

HB-1988

Submitted on: 1/29/2020 1:45:04 PM

Testimony for LHE on 1/30/2020 2:20:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ruston Utu	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support this bill. There are many religious holidays that students miss out on with their families due to the importance of attendance policy of the school.

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- Mary Burgess
- Thursday 1/30/20
- In favor of #HB1988
- Introduction:

LATE TESTIMONY

1. Aloha, My name is Mary Burgess. I am here today speaking as both a mother, and as a member of the Jewish community in regards to HB1988. 3. I am testifying in favor of releasing students for religious practices. Currently, the standard school year excusal dates follow around traditional Christian Holidays, as well as understandably secular national observances and importantly State Holidays. However, For children who observe religious practices that do not fall within these dates, they are by necessity considered absent. Currently, this is as stated in the bill considered an excused absence. This designation does two things, it makes it necessary for parents and students to choose between religious observance, and academic attendance standings. It also privileges Christian holidays.

In a state such as Hawaii, where the Jewish community is small, it is important to me as a mother to ensure my daughters are able to attend and participate in as many of our cultural and religious observances as possible. Chiefly, during the high holy days, our Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur it is important for them to be present.

Our family highly values education, and strive to teach our daughters to appreciate the advantages that a good education grants. We also value our connection to our Jewish heritage. For these reasons, I ask that you move HB1988 forward.

Thank you,

Mary Burgess