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TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON  
EDUCATION

RE: SB 618 - RELATING TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2017

COREY ROSENLEE, PRESIDENT  
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Chair Kidani and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association **supports SB 618**, relating to the Board of Education.

In 2016, the Hawai'i State Board of Education conducted several community meetings in the evening, including on the outer islands, to offer the public an opportunity to participate in board decisions. The importance of these meetings was heightened by the revision of the Joint BOE-DOE Strategic Plan and writing of Gov. Ige's ESSA Blueprint, which were supported by additional community meetings organized by the Hawai'i State Department of Education and ESSA Task Force.

Now that the Strategic Plan has been adopted and the ESSA Blueprint is near completion, we hope that the board will continue opening its doors to the community, especially the concerns of our state's hardworking teachers. While a range of issues have been brought before the board as part of the Strategic Plan process, many questions linger about, for example, the possible application for the federal government's "innovative assessment" pilot program, details of the DOE's STRIVE-HI school accountability program, revisions to the educator effectiveness system, and improvement of services for special needs students. Since teachers are the most important school-level personnel in guiding student learning, they should have ample opportunity to provide their professional feedback to the board.

To lift teachers voices in educational governance, the Hawaii State Teachers Association asks your committee to **support** this bill.



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SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Friday, February 10, 2017, 2:45 p.m. Room 229  
SB 618 RELATING TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
TESTIMONY

Janet Mason, Legislative Co-Chair, League of Women Voters of Hawaii

Chair Kidani, Vice-Chair Kahele and Committee Members:

**The League of Women Voters of Hawaii strongly supports SB 618 that would require the Board to have a process whereby the public may petition to add items to their agenda at the next meeting.**

The League supports the public's rights and interest concerning the administration, policy setting and budget making for our statewide school system; this is important whether we have an elected or appointed Board of Education. We believe the proposed measure is consistent with Chapter 92 Section 302A-124 HRS and the Board's By-Laws.

Now, the public is permitted to testify at Full Board of Education meetings, but only for items that already appear on the agenda, which has been set by the Board in advance of the meeting. We request this bill be amended, as necessary, so it is clear that every meeting of the full Board would have an agenda item titled "Open Forum" or "Community Items," so that the Board routinely solicits public proposals for future agenda items. This would permit greater transparency because minutes of the Board meeting would include the proposed agenda items that had been suggested.

At a subsequent Board meeting the full Board could then act on any open "Community Items." Making decisions on suggested items at the subsequent meeting would guarantee that the suggested items appeared on the public agenda for this meeting, when the Board could make decisions on suggested items. While this would not guarantee inclusion on the agenda of the



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items proposed by the public under the 'Open Forum' or 'Community Items' area, it would create a venue for the public to present suggestions of items for discussion.

We support the Board's current instructions for submitting written testimony and testifying in person at Board meetings and do not believe the proposed change would interfere with the general business of the Board.

We urge you to pass this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 8, 2017 11:57 AM  
**To:** EDU Testimony  
**Cc:** michelematsuo@yahoo.com  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for SB618 on Feb 10, 2017 14:45PM

**SB618**

Submitted on: 2/8/2017

Testimony for EDU on Feb 10, 2017 14:45PM in Conference Room 229

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
michele matsuo	Democratic Party of Hawaii Education Caucus	Support	Yes

Comments: Aloha, Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kahele and members of the committee. Thank you for this opportunity to testify. My name is Michele Matsuo. I am the Chair of the Democratic Party of Hawaii's Education Caucus. The Education Caucus strongly supports this bill. Mahalo, Michele Matsuo

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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46-063 Emepela Pl. #U101 Kaneohe, HI 96744 · (808) 679-7454 · Kris Coffield · Co-founder/Executive Director

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## **TESTIMONY FOR SENATE BILL 618, RELATING TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**Senate Committee on Education  
Hon. Michelle N. Kidani, Chair  
Hon. Kaiali'i Kahele, Vice Chair**

**Friday, February 10, 2017, 2:45 PM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 229**

Honorable Chair Kidani and committee members:

I am Kris Coffield, representing IMUAlliance, a nonpartisan political advocacy organization that currently boasts over 350 members. On behalf of our members, we offer this testimony in support of Senate Bill 618, relating to the Board of Education.

Over the past year, the Hawai'i State Board of Education has attempted to establish a more open and democratic decision-making process. The BOE has held several evening community meetings, including on the outer islands, to ensure that the public has an opportunity to provide input on board decisions. Such meetings were made more important by the revision of the Joint BOE-DOE Strategic Plan and drafting of Gov. Ige's ESSA Blueprint, additional community meetings for which were convened by the Hawai'i State Department of Education and ESSA Task Force, respectively.

At the same time, the board's and board committees' agendas remain wholly subject to the will of the chairs and most meetings are held at hours during which teachers and working families are preoccupied. While numerous topics have been brought to the BOE's attention through discussions around the revision of the strategic plan (which encompasses all public education activities and operations), the plan's extension was adopted last December. Urgent conversations on subjects ranging from the overuse of standardized testing to teacher evaluations to mandated curricula to the inadequacy of special education may be impossible to have, unless the public—especially hardworking educators and the parents of public school students—are given a pathway to place items on the board's radar.

For example, Infinite Campus, the DOE's new student information system, is currently in its first phase of implementation and is desperately in need of the BOE's attention, which it so far hasn't received. It replaces eSIS, the old student information system, which a few years ago, became incompatible with the outdated Java-based programs being run by the DOE. You can do

a lot of things with Infinite Campus—in fact, teachers are *required* to do a lot of things with Infinite Campus, like uploading grades and tracking attendance. Yet, it’s only as effective as it is understood by those who use it. To date, the DOE has provided 400 trainings on Infinite Campus. About 25 percent of those trainings were for “teacher cadres,” groups of about five teachers from a school meant to instruct fellow teachers in how to use the new program. The math sounds legit: 13,500 teachers divided by 500 teacher cadre members equals 27 teachers per cadre member. As with class size, however, this number varies greatly by school population—a teacher cadre member at Campbell High School, for example, would have to train far more people than a cadre member at Ka’awa Elementary.

Unfortunately, the DOE provided no time for teacher training. Of the four days teachers are given at the beginning of the year, at most schools, two are devoted almost exclusively to compliance and regulation reviews, while another two are meant for teachers to prep for the new year. Some savvy principals have allowed faculty meetings or portions of the contractual 21 hours of job-embedded professional development time to be used for Infinite Campus training, but even that isn’t enough to cover the shift to an entirely new student information system—grades, attendance, and all. Infinite Campus is also infinitely detailed. While customizability is good from the department’s standpoint, a teacher just wanting to input grades doesn’t enjoy having to sift through onerous presets for every possible grading situation over any given time period—weekly, bi-weekly, monthly, quarterly?—and then do it all over again.

Furthermore, in tandem with the state’s other shiny new software, Clever, Infinite Campus is glitchy. Teachers were required to get student passwords by August of last year, but this prevented students who switched classes, schools, or were new to the department after that date from getting passwords at all. Even programs like the department’s much ballyhooed online portion of Springboard have been prevented from operating appropriately, teachers have found, because of their inability to obtain passwords for all students and access the online content.

Finally, the new software doesn’t always sync seamlessly. My mother is the testing coordinator at Kahuku High School. Last September, she found that five full periods of classes were unable to take the iReady diagnostic test because the classes were missing from Infinite Campus and she could not add them. She notified Curriculum Associates, the company that operates iReady at her school, which, in turn, said that they no longer had departmental access to fix their own program, telling her that she had to call Clever. Clever had her check if the missing classes appeared on *their* platform, which they did. After more checking, it was determined that neither Curriculum Associates nor Clever could add the classes, since they’re synced with Infinite Campus, which is controlled by the DOE. Eventually, a conference call with the DOE, Infinite Campus, Clever, and Curriculum Associates was coordinated to determine what the glitch was, if there were other classes or schools with the problem, and figure out a fix, though no one could say when that would happen.

These programs are not making teachers' lives easier. If they're supposed to, then we need the BOE to ask the DOE to *get on that*.

To give teachers and the public an opportunity to educate the BOE on problems occurring at their community's schools, we ask you to require the board to provide a process for placing items on its agenda. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

Sincerely,  
Kris Coffield  
*Executive Director*  
IMUAlliance



**ADA**

**HAWAII**

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P.O. Box 23404  
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February 8 , 2017

TO:            Honorable Chair Kidani and Members of the Education Committee

RE:            SB 618 Relating to the Board of Education  
Support for hearing on Feb. 10

Americans for Democratic Action is an organization founded in the 1950s by leading supporters of the New Deal and led by Patsy Mink in the 1970s. We are devoted to the promotion of progressive public policies.

We strongly support SB 618 as it would require the Board of Education to put public petition on the agenda. Since the transition from an elected Board to an appointed one, the Board has often met in the afternoon when parents and teachers are unlikely to attend and has taken off the public comment section of the agenda. We need to make the Board more open to public input; this bill would take an important step in that direction.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

John Bickel  
President



## EDU Testimony

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**From:** Marcia Linville <linvilleedcac253@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 9, 2017 4:53 PM  
**To:** EDU Testimony  
**Cc:** Jenny Nomura  
**Subject:** SB 618

Senate Education Committee  
SB 618

2-10-17  
Conf Rm 229

Chair Kidani and members of the Senate Education Committee:

I am Marcia Linville, speaking as SCC for the Education Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawaii, in support of SB 618. The education caucus covers a wide area of education including public schools, charter schools, private schools, libraries and early learning and is one of the special interest caucuses of the Democratic Party.

SB 618 is an important bill, because it returns to the public the opportunity to inform the Board of Education of areas of public concern, for which the Board has no other access.

The Boards present knowledge, through public testimony, is limited to only those items already on the agenda. When asked by an interested citizen how she could get an item of interest on the agenda she was told by the then chair of the Board. "You can't. We don't owe you anything." The women was so shocked, she burst into tears.

The major source of information for the Board is reports from the staff. As was testified recently by a teacher at a Board meeting on the difficulties of recruitment and retention, "There is a large gap between the way things are reported to the Board and the way they are experienced by teachers."

From 1959 when the Board and the Department of Education were created in their present form, until it became an appointed Board under Governor Abercrombie, the agenda for every Board meeting had as it's final item, Public Input. Anyone attending a Board meeting was able to bring to the Boards attention a matter of concern. There were limitations. No matter could be acted on until the next meeting, and personalities were not allowed. Testimony was limited to 5 minutes. It was explained to me by Marion Saunders in 1969, that that item had been deliberately added for the purpose of keeping the Board aware of public concerns . It made for a strong and informed educational community.

That sense of a strongly involved public school community has been lost with the curtailment of public testimony. Board meetings were previously held in the afternoons and evenings to enable working parents and teachers to attend. Under the new chair, evening meetings arena available quarterly, but they are not well advertised. Under the ESSA, the Governors Blueprint and the Boards Strategic Plan, there will be great many changes. It is vital that the public have the opportunity to inform the Board of the effect those changes are having at the school level. This can be most easily done by the restoration of the public input item on the agenda. I therefor ask for your support for SB 618.

Thank you

Marcia Linville  
536-4466



February 8 , 2017

TO: Honorable Chair Kidani and Members of the Education Committee

RE: SB 618 Relating to the Board of Education

Support for hearing on Feb. 10

I support SB618 which would require the Board of Education to put public petition on the agenda. The attitude of the appointed Board of Education has been to the effect that the concerns of the public are of no consequence to the board. This has to change and the board needs to listen to what the public perceives are problems that occur in our educational system. Public voices are an integral part of the democratic process so this bill will remedy this missing part of the BOE meetings.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jenny Nomura  
Education caucus secretary

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 8, 2017 6:22 PM  
**To:** EDU Testimony  
**Cc:** lady.flach@gmail.com  
**Subject:** \*Submitted testimony for SB618 on Feb 10, 2017 14:45PM\*

**SB618**

Submitted on: 2/8/2017

Testimony for EDU on Feb 10, 2017 14:45PM in Conference Room 229

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

Comments:

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 8, 2017 12:32 PM  
**To:** EDU Testimony  
**Cc:** burgharc@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for SB618 on Feb 10, 2017 14:45PM

**SB618**

Submitted on: 2/8/2017

Testimony for EDU on Feb 10, 2017 14:45PM in Conference Room 229

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

Comments: I think that this would add an important component to the BOE especially since they currently are appointed by the Governor. The community should have an access point, I believe for agenda items.

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Feb. 10, 2017

Aloha Chair Kidani and Members of the Committee,

As a social studies teacher and community advocate, I am writing in strong support of Senate Bill 618. This legislation will amend Hawai'i Revised Statutes, Section 302A-124 and providing a mechanism by which the public may petition the Board of Education to add items to the agenda of the next scheduled meeting.

Democratic schools, according to a brief entitled "Finding Common Ground in an Era of Fragile Support," require the "thoughtful efforts of all stakeholders, including students, teachers, families, and community members" (ASCD 1996). The leaders of Harwood Institute, which does important work on community engagement and positive social change, suggest that leaders turn outward, using the community as the main reference point for decisions, because such an approach produces greater impact with more relevance for the community. To do that, Board members need to be able to, as a first step, identify community issues rooted in people's shared aspirations. The mechanism provided by this legislative proposal would move us in that direction. Our Board of Education are uniquely positioned to provide leadership for exploring our differences of perspective, and working with our communities to more clearly articulate our shared ideals.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this issue.

Amy Perruso  
Mililani High School  
Social Studies

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 9, 2017 7:44 PM  
**To:** EDU Testimony  
**Cc:** hondo4274@gmail.com  
**Subject:** \*Submitted testimony for SB618 on Feb 10, 2017 14:45PM\*

**SB618**

Submitted on: 2/9/2017

Testimony for EDU on Feb 10, 2017 14:45PM in Conference Room 229

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

Comments:

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To: Senate Education Committee

Regarding: SB 618

Position: Support

Chair Kidani and Members of the Committee,

I am David Negaard, an English teacher at H.P. Baldwin High School on Maui. I have been a public school teacher for 19 years. I urge the passage of Senate Bill 618 which amends Hawai'i Revised Statutes, Section 302A-124, providing a means by which the public may petition the Board of Education to add items to the agenda of the next scheduled meeting.

Democratic principles suggest that any public entity involved in the governance of a public service like public education should hear and heed the voice of public stakeholders. While the Board of Education is appointed by the governor, it serves the public interest and is responsible to the public for its decisions with respect to public schools. Its agenda ought to be inclusive of the voice and will of Hawai'i citizens, but as things stand there is no provision for essential stakeholders to express their concerns or views on anything not on the Board-specified agenda. That omission excludes the voice of those often most intimately affected by Board decisions.

Give the people a say in the work of their Board of Education. Pass SB 618 and open the Board to the voice of its constituents. Thank you.

David Negaard, H.P. Baldwin High School, Maui