

Title of Resolution: **HCR8 HD1: URGING THE BOARD OF EDUCATION AND DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO ELEVATE HAWAIIAN LANGUAGE AND CULTURAL EDUCATION IN PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS BY EXPANDING ACCESS TO HAWAIIAN LANGUAGE AND CULTURAL CLASSES THAT FULFILL CORE REQUIREMENTS THROUGHOUT SECONDARY EDUCATION.**

Person Testifying: Deborah Chaves Kepaa

Date: Sunday, March 28, 2021

Aloha, my name is Deborah Chaves Kepaa, I am currently a Native Hawaiian Master of Social Work Student at the University of Hawai'i, Thompson School of Social Work & Public Health. I am testifying in **SUPPORT** of HCR8 HD1, Relating to Hawaiian Language and Cultural Education in public high schools.

Haumana, especially those of Hawaiian ancestry should be able to learn about the Hawaiian history, culture and language without having to locate outside resources. Growing up, I truly struggled with trying to connect to my Hawaiian heritage while finding a sense of place and identity in the Hawaiian community because I was not offered cultural courses in my education. I felt guilt-ridden not knowing the history of my own people, not knowing how to speak 'Ōlelo and not having the experience in practicing cultural traditions such as: dancing Hula, reciting Oli and Mele, Mea 'Ai, Ho'oponopono, L'āau Lapa'au, Lomilomi and so much more. Living in a Western Society and having our Hawaiian culture deprecated in the education system makes it even harder for our Lāhui to thrive. When the Hawaiian culture was stripped away from our Kūpuna, it affected our overall well-being tremendously and resulted in cultural, historical and intergenerational trauma. We will never be able to fully recover from this tremendous loss but HCR8 HD1 will allow a start that is needed to nurture the Hawaiian community forward.

I humbly urge this committee to approve this measure and move it forward.

Mahalo for this opportunity to submit testimony.

Respectfully,  
Deborah Chaves Kepaa  
MSW Candidate  
Thompson School of Social Work & Public Health  
(808) - 783 - 8967

# HAWAII YOUTH SERVICES NETWORK

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Carole Gruskin, President

Judith F. Clark, Executive Director

Bay Clinic

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Hawaii

Big Island Substance Abuse Council

Bobby Benson Center

Child and Family Service

Coalition for a Drug Free Hawaii

Collins Consulting, LLC

Domestic Violence Action Center

EPIC, Inc.

Family Programs Hawaii

Family Support Hawaii

Friends of the Children of West Hawaii

Friends of the Children's Justice Center of Maui

Hale Kipa, Inc.

Hale 'Opio Kauai, Inc.

Hawaii Children's Action Network

Hawaii Health & Harm Reduction Center

Ho'ola Na Pua

Kahi Mohala

Kokua Kalihi Valley

Kokua Ohana Aloha (KOA)

Maui Youth and Family Services

Na Pu'uwai Molokai Native Hawaiian Health Care Systems

P.A.R.E.N.T.S., Inc.

Parents and Children Together (PACT)

PHOCUSED

PFLAG – Kona Big Island

Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest and Hawaiian Islands

Residential Youth Services & Empowerment (RYSE)

Salvation Army Family Intervention Services

Sex Abuse Treatment Center  
Susannah Wesley Community Center

The Catalyst Group

March 27, 2021

To: Representative Mark Nakashima, Chair  
And members of the Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HCR 8/HR 9 HD 1 URGING THE BOARD OF EDUCATION AND DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO ELEVATE HAWAIIAN LANGUAGE AND CULTURAL EDUCATION IN PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS BY INCORPORATING MORE DIVERSE HAWAIIAN LANGUAGE AND CULTURAL CLASSES AS CORE REQUIREMENTS THROUGHOUT SECONDARY EDUCATION.**

Hawaii Youth Services Network, a statewide coalition of youth-serving organizations, supports HCR 8/HR 9 HD 1 Urging the Board of Education and Department of Education to Elevate Hawaiian Language and Cultural Education in Public High Schools by Incorporating More Diverse Hawaiian Language and Cultural Classes as Core Requirements Throughout Secondary Education.

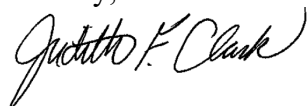
In October 2020, 55 youth gathered over a 3-day period to come to agreement on what the Hawaii Legislature needs to do to make our state a better place to live, learn, and work. More than 1,100 youth then voted to rank the priorities.

Providing more opportunities to study Hawaiian culture and language was one of the top priorities of the youth who participated in the Summit.

Hawaii Youth Services Network urges you to honor the voices of our youth by passing this resolution.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,



Judith F. Clark, MPH  
Executive Director



**HCR-8-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/25/2021 3:12:40 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/29/2021 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Support

The question remains... why do we have to keep asking the DOE to do the right thing? `Ōlelo Hawai`i is the first language of these islands. The DOE and everyone else needs to recognize the importance of following through and making this a priority. English is the second language of these islands.

**HCR-8-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/26/2021 9:31:43 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/29/2021 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Keiki Kawai'ae'a	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

26 Malaki, 2021

*Testimony of Dr. Keiki Kawai'ae'a*

*Director of Ka Haka 'Ula O Ke'elikāni'i College of Hawaiian Language*

**HCR8 HD1**

URGING THE BOARD OF EDUCATION AND DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO ELEVATE HAWAIIAN LANGUAGE AND CULTURAL EDUCATION IN PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS BY EXPANDING ACCESS TO HAWAIIAN LANGUAGE AND CULTURAL CLASSES THAT FULFILL CORE REQUIREMENTS THROUGHOUT SECONDARY EDUCATION.

**Position: Strong Support:**

E ke Kā• mike Ho'ona'auao a me ke Kā• mike Ho'okolokolo a Kuleana Hawai'i,

Aloha 'oukou;

The Hawaiian language, history and culture are an important part of total education package for ALL students being educated in Hawai'i. This includes access to Hawaiian knowledge that is tied directly to the educational plan and is implemented through graduation requirements. Those requirements are built on a value set of knowledge, skills and dispositions for Hawai'i's public school students.

Education is a responsibility and a public investment in Hawai'i's future. Critical to our future is ensuring that students have adequate knowledge of the Hawaiian language, history and culture that prepares them to care for Hawai'i present and future. Embodied in the Hawaiian language, history and cultural knowledge are place-based responses to issues that enable students to *mālama*, care for our land, water, people, place and its only native language and culture.

I support the bill that urges the BOE and DOE to elevate Hawaiian language and cultural education in all public schools and humbly ask for your support to pass the bill.

**HCR-8-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/27/2021 8:10:06 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/29/2021 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

I strongly support hcr8 hd1

**HCR-8-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/28/2021 11:38:37 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/29/2021 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Fully support, especially in view of Hawaiian being the first language of Hawaii.

[HCR 8, HD1 / HR 9,](#)  
[HD1](#)  
[\(HSCR1117\) /](#)  
[\(HSCR1116\)](#)

URGING THE BOARD OF EDUCATION AND DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO ELEVATE HAWAIIAN LANGUAGE AND CULTURAL EDUCATION IN PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS BY EXPANDING ACCESS TO HAWAIIAN LANGUAGE AND CULTURAL CLASSES THAT FULFILL CORE REQUIREMENTS THROUGHOUT SECONDARY EDUCATION.

Testimony in Support of HCR8, HD1; HR9, HD1, HSCR117/HSCR116  
From Ka‘iu Kimura

Aloha Chair Nakashima and Members of the House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs,

My name is Ka‘iu Kimura and I am a concerned community member who has worked within the Hawaiian medium education efforts through the ‘Aha Pūnana Leo and the College of Hawaiia Language at UH-Hilo for the past 25 years. My son is also a preschooler at the Pūnana Leo o Hilo and will be continuing on to K-12 education through the Hawaiian language medium school, Ke Kula o Nāwahīokalani‘ōpu‘u in Kea‘au, Hawai‘i.

As an involved community member, I am regularly contacted by others in the community frustrated by lack of support through the standard DOE procedures and also standard UH procedures to meet the demand for learning of the Hawaiian language and Hawaiian cultural content. I am also contacted by others who are seeking amplification of Hawaiian language and culture resources, programs, and curriculum to further boost their child/families growth in the language and culture - especially during a time when “place-based” learning has been furthered hampered by readily available, distance learning resources that supplanted the COVID-19 impacted school year.

The legislature has been the entity that has provided much of the landmark progress that we have seen relative to Hawaiian language education. That progress has been substantial. Hawai‘i is recognized nationally as the state that is most advanced in providing Indigenous language education.

In response to community demand, the legislature was the entity that opened the pathway to schooling through Hawaiian. The legislature then established the Hale Kuamo‘o Center here in Hilo to provide resources to those schools unavailable from the standard out of state vendors used by the DOE. Today the Hale Kuamo‘o produces most of the curriculum materials used in the Hawaiian immersion schools and operates the Ulukau Hawaiian Electronic Library that provides free internet access to Hawaiian resources used in the DOE and UH system. The legislature also introduced legislation to establish



the Hawaiian language college and mandate that it establish the first graduate programs in Hawaiian and first teacher education program targeting Hawaiian language.

The challenges to meeting community aspirations for access to Hawaiian education are extremely large. I believe that the legislature should take further bold steps to address Hawaiian education needs, as it has in the past, and bolster support and resources for efforts (like those listed above) in order to amplify access to Hawaiian education. Such action would move Hawaiian education forward and further Hawai'i's reputation as a national leader in Indigenous language education and support.

Thank you for this opportunity, and I testify in support of HCR8.

Mahalo nui loa,  
Ka'iu Kimura