA) for many years. I was a contributing writer of the national Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and have been a consultant on many national projects including the Reading First initiative (2001-2008), the Reading Rockets program, and the standards-writing effort of the IDA. I have published many research articles in peer-reviewed, scientifically oriented journals and I am the author of several textbooks and policy papers pertaining to teacher training and student services in reading, language, and literacy. I have also visited your state three times to speak at various conferences.

I have been asked by the proponents of the pending resolution, SCR 120, to provide commentary on some key issues under consideration.

1. Prevention of reading disabilities and reduction in numbers of students who end up in the “below basic” category. At this point, after more than 30 years of research on the nature, causes, and treatments for reading difficulties, including dyslexia, predictive science is quite advanced. We are quite good at flagging students who are risk for reading difficulties and at identifying what kind of reading difficulty they are likely to demonstrate (phonologically-based, or dyslexia; fluency-based; or language comprehension-based). We also have validated treatment approaches for each subtype of reading difficulty, at least through the intermediate grades. We know that *early identification is critical* in preventing and ameliorating reading disabilities and difficulties, and that with a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS or RtI) and specialized instruction, the severity of a reading disability can be lessened and the number of students who fail academically because of poor reading can be significantly reduced. I strongly support an emphasis on “literacy challenges” or “literacy difficulties” because we should aim to *prevent* disorders that are manifest as serious failure.

2. Professional development for and licensing of Literacy Specialists. A well-trained and well-equipped teacher can make a huge difference in a student's eventual outcomes. To this end, I chaired a committee of the IDA in 2010 that developed very specific guidelines for what teachers of reading should know and be able to do (IDA's *Knowledge and Practice Standards*). The document was created to fill a big void in the world of teacher training standards, which typically are not aligned with scientific research, which are not rigorous or measurable, which are unhelpfully vague, and which pay insufficient attention to the content knowledge that is necessary to drive instruction and the amount of supervised practice necessary to become a competent teacher. Literacy Specialists should be distinguished from "Reading Specialists" who, in spite of their title, are often not prepared with the depth of knowledge and skill necessary to intervene with dyslexia and related challenges.

3. Measurement of teacher competence. I strongly advocate the utilization of a teacher knowledge and competency assessment such as that adopted by Massachusetts and Connecticut. More states are moving in this direction, and it is the most effective way of ensuring that teachers are properly prepared. It should be required of all teachers of reading, including classroom teachers. The test for Literacy Specialists should be more rigorous than the tests currently used for special education licensure or for regular classroom teacher licensure. Until the New England states adopted a rigorous, meaningful test and set the cut-points at a motivating level, students at risk were not improving and teacher practices were not advancing with the scientific evidence. Since the tests were adopted, significant progress has been made in both states and the student achievement levels are among the highest in the country.

Legislators might reasonably ask why such a test should be necessary when the teachers are licensed and hold degrees. The unfortunate truth, which is well documented in a series of studies published in journals such as *Reading and Writing*, *Scientific Studies of Reading*, *Annals of Dyslexia*, and *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, or published by the National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) is that their coursework is often without real substance or may contain information which is seriously out of step with scientifically grounded evidence pertaining to reading acquisition, reading development, reading differences, and reading instruction. In my current enterprise, which is training teachers throughout the country, not a day goes by when we are not shocked by the lack of knowledge displayed by licensed, credentialed teachers with graduate degrees. After reviewing data from Hawai'i, I have no reason to believe that your state's teachers would differ in this respect.

While I think it inappropriate to mandate how courses should be designed in teacher training, I do think that state government should define expectations for professionals who serve in public schools and that tax-payer dollars should be used to ensure that certified or licensed

Louisa Moats testimony, SCR120, Hawai 'i

professionals are available to work in every school. A meaningful, rigorous assessment should measure teachers' knowledge of all essential components of instruction that are addressed in the CCSS and the IDA Standards (phoneme awareness, phonics and spelling, reading fluency, vocabulary and language development, reading comprehension, and writing). The bar should be set high enough to discourage those individuals who are not prepared to teach. Again, this assessment should be required of all teachers of reading and should be aligned to a scientifically-grounded blueprint.

Thank you for your thoughtful engagement of these critical issues. Please adopt SCR120.

Sincerely,

Louisa Moats, Ed.D.

260 Elkhorn Road

P.O. Box 6193

Sun Valley, ID 83354-6193

**From:** [Doris Young](#)  
**To:** [EDU Testimony](#)  
**Subject:** Testimony in Support of SCR 120  
**Date:** Thursday, March 21, 2013 1:41:03 PM

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Date: 3/21/13

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:

Aloha. I am a parent of a child with dyslexia, a tutor of dyslexic children, and an Occupational Therapist at The Queen's Medical Center. I am writing today to reinforce the need for our children of Hawaii to have specific learning approaches necessary to build strong reading skills, no matter what the child's abilities or learning challenges. In both my own child, children I tutor, and in patients I treat at the medical center, I see how pivotal reading skills can be for success or failure in daily life; a child or adult who cannot read well becomes a non-confident learner. Behavioral, academic, and emotional problems can stem from the lack of basic reading skills.

My daughter's experience with the public school system, unfortunately, was not a very positive one. During kindergarten, I knew instinctively, as a parent, that something was not quite right about my daughter's ability to read, but I did not know what. She would ask, "Mom, what's that word?" I would respond, "CAT." On the next page, she would ask, "Mom, here's a new word I don't know. . . What's this word?" I would again respond, "CAT." Despite numerous attempts to consult with teachers and the principal, no one identified the problem, nor offered solutions. I was told that she needed to be 2 years behind in reading before they could offer any services. Out of desperation, I left the public school system, and moved my daughter to a private school. Within a few months, they recommended that I get educational testing. I returned to the public school, and sat before a group of teachers and the assistant principal of the public school, requesting that my child receive educational testing, and they told me that "your daughter is so lucky to have such a concerned parent. . . we do not recommend testing or any other services, she's just fine." They made this decision with only a writing sample as data; no testing, no screening, and without meeting with her. Within the year, I paid privately (about \$1000) to have her tested, and she was diagnosed with a Specific Learning Disability--Dyslexia, and, later, with ADD. With specialized instruction from an Orton-Gillingham trained tutor, my daughter has been able to gradually learn how to read and improve her comprehension. I have heard similar stories from other parents of children I tutor.

Please support SCR 120, so that ALL children of our state can receive the assessments, reading instruction, and support necessary to become successful readers and community citizens. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Doris Young  
Concerned parent, tutor, and therapist

**From:** [mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov)  
**To:** [EDU Testimony](#)  
**Cc:** [svoit@hawaii.rr.com](mailto:svoit@hawaii.rr.com)  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for SCR120 on Mar 22, 2013 13:50PM  
**Date:** Thursday, March 21, 2013 1:44:28 PM

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SCR120

Submitted on: 3/21/2013

Testimony for EDU/HRE on Mar 22, 2013 13:50PM in Conference Room Auditorium

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

Comments: Thursday March 21, 2013 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. 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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**From:** [Kawailehua Pakjake](#)  
**To:** [EDU Testimony](#)  
**Subject:** Testimony in Support of SCR 120  
**Date:** Thursday, March 21, 2013 1:49:16 PM

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March 21, 2013

**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.**

I am a mother of a child with dyslexia. I am a part time teacher and substitute teacher in our public and private schools on Oahu. I am passionate that each and every child can achieve success in reading, however EXTREMELY passionate that each child learns to read differently. Reading is a passion everyone can indulge in if it were introduced to them in a way that makes them passionate. I'm a strong supporter of our education system, however, believe that we need to make changes in the way we are presenting reading material to our future generations. If we as adults and responsible parents and community don't make the change to support our future leaders, our future community, the fault will only lie on us; NOT them. We owe it to them to make the right changes NOW, not later, and NEVER leave it ignored.

My daughter is currently 6 years old, and never formally tested for dyslexia due to expenses that come with testing for dyslexia. Dyslexia is NOT covered by medical insurance because it is "not curable." My daughter is not sick, nor in need of medication for dyslexia. **She simply LEARNS DIFFERENTLY.** She by far has the brightest mind of any member of our family. She sees the world through different eyes, a complex mind. A mind we wish all our children could see the world. When she began the First grade, I noticed my daughter grinding her teeth. Imagine the stress she was enduring at school. She's an excellent student, who tries and strives for excellence, however, her mind just can't grasp the information like she's expected to. If you'd like to have a conversation about any subject with my daughter, she can do that. At length, and question things you would have never thought of. But as her to READ information on that same subject, she can't. Read it TO her, she can retain it and continue that conversation. Ask her to write about it, and she can, but it won't LOOK like it should. My daughter struggles with simple word fluency, phonics, hit frequency words, and more. She has attended preschool since the age of 3 years old, and yet still struggled to grasp such basic things. AS a concerned parent, I work with her at home, more than I should, yet her gains still didn't increase.

After much struggle and sleepless nights, we were able to get our daughter an IEP at her school. As I believe that it helps, I'm not comfortable in saying it has solved her difficulties in reading. Because of her difficulties in reading, she struggles in math, and of course writing. She is assisted for a total of 1 hour a week in a 1:1 environment. Two days a week for 30 minutes. She receives 45 minutes per quarter of speech. She remains in her general education classroom and her teacher, and her team felt she has a great mind and superior behavior to understand and grasp the

concepts being taught in her classroom. Title 1 Reading services were ruled out because they were run during her math instructional time. Which she extremely struggles in. No teacher or staff member at her school is aware of dyslexia, nor understand all that it comes with. No one is trained in a MSL program; which not only benefits students with dyslexia, but any student with a reading disability. I am not 100% happy about my daughter plan, however keep a positive and open mind to it. My daughter is extremely lucky to have parents to are aware of her needs and struggles. We fight for what is in her best interest. Not all students are as lucky. Our family cannot afford private tutors to assist our daughter in the way she learns. And I know many others could not either. Our state needs to provide these services. Teach and train our teachers.

Reading is the MOST vital connection to our children succeeding in not just school, but in our community and their, OUR future. Reading connects you to what you do with your life. It builds confidence, it allows our children to believe in themselves, to dream, and to make all those things a reality. As a part time teacher and substitute teacher, I go to many different schools and enter many different classrooms. Private and public. I see what is in our classrooms. **It is estimated that nearly 20% of our community is dyslexic. In a classroom of 25 students, that leaves 5 students in the dark. Lost and confused. In a school of 600 students that leaves 120 students lost and confused.**

Our communities awareness of dyslexia is slim to NONE. It is very misunderstood. I stand firm in believing that our community needs to become more aware of dyslexia. And making changes in our education is a start. making our teachers aware of the signs and training them with the abilities to provide for ALL students. Simple modifications in EACH classroom with help our state and students to succeed in reading. And better yet, LOVE reading.

Our state, the DOE, UH and others have agreed that we need to improve our state reading scores. With the Comprehension Plan to Teach Reading to Students in Hawaii written by the SCR 110 Working Group, we MUST implement practices like the ones stated in the Comprehensive plan to better our students and our future.

Please support SCR 120 and give our students the ability to LOVE reading. And to further their education experience and growth.

Sincerely,

Kawailehua Pakjake  
Mrs. Windward Oahu 2013  
Part Time & Substitute Teacher

**From:** [Gail Fox](#)  
**To:** [EDU Testimony](#)  
**Subject:** SCR 120  
**Date:** Thursday, March 21, 2013 2:13:13 PM

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Date: March 21, 2013  
RE: Testimony in Support of SCR 120  
Hearing before the Senate Education Committee  
March 22, 2013 1:50pm

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice-Chair Kidani, and members of the Committee:

**I am submitting this testimony in support of SCR 120.**

I am interested in dyslexia because I have a daughter with dyslexia. She is my second daughter and when she was only four years old I knew that she had problems with her learning. She had a difficult time with learning her letters even though I was a stay at home mom and spent lots of time with her. She had a difficult time learning her days of the week even though she knew the Days of the Week song by Barney. I would ask her what day came after Sunday. She would pause and think. She would sing the Barney song again and again. Each time she would give me the wrong answer. It was very frustrating for the both of us.

I had her tested by an audiologist and learned that my daughter has difficulties with her auditory processing. Her hearing is fine but somewhere between her ears and brain the information isn't received properly. My husband, mother-in-law, and brother-in-law all have dyslexia. Based on all the books I read, I knew that my daughter had dyslexia. But I remained hopeful because I realize my daughter's gifts and brilliance and my husband's family is highly creative and very bright.

As my daughter got older and it was time to start reading in 1<sup>st</sup> grade she continued to have problems. I requested that she be tested in the public school system and her results were: she falls in the normal range and does not qualify for special services. How can that be? I know that my daughter is having problems learning and she needs help. I worked with her at home every day to complete her homework and we did a program called Earobics to improve her phonemic awareness, auditory processing and phonics skills. My sister is a 1<sup>st</sup> grade teacher and recommended SRA's Reading Mastery so I did this with my daughter at home as well.

The teachers and school did what they could to help us. My daughter was put into remedial reading in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade but she complained about falling behind in her other lessons and felt the classes were too 'baby'. I explained to her that they need to start from the beginning to make sure everyone knew the proper sounds of the letters.

We continued to work with her at home using the Fast Forward program working with a therapist on the mainland. This cost about \$1000. During a family vacation on the mainland I drove my daughter each day for PEP (Perceptual Enrichment Program) and spent several hundred dollars for the testing and therapy. We worked hard every day for I believe 6 weeks.

My daughter continued to struggle at school trying to decode words. As she got older the words got longer and harder. By fourth grade she was having confidence issues especially since her teacher required each student to read the textbooks aloud. My daughter struggled

reading ever so slowly and each time the students finished her sentence or re-pronounced the word correctly my daughter's confidence would wither.

By her 5<sup>th</sup> grade, I became trained in Orton Gillingham to help my daughter with her reading. I had her retested but, again, she fell in the normal range and did not qualify for services at school. My response to the school was that I wasn't willing to let my daughter fall two years behind before she qualified for special services. My daughter worked hard EVERY day with her school work as well as all the extra things we did at home.

We worked closely with her elementary and middle school teachers and eventually received 504 accommodations for my daughter.

My daughter is now 16 years old and inducted into the National Honor Society at her high school. She so earned this honor as I believe she has had to work harder than the average student. She is very organized and sets goals for herself which she learned as a competitive swimmer since age 9.

I am thankful that my daughter is where she's at today. I wish we could've received more of the right help from our public school system. We are lucky that I was able to devote as much time as I was to our daughter. If I were working full time like most others, the story may have a different ending.

Please support SCR 120 to help our struggling readers. Most parents will not know how to help their children or have the resources to do so. Thank you.

Sincerely,  
Gail Fox

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

March 21, 2013

RE: Testimony in Support of SCR 120  
Hearing before the Senate Committees on Education and Higher Education  
March 21, 2013, 1:50 pm  
Conference Room - Auditorium

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.

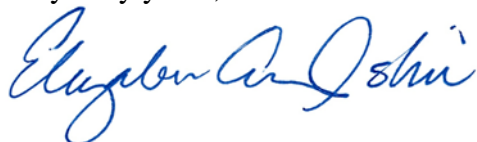
Fast forward a couple of years. My son was on track and I was volunteering at HIDA. I am not an educator so I was pretty much only good for handing out dyslexia brochures at education fairs. People, mostly mothers, would come to the HIDA booth and take a few brochures without meeting my eyes. I would 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](mailto:mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov)  
To: [EDU Testimony](#)  
Cc: [ScottF2009@hotmail.com](mailto:ScottF2009@hotmail.com)  
Subject: Submitted testimony for SCR120 on Mar 22, 2013 13:50PM  
Date: Thursday, March 21, 2013 2:34:27 PM

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## SCR120

Submitted on: 3/21/2013

Testimony for EDU/HRE on Mar 22, 2013 13:50PM in Conference Room Auditorium

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 NO. 120. I wish I could also testify in person, but I have classes on Friday. 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

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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**From:** [mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov)  
**To:** [EDU Testimony](#)  
**Cc:** [jlouis@hawaii.edu](mailto:jlouis@hawaii.edu)  
**Subject:** \*Submitted testimony for SCR120 on Mar 22, 2013 13:50PM\*  
**Date:** Thursday, March 21, 2013 2:43:54 PM

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SCR120

Submitted on: 3/21/2013

Testimony for EDU/HRE on Mar 22, 2013 13:50PM in Conference Room Auditorium

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

Comments:

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**From:** [pascualp011@hawaii.rr.com](mailto:pascualp011@hawaii.rr.com)  
**To:** [EDU Testimony](#)  
**Subject:** SCR120  
**Date:** Thursday, March 21, 2013 5:13:06 PM

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Dear Chair Tokuda, Chair Taniguchi, and members of the committee

I am submitting testimony in support of SCR 120 and I sincerely hope you will pass this bill. It is so important for our children, many of whom suffer in school because they don't get the help they need with their dyslexia related problems. I taught elementary students for 41 years, private and public schools. Now I'm a grandmother raising a grandchild with dyslexia.

The primary grades for a dyslexic student can be difficult when other students catch on easily to reading and writing. The student in grades 4-6 begins to feel inferior, not very smart, and asks him or herself "Why is my brain different? Why can't I learn? Why do other students get help and I don't?" It's heartbreaking, and often the solution has been to take the student out of school and home school the child. That's what I did. I also spent money on expensive private testing because the school testing didn't reveal the dysgraphia, the anxiety problems, poor reading comprehension, spatial confusion. Everything was going downhill until I found resources and specialists. HIDA is wonderful!

Hawaii's schools need to adopt the Comprehensive Plan for Teaching reading in Hawaii Schools. I've read it and I strongly urge you to support this strategy because there are so many students who will improve dramatically if they are given your help.

Sincerely, Mrs. Patricia Pascual



March 21, 2013

The Senate  
Twenty-Seventh Legislature, 2013  
State of Hawaii **Committee on Ways and Means**  
Attention: **Senator David Ige, Chair**  
**Senator Michelle Kidani, Vice-Chair**  
**Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means**

Aloha!

I would like to introduce myself. My name is Margarette Pegi Minicola Pang. I am the Founder and Executive Director for the Dyslexia Tutoring Center of Hawaii, Inc. (DTCH), and I am dyslexic.

My credentials are as follows:

- Certified Dyslexia Testing Specialist (the only one of two in the State of Hawaii)
- Certified Barton Tutor
- Dyslexia Screening Specialist
- 22 years of experience in the field of dyslexia
- A mother of 3 dyslexic children

I have been a member of the SCR 110 Working Group for 3 years and one of the driving forces for Dyslexia Awareness in the State of Hawaii.

I **oppose** the SCR 120 and I also opposed HB 675. I have attached my previous testimony for your review as well.

I found it amazing that in one paragraph of this bill, SCR 120, it states *that the Board of Education and Department of Education are requested to EVALUATE the comprehensive plan*. But in the very next paragraph, they are told to evaluate it *and move forward with appropriate implementation* of it.

- And this could be passed without any analysis of the financial impact of implementing this bill?
- With no additional budget money to pay for all of this?
- Is this going to turn into another “unfunded mandate”?

SCR 120 also wants to require the Board of Education and Department of Education to “evaluate and implement” a Dyslexia Awareness” plan (see paragraphs 7 and 8), but then they also want the Board of Education and the Department of Education to submit a written report before the start of the next legislative session which contains information such as the percentage of students who have been identified as having dyslexia.

- First, they would have to do a comprehensive study of the entire DOE school system, K-12.
- Second, how can they provide an accurate percentage, when they haven’t yet been instructed on Dyslexia Awareness, and most don’t yet know the signs and symptoms of dyslexia?
- Are they going to find a certified evaluator and test each and every kid?
- Who is going to pay for it? Is there really funding for this?

My original position, which I passionately stand by, is to support DYSLEXIA AWARENESS, DYSLEXIA AWARENESS TRAINING and eventually a HANDBOOK or RESOURCE GUIDE on dyslexia for teachers, parents, professionals, etc. in collaboration with the Department of Education (DOE).

The State of Hawaii, let alone the DOE, is not prepared to implement the comprehensive plan for teaching reading in Hawaii Schools to dyslexic students at this time, when the understanding of dyslexia has caused confusion to individuals who don’t understand, **what is dyslexia?**

Teachers resent and fight change – when they do not understand why it is necessary. This current bill forces them to change methodology and change how they teach reading, before they understand why.

That’s why DYSLEXIA AWARENESS must be the first 1<sup>st</sup> step and should include PRACTICAL, FREE, and easy-to-implement ACCOMODATIONS that every teacher can do NOW without additional training.

Once teachers understand dyslexia, and see the positive impact that these practical, free, and easy accommodations provide, then teachers will be open to, and eager, to learn and implement different ways of teaching reading & spelling. Providing a POSITIVE impact on our teachers with regards to dyslexia will provide a POSITIVE impact on our students, parents, and community.

I believe it will take **at least 3 – 5 years** for all teachers in Hawaii to be trained in Dyslexia awareness and to successfully implement accommodations in their classrooms. In addition, a handbook or resource guide can be distributed to all teachers to further their understanding and increase sustainability.

If you try to **force** different methods on teachers now, without that awareness & understanding, they will fight and resent dyslexia – and nothing will be accomplished. In fact, they won’t want to work with a dyslexic student because they may feel that dyslexic students are too difficult to work with. As a dyslexic myself, I do not want to see this happen.



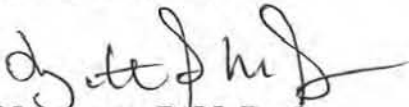
The ONLY dyslexia Bill, that DTCH and I would like to see and **support**, at this time, is one for **Dyslexia Awareness, Dyslexia Awareness and accommodations training for teachers, and the creation of a Handbook or Resource Guide on Dyslexia.**

If the WAM Committee on Education decides **not** to switch the SCR120 to only dyslexia awareness and a handbook or resource guide, then I would like to leave you with the following question as a topic for discussion:

- Why are special education teachers not mentioned or included in training that will be required for reading specialists and literacy specialists?
- after all, the Federal Law – the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) requires that Special Education teachers be "highly qualified" to teach whatever subject is listed on the IEP.
- and more than 80% of Special Ed kids classified as having a Specific Learning Disability, struggle with reading.

**I would like to take this opportunity to say "Thank you" in advance to each and every one of you for reading and considering my testimony.**

**Mahalo Nui Loa!**



**Margarette P. M. Pang**  
Certified Dyslexia Testing Specialist  
Certified Barton Tutor  
Dyslexia Screening Consultant



February 5, 2013

House of Representatives  
The Twenty-Seventh Legislature  
Regular Session of 2013

**Committee on Education**

Attention: **Rep. Roy M. Takumi, Chair**

**Rep. Takashi Ohno, Chair**

**Members of the Committee on Education**

Aloha!

I would like to introduce myself. My name is Margarette Pegi Minicola Pang. I am the Founder and Executive Director for the Dyslexia Tutoring Center of Hawaii, Inc. (DTCH), and I am dyslexic.

My credentials are as follows:

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- Certified Barton Tutor
- Dyslexia Screening Specialist
- 22 years of experience in the field of dyslexia

I have been a member of the SCR 110 Working Group for 3 years.

This Bill, HB675, has changed a lot during the past 3 years. I do not agree with the current bill. I strongly feel my original position, which supports DYSLEXIA AWARENESS TRAINING and a HANDBOOK or RESOURCE GUIDE on dyslexia is the correct and necessary 1<sup>st</sup> step – and the only thing that should be in this bill.

One of my reasons is this: Teachers resent and fight change that is forced down their throat – when they do not understand why it is necessary. The current bill forces them to change methodology and change how they teach reading, before they understand why.

That's why DYSLEXIA AWARENESS must be the first 1<sup>st</sup> step, and should include PRACTICAL, FREE, and easy-to-implement ACCOMODATIONS that every teacher can do **NOW** without additional training.





I think once teachers understand dyslexia, and once they see the positive impact that these practical, free, and easy accommodations provide, then teachers will be open, and hopefully eager, to learn and implement different ways of teaching reading & spelling.

However, I do think it will take **at least 3 – 5 years** for all teachers in Hawaii to go through a Dyslexia Awareness session, and for all the schools to get and read through a dyslexia handbook or resource guide, if one is implemented.

If you try to force different methods “down the throats” of teachers now, without that awareness & understanding, they will fight and resent dyslexia – and we won’t accomplish anything.

So the **ONLY** dyslexia Bill that I and DTCH **would support**, at this time, is one for **Dyslexia Awareness, Dyslexia Awareness sessions for teachers, and creation of a Handbook or Resource Guide on dyslexia.**

But if the Committee on Education decides **not** to switch the HB675 to only dyslexia awareness and a handbook or resource guide, then I would like to leave you with the following questions as a topic for discussion:

- Why are special education teachers not mentioned or included in training that will be required for reading specialists and literacy specialists?
- After all, the federal special education law requires that Special Ed teachers be "highly qualified" to teach whatever subject is listed on the IEP.
- And more than 80% of Special Ed kids are classified as having a Learning Disability, struggle with reading.

**I would like to take this opportunity to say “Thank you” in advance to each and every one of you for reading and considering my testimony.**

**Mahalo Nui Loa!**

**Margarete P. M. Pang**  
Certified Dyslexia Testing Specialist  
Certified Barton Tutor  
Dyslexia Screening Consultant