

To:

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Chair

Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair

And

COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair

Senator Josh Green, Vice Chair

SCR 51

NOTICE OF HEARING

DATE: Wednesday, March 12, 2014

TIME: 1:15pm

PLACE: Conference Room 414, State Capitol, 415 South Beretania Street

Testifier(s): Anna E. Weihl, MSW Student at the University of Hawai'i

Chair Tokuda and Oakland and Vice Chair Kidani and Green,

I strongly support this bill.

SCR 51 is requesting the administration of a youth risk behavior survey to students in grades six to twelve in order to assess the leading factors of death, disability, and health complications among youth and to improve health education programs.

According to West Hawaii Today "Key indicators of youth suicide (ages 10-24) in Hawaii have dropped since 2005, according to the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's 2011 study of youth behavior. Youth that have seriously considered suicide fell from 18.5 percent of the population to 16.1 percent, and actual suicide attempts dropped from 12 percent to 8.6 percent. But those percentages for Hawaii youth are still higher than national averages in 2011". - See more at:

<http://westhawaii.com/sections/news/local-news/hawaii-no-longer-no-1-teen-suicide-attempts-still-top-10.html#sthash.t5eSdowL.dpuf>

However, obviously a high risk factor still remains within the youth of Hawai'i, which demands attention. SCR 51 would start a very beneficial awareness-based foundation by gathering the data that exists from the said population thus increasing knowledge toward successful prevention of youth risk behaviors.

It is 2014 and the trends and popularity of today's youth cultures are ever-changing. We must "move with the times" and seek alternatives and gain knowledge to better serve the youth of today so tomorrow's future is bountiful with healthy, happy and productive citizens of Hawai'i.

I respectfully ask the Committee to support and pass this bill.



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Senate Committee on Education
Senator Jill Tokuda, Chair
Senator Michelle Kidani, Vice Chair

Senate Committee on Human Services
Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
Senator Josh Green, Vice Chair

March 12, 2014

Dear Chairs Tokuda and Chun Oakland, Vice Chairs Kidani and Green, and Committee Members:

This testimony is submitted support for SCR51, requesting the administration of the Youth Risk Behavior Survey in grades six to twelve.

The Hui for Excellence in Education (HE'E) is a diverse coalition of over 40 parent and community organizations dedicated to improving student achievement by increasing family and community engagement and partnerships in our schools. Our member list is attached.

The Coalition likes the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) because it is a federal survey, which is widely viewed and allows Hawaii to be compared with other states and the nation. Further, the questionnaire asks specific questions about risk behavior, which may help inform the Department of Education and the Board of Education on risk behavior trends, and consequently help shape policy and planning decisions. Among the topics that are covered in the survey, bullying, physical fighting, depression and attempted suicide are of particular interest to families, with the feeling that if students do not feel safe they will not be able to learn.

As with all surveys, in order for them to be effective, an adequate response rate is critical. We learned that currently, one obstacle about the YRBS was that a parent would have to give consent for a student to take the survey. This bill allows a student not to take the survey only if there is written permission from the parent. This opt-out clause, we believe, will result in more students being able to take the survey, improving response rates. The Coalition also supports the broadening of participation to include private schools students to allow for a meaningful representation for the students of Hawaii.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify and for your consideration. Our support of this bill represents a 75% consensus or more of our membership.

Sincerely,

Cheri Nakamura
HE'E Coalition Director

HE'E Member List

Academy 21
After-School All-Stars Hawaii
Alliance for Place Based Learning
*Castle Complex Community Council
Center for Civic Education
Coalition for Children with Special Needs
*DOE Windward District
*Faith Action for Community Equity
Fresh Leadership LLC
Girl Scouts Hawaii
*Good Beginnings Alliance
Harold K.L. Castle Foundation
*Hawaii Appleseed Center for Law and
Economic Justice
Hawai'i Athletic League of Scholars
*Hawai'i Charter School Network
*Hawai'i Nutrition and Physical Activity
Coalition
*Hawaii State PTSA
Hawai'i State Student Council
Hawai'i State Teachers Association
Hawai'i P-20
Hawai'i 3Rs
Head Start Collaboration Office
It's All About Kids
*INPEACE
Joint Venture Education Forum
Junior Achievement of Hawaii
Kamehameha Schools
Kanu Hawai'i
Keiki to Career Kaua'i
Kupu A'e
*Leaders for the Next Generation
Learning First
McREL's Pacific Center for Changing the
Odds
Our Public School
*Pacific Resources for Education and
Learning
*Parents and Children Together
*Parents for Public Schools Hawai'i
Punahou School PUEO Program
Teach for America
The Learning Coalition
US PACOM
University of Hawai'i College of Education
YMCA of Honolulu
*Voting Member