



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

**Date:** 02/22/2018  
**Time:** 01:30 PM  
**Location:** 308  
**Committee:** House Finance

**Department:** Education

**Person Testifying:** Dr. Christina M. Kishimoto, Superintendent of Education

**Title of Bill:** HB 2117, HD1 RELATING TO STANDARDIZED TESTING.

**Purpose of Bill:** Limits the number of standardized tests students take in a school year. Requires the Board of Education to conduct a statewide survey of school administrators and teachers to determine the time spent on preparing for standardized tests and the impact of preparation time on the quality of instruction. (HB2117 HD1)

**Department's Position:**

The Department of Education (Department) offers the following comments on this measure. We respectfully suggest that HB2117 HD1 is not necessary at this time.

The Department recognizes the value of standardized testing as a valid, reliable, and efficient means to ensure that students graduate equipped for college and career success. The Department is committed to ensuring that the amount of assessments administered to students is appropriate.

Standardized testing provides information on academic progress to students, parents, teachers, and educational administrators, while aggregated results inform educators and policy-makers by providing a measure of accountability of the public education system. Outside of standardized test results, no objective measure exists for policymakers to identify student academic achievement. The federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), section 111(b)(2)(B) requires the administration of a statewide assessment, and that the results be reflected in the state accountability plans.

In school year 2015-2016, the Department conducted a review of its statewide testing portfolio, which resulted in the reduction of state-mandated standardized tests to the minimum federal requirement. Complexes and schools participated in a statewide training effort, in order to conduct their own assessment audits based upon their own unique needs. Schools have local control of the decisions regarding school level assessments, which is grounded in the belief that those closest to the students are best suited to determine the needs and the instructional strategies most appropriate for their student population.

The culture of testing and accountability has shifted from the stringent guidelines of No Child Left Behind (NCLB). Our current Strive HI school accountability system no longer ranks and stacks schools, but recognizes the context of each school's unique student population and strives for academic excellence

and equity for all students.

The Department is actively engaged in maintaining a balance between federal assessment requirements, the accountability benefits of testing and the instructional practices utilized by schools and teachers to meet their student's needs. Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this measure.

The Hawaii State Department of Education seeks to advance the goals of the Strategic Plan which is focused on student success, staff success, and successful systems of support. This is achieved through targeted work around three impact strategies: school design, student voice, and teacher collaboration. Detailed information is available at [www.hawaiipublicschools.org](http://www.hawaiipublicschools.org).



**TESTIMONY OF  
THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL  
TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE, 2018**

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**ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:**

H.B. NO. 2117, H.D. 1, RELATING TO STANDARDIZED TESTING.

**BEFORE THE:**

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

**DATE:** Thursday, February 22, 2018      **TIME:** 1:30 p.m.

**LOCATION:** State Capitol, Room 308

**TESTIFIER(S):** Russell A. Suzuki, Acting Attorney General, or  
Anne T. Horiuchi, Deputy Attorney General, or  
Melissa J. Kolonie, Deputy Attorney General

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Chair Luke and Members of the Committee:

The Department of the Attorney General provides the following comments.

The purposes of this bill are to limit the number of standardized tests students take in a school year and to require the Board of Education (BOE) to conduct a statewide survey of school administrators and teachers to determine the time spent on preparing for standardized tests and the impact of preparation time on the quality of instruction.

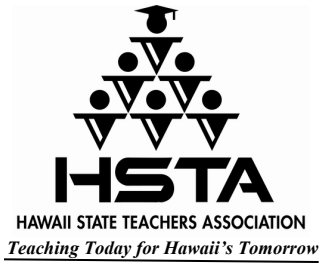
On page 2, lines 9-11, the bill requires the Department of Education (DOE) to notify students and the students' parents or guardians about the right to opt out of participating in statewide standardized tests. On page 2, lines 12-18, "standardized test" is defined as,

[A]ny federal, state, or locally mandated assessment that is administered and scored in a consistent manner and intended to measure a student's academic readiness, achievement level, learning progress, or skill acquisition, including any diagnostic, interim, or practice test used to prepare such an assessment.

There is no state law giving the right to parents to opt out of academic assessments for their child. The federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) does allow flexibility in academic assessments if a state enacts such a law.

ESSA requires certain assessments to be conducted in particular grade levels on specific subjects. See 20 U.S.C. § 6311(b). DOE, in accordance with ESSA, developed the Hawaii Consolidated State Plan, which was approved by the U.S. Secretary of Education on January 19, 2018. Under the Hawaii Consolidated State Plan, the DOE is required to administer certain assessments to all students. If the DOE fails to meet the requirements, the U.S. Secretary of Education may withhold funds until the Secretary determines that the State has fulfilled those requirements. See 20 U.S.C. § 6311(a)(7). Because no state law exists that gives parents the right to opt out of academic assessments for their child, we recommend amending the definition of "standardized tests" to exclude those tests that are required under ESSA, which are described in the Hawaii Consolidated State Plan.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments.



1200 Ala Kapuna Street ♦ Honolulu, Hawaii 96819  
 Tel: (808) 833-2711 ♦ Fax: (808) 839-7106 ♦ Web: www.hsta.org

**Corey Rosenlee**  
 President  
**Justin Hughey**  
 Vice President  
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**Wilbert Holck**  
 Executive Director

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON  
 FINANCE

RE: HB 2117, HD 1 - RELATING TO STANDARDIZED TESTING

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2018

COREY ROSENLEE, PRESIDENT  
 HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Chair Luke and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association **strongly supports HB 2117, HD 1,** relating to standardized testing.

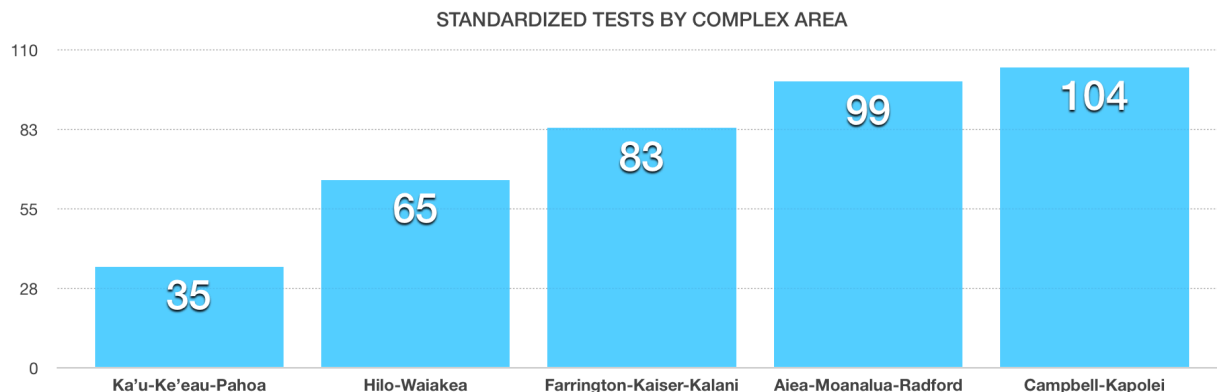
## Standardized Testing in Hawaii's Public Schools

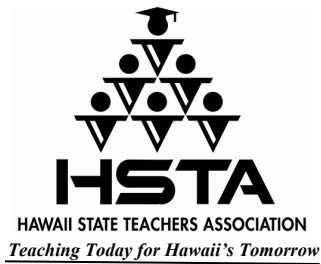
Elementary		Middle		High	
Mandatory	Optional	Mandatory	Optional	Mandatory	Optional
SBA Math SBA ELA HSA Science NAEP	Star Screener SBA Practice Dibels iReady Catapult TerraNova	SBA Math SBA ELA HSA Science NAEP	ACT Aspire Star Screener SBA Practice iReady EOC Alg 1	SBA Math SBA ELA Biology EOC	NAEP ACT EOC Alg I EOC Alg II EOC US History Star Screener SBA Practice iReady

(This list is not meant to be all encompassing, nor does it include additional testing for ELL or Sped students)

To begin, we applaud Hawai'i State Department of Education officials for working to reduce time spent on the Smarter Balanced Assessment for the 2017-2018 school year. As the testing season commences, though, the department's claims about decreasing time devoted to testing have not been realized through practice. In Hawai'i, schools still spend over 60 hours of instructional time on standardized testing, and even more if and when screening exams and practice tests are employed with regularity to prepare students for statewide exams.

A recent survey conducted by HSTA found that 82 percent of teachers do not feel like they are involved in decision-making processes about how tests are used at their schools. Furthermore, when asked to rate the value of the feedback received from each individual standardized and diagnostic test given throughout the department, teachers overwhelmingly indicated that no test provides a substantial amount valuable feedback to inform their practice. Perhaps most tellingly, we found that the number of standardized tests given to students varies dramatically between complex areas (see chart below). In the Ka'u-Ke'au-Pahoa Complex Area, for instance, students are required to take 35 standardized tests between kindergarten and twelfth grade. That number rises significantly in the Hilo-Waiakea Complex Area, just across the Big Island, in which students participate in 65 tests over the course of their academic careers. Some parts of O'ahu see even more stark escalations in the amount of testing imposed on our children. In the Campbell-Kapolei Complex Area, a whopping 104 standardized tests are given to students by the time they graduate.





1200 Ala Kapuna Street ♦ Honolulu, Hawaii 96819  
Tel: (808) 833-2711 ♦ Fax: (808) 839-7106 ♦ Web: [www.hsta.org](http://www.hsta.org)

**Corey Rosenlee**  
President

**Justin Hughey**  
Vice President

**Amy Perruso**  
Secretary-Treasurer

**Wilbert Holck**  
Executive Director

Our current testing culture was developed under the federal No Child Left Behind and Race to the Top initiatives, in which test scores were viewed as the best determinant of school performance. Studies show, however, that test scores strongly correlate with socioeconomic status: rich schools do well, while poor schools struggle. Because of the pressure to perform well on tests and their inability to control the socioeconomic status of their students, struggling schools cut back on arts and cultural education, career and technical courses, electives, and more, so that greater resources could be spent on prepacked programs and consultants meant to boost test scores.

Now, however, efforts to limit testing have become an accelerating national movement. In October of 2015, former President Barack Obama proposed limiting testing to 2 percent of schools' total instructional time. Since then, numerous states have enacted or are considering enacting similar proposals. Last May, Maryland passed HB 461, "eliminating more than 700 hours of unnecessary district-mandated testing," according to Maryland State Education Association President Betty Weller. Similarly, Texas and Georgia lawmakers are considering legislation to dramatically slash the number of tests given in their states to increase personalized learning opportunities and broaden curricular offerings. A typical student takes over 100 mandated standardized tests between pre-kindergarten classes and 12th grade, recent studies have found. By contrast, **most countries that outperform the United States on international exams test students only three times during their school careers.**

This measure would move Hawai'i toward its international peers by limiting the number of tests delivered under the statewide assessment program in each grade level to four, the minimum federal number required, with exceptions for extra time made for students who need accommodations (special needs students). Schools would be allowed to seek a waiver from the Hawai'i State Board of Education to require additional tests, which BOE members would be empowered to review on a case-by-case basis. Critically, our proposal does not conflict with, but rather amplifies the principles of, the requirements of STRIVE HI 3.0, the state's school accountability system, or the DOE's consolidated state plan for the Every Student Succeeds Act (just this month, DOE officials applied for Hawai'i to be one of seven

states selected for the federal innovative assessment pilot program). Instead, it merely codifies into law our collective effort to limit testing time, while also requiring that parents be notified of the right to opt their students out of gratuitous amounts of testing and calling for a survey of excessive testing statewide.

Life is not a standardized test. To provide authentic learning experiences to all of our children, we ask your committee to **support** this bill.





2850 Kahawai Street  
Honolulu, HI 96822

808 988 5505  
www.pps-hi.org

Lois Yamauchi  
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February 11, 2018

House Committee on Finance

Rep. Silvia Luke, Chair

Rep. Ty J.K Cullen, Vice Chair

Re: HB.2117, HD 1 Relating to Standardized Testing

Hearing: Thursday, February 22, 2018, 1:30 pm, Room 309

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen and Committee members:

**This testimony is in strong support for HB2117, HD 1, relating to standardized testing.** I am writing on behalf of Parents for Public Schools of Hawai'i (PPS Hawai'i), a non-profit organization focused on supporting and improving Hawaii's public schools through family engagement. Our group emerged from the Furlough Friday crisis, and we currently have approximately 1,000 members statewide.

Our members have told us that the increased focus on standardized testing has had a negative influence on the educational experiences of their children. Although there may be one "official" test that students take, they often take multiple tests throughout the year to prepare for the standardized test.

Standardized tests are high stakes, since they are used as the main criteria by which a school is judged to be succeeding or failing. Educators have been forced to increase their school's scores to show they are doing a good job. Research indicates that the best way to increase children's test scores is for students to become familiar with test-taking procedures. Thus, much time is spent on practice tests and on other drills. Homework is sometimes formatted to look like the test. Testing is pervasive and dominates the curriculum.

Test preparation takes time and energy, on the part of children and their teachers. This means that there is no longer time for students and their teachers to engage in creative, interactive, and meaningful activity that leads to true learning and development. When we think back to what has inspired all of us to learn and engage in school, it was not sitting for a test, but reading a book and discussing it with our teachers and classmates, working on a project of our choice, engaging in ideas, artwork, and music--all things that are now reduced or cut out of the curriculum because of the overemphasis on testing. When PPS Hawai'i surveyed members about their experiences with the public schools, parents said that the overemphasis on testing was one of their greatest concerns. In addition, they wanted more arts, music, and physical activity, which are related to time spent on testing.

Standardized testing is an equity issue because research indicates that the strongest predictor of a student's standardized test score is their family's income. The schools and teachers, who are spending the most time trying to increase test scores, are those serving communities who are struggling financially. These are communities who desperately need the arts, music, Hawaiian Studies, and other engaging learning activities! These are the very communities whose children are dropping out of school because it is boring and not meaningful to them, because they don't feel that anyone cares. By decreasing an emphasis

on testing, educators in these communities can be freed to engage in more meaningful and effective educational activities with their students. We suggest that the survey proposed in this bill indicate the complex in which the students are served, so that the public can become more aware of these equity issues.

All students deserve a challenging curriculum that includes the arts, music, and activity that is relevant to their cultures and communities. We at PPS Hawai'i urge your support of HB 2117 to make this happen.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Aloha,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lois A. Yamauchi". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lois Yamauchi, PhD  
President, Parents for Public Schools of Hawai'i

*Parents for Public Schools Hawaii (PPSHI) is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) volunteer organization of parents, community members, and educators working to improve and support public education through family engagement. We are committed to ensuring all children in Hawai'i have access to a quality public education.*



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

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**TESTIMONY FOR HOUSE BILL 2117, HOUSE DRAFT 1, RELATING TO  
STANDARDIZED TESTING**

**House Committee on Finance  
Hon. Sylvia Luke Chair  
Hon. Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice Chair**

**Thursday, February 22, 2018, 1:30 PM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 308**

Honorable Chair Luke and committee members:

I am Kris Coffield, representing IMUAlliance, a nonpartisan political advocacy organization that currently boasts over 400 members. On behalf of our members, we offer this testimony in strong support of House Bill 2117, HD 1, relating to standardized testing.

The overuse of standardized tests in Hawai'i's schools has become an epidemic. Rather than focus on student learning, our schools devote increasing amounts of time to “test and punish” frameworks, in which critical thinking and applied knowledge are replaced with rote test-taking skills that adversely impact a teacher's or schools’ statistical assessment. According to the American Federation of Teachers report “Testing More, Teaching Less: What America's Obsession with Student Testing Costs in Money and Lost Instructional Time,” test preparation and testing in heavily tested districts can absorb up to a month and a half of school time. The grade-by-grade analysis found that students spend from 60 to more than 110 hours per year on test preparation, at an estimated cost per pupil of \$700 to \$1,000 in heavily tested grades (in Hawai'i, each test, itself, costs \$65, discounting resources and personnel needed to administer each test). At the same time, abandoning so-called “toxic testing” could add 20 to 40 minutes of daily instructional time to secondary school grades, according to the report, with hundreds of dollars per student—and millions of dollars overall—reallocated to the purchase of instructional programs, school technology, infrastructure upgrades, and teacher pay increases. Notably, American students take over 100 standardized tests between pre-kindergarten classes and 12th grade, according to a 2015 study by the Council of Great City Schools. **In contrast, many countries that outperform the U.S. on international exams, like the Program for International Student Assessment, test students only three times during the course of their academic careers.**

Make no mistake, when we discuss standardized tests, we're talking about the Common Cor(porat)e State Standards Initiative, a set of corporatized standards that were foisted upon teachers and children across the nation without prior field testing. Developed by an organization called Achieve and the National Governors Association, and funded by the Gates Foundation, the standards were crafted with minimal public input. Under the Obama Administration's Race to the Top grant program, states were effectively told that if they did not adopt the Common Core, they would not be eligible to receive a portion of the program's \$4.35 billion in grant money. As education policy expert Diane Ravitch has said, "Federal law prohibits the U.S. Department of Education from prescribing curriculum, but in this case the Department figured out a clever way to avoid the letter of the law." The result? A precipitous decline in test scores based on Common Core's arbitrary cut scores, a lack of critical thinking development based on Common Core's arbitrary pedagogical instructional time ratios, disproportionate harm caused to English Language Learners and low-income students, further elimination of arts education, and parents and students across the nation joining the United Opt Out movement against the Smarter Balanced Assessment associated with Common Core, with students—including those in Hawai'i—literally "opting out" of toxic high-stakes tests. Both President Obama and the U.S. Department of Education have called for an end to overtesting, with Obama calling for testing time to be capped at no more than 2 percent of student instructional time. Even the Gates Foundation, the alchemists responsible for the Common Core monstrosity, have backpedaled on their Frankensteinian experiment, calling for a moratorium on linking Common Core to teacher evaluations and their related "value-added method" of measuring performance.

Now, we have hope. The federal Every Student Succeeds Act provides states with increased flexibility in the use of standardized testing, including eliminating federally mandated inclusion of standardized tests in teacher evaluations, and allowing states to choose what test to use for annual school assessments. ESSA also permits states to limit the amount of time that students spend preparing for and taking standardized tests, provides funding to states for auditing and streamlining assessment systems, and, importantly, establishes an "innovative assessment pilot program" through which states may receive permission to connect authentic assessments with real-world learning. In fact, the Hawai'i State Department of Education submitted its application to be one of seven states participating in the pilot program earlier this month. We can abolish the "test and punish" education culture that subjugates our teachers and students to educational automation. We must move quickly to set them free.

Toxic testing undermines our schools' curricula, our teachers' autonomy, and our students' creativity. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

Sincerely,  
Kris Coffield  
*Executive Director*  
IMUAlliance

**HB-2117-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2018 11:35:59 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/22/2018 1:30:00 PM

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

Comments:

This bill has many good parts to it. I see that there was this amendment:

“~3O2A- Standardized tests limitations; exemptions. (a)

14 15 16

No more than four different standardized tests shall be administered to any student, other than a student with disabilities or an English language learner, per school year.

AS a retired educator, this seems to be a way of appeasing the FEDS. and the corporations who profit from these tests. If I read this as four different tests, that means a child could take the NAEP, the SBAC, and two others? Each one of those tests could take more than one day and in some cases a week. So, it's ok to have a student take four tests numbering in days taking tests? OR DID YOU MEAN that a small child would only take one test which could take a number of days? EITHER WAY, do you really want children spending most of their time testing for data? This bill talks a lot about eliminating "standardized" testing but you have done nothing (that I can see ) to address the daily testing on things like IREADY, AR and other such things including the WONDERS curriculum or Springboard or the Math on line. LOOKING positively at what we hope for our children in the islands and their safety. HOW does an educator get to spend quality time knowing their children when they are forever testing? Wouldn't time spent on place-based learning and 'ohana values be better? We have everything in place. The data that is collected from the above tests, where does it go? How is it used and does it really benefit kids? I would argue NOT as does most research. RETHINK how much testing you are allowing and let's let kids be kids. We are unique. ALL kids are too.

**HB-2117-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2018 5:33:28 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/22/2018 1:30:00 PM

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

Comments:

I Strongly Support HB2117 HD1 RELATING TO STANDARDIZED TESTING Requiring the Board of Education to conduct a statewide survey of school administrators and teachers to determine the time spent on preparing for standardized tests and the impact of preparation time on the quality of instruction.

**HB-2117-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2018 7:33:40 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/22/2018 1:30:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Mavis Oliveira-Medeiros	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**HB-2117-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2018 8:52:17 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/22/2018 1:30:00 PM

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

Comments:

**Time: 1:05**

**Location: Kalaheo High School**

**Committee: House Education**

**Department: Education**

**Person Testifying: Chais Droge Student Of Kalaheo High School**

**Title of Bill: HB 2117 RELATING TO STANDARDIZED TESTING**

**Purpose of Bill: Limits the number of standardized tests students take in a school year. Requires the Board of Education to conduct a statewide survey of school administrators and teachers to determine the time spent on preparing for standardized tests and the impact of preparation time on the quality of instruction.**

**Hello,**

**I am Chais Droge, a student from Kalaheo High School. I agree with this bill for multiple reasons. One is that there are too many tests in general and we need to have less of them. They stress students out by having more and more tests. They have to study for each one to get a good grade and tests don't show how students are in school and as students. Bill HB 2117 will help all upcoming**



**students. Me as a student will say that I do not like taking tests and I think we should make it less.**

**Thank you for hearing me**

**Chais Droge**

**LATE**

**HB-2117-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2018 9:29:35 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/22/2018 1:30:00 PM

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

Comments:

**LATE**

**HB-2117-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2018 9:34:12 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/22/2018 1:30:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Jun Shin	Young Progressives Demanding Action - Hawaii	Support	No

Comments:

My name is Jun Shin. I am a board member at-large for Young Progressives Demanding Action - Hawaii. I strongly support this measure, with the understanding that individual students are not made of one mold. Standardized testing cuts into the arts and our culture studies which have the potential to provide different career paths as it gets fostered by these classes, but it also helps in creating a well rounded student. With many individuals in Hawaii choosing not to further their education, career preps and technical skills are important as they could go immediately into the workforce after and standardized testing cuts into this. Allowing for teachers to teach and not just be test facilitators is also very important and really, allowing for life skills and important discussions in subjects such as civics is very important and school is suppose to prepare students for the future. That is why I am asking you to pass this measure.