

SR-115

Submitted on: 3/20/2022 12:21:34 PM

Testimony for EDU on 3/21/2022 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Chachie Abara	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

My name is Chachie Abara and I'm a proud alumni and graduate at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa. I would like to give testimony in favor in support of requesting the Department of Education to implement a Filipino History, Culture, and Identity Social Studies Course for High School Students. I was inspired and changed after I took my first IP 364 course at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa which stands for Indo Pacific Philippine Pop Culture course which was taught by Professor Dr. Jayson Parba. This course and many others provided by the University has taught me not to be ashamed about embracing my own cultural roots but gave me an opportunity to heal from unhealed traumas that I did not know I needed to learn and unlearn from. Often times, I asked myself why haven't I had the chance to learn about this course. I built a platform called Reclaiming Filipino/x/a Identity which is now called, Kasamahan Co as a way for folks and others to have a platform to share their story as a Filipino who were born and raised in Hawaii growing up but also for those as transplants, settlers that made a contribution to building a Filipino community in Hawai'i. My passion led me to my destiny of being a storyteller and giving a voice for our community. If it weren't for classes like these that helped me looked back into my cultural roots, I wouldn't have gathered the courage to find what I want to do in life, I know there are still so much for me to grow.

Having classes like these that would provide students the opportunity to learn about their ethnic and cultural history will create a better community. Through looking back at my history, I stumble upon this book, "Little Manila in the Heart" written by Dawn Mabalon, who collected oral histories, old newspaper articles, shreds of people's memories and photograph to paint a memory back in Los Angeles, California which I aspire and continue to aspire as I am collecting the narratives of Filipinos in Hawai'i. As our national hero once said, "Know History, Know Self – No History, No self" This quotes transcends the importance of how history and self are inevitably intertwined. For High school students, this is the time and moment to truly know themselves and its through learning the true history of what happened that will help them further their life.

For me, anytime I was able to reconnect with my culture and history. Anytime I was having conversations with my community through my podcast, it slowly healed me inside. This gave me a hope that when we start now, when we start to focus on letting our students look back and learn at the history of their ancestors it heals a community and it breaks the stigma of intergenerational trauma. As I conclude this testimony, I would like to say that with taking Filipino classes and Ilokano classes, I am proud to say that I have graduated the University of Hawaii at Manoa with a Bachelor's in Psychology and Ilokano Studies. My dream and my dream for this generation to come is to create a Filipino multimedia company that will spotlights Filipino visionaries,

storytellers and creatives to talk about our history from the good, the bad and to be a trailblazer. Please support the institution of a implement a Filipino History, Culture, and Identity Social Studies Course for High School Students.

SR-115

Submitted on: 3/20/2022 2:25:18 AM

Testimony for EDU on 3/21/2022 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lauren Watarida	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Monday, March 21, 2022, 3:15 PM

Conference Room 229 & Videoconference

March 19, 2022

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Mercado Kim, Senator Dela Cruz, Senator Fevella, and Senator Kanuha,

My name is Lauren Watarida and I am a junior at Kapolei High School. I am part of the Filipino Curriculum Project, a public-private school collaboration that advocates for Filipino representation in our high school curriculum.

I strongly support SCR131 / SR115 Requesting the Department of Education to Implement a Filipino History, Culture, and Identity Social Studies Course for High School Students.

I support SCR131 / SR115 because as a Filipina myself, I've always sought opportunities to learn about my culture and identity in a classroom setting but never found them. I am half Japanese and half Filipino and throughout all my classes from Kindergarten to Junior year, I've always been taught about Japanese history. I thought it was completely normal to not learn about Filipino history but I was young and didn't know any different. I didn't once question why I was

only being half represented. Now that I'm a Junior, after joining the Filipino Curriculum Project, I came to realize the things I was doing to make up for the lack of education I was receiving. Such as taking Spanish because it was the closest thing to a Filipino language class.

No student should settle for less when it comes to their identity. One side of them is not more important than the other and they should be represented as a whole. The opportunity to learn about who they are is not just a privilege, but a right. Through implementing a Filipino History, Culture, and Identity Social Studies Course for High School Students, we can lessen the gap for future generations.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Lauren Watarida

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
Monday, March 21, 2022, 3:15 PM
Conference Room 229 & Videoconference

March 19, 2022

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Mercado Kim, Senator Dela Cruz, Senator Fevella, and Senator Kanuha,

My name is Marissa Halagao and I am a Junior at Punahou School. I am a part of the Filipino Curriculum Project, a public-private school collaboration that advocates for Filipino representation in our high school curriculum.

I strongly support SCR131 / SR115 Requesting the Department of Education to Implement a Filipino History, Culture, and Identity Social Studies Course for High School Students.

I support SCR131 / SR115 because as a Filipina American who has lived in Hawaii all my life, I have rarely felt adequately represented in education. Education is so powerful in helping students enrich their identities and feel proud about who they are, and when we are not represented, this fuels a disconnect between us and our culture and the belief that we are not worthy enough to be recognized. My goal is to ensure that other Filipino students never feel underrepresented in the curriculum that they are learning and to help non-Filipinos learn about and connect to a large part of our community. Filipinos make up more than 25% of the population in Hawaii, claiming the title of the largest Asian and non-white ethnic group in the state, but we are rarely celebrated or represented in education, victim to a jarring hierarchy of who gets to learn about themselves and who doesn't. I am proud to be Filipino and strive to embrace and learn about my ethnic identity each day, and our mission is to empower other Filipinos to feel equally proud, knowledgeable about themselves, and uplifted.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Marissa Halagao



TINALAK FILIPINO EDUCATION COUNCIL

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Monday, March 21, 2022, 3:15 PM

Conference Room 229 & Videoconference

To: Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Mercado Kim, Senator Dela Cruz, Senator Fevella, and Senator Kanuha

From: Tinalak Filipino Education Council, University of Hawaii, Mānoa College of Education

Subject: Support for SCR131 / SR115 Filipino Social Studies Course for High School Students

The Tinalak Filipino Education Council strongly supports SCR131 / SR115 Requesting the Hawaii Department of Education (HIDOE) to Implement a Filipino History, Culture, and Identity Social Studies Course for High School Students, along with recommendations to integrate Filipino content into the HIDOE standards and recruit more Filipino teachers.

Tinalak Council was established in 2012 to serve as an advisory council to the Dean of the University of Hawaii, Mānoa College of Education. We are composed of the COE's tenure and non-tenure track Filipino faculty and doctoral students. Our mission is to inspire and weave together Hawaii's new generation of educators through the recruitment and support of Filipinos in the education field.

Filipinos make up the largest ethnic group in Hawaii (25%) and student ethnic group in Hawaii's public schools (23.4%), and yet, they are **underrepresented in the teaching force and school curriculum they learn**. According to the HIDOE Employment report 2020-2021, Filipino teachers represent 8% of the teaching workforce in contrast to teachers who identify as White (25%) and Japanese (24%). Research shows that student-teacher matching of the same race or ethnicity produces more positive educational experiences for students of color and gains in student achievement.

With over 2500 HIDOE courses offered to students, the only Filipino-focused courses are world language courses in Filipino and Ilokano. However, these Philippine language courses are limited and only offered at Farrington High School and Waipahu High School. And they lack qualified licensed world language teachers--there is only one teacher in the HIDOE who has a World language license to teach Ilokano at Waipahu High school.

Similar to Hawaiian studies and Pacific Island studies courses, courses should reflect the experiences and backgrounds of students, including Filipino-focused courses, such as Philippine studies, Filipino American Studies, Filipino history, culture and identity social studies courses, or Filipino literature courses. Furthermore, when examining the HIDOE subject standards, there is no Filipino content covered in visual and performing arts, English language arts, math, science and social studies standards. The Common Core English Language Arts standards Appendix B “Text Exemplars” does not list any literature by Filipino authors. Particularly noteworthy, Filipino content is not addressed in the social studies standards of world history, Modern History of Hawaii or Pacific Island Studies at the middle and high school levels. The absence of Filipino content in K-12 content standards and curriculum sends a message that Filipinos are not worthy or important enough to be included in learning.

Filipino students are an “invisible majority” in the Hawaii K-12 public school system. They are the largest ethnic group, yet they are not represented in the curriculum they learn, nor are they reflected in the education faculty. Perhaps, Filipinos do not garner much attention as a group because, on the whole, they are neither struggling nor exceeding academically. In comparison to other racial and ethnic groups in the HIDOE, they score in the middle for academic achievement and teachers rank them as average in socio emotional learning. With such a moderate status, Filipinos may be overlooked and fly under the radar, ultimately not performing to their potential. A persistent education gap becomes visible in public higher education in Hawaii, where Filipinos are less likely than other groups to be enrolled at four year institutions. Their K-12 experiences set the stage for this underrepresentation.

We need to transform the curriculum so it reflects the histories, lives, and experiences of one of the major ethnic groups in the HIDOE. When academic knowledge and practical skills are situated within the lived experience of students, schoolwork becomes more personally meaningful and interesting. Research shows multicultural content or ethnic studies courses increase academic achievement of racial and ethnic groups and promotes positive racial and ethnic attitudes among all groups.

We hope the legislature will join our families, schools, and communities to advocate for greater Filipino representation in our K-12 educators and curriculum for our Filipino students.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

SR-115

Submitted on: 3/20/2022 12:20:05 PM

Testimony for EDU on 3/21/2022 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Breanna Agas	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Mercado Kim, Senator Dela Cruz, Senator Fevella, and Senator Kanuha,

My name is Breanna Komata Agas and I am a graduate student at the University of Hawai‘i Mānoa. I am testifying as an individual and do not represent the University of Hawai‘i.

I strongly support SCR131 / SR115 Requesting the Hawaii Department of Education (HIDOE) to Implement a Filipino History, Culture, and Identity Social Studies Course for High School Students.

I support SCR131 / SR115 because I believe there is a great need to provide this opportunity for our Filipinx youth. Given their size relative to their lack of representation in higher education, it is clear and evident that they are lacking the needed support to thrive. For instance, at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, Filipinx students make up 10.6% of undergraduate students and only 5.4% of graduate-level students. Not only is this concerning but it also suggests that Filipinx will be underqualified for higher-level labor markets and this will inhibit them from rising in socioeconomic status. To remedy this, we must modify our courses to allow for students to see their own communities, heritage, and ancestors represented. When students are heard or felt in their curriculum, they feel that they belong and therefore are relevant to educational spheres and the greater community of Hawai‘i.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Breanna Komata Agas

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
Monday, March 21, 2022, 3:15 PM
Conference Room 229 & Videoconference

March 19, 2022

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Mercado Kim, Senator Dela Cruz, Senator Fevella, and Senator Kanuha,

My name is Caitlin Jayne Agnes and I am a freshman at Temple University in Philadelphia, and an alumni of Kapolei High School class of 2021. I am part of the Filipino Curriculum Project, a public-private school collaboration that advocates for Filipino representation in our high school curriculum.

I **strongly support** SCR131 / SR115 Requesting the Department of Education to Implement a Filipino History, Culture, and Identity Social Studies Course for High School Students.

I support SCR131 / SR115 because I want to educate those with Filipino blood and those without, about the Philippine's culture. Influencing my decision, I grew up not knowing significant events or people of the country. I also felt a disconnection within my family members because I couldn't speak Ilokano fluently. With these reasons, I felt lost saying that I am Filipino American. I don't want future generations of Filipinos to feel lost within their race because they don't feel connected with their culture. Supporting SCR131 / SR115 will also benefit those who aren't Filipino because the Philippine's culture includes vast similarities with other ethnicities, like those from the Polynesian islands. This curriculum will allow every student who chooses to take this class to embrace their culture and self identity.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Caitlin Jayne Agnes

SR-115

Submitted on: 3/20/2022 1:35:18 PM

Testimony for EDU on 3/21/2022 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
amy agbayani	Testifying for Hawai'i Friends of Civil Rights	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:



TESTIMONY SUBMITTED BY Amy Agbayani, co-chair

Hawai'i Friends of Civil Rights

TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT SR 115/ SCR 131/

The Hawai'i Friends of Civil Rights supports programs and policies that ensure equal access, diversity and inclusion. HFCR strong supports / SR 115 /SCR 131REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO IMPLEMENT A FILIPINO HISTORY, CULTURE, AND IDENTITY SOCIAL STUDIES COURSE FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS.

Chair Kidani and Vice Chair Kim:

A course on Filipino history, culture and identity will benefit Filipino students as well students who are not of Filipino Heritage learn about Hawaii and US history. Filipinos have been in Hawai'i for 116 years; Filipino students are the largest ethnic group in the public schools and every fourth individual in our state is of Filipino ancestry. Unfortunately Filipinos are generally invisible in the curriculum and underrepresented among teachers. Excluding the experiences and aspirations of Filipinos in the curriculum must be addressed. Hawai'i students deserve a comprehensive, accurate and inclusive curriculum. I believe that our Filipino students and community want to know about heritage and history and that every student who takes this course will benefit. In addition to making the curriculum more accurate, it is an equity issue and an opportunity to increase appreciation and respect for all groups.

I want to express my appreciation to the Filipino private and public high schools for initiating this project as well as the multi-ethnic Filipino Senate and House caucus who introduced this resolution.

Mahalo to this committee for hearing this resolution. I respectfully request you approve SR 115 (scr 131)

Amy Agbayani

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
Monday, March 21, 2022, 3:15 PM
Conference Room 229 & Videoconference

March 20, 2022

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Mercado Kim, Senator Dela Cruz, Senator Fevella, and Senator Kanuha,

My name is Shannon Cristobal and I am a Ph.D. Candidate in the Educational Foundations Department at the College of Education at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UHM) and the Director of Hawai'i History Day and K-12 Humanities Programs at the Hawai'i Council for the Humanities. I am testifying as an individual and do not represent the University of Hawaii or the Hawai'i Council for the Humanities.

I strongly support SCR131 / SR115 Requesting the Hawaii Department of Education (HIDOE) to Implement a Filipino History, Culture, and Identity Social Studies Course for High School Students.

As a high school graduate of the Hawai'i Department of Education (HIDOE) and now a graduate student, teacher educator, and public humanities program director, I see how vital and imperative it is to create spaces and content that is diverse, equitable, and that also advocates for recruiting, retaining, and educating teachers from underrepresented ethnic groups such as Filipinos. Filipino teachers are underrepresented in comparison to their Filipino students, representing only 8% of the teaching workforce in contrast to teachers who are Whites (25%), Japanese (24%), and Hawaiian (11%). This underrepresentation is detrimental to students' social emotional learning and well-being. According to HIDOE, social emotional learning is described as "the mindsets, skills, attitudes, and feelings that help students succeed in school, career, and life. SEL focuses on how motivation, social connectedness, and self-regulation enable every student to learn and thrive." [13]

I also support SCR131 / SR115 because the absence of Filipino content in K-12 content standards and curriculum sends a message that Filipino content is not worthy or important enough to be included in learning. I personally experienced this myself while attending schools in the HIDOE and had to wait till I attended college to read anything that touched upon Filipino history, culture, or literature. My children also attended schools in the HIDOE up until the 6th grade and only got to study very briefly a few

stories of Filipinos during the plantation era because of a field trip to the Hawai'i Plantation Village. As the Director of Hawai'i History Day and K-12 Humanities Programs I get to work with over 100 teachers and hundreds of students every year from across the state (public, private, charter, Hawaiian Immersion, and Homeschool). It's unfortunate that many of these teachers and students have expressed to me that the Filipino & Filipino American History & workshops that include history, literature, and resources they had no idea existed.

Growing up in Kalihi from a poor family. I never in my wildest dreams thought I could attain my Ph.d. It was through the guidance, care, and determination by many Filipino and non Filipino teachers and educators that have helped me to get past self-hated, imposter syndrome by seeing myself in the Filipino literature I read, the Filipino and Filipino American history I studied and can finally say I am proud to be Filipino. I want all Filipino children to learn this at a young age not when they are in college and unfortunately a lot of them don't even get to that point with your help they can.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Shannon Cristobal

From: Kenny D. Quibilan, M.Ed
Subject: Support for SCR131 & SR115

March 19,2022

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Mercado Kim, Senator Dela Cruz, Senator Fevella, and Senator Kanuha,

My name is Kenny Quibilan and I am an Academic Advisor at University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa. I am testifying as an individual and do not represent the University of Hawai‘i. **I strongly support SCR131 / SR115 Requesting the Department of Education to Implement a Filipino History, Culture, and Identity Social Studies Course for High School Students.**


I support SCR131 / SR115 because I believe representation matters. Filipinos make up 25% of the population here in Hawai‘i and play a crucial role in the state’s development. More importantly, Filipino students are one of the largest demographic groups in Hawai‘i’s Department of Education (HIDOE) at 23.4%. The next largest demographic group being Native Hawaiians at 23.1%. Both Filipinos and Native Hawaiians continue to be ethnically discriminated against in our society, yet, they make up over half of HIDOE’s student population and almost half of Hawai‘i’s state population. Their continued discrimination is a legacy of Hawai‘i’s colonialism and racialized social hierarchy. SCR131/SR115 will provide opportunities in which public schools are able to implement the lived experiences of their Filipino students in HIDOE’s social studies curriculum. Furthermore, all Hawai‘i students are able to learn the Filipino community’s role in shaping modern day Hawai‘i.

Currently, Filipino focused content is not covered in World History, History of the Hawaiian Kingdom, or Modern History of Hawai‘i at the middle and high school levels. However, East-Asian (i.e. Japanese, Chinese) and White focused content are disproportionately included in HIDOE’s social studies curriculum. This ultimately has erased the contribution and the impact of the Filipino community in Hawai‘i as well as signaling to Filipino students that their presence is not worth learning about. In order to end this bias and discriminatory practice in HIDOE’s curriculum, **I would like repeat my support for SCR131 / SR115.**

Lastly, I would also like to express my strong support for the implementation of Native Hawaiian, Micronesian, Pacific Islander and LGBTQIA content in HIDOE’s curriculum. Education should always be inclusive and reflective of our diverse society and student population.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,


Kenny Quibilan, M.Ed.
Academic Advisor

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
Monday, March 21, 2022, 3:15 PM
Conference Room 229 & Videoconference

March 19, 2022

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Mercado Kim, Senator Dela Cruz, Senator Fevella, and Senator Kanuha,

My name is Nicole Alia Salis Reyes and I am an Associate Professor in the College of Education at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. While I draw on my professional knowledge and expertise, I am testifying as an individual and do not represent the University of Hawai'i.

I strongly support SCR131 / SR115 Requesting the Department of Education to Implement a Filipino History, Culture, and Identity Social Studies Course for High School Students, along with recommendations to integrate Filipino content into the HIDOE standards and recruit more Filipino teachers.

As a Kanaka Maoli and Filipina woman, a scholar of higher education, and the first in my father's family to earn a college degree, I am deeply interested in issues of Indigeneity, diversity, equity, and inclusion. There is a noticeable educational outcome gap when it comes to Filipinos in Hawai'i. Whereas Filipinos comprise 25 percent of the total population of Hawai'i and 23.4 percent of all students enrolled in HIDOE schools, they are underrepresented at all levels in the UH System. Currently, Filipinos comprise only 17.4 percent of students enrolled in the UH community colleges, 12.3 percent of undergraduates enrolled in UH four-year institutions, and 5.5 percent of graduate students enrolled in UH four-year institutions. So, while other statistics might suggest that Filipinos are performing in the middle of the pack in terms of academic achievement and socio-emotional learning in the HIDOE, these college-going rates reveal that there is still a disconnect that is hindering Filipinos in their pursuit of quality education.

I believe that an important factor in this disconnect stems from the virtual invisibility of Filipinos within the curriculum and teaching staff of the HIDOE. Currently, the only Filipino-focused courses in the HIDOE are in Filipino and Ilokano languages, which are only offered at Farrington and Waipahu High Schools. There are no courses offered that focus on Philippine studies, Filipino American studies, Filipino history, Filipino culture, or Filipino literature. There are also no HIDOE subject standards that relate to Filipino

content. Moreover, only 8 percent of the teaching workforce of the HIDOE identifies as Filipino. As a result, Filipino students often do not see themselves, their families, or their communities reflected in their K12 experiences. This is problematic when we know that academic achievement and positive racial/ethnic attitudes are linked to students being able to connect with educators who share the same ethnic/racial backgrounds as well as to students being able to engage in culturally sustaining coursework.

What is taught in schools and by whom matters. Sadly, I have heard countless personal stories from students who have been made to feel ashamed to be Filipino. These stories are absolutely heartbreaking and have been deeply shaped both by intergenerational trauma and by negative schooling experiences. Unfortunately, the Philippines and Hawai'i share similar histories and ongoing experiences with U.S. colonialism. Schools have historically been used to reinforce American superiority and both Filipino and Hawaiian inferiority, contributing to senses of negative self-concept and perpetuating societal hierarchies with Filipinos and Hawaiians at the bottom. This is unacceptable, but there is hope. Research also suggests that education, when it is culturally sustaining and decolonized, can be used toward community uplift.

If we want Hawai'i to thrive now and into the future, then we need Hawai'i to be a place where Kānaka Maoli and Filipinos, two of Hawai'i's largest ethnic groups, can thrive. Education plays a vital role in this. We must support education that best supports these populations. SCR131/SR115 can help to pave the way. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Nicole Alia Salis Reyes

SR-115

Submitted on: 3/19/2022 10:27:33 PM

Testimony for EDU on 3/21/2022 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Leon Florendo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Mercado Kim, Senator Dela Cruz, Senator Fevella, and Senator Kanuha,

My name is Leon Fuimaono Florendo and I am a Counselor at Leeward Community College Wai'anae Moku. I am testifying as an individual and do not represent the University of Hawaii. I am also a father of twin 12 year old girls attending Kaimuki Middle School and a son who is 9 year old and a 3rd grader at Liholiho Elementary School.

I wholeheartedly support SCR131 / SR115 Requesting the Department of Education (DOE) to Implement a Filipino History, Culture, and Identity Social Studies Course for High School Students.

I strongly support SCR131 / SR115 because I believe it is long overdue. As a young Filipino Samoan from Wai'anae and an alumni. I first learned about Filipino history, culture and identity in Hawai'i as a 21 year old college student at UH Manoa taking an Ethnic Studies course 33 years ago. I feel that it is an injustice that Filipinos represent 25% of Hawai'i state population and 23.4% DOE largest ethnic population and have contributed a lot to Hawai'i history beyond working on the plantation and hotel. The fact that today the Hawai'i state DOE does not offer courses that cover Filipino history, culture, and identity is a tragedy and long overdue. My children should not have to wait till attending College to learn about their Filipino history, culture, and identity.

Salamat po for the opportunity to testify.

Leon Fuimaono Florendo

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
Monday, March 21, 2022, 3:15 PM
Conference Room 229 & Videoconference

March 19, 2022

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Mercado Kim, Senator Dela Cruz, Senator Fevella, and Senator Kanuha,

My name is Raymart Billote and I am a freshman at the University of Hawai'i –West Oahu. I am part of the Filipino Curriculum Project, a public-private school collaboration that advocates for Filipino representation in our high school curriculum.

I **strongly support** SCR131 / SR115 Requesting the Department of Education to Implement a Filipino History, Culture, and Identity Social Studies Course for High School Students.

I support SCR131 / SR115 because w was terrified people would make fun of my accent when I was in high school. Every morning, I would always look myself in the mirror and ask: "Would they think that I am too F.O.B. if I were to wear this?" Many local-born Filipinos I know are not familiar with their Filipino background. Whenever I ask them if they can speak in Tagalog or Ilokano, their responses are always "I can only understand." It turns out many were encouraged not to speak in any Filipino languages. Despite most of them growing up in a Filipino household, they are still unaware of what it means to be a Filipino. As a result, most of them kept their Filipino identity under the table.

I support this resolution because first, not only Filipinos who lack knowledge of their ethnic background but also non-Filipinos will have the opportunity to learn more about our rich history and what it really means to be Filipino. The more they understand our culture, the more effortless we build a welcoming and giving community. Second, I support this resolution because Filipinos in the diaspora, especially Hawaii, are losing their grip on their Filipino identities. I support this resolution to free Filipinos in the diaspora from experiencing identity crises. So that our younger generation of Filipinos in Hawaii will grow up seeing themselves in school. And that they will grow up recognizing the history and culture of the Philippines that most social studies curricula have long neglected. I want my younger sister and the whole next generation to grow up in a community where they feel valued. I support this resolution because it allows us

Filipinos to have pride in our cultural heritage. I support this resolution because I believe that representation *does* matter. Finally, I support this resolution because I know that education has the power to make every student feel seen. That education should be one of the endless gateways to making every individual proud of their own ethnic identity.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Raymart

SR-115

Submitted on: 3/20/2022 2:32:25 AM

Testimony for EDU on 3/21/2022 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Landee Resuello	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

March 20, 2022

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Mercado Kim, Senator Dela Cruz, Senator Fevella, and Senator Kanuha,

My name is Landee Resuello and I am a Junior at Kamehameha High School Kapalama. I am part of the Filipino Curriculum Project, a public-private school collaboration that advocates for Filipino representation in our high school curriculum.

I strongly support SCR131 / SR115 Requesting the Department of Education to implement a Filipino History, Culture, and Identity Social Studies Course for High School Students.

I support SCR 131 / SR115 because as you all know Hawaii is the mixing bowl of ethnicities and backgrounds and you cannot deny the large population of Filipinos. Growing up the amount of representation for Filipinos lacked and with a curriculum being formed, being able to come together and connect will be not only impactful to students learning by keeping them engaged, but it will make them feel comfortable and seen. I am a high school student, I have gone through a number of classes, but the ones that interested me the most, were the ones where I could connect to; the ones where I was engaged in the content. It is important to have content that students can connect to because it also helps them discover themselves. If this was a curriculum right now, not only would I enjoy it, but it would teach me about the history and heritage about where I came from, being a Filipino, being that it was never something I could learn in school like how Hawaiian History or US History is taught in school.

Having that representation will create that community for non-Filipinos and Filipinos alike to learn about the culture and be able to feel connected on a larger scale. It will strengthen individuals awareness and self worth. I could only imagine and envision the positive impact that it will make!

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Landee Resuello

SR-115

Submitted on: 3/20/2022 7:11:35 AM

Testimony for EDU on 3/21/2022 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Norman Sales	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Monday, March 21, 2022, 3:15 PM

Conference Room 229 & Videoconference

March 20, 2022

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Mercado Kim, Senator Dela Cruz, Senator Fevella, and Senator Kanuha,

My name is Norman Sales and I am the School Strategic Planner at Farrington High School. I am testifying as an individual and do not represent Farrington.

I strongly support SCR131 / SR115 Requesting the Department of Education to Implement a Filipino History, Culture, and Identity Social Studies Course for High School Students.

House Bill 3343 from the 24th legislature of the State of Hawaii recognizes that the “teachings of American history have often overlooked the historical role of Asian-Americans, including the role of Filipino-Americans, whose heritage spans a colonial, political, economic, and cultural relationship with the United States.” More than 10 years after the aforementioned bill was passed, the history, culture, and identity of Filipino students are still not emphasized in the Social Studies curriculum of the Department of Education. Many of my former Filipino students, who represent 58% of the student population at Farrington, return from their semesters in college sharing their frustrations of not learning more about their history in our high school classrooms. They had to wait until they reached their college lecture halls to learn how the history of Filipinos in Hawaii and the United States continue to shape their identities.

I support SCR131 / SR115 because our students deserve representation in the curriculum. They deserve to leave our high school classrooms with a better understanding of who they are and where they come from.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Norman Sales

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
Monday, March 21, 2022, 3:15 PM
Conference Room 229 & Videoconference

March 19, 2022

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Mercado Kim, Senator Dela Cruz, Senator Fevella, and Senator Kanuha,

My name is Jalen Espejo and I am a senior at Farrington High School. I am part of the Filipino Curriculum Project, a public-private school collaboration that advocates for Filipino representation in our high school curriculum.

I strongly support SCR131 / SR115 Requesting the Department of Education to Implement a Filipino History, Culture, and Identity Social Studies Course for High School Students.

I support SCR131 / SR115 because Filipino's contribute to the outstanding diversity of our society. According to the University of Hawaii, 25% of Hawaii's population is composed of Filipinos and 23% of the public school population in Hawaii are Filipinos. Filipino's rank second as the largest race in Hawaii. We have Filipino's that were born locally that would love to learn about their culture and their historical background, they want to have the same knowledge as the Filipino's that were born in the Philippines. By implementing a Filipino History Course, we could decrease the barrier of Local Born Filipino's from their native

country, by teaching them their own historical background and finding their own true identities.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Jalen Espejo

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
Monday, March 21, 2022, 3:15 PM
Conference Room 229 & Videoconference

March 19, 2022

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Mercado Kim, Senator Dela Cruz, Senator Fevella, and Senator Kanuha,

My name is Mariah Iris Ramo, and I am an 11th-grade student at Waipahu High School. I am part of the Filipino Curriculum Project, a public-private school collaboration that advocates for Filipino representation in our high school curriculum.

I **strongly support** SCR131 / SR115 Requesting the Department of Education to Implement a Filipino History, Culture, and Identity Social Studies Course for High School Students.

I support SCR131 / SR115 because I am a proud Filipino immigrant. Filipinos are the largest ethnic group in Hawaii's public schools. However, we are under-represented in Education. To illustrate, there are no Filipino-focused courses. There are world language courses, but Filipino and Ilokano are only offered in Waipahu High School and Farrington High School. It is also rare to learn a bit of the culture in any existing courses. I think those statistics played and continue to play a massive role in why I, and many others, feel ashamed of our skin color and thick accent. Therefore, I believe that this bill is the ultimate key that can help build a better world: a place where individuals are not judged for who they are and where they came from.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,



Mariah Iris Ramo

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
Monday, March 21, 2022, 3:15 PM
Conference Room 229 & Videoconference

March 19, 2022

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Mercado Kim, Senator Dela Cruz, Senator Fevella, and Senator Kanuha,

My name is Kailee Trias and I am a first year student at Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University. I am part of the Filipino Curriculum Project, a public-private school collaboration that advocates for Filipino representation in our high school curriculum.

I **strongly support** SCR131 / SR115 Requesting the Department of Education to Implement a Filipino History, Culture, and Identity Social Studies Course for High School Students.

I support SCR131 / SR115 because the Filipino community is very underrepresented in the state of Hawaii's education, when roughly a quarter of the population are this ethnic group. I am mixed with only 50% Filipino blood, but grew up in a full-fledged Filipino home barely learning anything about my culture because my family never taught me at home. This is a big issue for second generation Filipinos; families sometimes refuse to teach their children about their history and background because they think it would be easier for the child and themselves. I later graduated from Waipahu High School feeling completely disconnected from my culture because it was also severely lacking in Filipino education—when about 70% of the school population is Filipino according to the DOE themselves—the only program available was Ilokano language class. My goal is to eradicate the misconceptions and ignorance that people have of Filipinos and our history, and to encourage mixed students to feel pride and know their identity among the other ethnicities they have in their blood. Therefore, I believe every student should have the opportunity to learn about Filipino history and culture, especially those who are mixed and in the same state of disconnection due to their families not educating them at home. Being disconnected from our culture strips a part of our identity and the motivation to learn about ourselves. Having more programs and activities that support Filipino history and culture will inevitably encourage and motivate Filipino students to express themselves more freely, and teach non-Filipino students our history and acceptance of the community.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Kailee Trias

SR-115

Submitted on: 3/20/2022 12:07:56 PM

Testimony for EDU on 3/21/2022 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Edward Reyes	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

SR115 will open up the opportunity for the community here in Hawai'i to learn more about Filipino history and culture and why it matters. Although Hawai'i is one of the most diverse states in the U.S., Filipino history and culture is rarely taught or talked about here. SR115 will open up that topic, bringing more representation to one of the largest groups in Hawai'i that is not given.

SR-115

Submitted on: 3/20/2022 1:41:44 PM

Testimony for EDU on 3/21/2022 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Halle Myan Umayam	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I enthusiastically support SR115 due to the fact that as a second generation Filipino American, I have lived on the island Oahu majority of the time and some parts of it in the Philippines. After coming back to Hawaii, I had a culture shock on how Americanized it was in our school system even though the State of Hawaii is the #1 state with the most diversity amongst many cultures and religions but yet as we stand in our education system here, it stuns me that my people, the Filipinos, are barely studied in our history books when majority of our “Asian Studies” have been only towards the Japanese and Chinese, and knowing that the Filipinos have been here for Centuries we still yet have been studied upon on. I am here to make a change and give the Filipinos the rights to be studied and be appreciated in our school system. I am a proud Filipino American and I hope other Filipinos or Non-Filipinos can look at us with the same equality and dignity as we do for other Asian cultures.

Respectfully,

Halle Myan D. Umayam

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Monday, March 21, 2022, 3:15 PM

Conference Room 229 & Videoconference

March 20, 2022

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Mercado Kim, Senator Dela Cruz, Senator Fevella, and Senator Kanuha,

My name is Jennifer Padua, and I am an Assistant Professor in the College of Education at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa (UHM). While I draw on my professional knowledge, I am testifying as an individual and do not represent the UHM.

I strongly support SCR131 / SR115 Requesting the Department of Education to Implement a Filipino History, Culture, and Identity Social Studies Course for High School Students.

As a high school graduate of the Hawai‘i Department of Education (HIDOE) and now a teacher educator, I am interested in diversity, equity, and the advocacy of recruiting and retaining educators from underrepresented ethnic groups such as Filipinos. Currently, in the HIDOE, only 8% of public school teachers are identified as Filipino, and in the UHM College of Education, only 11% of undergraduate Filipino students are pursuing a teaching license. I bring these statistics to your attention because Filipinos are the largest student population in the HIDOE at 23.4%, but they have significantly low college-going rates at 54%.

I support SCR131 / SR115 because research shows that students of color perform better academically when they see themselves in the curricula and are taught by educators of the same ethnicity. There are over 2,500 courses in the HIDOE. But the only Filipino-focused courses are in World Languages and offered at Farrington and Waipahu High Schools. If students are proficient in speaking Filipino or Ilokano, there is no need to enroll in this language course. In addition, despite Filipinos arriving in Hawai‘i in the early 1900s, their contributions to our state are not explicitly mentioned in the social studies or language arts curriculum. As a result, Filipino students and educators often do not see themselves or their culture as significant to our state's history, schooling, or lives.

What is taught and by whom makes a difference. I have a few undergraduate students who pursued teaching because they did not have Filipino educators as role models and did not learn about Filipino history until they were college students. They believed if teachers understood their culture and identity as Filipino students, they would have a more positive experience during their public school years. Now as classroom teachers, they reported a lack of curricula resources to teach Filipino culture/history and not having colleagues of Filipino ethnicity. The lack of Filipino resources and educators has been persistent issues for decades.

I believe the passing of SCR131 / SR115 is a first step in improving educational outcomes for Filipino students. Seeing Filipino culture and history in the K-12 curricula and having Filipino teachers as role models may motivate Filipino students to enter college, possibly the teaching profession and to understand the importance of Filipino culture.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Padua

SR-115

Submitted on: 3/20/2022 2:17:41 PM

Testimony for EDU on 3/21/2022 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Phillippe Fernandez-Brennan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Monday, March 21, 2022, 3:15 PM

Conference Room 229 & Videoconference

March 20, 2022

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Mercado Kim, Senator Dela Cruz, Senator Fevella, and Senator Kanuha,

My name is Phillippe Fernandez-Brennan and I am a PhD student in Education: Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UHM) and member of the UHM College of Education Tinalak Council. I have also taught in the Hawai'i public schools for the past 8 years. I am testifying as an individual and do not represent the University of Hawai'i nor the Hawai'i Department of Education

I strongly support SR115, *Requesting the Hawai'i Department of Education (HIDOE) to Implement a Filipino History, Culture, and Identity Social Studies Course for High School Students.*

I support SR115 because I never learned about Filipinos in Hawai'i while attending K-12 public schools in the 1990s and early 2000s. Despite Filipinos having the largest population of any ethnic group in Hawai'i (70% being of Ilokano/Ilocano ethnicity), and the largest student demographic in Hawai'i public schools, Filipinos in Hawai'i are invisible in K-12 curriculum, systemically excluded as public school teachers and administrators, and disproportionately underrepresented as professors at the UHM.

Despite a strong presence in Hawai'i since 1906 and significant contributions to the fabric of Hawai'i, Filipinos as a community, continue to struggle socially, politically and economically. While Hawai'i's population is racially and ethnically diverse, ethnic groups are systemically concentrated in particular districts. Most Filipinos are concentrated on O'ahu in the central and leeward areas, specifically Kalihi, Waipahu and Ewa Beach, which tend to have higher rates of poverty.

During the 2019-2020 school year, Filipino students were the largest ethnic group in Hawai'i public schools at 23.4%. Despite this large number of Filipino enrollment, Filipino graduates are disproportionately enrolling into 4-year college institutions. The low enrollment is due to significant barriers like financial aid resources, cultural heritage reinforcement, and institutional support systems. Consequently, Fall 2021 at UHM enrollment data shows that the total Filipino student population was only 9.1% (1,767/19,098), undergraduates accounted for 10.6% (1,493/14,059), and Graduate students accounted for 5.4% (267/4,978). Filipinos are mostly found at the community college level (17.2%) and are transferring to four-year institutions disproportionately lower compared to other ethnic groups.

Data on Filipino faculty at the UH Mānoa shows alarming low and disproportionate representation. In 2016, Filipino faculty only accounted for only 2.6% of the entire UH Mānoa faculty. In 2021 they accounted for only 5.9%. At the College of Education, only 5 out of 174 faculty members or 2.8% are of Filipino descent.

Filipinos are underrepresented at the College of Education as teacher candidates and graduate students. As the highest producing licensure Education Preparation Program (EPP) in the Hawai'i, this low number of Filipino teacher candidates consequently leads to under-representation of Filipino teachers and administrators employed in the Hawai'i Department of Education.

The most recent data in 2021 Filipinos shows that Filipinos have one of the lowest representations of teachers and administrators at the Hawai'i Department of Education. This is problematic because Filipino youth represent the majority of the public school demographic. From 1974 to 1991 data shows that Filipino teachers have historically been the lowest ethnic group represented in Hawai'i public schools. This trend is also reflected in the underrepresentation of Filipino administrators.

Research in education supports that the process of learning is culturally dependent, that culturally relevant and community engaged curricula are essential to improving academic performance and school culture for students, and that it is essential to have linguistic and cultural flexibility in education.

The Hawai'i State Department of Education (HIDOE) subject standards do not include Filipino content in visual and performing arts, English language arts, math, science and social studies. Filipino content is not addressed in the social studies standards of world history, History of Hawaiian Kingdom, Modern History of Hawai'i or Pacific Island Studies at the middle and high school levels. When Filipino culture is invisible in the

curriculum, it is difficult for Filipino youth to develop a positive sense of self- and ethnic identity.

This underrepresentation of Filipino teachers and administrators and lack of Filipino curriculum has led to the persistent low performance, low achievement and lack of success among Filipino students in the Hawai'i K-12 public schools.

We can support Filipino students through the passing of SR115 and mandating that the Hawaii Department of Education (HIDOE) implement Filipino history, culture, and identity social studies course for high school students.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,



Phillippe Rivera Fernandez-Brennan, M.Ed. (He | Him)

UH Mānoa, Curriculum Studies | PhD Student

pfgalici@hawaii.edu

SR-115

Submitted on: 3/20/2022 2:21:58 PM

Testimony for EDU on 3/21/2022 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Doris Ching	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony Presented Before the Senate Committee on Education

March 21, 2022 at 3:15pm

by Doris Ching, Emeritus Vice President for Student Affairs, University of Hawai'i System

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO IMPLEMENT A FILIPINO HISTORY, CULTURE, AND IDENTITY SOCIAL STUDIES COURSE FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Mercado Kim, Senator Dela Cruz, Senator Fevella, Senator Kanuha:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on SCR 131 and SR 115. I am testifying as a concerned individual and member of the Hawai'i community. Having had the privilege of teaching in K-12 education with the Hawai'i Department of Education at Kalakaua Middle School, August Ahrens School, and Kawanānakoā Middle School as well as serving higher education at the University of Hawai'i at UH-Mānoa, UH-West O'ahu and the UH System over the past five decades, I have personally observed the educational curricular and representation shortcomings relative to students and professionals of Filipino ethnicity within Hawai'i's K-12 and higher educational systems. I concur with the assertions in SCR 131 and SR 115 and firmly believe the addition of a course in the DOE curriculum will result in a marked improvement to overcome the current shortcomings. I, therefore, strongly support SCR 131 and SR 115 Requesting the Hawaii Department of Education (HIDOE) to Implement a Filipino History, Culture, and Identity Social Studies Course for High School Students.

Thank you for your consideration on this important matter.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
Monday, March 21, 2022, 3:15 PM
Conference Room 229 & Videoconference

March 21, 2022

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Mercado Kim, Senator Dela Cruz, Senator Fevella, and Senator Kanuha,

My name is Sherylynne Andrada and I am a student in the College of Education at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa and I will draw on my academic knowledge and my own personal experiences as a student from and in Hawai'i. I am testifying as an individual and do not represent the University of Hawaii.

I strongly support SCR131 / SR115 Requesting the Department of Education to Implement a Filipino History, Culture, and Identity Social Studies Course for High School Students, along with recommendations to integrate Filipino content into the HIDOE standards and recruit more Filipino teachers.

As a second-generation Ilokana and Filipina who was born and raised on Maui, I understand that there is a noticeable educational outcome gap when it comes to Filipinos in Hawai'i. Whereas Filipinos comprise 25 percent of the total population of Hawai'i and 23.4 percent of all students enrolled in HIDOE schools, they are underrepresented at all levels in the UH System. Currently, Filipinos comprise only 17.4 percent of students enrolled in the UH community colleges, 12.3 percent of undergraduates enrolled in UH four-year institutions, and 5.5 percent of graduate students enrolled in UH four-year institutions. These college-going rates reveal that there is still a disconnect that is hindering Filipinos in their pursuit of quality education.

Personally, I am familiar with the invisibility of Filipinos within the curriculum and teaching staff of the HIDOE. Although Ilokanos and Filipinos make up a large percentage of the population of students in Maui High School (and the elementary and intermediate schools in Kahului), there was a noticeable absence of Filipino representation in the teaching staff. There were also no courses offered that focused on Philippine studies, Filipino American studies, Filipino history, Filipino culture, or Filipino literature nor any HIDOE subject standards that related to Filipino content. It is difficult when you do not see yourself reflected in the content that you are learning. It sends a message about yourself, your culture, and your community. There are still legacies of

colonization, such as the colonial mentality and other forms of oppression of Filipinos, influencing the way students perceive themselves and the invisibility of these issues in school discussions continue to perpetuate them.

There have been times when my classmates and I have felt ashamed of different aspects of Filipino culture, including the languages like Ilokano. Many parents think that their children have to assimilate to the American culture and Westernized ways of learning to succeed, but this comes at the expense of the children's connections to their heritage culture, which leads to Filipino inferiority and cultural disconnect. Schools have historically been used to reinforce American superiority and both Filipino and Hawaiian inferiority, contributing to senses of negative self-concept and perpetuating societal hierarchies with Filipinos and Hawaiians at the bottom. Cultural sustaining and decolonizing curriculum can be used to engage and support students that have been traditionally overlooked and marginalized and their cultures.

Education plays a vital role in seeing a future where all people in Hawai'i of different backgrounds can thrive. We must support education that best supports these populations. SCR131/SR115 can help to pave the way. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Sherylynne Andrada

SR-115

Submitted on: 3/20/2022 2:49:05 PM

Testimony for EDU on 3/21/2022 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mildred Macugay Asuncion	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To All Concerned:

My name is Mildred (Milli) Macugay Asuncion and I am the Co-Founder and Board Secretary of the Sariling Gawa Youth Council, a community-based nonprofit organization. I am testifying as an individual and do not represent the University of Hawaii.

I strongly support SCR 131 / SR115 Requesting the Department of Education to Implement a Filipino History, Culture, and Identity Social Studies Course for High School Students.

I support SCR 131 / SR115 because twenty three percent of Hawaii’s public school students are of Filipino heritage and consist of the largest ethnic group in the Hawaii Department of Education system. Additionally, Filipinos in Hawaii represent the largest ethnic group in the state due to historical forces that initially brought Filipino Sakadas and their families since the early 1900’s. Today, 25% of Hawaii’s population are of Filipino heritage and are major contributors to the state’s economy and social, multicultural richness.

Born and raised on Kauai, I consider myself lucky to have learned my Filipino heritage through my parents who instilled in me an appreciation of being Filipino. So much so that I became president of the first Filipino club in my high school, and then president of the Fil-Am Students Association at UH-Mānoa, and became involved in numerous Filipino community organizations through the years.

During these community experiences, I, along with my family and friends, encountered many youngsters who did not care to practice Filipino ways, and furthermore, did not want to be associated with or identified as being Filipino. This unsettling attitude motivated us to create the Sariling Gawa Youth Council to change the mindset of these youths.

Sariling Gawa has dedicated its youth leadership development efforts since 1980 to ensuring that Filipino youth are empowered to be community leaders with a deep understanding and appreciation of their history, languages, culture and values. Over 3,000 high school students across the state have participated in Sariling Gawa’s conferences and workshops. Throughout the organization’s 42-year history, these students expressed a strong desire to have deep respect and appreciation of their Filipino heritage. They also shared that some of their high schools have a Filipino Club and wanted additional in-depth courses in their schools to build upon Sariling Gawa’s introduction to Filipino history, culture, values and languages.

Having a Filipino course within the DOE would ensure that our Filipino students learn their rich cultural heritage in an educational setting with consistency and legitimacy. On a broader scale, non-Filipino students would learn about the Filipinos to help them understand and appreciate the culture of their fellow Filipino students, as well as how the Filipinos have contributed to Hawai'i's society.

It's about time we put Filipinos in the public school curriculum!

Sincerely,

Mildred (Milli) Macugay Asuncion

Co-Founder and Board Secretary

Sariling Gawa Youth Council

Testimony in Support of SR 115

Dear Senate Education Committee:

I'm writing to express my strong support, as an individual, for SR 115. I'm requesting that the efforts described in the resolution be implemented. Increasing the representation of Filipinos in the curriculum, along with efforts to recruit and retain teachers of Filipino ancestry, would be beneficial for all students. Students of Filipino ancestry stand to benefit from being affirmed in their educational experience. Non-Filipino students stand to gain valuable knowledge, understanding, and appreciation for the backgrounds of a sizable portion of our population. For these reasons, I strongly support SCR 131. Thank you for the opportunity to offer my testimony.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Moniz, PhD
Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, UH West O'ahu

SR-115

Submitted on: 3/20/2022 2:53:43 PM

Testimony for EDU on 3/21/2022 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Stephen Fernandez-Brennan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha -

I'm writing to support SR115, to implement a Filipino history, culture and identity social studies course for Hawai'i high school students.

I'm proud of the diversity of cultures and ethnicities in Hawai'i but I'm clear-eyed about the opportunities for improvement as well. Filipinos are the largest ethnic group in the DOE and yet their educational outcomes don't match their numbers. Research elsewhere (UC Santa Barbara - study here:

<https://www.duels.ucsb.edu/sites/default/files/sitefiles/Tapia%2C%20Jose.%20Ethnic%20Studies%20Pedagogy%20FINAL.pdf>) has shown that when courses are designed to speak to students in specific populations who are not achieving educational success, their outcomes (attendance, grades) can improve dramatically. This is a very modest step indeed to help support the single largest cohort of students in the Hawai'i DOE -- I strongly support SR115.

Mahalo for your consideration -

Stephen Fernandez-Brennan

Makiki, O'ahu

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
Monday, March 21, 2022, 3:15 PM
Conference Room 229 & Videoconference

March 20, 2022

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Mercado Kim, Senator Dela Cruz, Senator Fevella, and Senator Kanuha,

My name is Joe Uesato. I am a graduate of the University of Nevada at Las Vegas and an alumni of Kapolei High School, valedictorian of the class of 2017. I am part of the Filipino Curriculum Project, a public-private school collaboration that advocates for Filipino representation in our high school curriculum.

I **strongly support** SCR131 / SR115 Requesting the Department of Education to Implement a Filipino History, Culture, and Identity Social Studies Course for High School Students.

I support SCR131 / SR115 because of the great positive impact I believe it will have on all the students in Hawaii's educational system. Statistically, Filipinos make up nearly a quarter of the population of Hawai'i and its public school student base - more than the population of Native Hawaiian students and larger than the combination of all the other Asian ethnicities combined. Despite that, there is a scarcity of Filipino language and culture curriculum, it being only offered at two public schools, and an underrepresentation of Filipino educators (only 8% of the HDOE teaching workforce). These are extremely low statistics, especially when compared to the widely available curriculum for other cultures such as Japanese or Hawaiian, which make up a similar, if not less, percentage of Hawaii's population. Knowing this, in order to adequately educate Hawaii's students on the local culture and to uphold Hawaii's "melting pot" reputation of diversity, implementing Filipino culture curriculum for all public school students, both Filipino and non-Filipino, seems both justified and essential.

Growing up in the Hawaii public school system, I had many many Filipino classmates. However, as an "Americanized" local Filipino with very little at-home exposure to the Filipino culture, I found myself very left out of the Filipino community. I didn't get the references, the jokes, the language, the celebrations, or any of the other things that made that culture unique. Over time, and after many years of interacting with my Filipino friends, I have begun to understand the culture. However, looking back, I always wished there was a better way to get that cultural knowledge and be included in

the community that was all around me, but I was not a part of. I remember learning that Filipinos were on the plantations in Hawaii but we were hardly taught to any extent about what the Filipino culture really was like. There were never any Filipino classes, and in hindsight, I truly believe some kind of education on the Filipino culture would have greatly impacted my life as a student in the Hawaii public school system, and again I strongly support the addition of a Filipino History, Culture, and Identity Social Studies Course for High School Students.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Joe Uesato

Regarding Senate Resolution 115

Jonathan Y. Okamura

I would like to express my strong support for SR 115 on requesting the state Department of Education to implement a social studies course on Filipino history, culture and identity for high school students. Such a course would contribute significantly to the knowledge and appreciation of Hawai'i students for the many and varied contributions of Filipinos to Hawai'i since their arrival as plantation laborers in 1906.

Filipino Americans have distinguished themselves in diverse fields in Hawai'i, including labor organizing, higher education, and government and politics. Students need to know about labor leaders, such as Pablo Manlapit, who organized the first union for Filipino plantation workers, and Carl Damaso, who was a long-term leader of the ILWU after it organized sugar and pineapple and many other workers. Manlapit and Damaso and other Filipinos in organized labor have contributed to Hawai'i being the most unionized state in the nation, which has resulted in substantial wage, health care, and retirement benefits for all working people.

In higher education, students in a social studies course on Filipinos can learn about the contributions of scholars, such as Roman Cariaga, who wrote a master's thesis on Filipinos in Hawai'i in 1936. More recently, they can be taught about Dr. Amy Agbayani and Dr. Melinda Tria Kerkvliet, who were among those who started Operation Manong at UH Manoa in 1972, the first student services program in the U.S. to serve Filipino American and other ethnic minority students.

As for government and politics, a course on Filipino Americans would inform students about Ben Menor, the first Filipino American to be named to a state supreme court in the U.S. Another first Filipino American is Ben Cayetano, who was elected the first governor of Filipino ancestry and who also served many years in the state legislature as a leader before his election.

Many other Filipino Americans have made notable and long lasting contributions to Hawai'i in other fields, such as health care, business, medicine, community service and thereby enhanced the quality of life for all of Hawaii's people. Knowing of their accomplishments can enable Filipino American students to develop a more positive awareness of their ethnic identity and culture.

SR-115

Submitted on: 3/20/2022 3:11:23 PM

Testimony for EDU on 3/21/2022 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Blaine Bacerra	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Monday, March 21, 2022, 3:15 PM

Conference Room 229 & Videoconference

March 19, 2022

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Mercado Kim, Senator Dela Cruz, Senator Fevella, and Senator Kanuha,

My name is Blaine Bacerra and I am a junior at Kapolei High School. I am part of the Filipino Curriculum Project, a public-private school collaboration that advocates for Filipino representation in our high school curriculum.

I strongly support SCR131 / SR115 Requesting the Department of Education to Implement a Filipino History, Culture, and Identity Social Studies Course for High School Students.

I support SCR131 / SR115 because as a Filipino student, Filipino representation in education is important to me.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Blaine Bacerra

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
Monday, March 21, 2022, 3:15 PM
Conference Room 229 & Videoconference

LATE

March 19, 2022

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Mercado Kim, Senator Dela Cruz, Senator Fevella, and Senator Kanuha,

My name is Jeremiah Brown and I am a teacher and English Learners coordinator at Waipahu High School. I am testifying as an individual and do not represent the school.

I strongly support SCR131 / SR115 Requesting the Department of Education to Implement a Filipino History, Culture, and Identity Social Studies Course for High School Students.

I support SCR131 / SR115 because students need to see themselves in the school curriculum. Over 65% of students at my school are of Filipino descent, either locally-born or from the Philippines, and a Philippine Studies course would be incredibly empowering and relevant for my students. It would send the message that their culture, languages, and experiences are important enough to be included in the curriculum, highlighted for the rich contributions to our community and state.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Jeremiah Brown

LATE

SR-115

Submitted on: 3/21/2022 9:25:22 AM

Testimony for EDU on 3/21/2022 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Hartwell lee loy	Testifying for Farrington High School	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I rise in support of SR115