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Testimony of Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice  
Supporting HB 2182 Relating to Access to Justice  
House Committee on Finance  
Scheduled for Hearing Friday, February 21, 2014, 12:00 PM, Room 308

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*Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice is a nonprofit, 501(c)(3) law firm created to advocate on behalf of low-income individuals and families in Hawai'i on civil legal issues of statewide importance. Our core mission is to help our clients gain access to the resources, services, and fair treatment that they need to realize their opportunities for self-achievement and economic security.*

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Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **strong support** of House Bill 2182, which would establish a program to provide loan repayments for eligible lawyers pursuing public interest work in Hawai'i. As a nonprofit legal organization dedicated to promoting social justice for Hawai'i's low-income and other vulnerable residents, we strongly believe in the need to support attorneys seeking to serve their community in public interest law.

The creation of a meaningful Loan Repayment Assistance Program (LRAP) would replicate successful existing programs in a number of stated and law schools in the nation. The costs of loan repayment by graduates of law schools remains an almost insurmountable barrier to many who have a passion to provide public service through employment at a legal services program. That is a tragedy. The need has been recognized in numerous studies on the unavailability of critical legal assistance when low-income residents are confronted with a legal challenge that will impact on their ability to stop illegal eviction, inappropriate terminations from critical benefits, custody of their children and so many other barriers to survival and self-achievement.

The most recent study conducted by the Hawai'i Legal Services Hui indicated that the justice gap is so wide that less than one in four low-income residents in Hawaii were able to find assistance when confronted with a legal challenge. An effective LRAP program would provide a significant tool for legal aid programs and prospective employees to use in overcoming the economic barriers to public service that high loan repayment obligations impose.

Again, thank you for an opportunity to testify in strong support of HB 2182.

finance1

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
Sent: Friday, February 21, 2014 8:39 AM  
To: FINTestimony  
Cc: angelica.zabanal@gmail.com  
Subject: \*Submitted testimony for HB2182 on Feb 21, 2014 12:00PM\*

**LATE**

**HB2182**

Submitted on: 2/21/2014

Testimony for FIN on Feb 21, 2014 12:00PM in Conference Room 308

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

Comments:

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**LATE**



## **Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs**

P. O. Box 1135  
Honolulu, Hawai`i 96807

### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

#### **HB 2182HD2 (HSCR538-14) RELATING TO ACCESS TO JUSTICE**

Friday, 2/21/14; 12:00pm; Room 308

Aloha Madam Chair Luke, Vice chairs Nishimoto and Johanson and members of the House Judiciary Committee. I am Soulee Stroud, president of the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs (AHCC) speaking in support of proposed amendments being offered to HB2182 by the Student Bar Association of the University of Hawaii.

The first club of the AHCC was founded in 1918 by Prince Kuhio and a group of Native Hawaiian citizens to act as an advocacy organization for issues impacting on the Native Hawaiian population. That first club, now operating for ninety-six years is still strong and viable, and sixty eight other clubs have since been chartered throughout Hawaii and sixteen states of the continent.

Each year the AHCC holds a convention to deliberate on AHCC business and to address important issues of the day. Our process is through resolutions that are introduced, discussed and voted upon in committee and finally in plenary session by the House of Delegates.

In 2013, the AHCC passed Resolution 13-19 "Supporting the Creation of a State Task Force to Establish a State Program for Graduates of the University of Hawaii at Manoa William S. Richardson School of Law Who Pursue Public Interest Work In Hawaii In Order to Increase Access to Justice In Honor of William S. Richardson."

Resolution 13-19 puts into writing what many of us have known for a long time, i.e. the dismal health and incarceration statistics, as well as other social ills, with regard to Native Hawaiians. We applaud the initiative and social

conscience of the Student Bar Association of the University of Hawaii, noting that this action would indeed have made “CJ” Richardson proud.

Should this legislation become law, the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs accepts the responsibility of serving on the pool of organizations to select the lawyers to benefit from the Loan Repayment Assistance Program. We qualify to serve in this capacity as a 501(c ) (4) organization as well as a Native Hawaiian public interest organization.

We urge the passage of this bill that will do much to begin to alleviate injustice in Hawaii by attorneys who pursue public interest law. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Contact: [jalna.keala2@hawaiiantel.net](mailto:jalna.keala2@hawaiiantel.net)

**LATE**

Tyler Hi`ikua Stevenson  
University of Oregon School of Law

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 2182**

February 20, 2014

Aloha Chair Karl Rhoads, Vice-Chair Sharon Har and Committee Members,

My name is Tyler Stevenson and I am a second year law student at the University of Oregon School of Law. I offer this testimony in **strong support** of **HB2182**.

I have seen first hand the positive impact that good public interest lawyers have on the community and why HB2182 is crucial to providing strong legal counsel to low and moderate-income community members. Last summer, I was an intern at the Office of the Public Defender Maui County and had the pleasure to work among lawyers committed to protecting the liberties of community members who could not afford private legal counsel. Many of the public defenders I worked with love their job and believe in its purpose, however, in order to support themselves and a family, they had to work additional jobs. It has always been my passion to be a community leader in the public interest sector, but I continue to worry about the ability to support my growing family.

As an out-of-state law student, the current job prospects in Hawaii and high cost of living provide little incentive for my family and I to return to Hawaii. It will be difficult to provide a comfortable quality of life for my family with the income of a public interest sector job in Hawaii.

By the time I graduate in 2015, I will have over \$100,000.00 of student loans, which has directly influenced my decisions of whether to pursue a career in the public interest sector versus the private firm sector. The University of Oregon School of Law established a loan repayment plan that has helped turnout over 50% of its law school graduates in the public interest sector and is the leading option I have found to provide for my family's well being. However, my true career interests are to return home to Hawaii and serve the community in which I was born and raised.

I fully recognize the opportunity HB2182 gives me to pursue my passion of public interest work in Hawaii with financial security. Mahalo for considering this testimony in strong support for HB2182.

Sincerely,  
Tyler Hi`ikua Stevenson  
[thstev@gmail.com](mailto:thstev@gmail.com)

**TESTIMONY OF JOY STEVENS IN STRONG SUPPORT OF HB2182 HD 2**

**LATE**

To the Honorable Chair, Vice Chairs and Members of the House Committee on Finance,

I offer this testimony in **strong support** of **HB 2182 HD 2** related to Access to Justice. My name is Joy Stevens and I am a community resident of Kapolei, Hawaii.

I understand **HB2182 HD 2** will increase access to justice in civil legal matters for low- and moderate-income residents by creating a state funded student loan repayment program for public interest lawyers. I also understand that the creation of this bill is based on the recommendation and findings of the Supreme Court of Hawaii Access to Justice Commission. The commission found that the reasons for the severe disparity among citizens' abilities to access the judicial system were the insufficient number of attorneys choosing to practice public interest law. I wholeheartedly agree with this finding and therefore lend my full support to this bill. I strongly believe HB2182 will strengthen legal services in communities with the highest need.

The lack of legal representation and guidance in civil legal matters is a severe issue in our community. Those who cannot afford to hire a private attorney run a higher risk of losing their basic and fundamental rights, and often they do not gain access to valuable resources to improve the well-being of their families.

**HB 2182 HD2** will encourage more lawyers to work in the public interest arena to ensure all citizens have equitable access to legal guidance and representation in all civil legal matters. By having more lawyers working in this area, the state will protect the basic fundamental rights of our most vulnerable citizens.

For these reasons, I urge you to please support **HB 2182 HD2**.

Sincerely,  
Joy Stevens  
joys@inpeace.org

## TESTIMONY OF JOT STEVENS IN STRONG SUPPORT OF HB2182 HD 2

**LATE**

To the Honorable Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Har and Members of the House Committee on Judiciary,

I offer this testimony in **strong support** of **HB 2182 HD 2** related to Access to Justice. My name is Joy Stevens and I am a community resident of Kapolei, Hawaii.

I understand **HB2182 HD 2** will increase access to justice in civil legal matters for low- and moderate-income residents by creating a state funded student loan repayment program for public interest lawyers. I also understand that the creation of this bill is based on the recommendation and findings of the Supreme Court of Hawaii Access to Justice Commission. The commission found that the reasons for the severe disparity among citizens' abilities to access the judicial system were the insufficient number of attorneys choosing to practice public interest law. I wholeheartedly agree with this finding and therefore lend my full support to this bill. I strongly believe HB2182 will strengthen legal services in communities with the highest need.

The lack of legal representation and guidance in civil legal matters is a severe issue in our community. Those who cannot afford to hire a private attorney run a higher risk of losing their basic and fundamental rights, and often they do not gain access to valuable resources to improve the well-being of their families.

**HB 2182 HD2** will encourage more lawyers to work in the public interest arena to ensure all citizens have equitable access to legal guidance and representation in all civil legal matters. By having more lawyers working in this area, the state will protect the basic fundamental rights of our most vulnerable citizens.

For these reasons, I urge you to please support **HB 2182 HD1**.

Sincerely,  
Joy Stevens  
joys@inpeace.org

**LATE**

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
Sent: Friday, February 21, 2014 9:34 AM  
To: FINTestimony  
Cc: chefg@maui.net  
Subject: \*Submitted testimony for HB2182 on Feb 21, 2014 12:00PM\*

**HB2182**

Submitted on: 2/21/2014

Testimony for FIN on Feb 21, 2014 12:00PM in Conference Room 308

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Daniel J. Southmayd	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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

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**TESTIMONY OF Nicole Solatorio IN STRONG SUPPORT OF HB2182 HD 2**

**LATE**

To the Honorable Chair, Vice Chairs and Members of the House Committee on Finance,

I offer this testimony in **strong support** of **HB 2182 HD 2** related to Access to Justice. My name is Nicole Solatorio and I am a community resident of Waianae, Hawaii.

I understand **HB2182 HD 2** will increase access to justice in civil legal matters for low- and moderate-income residents by creating a state funded student loan repayment program for public interest lawyers. I also understand that the creation of this bill is based on the recommendation and findings of the Supreme Court of Hawaii Access to Justice Commission. The commission found that the reasons for the severe disparity among citizens' abilities to access the judicial system were the insufficient number of attorneys choosing to practice public interest law. I wholeheartedly agree with this finding and therefore lend my full support to this bill. I strongly believe HB2182 will strengthen legal services in communities with the highest need.

The lack of legal representation and guidance in civil legal matters is a severe issue in our community. Those who cannot afford to hire a private attorney run a higher risk of losing their basic and fundamental rights, and often they do not gain access to valuable resources to improve the well-being of their families.

**HB 2182 HD2** will encourage more lawyers to work in the public interest arena to ensure all citizens have equitable access to legal guidance and representation in all civil legal matters. By having more lawyers working in this area, the state will protect the basic fundamental rights of our most vulnerable citizens.

For these reasons, I urge you to please support **HB 2182 HD2**.

Sincerely,  
Nicole Solatorio  
89-118 Pililaau Avenue  
Waianae HI 96792  
nicoles@inpeace.org

**LATE**

From: Teresa Kaneakua <davan@hawaii.edu>  
Sent: Friday, February 21, 2014 8:21 AM  
To: FINTestimony  
Subject: Testimony of Teresa Kaneakua in Strong Support of HB2182 HD 1

To the House Committee on Finance,

I offer this testimony in strong support of HB 2182 HD 1 related to Access to Justice. My name is Teresa Kaneakua and I am a life-time community resident of Wahiawa, Hawaii, a part-time law student at William S. Richardson School of Law, and a working mom.

I understand HB2182 HD 1 is intended to increase access to justice in civil legal matters for low- and moderate-income residents by creating a state funded student loan repayment program for public interest lawyers. I also understand that the creation of this bill is based on the recommendation and findings of the Supreme Court of Hawaii Access to Justice Commission. The commission found that the reasons for the severe disparity among citizens' abilities to access the judicial system were the insufficient number of attorneys choosing to practice public interest law. I wholeheartedly agree with this finding and therefore lend my full support to this bill. I strongly believe HB2182 will strengthen legal services in communities with the highest need.

The lack of legal representation and guidance in civil legal matters is a severe issue in our community. Those who cannot afford to hire a private attorney run a higher risk of losing their basic and fundamental rights, and often they do not gain access to valuable resources to improve the well-being of their families.

I see the need for us to pursue careers that directly serve our community and I want to be able to work in the public interest arena, however, the debt that I am incurring to attend law school and the cost of raising a family in Hawaii discourages me from pursuing a career in public interest law.

HB 2182 HD1 will encourage and enable us to work in the public interest arena to ensure all citizens have equitable access to legal guidance and representation in all civil legal matters. By having more lawyers working in this area, the state will protect the basic fundamental rights of our most vulnerable citizens.

For these reasons, I urge you to please support HB 2182 HD1.

Mahalo,

Teresa Kaneakua

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Teresa E. Kaneakua  
JD Candidate, 2015  
University of Hawai'i at Manoa  
William S. Richardson School of Law

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Teresa E. Kaneakua  
JD Candidate, 2015  
University of Hawai'i at Manoa  
William S. Richardson School of Law

## TESTIMONY OF MARISSA PICO IN STRONG SUPPORT OF HB2182 HD 2

**LATE**

To the Honorable Chair, Vice Chairs and Members of the House Committee on Finance,

I offer this testimony in **strong support** of **HB 2182 HD 2** related to Access to Justice. My name is Marissa Pico and I am a community resident of Ewa Beach, Hawaii.

I understand **HB2182 HD 2** will increase access to justice in civil legal matters for low- and moderate-income residents by creating a state funded student loan repayment program for public interest lawyers. I also understand that the creation of this bill is based on the recommendation and findings of the Supreme Court of Hawaii Access to Justice Commission. The commission found that the reasons for the severe disparity among citizens' abilities to access the judicial system were the insufficient number of attorneys choosing to practice public interest law. I wholeheartedly agree with this finding and therefore lend my full support to this bill. I strongly believe HB2182 will strengthen legal services in communities with the highest need.

The lack of legal representation and guidance in civil legal matters is a severe issue in our community. Those who cannot afford to hire a private attorney run a higher risk of losing their basic and fundamental rights, and often they do not gain access to valuable resources to improve the well-being of their families.

**HB 2182 HD2** will encourage more lawyers to work in the public interest arena to ensure all citizens have equitable access to legal guidance and representation in all civil legal matters. By having more lawyers working in this area, the state will protect the basic fundamental rights of our most vulnerable citizens.

For these reasons, I urge you to please support **HB 2182 HD2**.

Sincerely,  
Marissa Pico  
91-1287 Hoopio Street  
Ewa Beach, HI 96706

## TESTIMONY OF MISTY PAVE IN STRONG SUPPORT OF HB2182 HD 2

**LATE**

To the Honorable Chair, Vice Chairs and Members of the House Committee on Finance,

I offer this testimony in **strong support** of **HB 2182 HD 2** related to Access to Justice. My name is Misty Pave and I am a community resident of Honolulu, Hawaii.

I understand **HB2182 HD 2** will increase access to justice in civil legal matters for low- and moderate-income residents by creating a state funded student loan repayment program for public interest lawyers. I also understand that the creation of this bill is based on the recommendation and findings of the Supreme Court of Hawaii Access to Justice Commission. The commission found that the reasons for the severe disparity among citizens' abilities to access the judicial system were the insufficient number of attorneys choosing to practice public interest law. I wholeheartedly agree with this finding and therefore lend my full support to this bill. I strongly believe HB2182 will strengthen legal services in communities with the highest need.

The lack of legal representation and guidance in civil legal matters is a severe issue in our community. Those who cannot afford to hire a private attorney run a higher risk of losing their basic and fundamental rights, and often they do not gain access to valuable resources to improve the well-being of their families.

In 2009, my daughter shared with me that someone she knew tried to molest her. She was about 8 or 9 yrs old when the incident happened. I reported to the police immediately when she informed me of this. A few months later they sent a detective to take our report and start a case to put this man in jail. He took the report and a few months later we were sent a packet. I called the contact number from that little packet, but no one ever returned my call. Unfortunately a month later I misplaced the packet, but I had the detectives contact info. I called him, he gave me a number to call. I called again and still no contact number. I called a few more times before I lost that number. And still no one returned my call. I tried to contact the detective again, but unfortunately never got a call back. Four years later, I received a call from a woman who advised me that they found my case and wanted to know if we still wanted to pursue this man. My daughter is now 18 years old. The woman advised me that the person who had responsibility for my case has since left and my case was put in a pile that was supposed to be handed to the next person. Her words to me was that it fell through the cracks. Both my daughter and I were disappointed that they let this go. The woman asked that if we no longer wanted to pursue then my daughter will have to call to inform her to no longer proceed with this action. I no longer have the voicemail from this woman because my phone broke and had to get a new one since, but I am sure that the voicemail can still be retrieved from my cell phone carrier if needed. This is my testimony. I feel as if my rights for me and my children are no longer protected. I took the right actions to protect my child and no one stepped up to help us, or more complete the duties of protection all the way through to the end.

. **HB 2182 HD2** will encourage more lawyers to work in the public interest arena to ensure all citizens have equitable access to legal guidance and representation in all civil legal matters. By having more lawyers working in this area, the state will protect the basic fundamental rights of our most vulnerable citizens.

For these reasons, I urge you to please support **HB 2182 HD2**.

Sincerely,

Misty Pave  
808-728-7692  
mp2luv33@gmail.com

finance1

**LATE**

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
Sent: Friday, February 21, 2014 8:12 AM  
To: FINTestimony  
Cc: megan.moniz@gmail.com  
Subject: \*Submitted testimony for HB2182 on Feb 21, 2014 12:00PM\*

**HB2182**

Submitted on: 2/21/2014

Testimony for FIN on Feb 21, 2014 12:00PM in Conference Room 308

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

Comments:

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Melody Kapilialoha MacKenzie, Esq.  
579 Kāne‘apu Place ♦ Kailua, Hawai‘i 96734  
(808) 780-8236 ♦ melodykmackenzie@gmail.com

**H.B. 2182, H.D. 2**  
**Relating to Access to Justice**  
House Committee on Finance  
Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair  
Rep. Scott Y. Nishimoto, Vice Chair  
Rep. Aaron Ling Johanson, Vice Chair  
Hearing on Friday, February 21, 2014, at 12:00 p.m.

**LATE**

Mahalo for this opportunity to submit testimony in **support** of H.B. 2182, H.D. 2, which establishes a loan repayment program for attorneys who pursue public interest work.

I am an associate professor at the William S. Richardson School of Law and director of Ka Huli Ao Center for Excellence in Native Hawaiian Law. I submit this testimony, however, in my personal capacity as a private citizen, a graduate of the Law School, and an attorney who practiced for many years in the public interest sector representing Native Hawaiian clients.

When I attended Law School, tuition was affordable and, after graduation, although I could not spend money on luxuries, I could pursue my dream of working for the Native Hawaiian community. Today, it is very difficult for students, who graduate with tens of thousands of dollars of debt (each semester of resident tuition is over \$9,000), to be able to work for non-profits, in rural communities, or in advancing the rights of under-represented communities.

I have seen the great need in our community – and here I speak specifically of the Native Hawaiian community – for legal representation. At Ka Huli Ao, we are often asked to kōkua with legal advice; sometimes we are able to help through our clinics or through the Law School’s pro bono program. We are not able, however, to provide direct legal representation. We simply do not have the capacity or resources to be able to do so. Sometimes we can offer advice and make recommendations. But, all too often, we must turn away members of our community.

I understand that the Hawai‘i Justice League proposed by H.B. 2182, H.D. 2, is modeled after a similar program, the Hawai‘i Health Corps Program, created in 2012 by the Legislature. The purpose of the Hawai‘i Health Corps Program is to encourage health care professionals to serve in neighbor-island and rural communities where there are shortages of doctors and nurses. Although lack of funding for the Hawai‘i Health Corps Program has stymied its implementation, the basic idea is an excellent one. Like healthcare, there is a great unmet need for good, affordable, legal advice and representation in neighbor-island and rural communities.

The program established in H.B. 2182, H.D. 2, serves two important purposes: first, it helps to relieve the debt of hard-working and dedicated young men and women who seek to serve the community; and second, it is a means to provide access to the legal system – indeed, to provide justice – to our citizens. I believe that some concerns about administration of the loan repayment program are being worked out and commend the Legislature for considering this bill. I urge this Committee to pass H.B. 2182, H.D. 2.

Mahalo for the opportunity to present this testimony.





# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

Written Testimony Presented Before the  
House Committee on Finance  
February 21, 2014, 12:00 p.m.

by  
Aviam Soifer, Dean  
William S. Richardson School of Law  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

**LATE**

### HB 2182, HD 2: RELATING TO ACCESS TO JUSTICE

Chairperson Luke, Vice Chairs Johanson and Nishimoto, and Members of the Committee:

HB 2182, HD 2 is a bill authored and introduced by the law students of the William S. Richardson School of Law. Richardson students have strongly demonstrated their commitment to public service in many forms, including their formation of Advocates for Public Interest Law (APIL) in 1985, creating and implementing the pro bono requirement for graduation, their participation in clinical outreach work and post graduation employment in areas dedicated to serving the most vulnerable in our community in countless ways.

We recognize the clear need for greater access to justice, and the need to address the serious, burdensome debt that students face after graduation. The HB 2182, HD 2 initiative could act as a vital supplement to the current federal loan forgiveness programs already in existence.

While we support the intent of the bill, we have grave reservations regarding the bill in its' current form.

Again, the Law School is not opposed to the intent of HB 2182, HD 2 and we recognize the potential that it holds as a big step in the right direction to address the concerns of access to justice and the burdensome loans shouldered by graduates. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this matter.

finance1

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
Sent: Thursday, February 20, 2014 8:25 PM  
To: FINTestimony  
Cc: jannaahu@hawaii.edu  
Subject: \*Submitted testimony for HB2182 on Feb 21, 2014 12:00PM\*

**LATE**

**HB2182**

Submitted on: 2/20/2014

Testimony for FIN on Feb 21, 2014 12:00PM in Conference Room 308

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

Comments:

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**LATE**

TESTIMONY BY KALBERT K. YOUNG  
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE  
STATE OF HAWAII  
TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE  
ON  
HOUSE BILL NO. 2182, H.D. 2

February 21, 2014

RELATING TO ACCESS TO JUSTICE

House Bill No. 2182, H.D. 2, establishes the Hawaii Justice League and loan repayment assistance program, under the University of Hawaii William S. Richardson School of Law, to support eligible lawyers in pursuit of public interest work in Hawaii. The bill creates the Hawaii Justice League Revolving Fund for the repayment program that would generate revenues through legislative appropriations; gifts, donations, and grants; reimbursements of loan repayments; proceeds from program operations; and interest earnings. The bill also appropriates an unspecified sum of general funds and revolving funds for FY 2015 to establish and administer the program.

The Department of Budget and Finance takes no position on the establishment of a loan repayment program to stimulate public interest legal work within Hawaii. However, as a matter of general policy, the department does not support the creation of any revolving fund which does not meet the requirements of Section 37-52.3, HRS. Special or revolving funds should: 1) reflect a clear nexus between the benefits sought and charges made upon the users or beneficiaries of the program; 2) provide an appropriate means of financing for the program or activity; and 3) demonstrate the capacity to be financially self-sustaining. In regards to House Bill No. 2182, H.D. 2, it is difficult to determine whether the proposed revolving fund will be self-sustaining.

**LATE**

**TESTIMONY OF BRIDGETTE BLANCH IN STRONG SUPPORT OF SB2255 & HB2182**

To the Honorable Chair, Vice Chairs and Members of the House Committee on Finance

My name is Bridgette Blanch and I am a community resident of Aiea, Hawaii. I offer this testimony in **strong support** of **SB 2255** and **HB 2182** related to Access to Justice.

I understand these bills are intended to increase access to justice in civil legal matters for low- and moderate-income residents by creating a state funded student loan repayment program for public interest lawyers. I also understand that the creation of these bills is based on the recommendation and findings of the supreme Court of Hawaii Access to Justice Commission who found that the reasons for the severe disparity among citizens' abilities to access the judicial system is the insufficient number of attorneys choosing to practice public interest law.

I strongly support these bills because this effort addresses a critical need in our community to offer vital and necessary legal resources to those who need them the most. The lack of competent representation and guidance in civil legal matters is a severe issue in our community. Those who cannot afford to hire a private attorney run a higher risk of infringement upon their basic and fundamental rights, and often they do not gain access to valuable resources to improve the well-being of their families.

I know these issues first hand because I have been adversely affected by the lack of legal resources. I was diagnosed with lung cancer three years ago and life has been difficult trying to support myself as well as my family. I was forced to quit my job to take care of my health. I also am a single parent of a beautiful and bright 16 year-old girl. She has great hopes to attend college. I never established paternity for my daughter because I could not afford to hire an attorney to represent our family in the legal proceedings. My daughter is of Native Hawaiian ancestry through her father's side. Unfortunately, I do not have the resources to send her to college. However, there are several Native Hawaiian scholarships that she could have access to if I could amend her birth certificate to show her ancestry. In order for me to do that, I need to have legal representation. Again, we cannot afford it. What that means is my daughter will be cut off from those very important educational resources based on technicality.

The other issue we are facing is in our public housing division. Drug use is rampant where I live. I have told the public housing authority many times about the drug use and they refuse to do anything about it. In the meantime, my daughter and I live in fear not knowing what to expect when we come home. With drug use, there is an increased risk of crime and violence. If we had access to lawyer, he/she could guide us in knowing our basic rights under public housing and how to navigate the system to ensure a safe neighborhood. That is why I am supporting these bills because there is a huge need in our community for more public interest lawyers, especially for people like me who have fixed incomes. **SB 2255** and **HB 2182** will encourage more lawyers to work in the public interest arena to ensure citizens like me have equitable access to competent representation in all civil legal matters. By having more lawyers working in this area, the state will protect the basic rights of our most vulnerable citizens. For these reasons, please support **SB 2255 and HB 2182** as a way to increase more lawyers in the area of public interest.

Sincerely,

Catherine Blanch, 99-165 Kohomua St. No. 10F, Aiea, HI 96701, Phone: (808) 384-2118

finance1

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
Sent: Thursday, February 20, 2014 8:18 PM  
To: FINTestimony  
Cc: bjtcjtsoup@aol.com  
Subject: \*Submitted testimony for HB2182 on Feb 21, 2014 12:00PM\*

**LATE**

**HB2182**

Submitted on: 2/20/2014

Testimony for FIN on Feb 21, 2014 12:00PM in Conference Room 308

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Bobby-John Campbell	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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finance1

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
Sent: Thursday, February 20, 2014 7:54 PM  
To: FINTestimony  
Cc: mkyching@gmail.com  
Subject: \*Submitted testimony for HB2182 on Feb 21, 2014 12:00PM\*

**LATE**

**HB2182**

Submitted on: 2/20/2014

Testimony for FIN on Feb 21, 2014 12:00PM in Conference Room 308

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

Comments:

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
Sent: Thursday, February 20, 2014 8:24 PM  
To: FINTestimony  
Cc: rachelfg@hawaii.edu  
Subject: \*Submitted testimony for HB2182 on Feb 21, 2014 12:00PM\*

**LATE**

**HB2182**

Submitted on: 2/20/2014

Testimony for FIN on Feb 21, 2014 12:00PM in Conference Room 308

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

Comments:

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finance1

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
Sent: Thursday, February 20, 2014 7:34 PM  
To: FINTestimony  
Cc: leilark@hawaii.edu  
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**LATE**

**HB2182**

Submitted on: 2/20/2014

Testimony for FIN on Feb 21, 2014 12:00PM in Conference Room 308

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

Comments:

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Cc: Ituan@hawaii.edu  
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**HB2182**

Submitted on: 2/20/2014

Testimony for FIN on Feb 21, 2014 12:00PM in Conference Room 308

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

Comments:

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**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB2182**

**House Committee on Finance:**

**Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair**

**Rep. Scott Y. Nishimoto, Vice Chair**

**Rep. Aaron Ling Johanson, Vice Chair**

William S. Richardson School of Law  
University of Hawai'i  
2465 Campus Road  
Honolulu, HI 96822

Cassie Bagay  
Co-President

Mari Fujimoto  
Co-President

Mike Dunford  
First Amendment Coordinator

David Klaponski  
Forms Director

Christina Simpson  
Curriculum Coordinator

Courtney Takara  
Public Relations Coordinator

Nikki Yamauchi  
Secretary

**February 20, 2014**

Students for Public Outreach and Civic Education (SPOCE) is a student-run organization at the William S. Richardson School of Law, and submits this testimony in strong support of the Hawaii Justice League Act of 2014.

SPOCE's primary goal is to increase public understanding of the law, particularly as it relates to the issues that people are most likely to encounter in their daily lives. We have been privileged, over the last several years, to be able to conduct education and outreach efforts in middle- and high-school classrooms both on Oahu and on the Neighbor Islands. In the process, we have encountered many students who are very enthusiastic about finding career paths that will enable them to help their families and communities. Many of these students have expressed a strong interest in exploring public interest law careers as a path to accomplishing those goals.

Many of the students who have the desire to serve their community through a career in the law will be unable to attend law school without accumulating substantial debt. The need to repay these debts can create a barrier for students who want to work in the often low-paying field of public interest law. The loan repayment program created by the Hawaii Justice League Act of 2014 will reduce that barrier.

The Hawaii Justice League Act of 2014 will help these deserving students attain their dream of being able to spend their careers serving their families and communities. Their service, in turn, will help those who need legal assistance the most, and will benefit our communities and our state.

We ask that the legislature pass this important measure, and thank you for allowing us the opportunity to testify in favor of passage of this bill.

finance1

**LATE**

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
Sent: Thursday, February 20, 2014 8:02 PM  
To: FINTestimony  
Cc: likowallace@ymail.com  
Subject: \*Submitted testimony for HB2182 on Feb 21, 2014 12:00PM\*

**HB2182**

Submitted on: 2/20/2014

Testimony for FIN on Feb 21, 2014 12:00PM in Conference Room 308

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Faye L Wallace	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
Sent: Thursday, February 20, 2014 8:27 PM  
To: FINTestimony  
Cc: zuriaki@gmail.com  
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB2182 on Feb 21, 2014 12:00PM

**LATE**

**HB2182**

Submitted on: 2/20/2014

Testimony for FIN on Feb 21, 2014 12:00PM in Conference Room 308

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

Comments: Hello, My name is Z. 'Aki, I am a Richardson School of Law 1L and I support this bill.

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To: FINTestimony  
Cc: likowallace@ymail.com  
Subject: \*Submitted testimony for HB2182 on Feb 21, 2014 12:00PM\*

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Testimony for FIN on Feb 21, 2014 12:00PM in Conference Room 308

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Faye L Wallace	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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Testimony of KHARA JABOLA-CAROLUS, President, Filipino Law Students Association

Before the House Committee on FINANCE

Friday, February 21, 2014 12:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 308



In consideration of

HOUSE BILL 2182, HOUSE DRAFT 2 RELATING TO ACCESS TO JUSTICE

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chairs Johanson and Nishimoto, and Honorable Members:

The Filipino Law Students Association (FLSA) and I, as president of FLSA, write in strong support of House Bill 2182 and its companion measure Senate Bill 2255. In December 2013, U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor observed that, “Every area of the law is missing diversity.” The low number of Filipinos represented in Hawaii’s legal community is a startling and tragic example of Justice Sotomayor’s observation.

Filipinos represent less than 3% of attorneys registered with the Hawaii State Bar Association although Filipinos account for 25% of Hawaii’s population. Those from our community able to overcome structural barriers and pursue advanced education face a second, perhaps more oppressive, obstacle upon graduation: staggering student loan debt. This debt combined with the fact that Hawaii has the highest cost of living in the nation according to a U.S. Commerce Department Bureau of Economic Analysis report, prevents many talented law graduates from serving their communities through public interest lawyering. To make the situation clearer, the U.S. Department of Agriculture found that food costs in Hawaii are 70 percent higher than the national average. Here, cars run on the most expensive gasoline in the United States. Hawaii residents pay the highest electricity rate in the U.S., triple the national average. These astronomical living expenses are exacerbated by the ever widening Hawaii-mainland salary gap for lawyers, particularly those in public interest work. While some argue that William S. Richardson School of Law tuition is “affordable” relative to schools within the continental U.S., nearly one-third of law students polled at Richardson report that they will graduate with \$80,000- \$120,000 in student loan debt.

HB 2182 provides a path to justice for communities historically excluded from legal resources by providing a loan repayment program for selected attorneys who practice public interest law in underserved communities. This legislation is critical because it helps to ensure fair

representation for vulnerable sectors of the population that are most in need of legal assistance but unable to afford a lawyer. FLSA thanks you for this opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

Mahalo for your service,

Khara Jabola-Carolus, President, Filipino Law Students Association

William S. Richardson School of Law

finance1

**LATE**

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
Sent: Thursday, February 20, 2014 9:56 PM  
To: FINTestimony  
Cc: cecilykaya@gmail.com  
Subject: \*Submitted testimony for HB2182 on Feb 21, 2014 12:00PM\*

**HB2182**

Submitted on: 2/20/2014

Testimony for FIN on Feb 21, 2014 12:00PM in Conference Room 308

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

Comments:

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Ho‘āla ‘Āina Kūpono  
P.O. Box 300304 • Ka‘a‘awa, HI 96730

**LATE**

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB2181 HD2  
House Committee on Judiciary

February 20, 2014

Dear Chair Sylvia Luke, Vice-Chair Aaron Ling Johanson, and members of the House Committee on Finance,

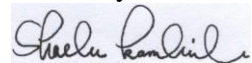
I am writing on behalf of Ho‘āla ‘Āina Kūpono (Ho‘āla), a non-profit organization based in Kahana, Ko‘olauloa, O‘ahu. Ho‘āla would like to thank the committee for the opportunity to provide **comments in support of SB 2255, “Relating to Access to Justice.”**

Just last year, Ho‘āla and the Kahana community had the privilege of working with the William S. Richardson School of Law’s Native Hawaiian Rights Clinic, which connected the Kahana community to law professors and students. Prior to having this kind of access to legal assistance, our community did not fully comprehend our legal rights. The law school clinic educated and helped the Kahana community make these kinds of decisions, which inevitably expanded our efforts to enable the people of Kahana to rise to sustain its ahupua‘a and people in health and abundance.

Access to legal assistance enabled the Kahana community to expand its Huilua fishpond restoration project, to working towards protecting and designating Kahana Bay as a Community Based Subsistence Fishing Area. This expansion allowed our community to work towards its ultimate goal to ensure a properly functioning ecosystem and ahupua‘a. This would not have been possible without access to legal assistance. Increasing the ability for attorneys to work with and in their communities on issues that matter to the community, maximizes a community’s capacity and allows them to move towards a better and healthier Hawai‘i.

Ho‘āla fully recognizes the value of HB2182 to allow attorneys to tap into their passions of why they decided to come to law school to truly serve a public purpose. It would be great to experience this not only on a clinical level, but be able to hone our skills by making a career out of public interest work. HB2182 is mutually beneficial for both the public interest attorney and the community. Mahalo for your time and for considering this testimony in strong support of HB2182.

Sincerely,



Shae Kamaka‘ala  
Secretary, Ho‘āla ‘Āina Kūpono

Student Bar Association  
William S. Richardson School of Law  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB2182**

House Committee on Finance

Hon. Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair  
Hon. Rep. Scott Y. Nishimoto, Vice-Chair  
Hon. Rep. Aaron Ling Johanson, Vice-Chair

February 20, 2014

**LATE**

Aloha Chair and Honorable committee members,

My name is Keani Rawlins-Fernandez, and I am the Chair of the Student Bar Association's Working Group on Access to Justice. I testify on behalf of the Student Bar Association at the William S. Richardson School of Law (SBA), which supports this bill.

The SBA represents over 300 students. It was established in 1985 and it is the only association of law school students organized within Hawai'i. The SBA's mission is to foster service-oriented legal professionals, who strive for justice through meaningful change.

The student delegates discussed what distinguishes us as Richardson lawyers, how to be accountable to community, and the importance of public interest law, at our 2013 Constitutional Convention. Our association then created the SBA Access to Justice Working Group, to clarify our role and focus our efforts.

We understand that we are newcomers to a long-standing conversation on Access to Justice. We acknowledge the work of those that have come before us, including: the Hawai'i Access to Justice Commission, the Hawai'i Innocence Project, the Native Hawaiian Legal Corporation, the Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice, the Community Alliance on Prisons, Legal Aid Society of Hawai'i, and the many others.

The SBA advocates for Article 1, Section 8, of the Hawai'i State Constitution's promise that "No citizen shall be disfranchised, or deprived of any of the rights or privileges secured to other citizens, unless by the law of the land." It's time to act upon the recommendation of the Hawai'i Access to Justice Commission, to create a Loan Repayment Assistance Program (2012 Annual Report). Let us step together toward a more pono Hawai'i.

Please find attached our concept amendments. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB2182.

Mahalo.

Attachment

**MEMORANDUM**  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE  
HEARING ON H.B. 2182  
Friday, February 21  
12:00 PM  
Conference Room 308

**To:** Honorable Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair  
Honorable Rep. Scott Y. Nishimoto, Vice Chair  
Honorable Rep. Aaron Ling Johanson, Vice Chair  
**From:** WSRSLS Student Bar Association Working Group on Access to Justice  
**Re:** Proposed amendments supplementing our testimony in support of H.B. 2182

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chairs Nishimoto and Johanson, and Honorable Committee members:

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify in support of HB2182, a bill to establish the Hawaii Justice League and create a loan repayment program for Hawaii public interest lawyers through the William S. Richardson School of Law. Please find concept amendments for your consideration:

**I. Relating to selection criteria for lawyers who apply to the program:**

- a. Applicants will have to demonstrate significant personal financial need. This may be done with the use of a CSS Financial Aid profile.
- b. Applicants will have to demonstrate that their work will serve a community which has demonstrated substantial legal need. This may be done by assessing income, unemployment, and availability of legal services in the area or the community being served, and other criteria.

**II. Relating to the establishment of a selection committee, by statute, which will be responsible for selecting applicants and deciding membership of the program:**

- a. The selection committee will consist of seven individuals.
- b. The Richardson School of Law may have only one representative on the selection committee at any given time.
- c. The selection committee may be drawn from the following organizations [this is not an exhaustive list]:
  - i. The University of Hawaii William S. Richardson School of Law
  - ii. Alumni of the William S. Richardson School of Law
  - iii. A County department or administration
  - iv. A State department or administration
  - v. The Access to Justice Hui
  - vi. The Access to Justice Commission
  - vii. The Office of Hawaiian Affairs
  - viii. The Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs
  - ix. The Student Bar Association of the William S. Richardson School of Law
  - x. Hawaii State Bar Association

**III. Funds shall be disbursed after service has been rendered and verified in a cliff vesting period of up to one year.** This vesting period will help ensure program retention and service is done to the community.

Mahalo.

finance1

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
Sent: Thursday, February 20, 2014 8:42 PM  
To: FINTestimony  
Cc: fdemapan@hawaii.edu  
Subject: \*Submitted testimony for HB2182 on Feb 21, 2014 12:00PM\*

**LATE**

**HB2182**

Submitted on: 2/20/2014

Testimony for FIN on Feb 21, 2014 12:00PM in Conference Room 308

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

Comments:

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## **TESTIMONY OF RAINE M.A. ARNDT IN STRONG SUPPORT OF HB 2182**

**To: Chair Sylvia Luke, Vice Chairs Scott Nishimoto and Aaron Ling Johanson, and Members of The House Committee on Finance**

**Hearing Date: Friday, Feb. 21, 12:00pm, Room 308**

**LATE**

To The Honorable Chair, Vice Chairs, and Members of The House Committee on Finance:

I am a licensed clinical social worker who has worked exclusively in the non-profit and governmental sectors locally here in Hawai'i for the past 6 years. I am also a current student at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa William S. Richardson School of Law, with an expected graduation date of May 2015. I offer this testimony in **strong support** of **HB 2182** related to Access To Justice.

As a professional social worker making the transition into the field of law, my hope is meld my two disciplines and to work in the public interest sector, advocating for and representing our most vulnerable citizens in order to promote a more equitable society. In doing so, I, along with so many other future attorneys hope to positively impact our community in a very practical way that is much needed in our present-day society.

In fact, my primary motivation for attending law school after already obtaining an advanced degree in social work was to extend the kind of public interest work I was (and am) already doing as a professional social worker onto a larger scale through skilled legal work which I feel can make a much larger impact than what I have been able to accomplish as a front-line social worker alone.

However, facing an extremely high cost of education and mounting student loans, I am encountering challenges in pursuing my passion for public interest work due to the lower salaries expected in this particular field of law. Providing much needed financial assistance through loan repayment opportunities provided for in **HB 2182** will make the public interest lawyering pursuit possible for me and so many of my fellow law school colleagues.

It is for this reason that I personally support **HB 2182** as a way to recruit and retain more lawyers in the area of public interest, and I urge you to please do the same.

Sincerely,

Raine M.A. Arndt, LCSW  
J.D. Candidate—University of Hawai'i at Mānoa William S. Richardson School of Law  
775 Kinalau Place Honolulu, HI 96819  
raine@hawaii.edu / raineardt@gmail.com  
808-218-8947

finance1

**LATE**

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
Sent: Thursday, February 20, 2014 8:48 PM  
To: FINTestimony  
Cc: aakao@hawaii.edu  
Subject: \*Submitted testimony for HB2182 on Feb 21, 2014 12:00PM\*

**HB2182**

Submitted on: 2/20/2014

Testimony for FIN on Feb 21, 2014 12:00PM in Conference Room 308

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

Comments:

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finance1

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**LATE**

From: Andrew Michaels <michaels1000@gmail.com>  
Sent: Friday, February 21, 2014 10:27 AM  
To: FINTestimony  
Subject: Testimony of Andrew Michaels in strong support of HB 2182 HD2

I am a law student in strong support of HB 2182 HD2.

Thank you,

Andrew Michaels

Sent from my iPhone



## TESTIMONY OF KAUI PRATT IN STRONG SUPPORT OF HB2182 HD 2

**LATE**

To the Honorable Chair, Vice Chairs and Members of the House Committee on Finance,

I offer this testimony in **strong support** of **HB 2182 HD 2** related to Access to Justice. My name is Kai Pratt and I am a community resident of Kaneohe, Hawaii. For nearly 15 years, I have worked in high need communities in both a professional and personal capacity. Access to legal resources is a severe issue in our communities.

I understand **HB2182 HD 2** will increase access to justice in civil legal matters for low- and moderate-income residents by creating a state funded student loan repayment program for public interest lawyers. I also understand that the creation of this bill is based on the recommendation and findings of the Access to Justice Commission. The commission found that the reasons for the severe disparity among citizens' abilities to access the judicial system were the insufficient number of attorneys choosing to practice public interest law. I wholeheartedly agree with this finding and therefore lend my full support to this bill. I strongly believe HB2182 will strengthen legal services in communities with the highest need. Those who cannot afford to hire a private attorney run a higher risk of losing their basic and fundamental rights, and often they do not gain access to valuable resources to improve the well-being of their families.

The lack of access to justice hits close to home. My cousin was recently bullied by the State's Child Protective Services because she was uneducated about her rights as a parent and the legal system. It was unfortunate to witness this because she is a good mother of two little girls, active within her community and ambitious. She is currently on a career path to become a nurse so that she can provide for her family. A few months ago, she was involved in an accident where one child was injured. CPS, without doing a proper investigation, took her children away from her for nearly two weeks without a court order, the first time this family had ever been separated. CPS then documented the abuse on record within 24 hours from the accident. Several community members, family and their family doctor urged CPS to reverse their decision and reconsider her case but CPS refused to. My cousin could not afford to hire an attorney. CPS was rude and bullied her throughout the process. Now that she has a documented case of child abuse on her record, she will not be able to get a job in the health care field for the next five years until the report drops off her record. I wholeheartedly believe that this could have been avoided if she had access to legal representation. Unfortunately, because she has the documented abuse on her record, her family will continue to live in poverty because she will not be able to develop professionally for the next five years. Her story of injustice is just one example that represents thousands of people in our state who have had their rights trampled on. Through my support of this bill, I hope to represent those voices today.

**Therefore, I strongly support HB 2182 HD2** because it will encourage more lawyers to work in the public interest arena to ensure all citizens have equitable access to legal guidance and representation in all civil legal matters. By having more lawyers working in this area, the state will protect the basic fundamental rights of our most vulnerable citizens.

For these reasons, I urge you to please support **HB 2182 HD2**.

Sincerely,

**Kai Pratt, 45-411 Akimala St. Kaneohe, HI 96744**

## TESTIMONY OF KU‘ULANI KEOHOKALOLE IN STRONG SUPPORT OF HB2182 HD 2

**LATE**

To the Honorable Chair, Vice Chairs and Members of the House Committee on Finance,

I offer this testimony in **strong support** of **HB 2182 HD 2** related to Access to Justice. My name is Ku‘ulani Keohokalole and I am a community resident of Kāne‘ohe, Hawaii.

I understand **HB2182 HD 2** will increase access to justice in civil legal matters for low- and moderate-income residents by creating a state funded student loan repayment program for public interest lawyers. I also understand that the creation of this bill is based on the recommendation and findings of the Supreme Court of Hawaii Access to Justice Commission. The commission found that the reasons for the severe disparity among citizens’ abilities to access the judicial system were the insufficient number of attorneys choosing to practice public interest law. I wholeheartedly agree with this finding and therefore lend my full support to this bill. I strongly believe HB2182 will strengthen legal services in communities with the highest need.

The lack of legal representation and guidance in civil legal matters is a severe issue in our community. Those who cannot afford to hire a private attorney run a higher risk of losing their basic and fundamental rights, and often they do not gain access to valuable resources to improve the well-being of their families.

This will personally affect my family, as my husband is a recent graduate of William S. Richardson School of Law and his ability to continue serving in the public sector depends on our ability to be able to repay his student loans and make ends meet for us and our two young children.

**HB 2182 HD2** will encourage more lawyers to work in the public interest arena to ensure all citizens have equitable access to legal guidance and representation in all civil legal matters. By having more lawyers working in this area, the state will protect the basic fundamental rights of our most vulnerable citizens.

For these reasons, I urge you to please support **HB 2182 HD2**.

Sincerely,  
Ku‘ulani Keohokalole  
[kuukeoho@gmail.com](mailto:kuukeoho@gmail.com)

# Moloka'i Community Service Council

Post Office Box 2047 • Kaunakakai, Hawai'i 96748

•Phone: 808-553-3244 •Fax: 808-553-3370 •E-mail: mcsc@molokai.org •Website: www.molokai.org

February 21, 2014

## COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

Hon. Rep. Karl Rhoads, Chair

Hon. Rep. Sharon E. Har, Vice-Chair

**LATE**

State Capitol

415 S. Beretania St.

Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Re: Testimony in Support of HB 2182

Hearing: Friday, February 21, 2014 at 12:00pm

We support HB 2182, which would provide incentive for law students to practice public interest law in exchange for student loan forgiveness. The number of attorneys who provide civil legal services for the indigent and for public interest matters has declined precipitously over the past two decades, as both the cost of a law degree and the cost of living have risen. As a result, access to justice has been barred for many who cannot afford to hire a private attorney.

As a former Legal Aid attorney who spent 16 years providing civil legal services to one of Hawai'i's low-income communities, I can attest to the importance of those services. Today, there are many bright young law students who are interested in public interest practices, and the passage of this proposed legislation would make it possible for many of them to do so.

Please pass HB 2182.

Mahalo for your consideration.

*Karen M. Holt*

Karen M. Holt, Esq.

Executive Director



Student Bar Association  
William S. Richardson School of Law  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

**LATE TESTIMONY**

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB2182**

House Committee on Finance

Hon. Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair  
Hon. Rep. Scott Y. Nishimoto, Vice-Chair  
Hon. Rep. Aaron Ling Johanson, Vice-Chair

February 20, 2014

Aloha Chair and Honorable committee members,

My name is Keani Rawlins-Fernandez, and I am the Chair of the Student Bar Association's Working Group on Access to Justice. I testify on behalf of the Student Bar Association at the William S. Richardson School of Law (SBA), which supports this bill.

The SBA represents over 300 students. It was established in 1985 and it is the only association of law school students organized within Hawai'i. The SBA's mission is to foster service-oriented legal professionals, who strive for justice through meaningful change.

The student delegates discussed what distinguishes us as Richardson lawyers, how to be accountable to community, and the importance of public interest law, at our 2013 Constitutional Convention. Our association then created the SBA Access to Justice Working Group, to clarify our role and focus our efforts.

We understand that we are newcomers to a long-standing conversation on Access to Justice. We acknowledge the work of those that have come before us, including: the Hawai'i Access to Justice Commission, the Hawai'i Innocence Project, the Native Hawaiian Legal Corporation, the Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice, the Community Alliance on Prisons, Legal Aid Society of Hawai'i, and the many others.

The SBA advocates for Article 1, Section 8, of the Hawai'i State Constitution's promise that "No citizen shall be disfranchised, or deprived of any of the rights or privileges secured to other citizens, unless by the law of the land." It's time to act upon the recommendation of the Hawai'i Access to Justice Commission, to create a Loan Repayment Assistance Program (2012 Annual Report). Let us step together toward a more pono Hawai'i.

Please find attached our concept amendments. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB2182.

Mahalo.

Attachment

**MEMORANDUM**  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE  
HEARING ON H.B. 2182  
Friday, February 21  
12:00 PM  
Conference Room 308

**To:** Honorable Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair  
Honorable Rep. Scott Y. Nishimoto, Vice Chair  
Honorable Rep. Aaron Ling Johanson, Vice Chair  
**From:** WSRSLS Student Bar Association Working Group on Access to Justice  
**Re:** Proposed amendments supplementing our testimony in support of H.B. 2182

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chairs Nishimoto and Johanson, and Honorable Committee members:

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify in support of HB2182, a bill to establish the Hawaii Justice League and create a loan repayment program for Hawaii public interest lawyers through the William S. Richardson School of Law. Please find concept amendments for your consideration:

- I. Relating to selection criteria for lawyers who apply to the program:**
  - a. Applicants will have to demonstrate significant personal financial need. This may be done with the use of a CSS Financial Aid profile.
  - b. Applicants will have to demonstrate that their work will serve a community which has demonstrated substantial legal need. This may be done by assessing income, unemployment, and availability of legal services in the area or the community being served, and other criteria.
  
- II. Relating to the establishment of a selection committee, by statute, which will be responsible for selecting applicants and deciding membership of the program:**
  - a. The selection committee will consist of seven individuals.
  - b. The Richardson School of Law may have only one representative on the selection committee at any given time.
  - c. The selection committee may be drawn from the following organizations [this is not an exhaustive list]:
    - i. The University of Hawaii William S. Richardson School of Law
    - ii. Alumni of the William S. Richardson School of Law
    - iii. A County department or administration
    - iv. A State department or administration
    - v. The Access to Justice Hui
    - vi. The Access to Justice Commission
    - vii. The Office of Hawaiian Affairs
    - viii. The Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs
    - ix. The Student Bar Association of the William S. Richardson School of Law
    - x. Hawaii State Bar Association

**III. Funds shall be disbursed after service has been rendered and verified in a cliff vesting period of up to one year. This vesting period will help ensure program retention and service is done to the community.**

Mahalo.