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SUPERINTENDENT

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

**Date:** 02/03/2017  
**Time:** 02:00 PM  
**Location:** 309  
**Committee:** House Education

**Department:** Education

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

**Title of Bill:** HB 1448 RELATING TO SCHOOL MEALS.

**Purpose of Bill:** Requires the Department of Education to provide free school meals to children who are eligible for free or reduced-price school meals, based on the United States Department of Agriculture's most current Income Eligibility Guidelines.

**Department's Position:**

The Department of Education (DOE) supports HB 1448, with the following considerations in Section 2, and amendments.

The appropriation out of general funds to cover a deficit of approximately \$1.1 million dollars in special funds to provide free meals to reduced students must be sustainable. Should the reduced eligibility increase, the general fund appropriation must be proportionate to support the fiscal increases.

Further considerations associated with this measure, would be the increase in bus ridership due to the current DOE rule of free lunch eligibility, and free bus transportation.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



Hawaii  
**Children's Action Network**  
Building a unified voice for Hawaii's children

February 2, 2017

To: Representative Roy M. Takumi, Chair  
Representative Sharon E. Har, Vice Chair  
Committee on Education

From: Deborah Zysman, Executive Director  
Hawaii Children's Action Network

Re: **HB 1488 – Relating to School Meals**  
**Hawaii State Capitol, Room 309, February 3, 2017, 2:00 PM**

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**On behalf of Hawaii Children's Action Network (HCAN), we are writing to support HB 1488 – Relating to School Meals.**

By expanding and providing a clear definition of those who should receive free or reduced-price (F/RP) school meals, Hawaii's children will be better cared for and able to learn. The US Department of Agriculture administers this program on the federal level, providing reimbursements to states for the meals served. To participate, a school must offer F/RP meals to low-income students, meet federal nutritional standards, and promote wellness policies. One of the most important functions of the school meals program is to address issues in childhood hunger, nutrition, and health. Additionally, by increasing the participation rates in the especially the breakfast program, Hawaii would receive additional federal funds.

Key facts why school meals are so important for Hawaii's students ([www.hiappleseed.org/school-meals](http://www.hiappleseed.org/school-meals)):

- **Students who come to school hungry cannot focus, and children suffering for food insecurity are unable to grow to their full potential.** An alarmingly high number of families struggle to consistently feed their children high-quality meals, an unsurprising problem given the very high cost of living in our state, and particularly the cost of food. Countless studies have shown that increasing breakfast participation improves academic and health outcomes for children. Out of the 70,000 students in Hawaii eating free or reduced price meals, only 40% eat school breakfast often just because they don't get to school on time. Hawaii ranks 47<sup>th</sup> out of the 50 states for breakfast participation rates being so low.
- **Hawaii Participation in School Meal Program:** As the economy faltered, Hawaii saw its numbers of F/RP-qualifying children rise. Children with family incomes below 130 percent of the poverty level receive free meals, and a family with a household income between 130 and 185 percent of

the poverty level qualifies a student for a reduced-price meal. Today, 47 percent of Hawaii's public school children qualify for free and reduced price lunch, an increase of 20 percent since 2007.

**For these reasons, HCAN respectfully requests that the committee pass this bill.**

HCAN is committed to building a unified voice advocating for Hawaii's children by improving their safety, health, and education. Last fall, HCAN convened input in person and online from more than 50 organizations and individuals that came forward to support or express interest for a number of issues affecting children and families in our state that resulted in the compilation of 2017 Hawai'i Children's Policy Agenda, which can be accessed at <http://www.hawaii-can.org/2017policyagenda>.

## EDNtestimony

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 31, 2017 9:59 PM  
**To:** EDNtestimony  
**Cc:** jamesjtz@aol.com  
**Subject:** \*Submitted testimony for HB1448 on Feb 3, 2017 14:00PM\*

### **HB1448**

Submitted on: 1/31/2017

Testimony for EDN on Feb 3, 2017 14:00PM in Conference Room 309

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
James Gauer	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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