

Written Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Education
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By

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Personal Testimony

SB 2763 Relating to the Board of Education

Requires the board of education to allow public testimony on items not on a public meeting agenda if certain requirements are met.

Thank you for hearing SB 2763. My name is Karen Ginoza. I am a retired teacher and past president of the Hawaii State Teachers Association. I strongly support the passage of SB 2763.

I have attended many meetings of the elected and appointed Board of Education. One significant difference between the two boards is the lack of access and voices of teachers and the general public. The current school board does not allow public testimony if the item is not on the agenda. It is very difficult to know what the agenda items are since the agenda is released to the public with very little details. We do not have access to the documents that the board members have.

Last year, I requested to speak to the board but was never given the opportunity to present a report completed by Faith Action for Community Equity (FACE). I was finally given a few minutes in a public forum before a few board members to share the report.

Under the appointed school board, the public is not given the opportunity to submit items for consideration by the board. Change will only take place when a new governor is elected since it is the governor who appoints the school board. Do we have to wait four to eight years to bring democracy back to the school system? Parents, teachers, and the public need to have their voices heard. It is only when we all work together that we will be able to improve education.

I strongly urge your support for SB 2763.