



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

Date: 02/21/2020
Time: 11:00 AM
Location: 308
Committee: House Finance

Department: Education

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

Title of Bill: HB 2088, HD1 RELATING TO EDUCATION.

Purpose of Bill: Establishes a working group to create a state plan to make FAFSA completion a statewide graduation requirement and an opt-out waiver for FAFSA completion by the 2022-2023 school year. Appropriates funds. Takes effect on 7/1/2050. (HD1)

Department's Position:

The Department of Education (Department) respectfully offers comments on HB 2088, HD1.

The purpose of HB 2088, HD1 is to establish a working group to create a state plan to make FAFSA completion or an opt-out waiver for FAFSA completion a statewide graduation requirement. The Department recognizes the important role of public education in providing support for students and their families in completing applications for post-secondary education but has concerns about hinging a student's graduation on FAFSA completion or an opt-out waiver for FAFSA completion.

The Department has an established working group, including representatives from the Department's Data Governance and Analysis, Communications, and Student Services Branches and the Hawai'i P-20 Partnerships for Education. However, the goal of this working group is to provide a statewide approach to increase awareness of FAFSA to, in turn, increase completion rates and not to add FAFSA completion as a graduation requirement.

The Department has also established the College & Career Counselor Professional Learning Community (PLC) comprised of 96 counselors from schools across the state. The purpose of the PLC is to share resources, tools, and data to best support students as they prepare for post-secondary options. This includes providing students with support in completing the FAFSA.

The Department is currently following the progress of Illinois, Louisiana, and Texas, who have made FAFSA completion a graduation requirement and would request more time to monitor the effects of these requirements in these states prior to committing to a mandated FAFSA

requirement.

While the measure does provide an option to opt-out of FAFSA completion, the Department is concerned about the effects opting out could have on the emotional safety of students. For example, opting out of FAFSA completion could draw unneeded attention to private issues which students are grappling with such as legal tax issues, undocumented families, or other family hardships.

Finally, should this measure continue to move forward, the Department is grateful for the proposed appropriation which would be necessary to shoulder the added responsibilities mandated by this bill and to include an additional working group member from the non-profit sector. However, we do ask that this appropriation not affect the priorities proposed in the Department's Board-approved budget.

Given the Department's ongoing work and commitment supporting students and families in completing applications for post-secondary education and the desire for more evidence that FAFSA completion has the intended positive impact on college enrollment, the Department wishes to defer this bill until more definitive data can be collected from states with a FAFSA requirement.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this bill.

The Hawai'i State Department of Education is committed to delivering on our promises to students, providing an equitable, excellent, and innovative learning environment in every school to engage and elevate our communities. 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.

OFFICE OF INFORMATION PRACTICES

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To: House Committee on Finance

From: Cheryl Kakazu Park, Director

Date: February 21, 2020, 11:00 a.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 308

Re: Testimony on H.B. No. 2088, H.D. 1
Relating to Education

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this bill, which would establish a working group to create a state plan to make FAFSA completion, or an opt-out waiver for FAFSA completion, a statewide graduation requirement. The Office of Information Practices (OIP) takes no position on the substance of this bill, but has comments and a recommendation regarding the bill's proposed exemption from the Sunshine Law, part I of chapter 92.

This bill proposes to completely exempt the working group from the Sunshine Law, although it would require it to post some form of minutes with no set requirement as to their level of detail or when they must be posted. It is not obvious why the proposed working group would need a complete exemption from the Sunshine Law to be able to effectively consider the proposal to make FAFSA completion a high school graduation requirement, as the issues it is required to consider do not seem to be ones that would involve discussions of individually identifiable student information on any kind of a regular basis. Further, OIP notes that the proposal to require students to complete the FAFSA to graduate from high

school is likely to be of high interest to public high school students and their parents or guardians, particularly since completing the FAFSA requires a student's parents or guardians to provide extensive financial information and tax return information. It is likely that members of the public will be interested in weighing in on this issue, yet this bill would not allow them to provide testimony to the working group or attend its meetings, but only to read minutes posted at some unspecified time after a meeting has taken place.

OIP notes that the proposed working group includes many government officials and employees who may need to discuss college financial aid issues with one another as part of their usual jobs. If there is a concern that the Sunshine Law's requirements would constrain their ability to talk with one another about financial aid issues as needed for their usual jobs, these Committees could address that by adding a permitted interaction allowing less than a quorum of members to talk about board business together, while still allowing for public participation consistent with the purpose and intent of the Sunshine Law.

Thus, OIP would strongly recommend that these Committees either remove entirely the Sunshine Law exemption at bill page 5, lines 17-21, or replace it with a permitted interaction allowing less than a quorum of members to talk together. If the Committees prefer the option of replacing the exemption with a permitted interaction, OIP would recommend the following language:

Two or more members of the working group, but less than the number of members that would constitute a quorum for the working group, may discuss between

themselves matters relating to official business of the working group to enable them to faithfully perform their duties to the working group and the organizations they represent, as long as no commitment to vote is made or sought. Such discussions shall be a permitted interaction under section 92-2.5, Hawaii Revised Statutes.

Thank you for the considering our comments and recommendation.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



JOHN S.S. KIM
CHAIRPERSON

STATE OF HAWAII
STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION
(‘AHA KULA HO‘ĀMANA)

<http://CharterCommission.Hawaii.Gov>
1111 Bishop Street, Suite 516, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Tel: (808) 586-3775 Fax: (808) 586-3776

FOR: HB 2088 HD1 Relating to Education
DATE: February 21, 2020
TIME: 11:00 A.M.
COMMITTEE: Committee on Finance
ROOM: Conference Room 308
FROM: Yvonne Lau, Interim Executive Director
State Public Charter School Commission

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, and members of the Committee:

The State Public Charter School Commission (“Commission”) appreciates the opportunity to submit this testimony in **SUPPORT of HB 2088 HD1 with amendments**. This measure provides funds to establish a working group to create a state plan to make FAFSA completion or an opt-out waiver for FAFSA completion a graduation requirement by the 2022-2023 school year.

The Commission requests that this **measure be amended to include a representative of the public charter school system** to ensure that public charter schools have the opportunity to provide input and perspective on this proposed change to graduation requirements. Public charter schools are required to follow the graduation requirements as determined by the Board of Education (BOE), unless a waiver from these requirements is granted by the BOE.

The Commission looks forward to collaborating with the committee, the DOE, other interested stakeholders, and public charter schools in moving this legislation forward.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.



MAUI

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

VOICE OF BUSINESS

**HEARING BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
HAWAII STATE CAPITOL, HOUSE CONFERENCE ROOM 308
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2020 AT 11:00 A.M.**

To The Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair;
The Honorable Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice Chair;
Members of the Committee on Finance;

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB2088 RELATING TO EDUCATION

Aloha, my name is Pamela Tumpap and I am the President of the Maui Chamber of Commerce, with approximately 650 members. I am writing share our support of HB2088.

The Maui Chamber of Commerce supports a working group to look at how students who want to go to college and their parents can be encouraged to and receive more help to complete FAFSA. According to the FAFSA website, it takes an average of 55 minutes to complete the form, plus additional hours to collect the needed information. This can be overwhelming for parents and students alike and support and education on this process would be valuable. This is an important effort to capture federal money to get those students to college with better opportunities and will need special resources, outreach and education to parents and students.

However, we ask that this bill be amended to remove the suggestion of FAFSA completion or an opt-out waiver be a requirement for graduation. Some students do not want to go to college and families should be proud of their children wanting to enter the workforce and not have to sign an opt-out waiver that has no benefit. For students who meet the requirements, there should never be an impediment for graduation. We feel the working group should be empowered to create a plan to get more FAFSA's completed in a positive manner without this restriction.

We appreciate the opportunity to testify on this matter and provide comments and ask that this bill be passed.

Sincerely,

Pamela Tumpap
President

To advance and promote a healthy economic environment for business, advocating for a responsive government and quality education, while preserving Maui's unique community characteristics.



**Testimony to the House Committee on Finance
Friday, February 21, 2020 at 11:00 A.M.
Conference Room 308, State Capitol**

RE: HB 2088 HD1, RELATING TO EDUCATION

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, and Members of the Committee:

The Chamber of Commerce Hawaii ("The Chamber") **supports** HB 2088 HD1, which would establish a working group to create a state plan to make FAFSA completion a statewide graduation requirement and an opt-out waiver for FAFSA completion by the 2022-2023 school year and appropriate funds.

The Chamber is Hawaii's leading statewide business advocacy organization, representing 2,000+ businesses. Approximately 80% of our members are small businesses with less than 20 employees. As the "Voice of Business" in Hawaii, the organization works on behalf of members and the entire business community to improve the state's economic climate and to foster positive action on issues of common concern.

In 2018, Hawaii students left \$10 million in unclaimed federal Pell Grants, while nationally, that total was nearly \$2.6 billion in unclaimed federal financial aid for higher education for high school graduates of the class of 2018 as a result of not filling out FAFSA applications despite being eligible. It is estimated that 90% of students who complete the FAFSA will attend college, as opposed to 55% of those who don't. The Hawaii Department of Education has set a goal to have 90% of high school seniors complete the FAFSA for the 2020 year, but there are some worries that this goal will not be met.

By creating this working group, the state can take the first step to guaranteeing that we are able to help our students with completing the FAFSA for those considering post-secondary education. Students who might not have thought they could go to college due to financial situations, may now have an opportunity to do so, because of the access to federal aid. We need to help ensure that our students are offered the best education in order to prepare them for college and their future roles in the workforce.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 2088 HD1.



david.miyashiro@hawaiikidscan.org
hawaiikidscan.org

David Miyashiro
Executive Director

February 21, 2020

Committee on Finance
Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair
Rep. Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice Chair

State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, and Members of the Committee,

HawaiiKidsCAN strongly supports HB 2088 HD1, which establishes a working group to create a state plan to make the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) completion a statewide requirement with an opt-out waiver for parents by the 2022-2023 school year, and appropriates funds to support this working group.

We believe this is an incredibly important measure, and we would like to highlight a few key points in particular:

- **Independent effort:** We believe that the working group created by this bill should sit outside similar efforts existing within the Hawaii State Department of Education (DOE), as it is incredibly important to ensure external voices are at the table and have equal weight. Similarly, we think the working group must have the explicit task of helping prepare the state for a FAFSA graduation requirement starting in 2022, which will add critical urgency and accountability around this effort.
- **Bold step needed:** While much great work has happened around the state to support FAFSA completions, the reality is that our data has moved only incrementally in the last four years, and our current path makes it incredibly unlikely Hawaii closes the large gap between last year's 60% completion rate and the DOE's goal for 90% completions by the 2020 school year. In fact, Hawaii is currently on track to have the same FAFSA completion rate that we had last year. A graduation requirement would be a bold step forward to shake up the status quo and ensure local students don't continue to lose out on millions of dollars in federal financial because of this incremental growth. To say this policy isn't needed at this time is to say that our state doesn't believe all students should know their options to afford and attend a 2 or 4 year college.
- **Protection for undocumented and vulnerable families:** It is simply not accurate to say HB 2088 HD1 would negatively impact vulnerable families or those with undocumented status. This bill clearly establishes an unconditional opt-out mechanism,

and there is no connection between opting out and being the focus of law or immigration enforcement activities. Such coordination between schools and these enforcement agencies would be incredibly inappropriate and likely illegal. Louisiana, the first state to implement FAFSA as a graduation requirement, authorized schools to apply for hardship waivers in sensitive cases where trusted school staff and counselors recognize extenuating circumstances for non-participation. There have been no reports from Louisiana that students are being targeted due to opting out of FAFSA completion or receiving a hardship waiver.

- **FAFSA graduation requirement policy works:** HawaiiKidsCAN has spoken directly with leaders in Louisiana, which is a national success story, jumping from 44% in FAFSA completions to nearly 80%. Nearly 1,600 more students enrolled in college as a result versus the previous year, and over 2,500 more students of color, nearly 5,000 more economically disadvantaged students, and 400 more students with disabilities enrolled in college in 2018 than did in 2012.¹ Because of Louisiana's success, it is no surprise that a number of other states are looking at implementing a similar approach, and Hawaii has the opportunity to be part of this early wave of states, helping our students compete for successfully for financial aid before the rest of the country also implements such policies and deepens the pool of applicants.

Founded in 2017, HawaiiKidsCAN is a local nonprofit organization committed to ensuring that Hawaii has an excellent and equitable education system that reflects the true voices of our communities and, in turn, has a transformational impact on our children and our state. We strongly believe that all students should have access to excellent educational opportunities, regardless of family income levels and circumstances.

Given Hawaii's low unemployment rate and high cost of living, a post-secondary associate's or bachelor's degree is increasingly important for local students. The Hawaii P-20 Initiative's 55 goal to have 55% of adults earn a college degree by 2025 is making progress, although recent attainment is still at 46.3%.

FAFSA completion is critical component for increasing access and equity in higher education, as it is the form students need to fill out to get any financial aid from the federal government to help pay for college. Each year, over 13 million students who file the FAFSA get more than \$120 billion in grants, work-study, and low-interest loans from the U.S. Department of Education. The FAFSA is also an important pre-requisite for many other need- and merit-based forms of financial aid, including the Hawaii Promise scholarship.

¹ Staff, Louisiana Department of Education. (2019, May 22). NUMBER OF LOUISIANA GRADUATES ENROLLING IN COLLEGE CLIMBS TO ALL-TIME HIGH. Retrieved from <https://www.louisianabelieves.com/newsroom/news-releases/2019/05/22/number-of-louisiana-graduates-enrolling-in-college-climbs-to-all-time-high>

FAFSA completion is also strongly correlated to college access, as 90% of high school seniors nationally who complete FAFSA attend college directly from high school.² Students in the lowest economic quintile who completed the FAFSA were 127% more likely to enter college than students who did not.³ Other benefits include a potential edge in college admissions, as admissions officers know that students hoping for aid who don't submit FAFSAs to the college are less likely to enroll.⁴

We are excited about the many important outreach efforts already happening in Hawaii schools, including the Cash for College challenge and text message-based outreach, and we think a statewide plan to prepare for a FAFSA graduation requirement would greatly boost this work. We believe this plan will be a rallying cry for the community, and a way to increase support for counselors and encourage local tax preparation companies to provide pro bono consultation to local families. HawaiiKidsCAN strongly believes HB 2088 HD1 is an important step forward for our students and broader community.

Mahalo for your consideration,

David Miyashiro
Founding Executive Director
HawaiiKidsCAN

² Abigail Hess, CNBC. (2018, October 2). The FAFSA is now open—here's why every student should fill it out. Retrieved from <https://www.cnbc.com/2017/09/28/why-every-student-should-fill-out-the-fafsa.html>

³ Bill DeBaun, National College Access Network (2019, December 3). FAFSA Completion by District Poverty Level Across the United States. Retrieved from <https://public.tableau.com/profile/bill.debaun.national.college.access.network#!/vizhome/FAFSACompletionbyDistrictPovertyLevelAcrossTheUnitedStates/Story1>

⁴ Staff, National College Planning Solutions. (2016, January 8). 3 Reasons You Should Fill Out the FAFSA—No Matter How Rich You Are. Retrieved from <https://ncps.com/3-reasons-you-should-fill-out-the-fafsa-no-matter-how-rich-you-are/>

Pepeluali 21, 2020

Committee on Finance
Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair
Rep. Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice Chair

State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

Aloha e nā Honorable Chair Luke & Vice Chair Cullen, a me Venerable Members of the Committee,

I write in support of HB 2088 HD1.

‘O Phoenix Maimiti Valentine, ko‘u inoa. Ua hanai ia au ma Mākaha, kahi kaulana no ka papa he‘e nalu. O Honua, ku‘u wailele. He umikūmāono o‘u makahiki. He haumana nui au ma ke kula ki‘eki‘e. Welina! My name is Phoenix Maimiti Valentine. I live in Mākaha, which is famous for longboard surfing. My waterfall is called Honua. I am a 16-year-old student in High School. Greetings!

In ancient Hawai‘i water was commonly known as wealth. Water supports life. It creates peace and wellness within the community. Water is a resource for everyone.

As water is life sustaining, so is financial aid for students who can’t afford college today. Please support HB 2088 HD1 which would establish a committee to help students with financial needs, complete the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) application. This “wealth” is a resource to those in need. Completion of this application would give those applying a greater chance of receiving funding.

Forms & Applications, can be overwhelming for a student, especially during their Senior year in High School. With help completing the FAFSA application, more wealth/ funding set aside by the government, will provide Life to College-Bound dreams. This Bill will empower students to apply, knowing there’s help to complete this application. Students will be able to focus on their studies rather than stress about paying bills while in college. Funding set aside for students in Hawai‘i will be utilized and not wasted as a resource.

Please vote in favor of HB 2088 HD1, to ensure a greater percentage of success to receive financial aid from FAFSA to help those who need it. I believe this will contribute to a greater success rate of graduates from college. Students like myself, will be grateful for your vote for HB 2088 HD1.

Mahalo nui loa a pau, Phoenix Maimiti Valentine



2112 Hillhaven Dr., Brea, CA 92821 execjimenez@aol.com

IN SUPPORT HB2088

My name is Elizabeth Jiménez Salinas and I am an educational consultant working with teachers in schools and school districts throughout the United States, including Hawai'i. Hawai'i needs more teachers. So, more local students need to go to University in order to fulfill that need. For most students to afford to do that, they need financial aid. The first step towards receiving financial aid is to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

I ask you to support HB2088 to initiate the formation of a working group to examine any current barriers and determine ways to increase the FAFSA completion rate amongst high school graduates and meet the Hawai'i DOE goal of 90% of high school seniors' completion of FAFSA in 2020.

As a mother of five children, I needed help to know what was required, in order for our family to help our children to complete the entrance requirements on time. Although I had attended college, I never knew about the FAFSA and the Federal Student aid that was available. The FAFSA was complex and confusing. Many families including ours, need assistance to understand and complete it, students and faculty need a clear understanding of the timeline for completion, and schools may want to have the tools to encourage and incentivize students in this process. The idea of this legislation is to study ways to eliminate a potential barrier for our students to qualify for aid to attend college in order to expand opportunity.

In 2001, the California state legislature passed AB 540 which allows undocumented students who meet certain requirements, to qualify for an exemption from the payment of non-resident tuition which is an aspect that the state of Hawai'i might consider exploring through this working group.

I also recommend that the bill specify that the working group membership include a member with English Learner expertise to help the group consider ways to

provide much broader language access, and that as the working group examines ways to increase FAFSA completion that they research the demographics, practices of high schools in the state that currently have lower/higher completion rates, percentages of language groups that may have greater/lesser completion rates, and review the policies developed and adopted in other states to look for elements such as an opt out provision for students who cannot qualify for Federal Aid that might be useful here.

Mahalo for your consideration. I ask for your aye vote.

Elizabeth Jiménez Salinas, CEO
GEMAS Consulting

HB-2088-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/19/2020 1:58:51 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/21/2020 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jacey Waterhouse	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

This bill does not provide equity to all students enrolled at charter schools throughout the state. Currently non-charter schools do not have access to a detailed list identifying which students have begun and completed the FAFSA. In years past information was emailed to counselors via P-20; however, this year counselors have access to it via Infinite Campus. Unfortunately, many charter schools do NOT have access to Infinite Campus. In the fall of 2019, I requested access to this information directly from P-20 and was informed they cannot work with charter schools without MOU. When asked when this paperwork would be approved, they could not give me an answer. This is just another example of how students of Hawaii taxpayers do not have equal access simply because they attend a charter school. If the data were accessible and transparent then I could see the value of enforcing this requirement.

HB-2088-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/19/2020 3:43:17 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/21/2020 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Sheldon Tawata	Individual	Comments	No

Comments:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit a testimony on House Bill 2088 HD1. As a professional who works in post-secondary education with colleagues at various high schools across the state, I am concerned with adding another requirement that comes with added expenses (time and money) to an already taxed organization (the Hawai'i State Department of Education). I know counselors who work tirelessly to encourage students to meet high school graduation requirements, which at times could be as critical as attendance. These individuals put in evenings and weekends to make sure students are on track toward a goal (or goals) that are most appropriate and supports personal and academic growth. I feel rather than designing a work group, I feel it would be worth acknowledging these counselors as content experts and provide an arena for them to flush out ideas that work best for students whom they see on a regular basis.

The workgroup guidelines in Section 2(b) appears to be heaving with administrators with minimal faculty who work directly with students.

"(10) A department of education school counselor, to be selected by the superintendent of education;" - is it just one counselor?

I'm also concerned that politicians will be serving as co-chairs in this workgroup versus those who have intimate knowledge of those involved with 1) assisting students with the current DOE graduation requirements, 2) assisting students with post-secondary exploration, and 3) assisting students with financing post-secondary endeavors.

Majority of the testimonies highlighted the benefit of financial aid, which I can agree 100%. I work with many students who have benefited from FAFSA and other aid such as Scholarships, that helped their college education. But I think House Bill 2088 HD1 doesn't provide a complete picture and doesn't address the current work of those who meet with students on a DAILY basis. Were any counselors and post-secondary financial aid specialists consulted when this Bill was drafted? Or are we chasing numbers with minimal research on the existing initiatives that are happening at the various schools?

I'm very worried that this bill doesn't give the proper recognition to those who truly help students make that transition into post-secondary education. I hope the State takes a

moment to self reflect and think how time and resources can be used to effectively support our youth.

HB-2088-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/19/2020 6:39:01 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/21/2020 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Dyson Chee	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice-chair Cullen, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Dyson Chee and I am a 17 year old high schooler living in Ala Moana who supports HB2088. As a senior in high school, I have completed my FAFSA which will be critical for me when the time comes for me to pay for my college classes soon. Unfortunately, not everyone takes advantage of FAFSA, which means that students in the lowest economic quintile who did not complete the FAFSA are 127% less likely to enter college than students who did. I believe that making FAFSA completion a graduation requirement will help to increase the number of students who do take advantage of FAFSA. For this reason, I urge you to pass HB2088.

HB-2088-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/19/2020 7:05:52 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/21/2020 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Aisha Heredia	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I am a former educator that has worked with college-bound high schoolers in Title 1 schools. I'm proud to **support HB2088 HD1** because it will increase opportunities for high school students to access funding for higher education. Every year there are \$10 million dollars in funds that are not used because students do not know how to fill out the FASFA, or are intimidated by the process. Some students whom I have helped with the application process feel that it's confusing, and I do think families who are new immigrants, or have language barriers do not apply, because they do not know how to navigate the FASFA application.

I am in **strong support HB2088 HD1** because it will establish a state plan to make FAFSA completion a statewide graduation requirement. There may already be a HIDEOE working group, but it is not effective if there isn't collaboration with families, and advocates who understand new immigrant struggles. I would like to see an outside of HIDEOE working group formed because this group has the ability to bring in stake holders from all aspects of the school community and outside of the school community such as legal support, or social service support workers who understand new immigrant populations. The support we give to students accessing higher education, comes back to us in an educated, highly talented and skilled workforce.

Mahalo,
Aisha Heredia

Former STEM Educator

HB-2088-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/19/2020 7:50:38 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/21/2020 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Maria Angst	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

HB-2088-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/20/2020 8:50:06 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/21/2020 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Stephanie Albaña	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

To the honorable chair,

I would like to politely disagree with the people who have argued that knowing how to file the FAFSA should not be a high school graduation requirement. As a high school senior and resident of Hawaii, I believe that **everyone should have the knowledge needed to fill out the FAFSA**. I am lucky to be able to go to a private school and have a college coach that guides me through the FAFSA process, but I cannot say the same for many public school students. Thanks to the FAFSA, I got the opportunity to claim money for college. Therefore, I strongly believe that all of Hawaii's students should learn how to file their own FAFSA in school. This would increase the number of students filing their FAFSA, and in turn, would also better the chance of seniors going off to college because they would have more support from the government to do so.

Thank you for your time and I look forward to the potential passing of HB2088.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Albaña

Aloha,

My name is Kiana Dulan, and I'm in support of HB 2088. Not many people may recognize the importance of filling out the FAFSA, so it would be helpful if this were a requirement.

Mahalo,

Kiana Dulan

HB-2088-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/20/2020 4:16:07 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/21/2020 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Edward Devine	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

There will be challenges getting all students to file, I realize. Some will feel it may put them in a compromising situation. This has been effective though in other places. Through an education/pr campaign, families can be made to feel confident about this step. It is not unlike filing many other federal/state forms. To nudge the college going rate to more than 55%, this step will help increase awareness of opportunities post high school.



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Corey Rosenlee
President
Osa Tui, Jr.
Vice President
Logan Okita
Secretary-Treasurer
Wilbert Holck
Executive Director

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
FINANCE

RE: HB 2088, HD1 - RELATING TO EDUCATION

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2020

COREY ROSENLEE, PRESIDENT
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Chair Luke and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association **strongly supports HB 2088, HD1, with amendments** that will establish a working group to create a state plan to make FAFSA completion a statewide graduation requirement and an opt-out waiver for FAFSA completion by the 2022-2023 school year. As an amendment, **we ask that when creating this working group, high school counselors are invited to join this work group, and supported, as they will be the ones directly providing these services to our students, and will have the most valuable input as to what is needed.**

Making FAFSA completion a graduation requirement will help ensure that high school graduates don't miss out on post-secondary educational opportunities merely because they can't pay for it. Multiple financial aid options are available for students who apply, including federal grants, loans, or work-study. Encouraging students to apply by making it a graduation requirement will help dispel the common misconception students have that they won't qualify for available aid. According to an analysis by NerdWallet, high school graduates missed out on \$2.3 billion in federal grants in 2017 simply because they failed to fill out the FAFSA. Among those who didn't apply, most said it was because they didn't think they would qualify.

In addition to matching students with the financial aid they are eligible for, research shows that students who complete a FAFSA are more likely to attend a two- or four-year college or vocational/technical school which is another positive outcome for FAFSA completion. According to the National College Access Network (NCAN), "Ninety percent of high school seniors who complete the FAFSA proceed directly to college, versus only 55 percent who don't complete the FAFSA."

To increase access to higher education among our high school students, the Hawaii State Teachers Association asks you to **support** this bill.



HAWAII COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION

LATE

February 20, 2020

House Committee on Finance
Hearing: 11:00 a.m. February 21, 2020
Hawaii State Capitol Room 308

Re: SUPPORT for HB 2088, HD1, Relating to Education

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice-Chair Cullen and members of the committee:

The Hawaii Community Foundation supports HB 2088, HD1, relating to education. This bill establishes a working group to create a state plan to make FAFSA completion a statewide graduation requirement and an opt-out waiver for FAFSA completion by the 2022-2023 school year.

FAFSA completion is a key indicator of college enrollment, and studies have reported that a high school senior who completes a FAFSA is 84% more likely to immediately enroll in a post-secondary education following high-school graduation. Students from higher-poverty school districts are less likely to complete a FAFSA, but these are the students who could benefit from financial aid the most, 2 with one study showing that students from the lowest income quintile who did complete a FAFSA had a 127% greater chance of being enrolled in a post-secondary school immediately following high school graduation than their counterparts who did not complete a FAFSA.

Requiring FAFSA as a graduation requirement can increase post-secondary fall enrollment rates but will need to be coupled with the necessary resources to help students fulfill this requirement as well as other college access resources. FAFSA alone will not support students to enroll in post-secondary institutions. Exceptions should definitely be considered, but the students categorized as “exceptions” need to be equitably determined and should be offered even more college-support services in light of the fact that these students are even at a higher disadvantage.

We recognize that problems that are big and complex require people from across all sectors who believe in the power of collective action to work together toward shared goals. Hawaii Community Foundation has identified increasing access to federal funding for Hawaii learners seeking higher education opportunities as an important step toward addressing significant community needs. We believe that the working group will promote higher education and ask that you please advance this measure.

Thank you.