



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

**Date:** 03/18/2019

**Time:** 02:05 PM

**Location:** 309

**Committee:** Lower & Higher Education,  
Labor & Public Employment

**Department:** Education

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

**Title of Resolution:** HCR 192 REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO ACCEPT THE NATIONAL ORIENTATION AND MOBILITY CERTIFICATION FOR TEACHERS PROVIDING ORIENTATION AND MOBILITY SERVICES.

**Purpose of Resolution:**

**Department's Position:**

The Department of Education (Department) appreciates the intent of HCR 192 requesting the Department to accept the National Orientation and Mobility Certification from the National Blindness Professional Certification Board for teachers providing orientation and mobility services. However, we are unable to support this measure.

Licensing and permit requirements for teachers in the state of Hawaii are governed by the Hawaii Teacher Standards Board. This board is the entity that sets professional and performance standards for licensing, which includes a teaching field in Special Education Orientation and Mobility.

Applicants in this teaching field must complete all course work in a state approved program in orientation and mobility with an exit exam requirement, such as the Academy for Certification of Vision Rehabilitation & Education Professionals Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialist. The Department requires that teachers providing orientation and mobility services be licensed in this area. The Department does not require any additional professional certification beyond teacher licensure, as it is unnecessary.

The Department currently has ten (10) orientation and mobility specialists serving students across the state. The Department also has an affiliation agreement through the University of Hawaii in cooperation with Portland State University to provide orientation and mobility training to teachers within the Department who are interested in obtaining this license.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

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).

DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF HAWAII, OAHU COUNTY COMMITTEE  
AFFIRMATIVE ACTION COMMITTEE

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF  
HCR 192/HR173

Requesting the Department of Education to Accept the National Orientation and Mobility Certification  
for Teachers Providing Orientation and Mobility Services  
Hearing: March 18, 2:05 p.m., Conf Rm 309

Committee on Lower and Higher Education  
Rep. Justin H. Woodson, Chair  
Rep. Mark J. Hashem, Vice Chair  
Rep. Amy A. Perruso, Vice Chair

Committee on Labor and Public Employment  
Rep. Aaron Ling Johanson, Chair  
Rep. Stacelynn K.M. Eli, Vice Chair

Aloha, Chair Woodson, Chair Johanson, and members of the above committees,  
Mahalo for bringing this resolution to a hearing.

This resolution will help expand equal opportunities for children to receive services and also teachers to become employed in the DOE. The certification currently accepted in the DOE is an international certification, and the one proposed to become eligible is a domestic certification. The international certification pre-dates the ADA and has had a lot of issues with discrimination against blind people in the certification process. The domestic one was created specifically to help give equal opportunities to blind people to become teachers of the blind since the international one wouldn't do it. Forcing teachers to go through a discriminatory licensing process is functionally discriminating against them.

If it is good enough to teach orientation and mobility at Ho`opono, it should be good enough to teach orientation and mobility in the DOE.

Please pass this resolution out of committee to help increase opportunities for our keiki to become meaningful contributors in our community; and to help more qualified teachers get into the DOE to teach them.

Respectfully

LEIMOMI KHAN  
Chair, OCC Affirmative Action Committee

**LATE**

**HCR-192**

Submitted on: 3/18/2019 11:26:52 AM

Testimony for LHE on 3/18/2019 2:05:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Dylan P. Armstrong	Individual	Support	No

Comments: