



**STATE OF HAWAII
OFFICE OF ELECTIONS**

802 LEHUA AVENUE
PEARL CITY, HAWAII 96782
elections.hawaii.gov

SCOTT T. NAGO
CHIEF ELECTION OFFICER

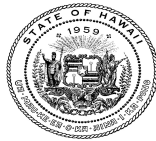
**TESTIMONY OF THE
CHIEF ELECTION OFFICER, OFFICE OF ELECTIONS
TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY
ON HOUSE BILL NO. 2126
RELATING TO VOTER REGISTRATION**

February 3, 2020

Chair Lee and members of the House Committee on Judiciary, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill No. 2126. The purpose of this bill is to establish a process, beginning on January 1, 2021, for preregistering or registering students enrolled in public schools and public charter schools.

This bill will maximize voter registration by requiring the Department of Education to provide voter registration applications. Currently, the Office of Elections works directly with contacts at each high school on the Young Voter Registration Program (YVRP) to disseminate and collect voter registration applications. Based on our current program, we would propose amending the timeframe envisioned by this bill from one month to at least two months to optimize the response rate.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill No. 2126.



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

Date: 02/03/2020
Time: 02:05 PM
Location: 325
Committee: House Judiciary

Department: Education

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

Title of Bill: HB 2126 RELATING TO VOTER REGISTRATION.

Purpose of Bill: Establishes a process, beginning on January 1, 2021, for preregistering or registering public school- and charter school-enrolled students to vote.

Department's Position:

The Department of Education (Department) provides comments on HB 2126 which seeks to increase Hawaii's youth voter participation and encourage civic engagement.

The Department encourages civic engagement and efforts to increase voter participation among our public high school students. Towards this goal, the Department supports automatic voter registration as a mechanism to remove barriers to strengthen the voice and involvement of our youth.

Should this measure move forward, the following amendments are respectfully offered for the Committee's consideration:

- Page 3, lines 8-11: The ~~superintendent of education~~ department of education may transmit the voter registration affidavit to the clerk of the county in which the applicant resides, as necessary:...
- Page 4, lines 11-14: The ~~board and superintendent~~, in consultation with the office of elections, may adopt and communicate guidelines ~~policies~~ as necessary to maximize and facilitate the preregistration and registration of qualifying students to vote as provided in section 11- ."

Dialogue is needed to address students with geographical exceptions to attend a public high school outside of their residence. The affidavits for the students may fall under another county, which would require further vetting by the clerk.

Equity and access for students and families whose primary language is other than English also needs to be discussed. The planning and provision of voter affidavits translated in other languages would be a critical element prior to any implementation.

Hawaii public schools continue to strengthen civic engagement as a critical avenue to cultivate positive change and a shared responsibility for our community well-being.

The Department appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony on HB 2126.

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.

HB-2126

Submitted on: 2/1/2020 5:52:05 PM

Testimony for JUD on 2/3/2020 2:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Alexandra Kahn	Surfrider Oahu	Support	No

Comments:

Statement Before The
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY
Monday, February 3, 2020
2:05 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 325

in consideration of
HB 2126
RELATING TO VOTER REGISTRATIONS.

Chair LEE, Vice Chair SAN BUENAVENTURA, and Members of the House Judiciary Committee

Common Cause Hawaii supports HB 2126, which establishes a process, beginning on January 1, 2021, for preregistering or registering public school- and charter school-enrolled students to vote.

Common Cause Hawaii is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, grassroots organization dedicated to reforming government and strengthening democracy through voting modernization efforts that increase civic engagement, voter turnout, and voter participation in our democratic processes.

HB 2126 will begin to alert students prior to when they are allowed to vote – the age of 18 – to the importance of voting. Studies have shown that voting is a habit, which develop over repetition and can become strongly reinforced if developed early.

HB 2126 is an important bill to encourage young people to vote and to vote their entire lives, leading to a strong and vibrant democracy. “We do not have government by the majority. We have government by the majority who participate.” Thomas Jefferson.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 2126. If you have further questions of me, please contact me at sma@commoncause.org.

Very respectfully yours,

Sandy Ma
Executive Director, Common Cause Hawaii



49 South Hotel Street, Room 314 | Honolulu, HI 96813
www.lwv-hawaii.com | 808.531.7448 | voters@lwv-hawaii.com | @LWV-Hawaii on Facebook

COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

Monday, February 3, 2020, 2:05 p.m., Room 325
HB 2126 RELATING TO VOTER REGISTRATION

TESTIMONY

Janet Mason, Legislative Committee, League of Women Voters of Hawaii

Chair Name, Vice-Chair Name, and Committee Members:

The League of Women Voters of Hawaii strongly supports HB 2126. This bill facilitates the pre-registration practice already in existence¹, and sets the stage for our future voters to get involved early and often. Making voting accessible and easy early in life sets the state for habitual voting - a badly needed solution to the state's chronic turnout problem.

At least 10 states have school-facilitated pre-registration already². HB 2126 would center the collection of voter registration information on the Superintendent (for public schools) or an Authorizer (for charter schools) for transmission to the respective County Clerk.

Concerns will arise when there is an appearance of officials requiring minor students to provide the kind of information required for voter registration. We conclude that HB 2126 addresses these concerns in two ways: first, by designating who can collect and transmit the information, and second, by requiring voter registration forms to be made available, but not required to be collected. These two points ensure that providing the information is voluntary, and that no entity besides the school and County Clerk get that information.

Getting students pre-registered through the state's schools is a cost-effective way to set the stage for a long-term solution to Hawaii's voter turnout. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

1. HRS § 11-12 (b).

2. Keyes, Scott. "Strengthening Our Democracy by Expanding Voting Rights". Center for American Progress.
<https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/courts/reports/2012/12/18/48396/strengthening-our-democracy-by-expanding-voting-rights/>, accessed 20 January 2020.



LATE

Board of Directors:

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

Gary L. Hooser
President

Monday, February 3, 2020 2:05 PM, Conference Room 325

Hawaii Alliance for Progressive Action SUPPORTS HB 2126

Andrea N. Brower
Ikaika M. Hussey
Co-Vice Presidents

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice Chair San Buenaventura, and Members of the House Judiciary Committee,

Kim Coco Iwamoto
Treasurer

The Hawaii Alliance for Progressive Action (HAPA) supports HB 2126, which establishes a process, beginning on January 1, 2021, for preregistering or registering public school- and charter school-enrolled students to vote.

Bart E. Dame
Secretary

Paul Achitoff

HB 2126 will begin to alert students prior to when they are allowed to vote – the age of 18 – to the importance of voting. Studies have shown that voting is a habit, which develop over repetition and can become strongly reinforced if developed early.

Laura Harrelson

Kaleikoa Ka'eo

Michael Miranda

HB 2126 is an important bill to encourage young people to vote and to vote their entire lives, leading to a strong and vibrant democracy.

Walter Ritte Jr.

Pua Rossi-Fukino

Mahalo for your consideration. HAPA is a member of the Common Good Coalition.

Karen Shishido

Leslie Malulani Shizue Miki

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anne Frederick', is positioned below the 'Sincerely,' text.

Anne Frederick
Executive Director

HB-2126

Submitted on: 1/31/2020 6:22:41 PM

Testimony for JUD on 2/3/2020 2:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Dara Carlin, M.A.	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

No no no!!!

HB-2126

Submitted on: 2/1/2020 2:39:59 PM

Testimony for JUD on 2/3/2020 2:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Gerard Silva	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Not until age 18 or older. You will find out that Thousands of Hawaii Voters are against this.

HB-2126

Submitted on: 2/1/2020 7:14:05 PM

Testimony for JUD on 2/3/2020 2:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jun Shin	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

HB-2126

Submitted on: 2/1/2020 11:26:32 PM

Testimony for JUD on 2/3/2020 2:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Caroline Kunitake	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Lee and Members of the House Judiciary Committee,

I am writing in support of HB 2126 which establishes a process, beginning on January 1, 2021, for preregistering or registering public school- and charter school-enrolled students to vote. I believe that this is a progressive step towards engaging citizens in the legislative process.

HB 2126 will begin to alert students prior to when they are allowed to vote – the age of 18 – to the importance of voting. Studies have shown that voting is a habit, which develop over repetition and can become strongly reinforced if developed early.

I am hopeful that these kinds of efforts will raise the overall voting rates in the state. Please support this bill.

Mahalo,

Caroline Kunitake

HB-2126

Submitted on: 2/2/2020 4:28:10 AM

Testimony for JUD on 2/3/2020 2:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Barbara Best	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

HB-2126

Submitted on: 2/2/2020 1:10:47 PM

Testimony for JUD on 2/3/2020 2:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Susan Dursin	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

HB2126, which provides for preregistering or registering public and charter school students, has been a long time coming. I work with several organizations that register voters. They have tried over the years, with great difficulty, to gain access to public schools. Sometimes we are successful at public events or in public locations in talking to and preregistering students. Often they register with considerable enthusiasm. They look on voting almost as a right of passage, an entree into the adult world. This will surely be true when school registration takes place.

The idea that they are assuming the right and responsibility of future voting will make them more open to the system, its process and debates. There's nothing like knowing you are a part of a system to cement your interest. Perhaps, as a consequence, curriculum including more attention to civics could be supported by the DOE.

Please give your support to HB2126 and its widespread implementation.