

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR



KEITH T. HAYASHI  
SUPERINTENDENT

STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
KA 'OIHANA HO'ONA'AUAO  
P.O. BOX 2360  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

**Date:** 03/21/2024

**Time:** 02:00 PM

**Location:** 309 VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

**Committee:** House Education

**Department:** Education

**Person Testifying:** Keith T. Hayashi, Superintendent of Education

**Title of Resolution:** HCR 0188 URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO ENSURE THAT SCHOOL LIBRARIES AND SCHOOL LIBRARY MEDIA CENTERS ARE STAFFED WITH LICENSED SCHOOL LIBRARIANS AND LICENSED SCHOOL LIBRARY MEDIA SPECIALISTS.

**Department's Position:**

The Hawaii State Department of Education supports HCR 0188.

School libraries supported by qualified staff can play a vital role in student success. Licensed librarians possess the expertise to curate resources, teach information literacy, and foster a love of reading.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HCR 0188.



Testimony to the House Committee on Education  
Thursday, Mar 21, 2024 2:00 PM

RE: **HCR188** Urging the Department of Education to Ensure that School Libraries and School Library Media Centers Are Staffed with Licensed School Librarians and Licensed School Library Media Specialists.

Aloha Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica, and Members of the Committee:

The Hawai'i Library Association (HLA) **strongly supports HCR 188**, which urges the Department of Education to ensure that school libraries are staffed by licensed school librarians.

Licensed school librarians are highly-skilled teachers who help students develop the critical thinking, information literacy, and media literacy skills needed to be effective and ethical community problem-solvers. At a time when social media content can be so misleading, skilled literacy instruction can train our students to be discerning consumers of information. School libraries are places where students can learn the digital technology skills they need to succeed academically, to be productive and responsible members of society, and become future contributors to our local workforce. School library programs managed by licensed school librarians are dynamic hubs of learning and literacy.

Unfortunately, student access to high quality school libraries is at its lowest with only 24% of DOE schools having a licensed school librarian. Access is also starkly inequitable: only 10% of schools on neighbor islands have library programs managed by licensed school librarians, compared to 32% of schools on O'ahu.

Students deserve access to school librarians and that access should not be determined by their zip code. This resolution acknowledges the crucial role that school libraries and librarians play in preparing students for success in higher education and the

workforce. We urge you to pass HCR188 to demonstrate our state's commitment to providing all students with the resources and support needed for their growth and success.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this resolution.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sunyeen Pai". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial 'S'.

Sunyeen Pai, Ph. D.  
President  
Hawai'i Library Association



STATE OF HAWAII  
HAWAII STATE PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM  
'OIHANA HALE WAIHONA PUKE AUPUNI O KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII'  
OFFICE OF THE STATE LIBRARIAN  
44 MERCHANT STREET  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION**

**Thursday, March 21, 2024**

**2:00 p.m.**

**Conference Room 309**

**By Stacey A. Aldrich  
State Librarian**

**HCR188 RELATING TO SCHOOL LIBRARIES**

To: Rep. Justin Woodson, Chair  
Rep. Trish LaChica, Vice Chair  
Members of the House Committee on Education

The Hawaii State Public Library System (HSPLS) **supports** HCR188 relating to urging the Department of Education to ensure that school libraries and school library media centers are staffed with licensed school librarians and licensed school library media specialists.

School libraries are a vital component of the educational ecosystem. School librarians do not simply manage books in a library for students. They are teachers who are dedicated to supporting the curriculum, faculty and growth of students' abilities to develop their literacy skills and effectively navigate the world of information. School librarians provide instruction on how to do research across physical and digital platforms, and how to be good digital citizens.

We live in a complex information world, one in which students are inundated with new challenges in navigation on a daily basis. This trend will only intensify. In this environment, school librarians are essential to ensuring that our students have the skills they need to thrive both today and in the future.

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

**HCR-188**

Submitted on: 3/19/2024 7:28:08 PM

Testimony for EDN on 3/21/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Caitlin Ramirez	Hawaii Association of School Librarians	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing to express my enthusiastic support for HCR188/HR168, which recognizes the invaluable contribution of school libraries and school librarians to our educational system. As a parent of public school students, a school librarian, and president of the Hawaii Association of School Librarians, I have witnessed firsthand the powerful impact that school libraries have on student success.

School library programs managed by licensed school librarians are not mere repositories of books; they are dynamic hubs of learning and literacy. In the State of Hawaii Public Education 2023-2029 Strategic Plan, the Hawai‘i State Department of Education (HIDOE) aims to ensure, “...All students experience rigorous, high-quality learning that results in equitable outcomes for all learners,” and that “All students read proficiently by the end of third grade, and those who do not read proficiently receive necessary and timely support to become proficient.” The likelihood of achieving this increases dramatically when students have access to high quality library programs that include expertly curated collections and high quality instruction provided by trained school librarians. Currently, access to school libraries managed by licensed school librarians is dismally inequitable, with only 24% of HIDOE schools staffed with licensed school librarians. The majority of these schools (54) are on O‘ahu and only 9 schools on all other islands have library programs managed by highly qualified school librarians.

The Hawaii State Literacy Plan published in 2020 recognizes the value of school libraries and librarians and recommended that the state “Improve literacy resources in schools [and] ensure schools have school libraries and school librarians.” If we hope to improve literacy outcomes throughout the state, the legislature must take this recommendation to heart. A step towards providing these improved literacy resources is adopting this resolution.

Investing in school libraries is not just an investment in our students' academic success; it is an investment in the future of our communities and our state. Therefore, I urge you to support HCR188/HR168 and demonstrate our commitment to providing all students with the resources and support they need to thrive.

Mahalo for considering this important issue. I am confident that your support for this resolution will have a lasting and positive impact on our educational system and the lives of countless students across our state.



**HCR-188**

Submitted on: 3/19/2024 3:42:12 PM

Testimony for EDN on 3/21/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Brian Huffman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hello,

I would like to strongly support HCR188. The education and skills licensed librarians and media specialists possess are paramount to effective education of our children in Hawai'i. Please don't sell our children short by denying them the support and experience librarians bring to the educational needs of students. Who else will curate, offer literacy instruction, maintain and facilitate access to books, online and in print, as well as various media children use to facilitate their education? Licensed school librarians and library media specialists are absolutely necessary in a valued and successful primary and secondary education setting.

Best,

Brian Huffman, MLIS, JD

**HCR-188**

Submitted on: 3/19/2024 3:42:46 PM

Testimony for EDN on 3/21/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cynthia Texeira	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**Aloha Honorable Members of the Committee on Education,**

**I am writing to offer my strong support for HCR188, which urges the Department of Education to ensure that school libraries and school library media centers are staffed with licensed school librarians and licensed school library media specialists.**

**As a concerned citizen deeply invested in the future of our educational system, I believe that access to well-staffed school libraries is indispensable for fostering a vibrant learning environment. School librarians and media specialists play a pivotal role in shaping students' intellectual curiosity, critical thinking skills, and overall academic success. Their expertise extends far beyond mere bookkeeping; they are indispensable guides who nurture a love for reading, research, and lifelong learning among students.**

**In an age inundated with information from various sources, the role of a trained librarian is more crucial than ever. School librarians are not only custodians of knowledge but also skilled educators who teach students how to navigate the vast sea of information ethically, discerningly, and efficiently. They empower students with the ability to evaluate sources, distinguish between credible and unreliable information, and synthesize knowledge from diverse perspectives. These are skills that are not only essential for academic success but also for navigating the complexities of the modern world.**

**Furthermore, school libraries serve as inclusive spaces where students from all backgrounds can access resources tailored to their individual needs and interests. Librarians curate collections that reflect the diversity of our society, ensuring that every student feels represented and valued. Moreover, they provide crucial support for students with diverse learning needs, helping them find materials in accessible formats and providing personalized assistance when required.**

**By mandating the presence of licensed school librarians and library media specialists in every school library in Hawai'i, HCR188 reaffirms our commitment to providing students with the best possible educational opportunities. It recognizes that investing in qualified library staff is an investment in our children's future—a commitment to fostering a generation of informed, curious, and engaged citizens capable of navigating the complexities of the 21st century.**



**In conclusion, I urge you to give your full support to HCR188. By ensuring that every school library is staffed with licensed professionals, we not only uphold the integrity of our educational system but also equip our students with the skills they need to thrive in an increasingly interconnected world. Thank you for your attention to this critical issue.**

**Mahalo nui loa,**

**Cindy Texeira**

**HCR-188**

Submitted on: 3/19/2024 3:50:06 PM

Testimony for EDN on 3/21/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Aulani Wagner	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**Aloha Chair Woodson and members of the Education Committee,**

**I am writing to express my unwavering support for HCR188, urging the Department of Education to ensure that school libraries and school library media centers are staffed with licensed school librarians and licensed school library media specialists.**

**As a college student who has relied extensively on the resources and expertise provided by school librarians throughout my academic journey, I cannot stress enough the vital role they play in shaping students' educational experiences. From elementary school to high school, the library and its dedicated staff have been my sanctuary, guiding me through countless research projects, helping me navigate complex subjects, and fostering my love for learning.**

**School librarians are mentors, educators, and champions of knowledge. They possess a wealth of expertise in information literacy, guiding students in discerning credible sources, conducting effective research, and honing critical thinking skills. Without their guidance, many students, myself included, would have struggled to navigate the overwhelming abundance of information available in today's digital age.**

**By requiring the presence of licensed school librarians and library media specialists in every school library, HCR188 recognizes the invaluable contributions these professionals make to our educational system. It reaffirms our commitment to providing students with the best possible resources and support to succeed academically and beyond.**

**In conclusion, I urge you to wholeheartedly support HCR188. As a college student who has directly benefited from the expertise of school librarians, I can attest to the profound impact they have on students' academic growth and success. Let us ensure that every student has access to the guidance and resources they need to thrive in today's complex world.**

Sincerely,

**'Aulani Wagner**

**HCR-188**

Submitted on: 3/19/2024 4:23:37 PM

Testimony for EDN on 3/21/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jody Brown	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing as a former school librarian at Kalama Intermediate School on Maui. For fourteen years, I supplemented Kalama's academic program by partnering with teachers from all departments to teach research skills, information literacy, provide a large variety of different academic support services, including working with substitute teachers to enrich and enhance any lessons needed. Librarians earn masters degrees in Library and Information Studies, which teachers and empowers us to lead classes and seminars on misinformation, disinformation, media bias, media safety, citation, bibliography and avoiding plagiarism, and many other critical 21st century skills. I loved being a school librarian and teaching students these very important life skills. The reason I am no longer a school librarian is that the administrators at my school systematically removed my support systems until I looked for another job. Now Kalama Intermediate School no longer has a certificated librarian and they no longer offer any of the information literacy lessons or media skills instruction that I offered. As far as I know, there are now fewer than half a dozen certificated school librarians left in the K-12 public schools in Maui County. Our keiki are missing out on learning the critical information skills that they will need to function in college, in democracy, and in life.

**HCR-188**

Submitted on: 3/19/2024 5:04:59 PM

Testimony for EDN on 3/21/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Diane K Mokuau	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

*Committee on Education*

*Justin H. Woodson, Chair*

*Trish La Chica, Vice Chair*

*HCR188/HR168*

*Urging the Department of Education to ensure that school libraries and school library media centers are staffed with licensed school librarians and licensed school library media specialist*

*Justin H. Woodson, Chair*

*House Committee on Education*

*HCR188/HR168*

*Hearing: Thursday, 3/21/24*

*2:00 pm, Conference Room 309 via videoconference*

*My name is Diane Mokuau, librarian at Molokai High School. I am testifying in support of the resolution to ensure that school libraries are staffed with licensed school librarians.*

*The shocking fact is that I am the sole licensed practicing school librarian on Molokai. All 4 elementary schools and the 1 middle school on my island have no qualified librarian in their library. It is especially disturbing to know that young children on Molokai have limited access to the latest books and online resources. They have no librarian to teach them how to find factual information and how to deal with the dangers of misinformation. Their teachers don't have the services of a librarian who can provide them with the latest exciting curriculum-related resources and technologies. At a time when we need to raise students who can successfully compete in the digital age, we are shortchanging them by not providing them with an indispensable resource. I strongly urge that you support this resolution to give our young learners the benefits of a well-equipped library that is managed by a licensed school librarian. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.*

*Diane Mokuau*

*Molokai High School*

*PO Box 445*

*Hoolehua, HI 96729*

*mokuaudiane@gmail.com*

**HCR-188**

Submitted on: 3/19/2024 5:06:10 PM

Testimony for EDN on 3/21/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Janice Lee	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**Subject: Support for HCR188/HR168 Staffing and Resources for School Libraries**

**Aloha Representative Woodson, Representative La Chica, and House Committee on Education,**

**I am writing to express my support for HCR188/HR168, which urges the Department of Education to ensure that school libraries are staffed by licensed school librarians. While having trained professionals in place is crucial, it's equally important to provide sufficient support for the resources and programs within school libraries to thrive. Without adequate support for resources and programming, the impact of having licensed librarians will be limited.**

**As a concerned community member and a licensed school librarian, I truly believe in the pivotal role that school libraries can play in the development and academic success of our youth. They serve as invaluable resources where students can explore diverse literature, conduct research, and enhance their critical thinking skills. School libraries are safe spaces that encourage collaboration, creativity, and inquiry.**

**Licensed school librarians are teachers who are trained not only in organizing and curating resources but also in fostering a love for reading and lifelong learning. They possess the expertise to collaborate with other teachers to assist students in navigating information effectively, promoting literacy skills, and guiding them towards credible and relevant resources. For school libraries to effectively fulfill their purpose, they must be adequately staffed, equipped, and accessible to all students, regardless of their socioeconomic background or geographical location.**

**In conclusion, I ask you to support HR168/HCR188 urging the Department of Education to ensure that school libraries are staffed with licensed school librarians. By prioritizing the enhancement of school library programs, we invest in the future of our youth and empower them with the tools they need to thrive academically and beyond.**

**Sincerely,**

**Janice Lee**

**HCR-188**

Submitted on: 3/19/2024 5:20:12 PM

Testimony for EDN on 3/21/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Marcia Kemble	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Greetings, I am a retired librarian who worked as a school librarian and school library director in local libraries for 19 years. It is just essential that school libraries are staffed with fully licensed librarians. They bring so much value to students' experience in school—much more than many people realize—by teaching sophisticated research skills, by fostering in students a love of reading and literature, and also by assisting teachers through providing resources to support what is being taught in the classroom. Mahalo.



**HCR-188**

Submitted on: 3/19/2024 5:30:46 PM

Testimony for EDN on 3/21/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Alice Kim	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this resolution.

19 March 2022

House Committee on Education  
Rep. Justin H. Woodson, Chair  
Hawai'i State Capitol, Room 405  
415 South Beretania St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Representative Woodson, Vice Chair Rep. Trish La Chica, and Honorable HCE Members Representatives Kapela, Perruso, Marten, Quinlan, Martinez, Todd, Matayoshi, Garcia, and Mizuno:

I am writing to you in **very strong support** of HCR168 and HCR188 and – **URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO ENSURE THAT SCHOOL LIBRARIES AND SCHOOL LIBRARY MEDIA CENTERS ARE STAFFED WITH LICENSED SCHOOL LIBRARIANS AND LICENSED SCHOOL LIBRARY MEDIA SPECIALISTS.** I'm writing to you as a librarian, professor of Library and Information Studies, and as a concerned citizen. You wanted to serve on the Committee on Education because you know our keiki are the key to our future. Countless studies show the importance of licensed school library media specialists on raising test scores. Good principals recognize this and recruit school library media specialists who become leaders on their campus in shaping innovative curricula that bring together disparate fields and help keiki see connections between disciplines like sciences and traditional arts. They also foster a recreational love of reading that encourages people to self-discovery and citizenship.

I wasn't fortunate enough to grow up in Hawai'i, but was fortunate that all of my public schools in suburban Minneapolis had amazing librarians who helped me to go beyond the curriculum. They fostered my discovery of different literatures, arts, histories, and even helped me find a safe place when my own family was falling apart. These experiences helped give me empathy and global and local understanding that made me who I am today – perhaps much more than my regular classroom instructors who had to take care of large classes, which included students who were gifted to those who were struggling academically.

I imagine that your committee might feel some hesitations to dictate to the DOE, but I believe that the resolution you have in front of you is a fine expression of your concern and hope that principals will have the resources available to maintain a licensed school library media specialist at each campus.

As an educator of future librarians and school library media specialists, I've seen amazing graduate students enter this field. The new generation of school library media specialists are helping our keiki deal with emotions and trauma (like the disaster on Maui) to the complexities of sorting out information from disinformation that surrounds them during their waking hours online. They've also helped them to connect with literature from the host culture and their own ethnic experience in ways that are deeply healing and liberating.

However, I've been concerned that few of our graduate LIS students stay in the School Library Media pathway because they worry about future employment, so instead they become public librarians, academic librarians, or add to the brain drain leaving the state. Passing this resolution will be an important step in also encouraging students to invest in the education needed to be an engaged school librarian who can help transform our schools to generate future-oriented learners who can think about science and the host culture, or discover innovative connections that will guide our future.

As a proud Democrat, I should add that this echoes the PLATFORM OF THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF HAWAII (As Adopted at the 2022 State Convention, May 28, 2022, p3):

*We support establishing a dedicated funding source to deliver a **quality public education and library services to every student, regardless of learning capacity or ability to pay, in an environment conducive to the learning process. These resources shall be made available at every level, from preschool through higher education, including life-long learning.***

Before I conclude, I should point out that these views don't necessarily represent the views of my employer, but I would be remiss if I didn't express my personal and professional conviction that this is one of the most critical issues facing our state, and that your support of this resolution is critical to help make sure we can recruit and retain the best school library media specialists for our keiki. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions at my personal email [drew.wertheimer@gmail.com](mailto:drew.wertheimer@gmail.com). Thank you again for considering my very strong support for this resolution.

Yours with Aloha,



Andrew B. Wertheimer, MLS, Ph.D.

**HCR-188**

Submitted on: 3/19/2024 6:59:59 PM

Testimony for EDN on 3/21/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Pam Lough	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In the age of artificial intelligence and social media, information literacy and critical thinking skills are more important than ever. Librarians have been establishing standards for information literacy since 1998 (Eisenberg, M. B., Lowe, C., & Spitzer, K. L (2004). Information Literacy: Essential Skills for the Information Age. Westport, CT: Libraries Unlimited). Not only are librarians experts in teaching information literacy skills, they are best suited to ensuring school library books serve student needs and can help to instill a love of reading in young people. Professional librarians do not allow personal bias to influence the library collection. They endeavor to provide equal access to library resources and services and ensure the safety and security of the library environment.

Years ago, I worked as the first professionally qualified librarian for Haleakala Waldorf School on Maui. The position was granted-funded and I wrote a second grant to continue my position. The school recognized how critical my role was to student success and decided to make my position permanent. However, we cannot rely on schools voluntarily employing librarians to support education. This resolution would recognize the important role that school libraries and school librarians play in preparing our students for higher education and workforce success.

Mahalo for considering this important issue.

**HCR-188**

Submitted on: 3/19/2024 7:41:17 PM

Testimony for EDN on 3/21/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Krystal Kakimoto	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To the House Committee on Education,

I am writing to express my strong support for HCR188/HR167, which urges the Department of Education to ensure that school libraries are staffed by licensed school librarians. As a concerned citizen and an advocate for quality education, I believe that access to a well-staffed library with qualified librarians is crucial for the academic success and intellectual development of our keiki.

School libraries are more than just repositories of books; they serve as hubs of learning, exploration, and innovation. Licensed school librarians play a vital role in fostering information literacy skills, promoting the appreciation of lifelong learning, and providing essential support for students and educators.

HCR188/HR168 represents a crucial step towards ensuring all keiki have access to the information they need to succeed. By supporting this resolution, we affirm our commitment to educational excellence, information literacy, and the empowerment of our youth.

Mahalo for considering my testimony in support of HCR188/HR168.

Aloha, Krystal Kakimoto

**HCR-188**

Submitted on: 3/19/2024 7:43:10 PM

Testimony for EDN on 3/21/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Elizabeth Akamichi	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Good afternoon, Honorable House of Representative members and the Committee on Education,

Thank you so much for this opportunity to voice my support for the resolution to strongly encourage the Department of Education to be certain that all school libraries are staffed with personnel who are licensed to teach and equip fully operational library facilities.

I am a 20-plus year elementary school librarian with the Department of Education, and my colleagues and I have been servicing students with the fervent hopes that they will become contributing citizens to society at any stage of their lives. There are many ways in which having a library that is operated, supervised, and managed by a licensed librarian or media specialist can help students to gain a sense of communal citizenship within a caring school environment. Taking care of and being sure to return (free!) borrowed library books aid in developing a student's sense of responsibility and conscience. Having a variety of books in a school's collection and access to those books are so important in any student's development, both intellectually and, as we are finding more to be true these days, emotionally and mentally as well, at any age. Having a library at school can mean solace and taking refuge to a student who needs to emotionally or mentally take a break. For the same reasons that we as adults value the solace and refuge of a library, students also need that sense of relaxation and release. When you consider this, a library is more than a building with books. It is a place that offers people space to clear or sort their thoughts as well as process information and at times, escape from reality for a short bit.

If I may underscore what it means for a school to have a licensed, fully-trained librarian or media specialist, I would like to outline the following points:

Having a licensed, fully-trained librarian or media specialist:

- Helps to alleviate instruction that a classroom teacher would otherwise have to undertake on their own already-overloaded plate. I am frequently asked by classroom teachers to teach certain concepts, skills, and other endeavors which are library-related.
- Would assure that proper online educational resources (ebooks, databases, research articles, etc.) are accessible and available to the school.

- Would assure that a library collection that is reflective of and relevant to a school community could be built and exists through the discerning eyes of a library professional who is trained to seek and find these sources.

I hear many stories from parents of other public schools whose libraries sit dormant and books unused, and whose children could benefit from a library professional who could guide students to find books that interest and invigorate their intellectual minds, and to satisfy their curiosity, and to know that other people in the books think just like them...that they are not alone and are represented in books. There are so many graduates from several university library science programs here and all over the country who are waiting to help students to learn great ideas and imagine wondrous worlds through books. Why not let those potential library leaders help guide students who so sorely need literacy sustenance through a trained professional?

Aloha no, and thank you so much for your time and consideration!

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Akamichi, Librarian (Queen Ka`ahumanu Elementary School)

**HCR-188**

Submitted on: 3/19/2024 8:02:39 PM

Testimony for EDN on 3/21/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jessica Hogan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Honorable Senators and Representatives,

I first want to thank you for being a part of the Education Committee that is dedicated to enriching our keiki's lives through quality education. Your support of public libraries over the years has not gone unnoticed and Hawaii's people have benefited from additional computers, stronger wi-fi, and updated print and electronic collections, in addition to new library locations. An area which could be strengthened is in appropriately and adequately staffing all of our public schools with certified school librarians. As a product of the University of Hawaii'i teacher librarians graduate every year but many are forced to move out of state due to position cuts over the years in a variety of schools across the state. Principals must make hard choices between allocating resources to teacher positions as areas grow, so often the librarian position is taken away and repurposed.

This has a negative effect on students' access to books and learning about computer and internet resources. Teacher librarians take special classes to teach this information which includes how to spot fake websites and fake news - something our future generations must be savvy at.

All three of my daughters attend Mililani public schools and have benefited from having librarians to turn to for reading recommendations, help with class projects and welcome them into a safe, quiet place to study or shop at fun book fairs. My oldest daughter is now in college level AP courses which require analyzing research papers and finding them in journals online in state funded library databases. The students would have a very hard time knowing where to start looking for research level sources and this prepares them for college. They have a leg up.

Finally, over 60 studies have correlated higher grades with schools that have active librarians and robust library collections. Only 1 in 4 public schools in Hawaii'i have this. Some schools have no library at all. It is my hope that someday each and every school in Hawaii'i will have a certified teaching librarian. Our children, families, and larger community will be better for it, as libraries provide opportunities for lifelong learning and pleasure, escaping in a story or learning how to do something new. Please consider giving this resolution weight and asking our Department of Education to fully fund library positions.

Thank you once again for your time and kokua.  
Sincerely and with aloha,

Jessica Hogan





**HCR-188**

Submitted on: 3/19/2024 9:04:29 PM

Testimony for EDN on 3/21/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Laura Ginoza	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Representative Woodson, Representative La Chica, and House Committee on Education,

I am writing to express my support for HR168/HCR188, which urges the Department of Education to ensure that licensed school librarians staff school libraries. While having trained professionals in place is crucial, it's equally important to provide sufficient support for the resources and programs within school libraries to thrive. Without adequate support for resources and programming, the impact of having licensed librarians will be limited.

As a concerned community member and educator, I believe having a licensed school librarian is crucial to our youth's development and academic success. As a licensed librarian, I do more than check out books; I also teach. My instruction focuses on teaching my students to look at information with a critical eye. For example, I conduct lessons on identifying fake news, looking at advertising and media to determine purpose and validity, and understanding and identifying bias. Given how our students are inundated with information, these skills are necessary for our students to be critical users of information.

Librarians not only teach our students to use information we also help our students to create. Many school libraries incorporate Maker Spaces – spaces where students can design, build, and innovate. School libraries are safe spaces that encourage collaboration, creativity, and inquiry. My library is a place for the students to explore and discover. At recess, yes, you will find students borrowing books, but you will also find students working on the computers and building with blocks. Others might be creating a marble run or working with gears.

Licensed school librarians are teachers who are trained not only in organizing and curating resources but also in fostering a love for reading and lifelong learning. They possess the expertise to collaborate with other teachers to assist students in navigating information effectively, promoting literacy skills, and guiding them toward credible and relevant resources. For school libraries to effectively fulfill their purpose, they must be adequately staffed, equipped, and accessible to all students, regardless of their socioeconomic background or geographical location.

In conclusion, I ask you to support HR168/HCR188, which urges the Department of Education to ensure that school libraries are staffed with licensed school librarians. By prioritizing the enhancement of school library programs, we invest in the future of our youth and empower them with the tools they need to thrive academically and beyond.

Sincerely, Laura Ginoza

**HCR-188**

Submitted on: 3/20/2024 8:37:24 AM

Testimony for EDN on 3/21/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dori Seatriz	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**Subject: Support for HCR188/HR168 Staffing and Resources for School Libraries**

Aloha Representative Woodson, Representative La Chica, and House Committee on Education,

I am writing to express my support for HR168/HCR188, which urges the Department of Education to ensure that school libraries are staffed by licensed school librarians. While having trained professionals in place is crucial, it's equally important to provide sufficient support for the resources and programs within school libraries to thrive. Without adequate support for resources and programming, the impact of having licensed librarians will be limited.

As a concerned community member and a licensed school librarian, I truly believe in the pivotal role that school libraries can play in the development and academic success of our youth. *Research continually shows* that they serve as invaluable resources where students can explore diverse literature, conduct research, and enhance their critical thinking skills. School libraries are safe spaces that encourage collaboration, creativity, and inquiry.

Licensed school librarians are teachers who are trained not only in organizing and curating resources but also in fostering a love for reading and lifelong learning. They possess the expertise to collaborate with other teachers to assist students in navigating information effectively, promoting literacy skills, and guiding them towards credible and relevant resources. For school libraries to effectively fulfill their purpose, they must be adequately staffed, equipped, and accessible to all students, regardless of their socioeconomic background or geographical location.

In conclusion, I ask you to support HR168/HCR188 urging the Department of Education to ensure that school libraries are staffed with licensed school librarians. By prioritizing the enhancement of school library programs, we invest in the future of our youth and empower them with the tools they need to thrive academically and beyond.

Sincerely,

Dori Seatriz

**HCR-188**

Submitted on: 3/20/2024 9:08:21 AM

Testimony for EDN on 3/21/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Malia Van Heukelem	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Representatives,

I am writing in support of **HCR188**. Please **vote yes** to ensure school libraries and media centers have licensed school librarians and media specialists to support student learning.

These positions are essential to providing access to trusted information in a world with increasing disinformation. They support student learning, success, and emotional wellbeing. Libraries are safe spaces for students to explore and learn.

Mahalo for advocating on behalf of libraries to have qualified personnel in our schools,

Malia Van Heukelem, Kaneohe

**HCR-188**

Submitted on: 3/20/2024 10:05:51 AM

Testimony for EDN on 3/21/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jade Sunouchi	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**Aloha Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica, and members of the House Committee on Education,**

**Thank you for this opportunity to express my strong support of HCR188.**

**I applaud this resolution as an individual who cares about the future and success of our keiki.**

**As an educator and Spring 2024 graduate of the Master in Library and Information Science Program at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, I continue to experience firsthand why licensed school librarians are essential for K-12 learners. By the time our local high school graduates enter my English composition classes as college freshmen, it is apparent that many have not had enough opportunities to learn essential information literacy and research skills under the guidance of a qualified school librarian in a Department of Education school library.**

**I urge you to support this resolution that can have immeasurable benefits to our keiki and communities. I appreciate all of your efforts in advancing this.**

**Very respectfully,**

**Jade Sunouchi**

**HCR-188**

Submitted on: 3/20/2024 11:53:16 AM

Testimony for EDN on 3/21/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Lori Misaka	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Representative Woodson, Representative La Chica, and House Committee on Education,

I am writing to express my support for HR168/HCR188, which urges the Department of Education to ensure that school libraries are staffed by licensed school librarians. While having credentialed and trained professionals in place is crucial, it's equally important to provide sufficient support for resources to help school library programs and collections meet the needs of the students they serve.

As a member of the community, a parent, and a licensed school librarian, I have witnessed the powerful impact that school libraries and librarians can have on socioemotional development, academic success, and community engagement for our youth. They serve as invaluable resources where students can find diverse literature, conduct research, learn media and information literacy, and enhance their critical thinking skills. Perhaps most importantly, libraries are safe spaces where students can explore their interests and aspirations, and find a community of learners in a “third place,” in addition to home and the classroom, where collaboration, creativity, and inquiry are inspired and encouraged. The school library is one of the few free spaces where, regardless of income level, background, or experience, students are welcome and provided the same opportunities and resources as anyone else.

The COVID-19 pandemic wreaked havoc on the hearts and minds of our keiki; their sense of safety and comfort in participating in person at school was severely shaken. I have seen firsthand with my own children and students how much support they have needed in coming back together, to once again fully integrate into the social fabric. Our school library has welcomed and given them a safe place to feel connected, where they can come in at recess or lunch to relax, do homework, read, converse, and feel they are seen and valued. The combination of programming, displays, instructional help, and resources provided by myself as the librarian and the team of students in our Library Club has been an integral component of our school community.

Finally, licensed school librarians are credentialed teachers who are trained not only in organizing and curating resources but also in fostering a love for reading and lifelong learning. They possess the experience and expertise to collaborate with other teachers to assist students in navigating information effectively, promote literacy, and guide them towards credible and relevant resources. In our global information economy, this is more important than ever. For school libraries to effectively fulfill their purpose, they must be adequately staffed, equipped, and

accessible to all students, regardless of their socioeconomic background or geographical location.

In conclusion, I ask you to support HR168/HCR188 urging the Department of Education to ensure that school libraries are staffed with licensed school librarians. By prioritizing the enhancement of school library programs, we invest in the future of our youth and empower them with the tools they need to thrive academically and beyond.

Sincerely,

Lori Misaka



**HCR-188**

Submitted on: 3/20/2024 12:16:02 PM

Testimony for EDN on 3/21/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kelly Campbell	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Kelly Campbell, and I am a librarian in the state of Hawai‘i. I am submitting testimony in support of HCR188 as an individual citizen.

Growing up, I found solace in my school libraries, learning from my school librarians and library staff. Though they were small in number, the impact they had on me and my classmates were insurmountable. The love I had for my school library was what helped inspire me to work and study towards becoming a librarian. A librarian is someone who is helpful and supportive of information literacy and learning. A librarian is someone who will defend your right to read. A librarian is someone who is better than Google and will help you on your journey of literature and knowledge.

Please, for our future, ensure we have licensed school librarians and licensed school library media specialists in all of our schools. Do it for your family, your friends, and for our state.

Thank you

**HCR-188**

Submitted on: 3/20/2024 1:16:13 PM

Testimony for EDN on 3/21/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Linda Mediati	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In a time where misinformation is rampant and book challenges have crossed the boundaries of individual freedoms to attacks on morals and threats on a person's physical safety, students need the guidance and support of staff who are educated in helping them access and assess opinions thrust upon them. They need people to help them think critically and independently. Look to the librarians to do that. Librarians can help students to search for and evaluate sources, and we need students who will take that extra step.

**HCR-188**

Submitted on: 3/20/2024 1:31:13 PM

Testimony for EDN on 3/21/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Carolyn Kirio	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**Committee on Education**

**Justin H. Woodson, Chair**

**Trish La Chica, Vice Chair**

**HCR188/HR168**

**Urging the Department of Education to ensure that school libraries and school library media centers are staffed with licensed school librarians and licensed school library media specialist**

**Justin H. Woodson, Chair**

**House Committee on Education**

**My name is Carolyn Kirio, librarian at Wallace Rider Farrington High School Library. I am testifying in support of the resolution to ensure that school libraries are staffed with licensed school librarians. I am licensed which includes having a Bachelor's Degree in Education, a Masters in Library Information Science, and a Doctorate in Learning Design and Technology. I am also Nationally Board Certified since 2002. However, in a complex of 12 schools (1 High, 2 Middle, 9 Elementary) I am only 1 of 2 certified librarians servicing our entire student population.**

**Students in the Farrington Complex are socioeconomically diverse and underprivileged. We are a Title I school with a large population of English Second Language Learners. Over 53% of our students start their educational journey enrolled in**

**school already behind and scoring below grade level. Due to budget cuts and under qualified staffing they are underserved educationally, denied literacy opportunities, and underprepared scholastically. Although we strive to catch students up and be college ready by the time they graduate the reality is without a supportive library and a certified librarian to provide instruction throughout their K-12 experience, they exit high school without the ability to perform research, critically review/determine reliable informational resources, express themselves through writing, and being able to or enjoy reading. As a result they are not on par with others their age and unable to qualify for career opportunities that they are otherwise capable of.**

**Having certified librarians in each school would provide the following benefits:**

- **Students receive instruction on how to find factual information and how to deal with the dangers of misinformation**
- **Students are instructed and guided in researching and writing**
- **Students have access to latest books, quality reading material, and online resources**
- **Students utilize curriculum-related resources and technologies thereby successfully able to compete in the digital age**
- **The school community has a safe spaces that encourages collaboration, creativity, critical thinking, and inquiry**

**I strongly urge that you support resolution HCR188/HR168 to give our young learners the benefits of a well-equipped library that is managed by a licensed school librarian.**

**Sincerely,**

**Carolyn Kirio, PhD**

**Wallace Rider Farrington High School**

**HCR-188**

Submitted on: 3/20/2024 1:42:33 PM

Testimony for EDN on 3/21/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Meera Garud	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica, and Members of the Committee:

I am writing in strong support for HCR 188, which urges the Department of Education to ensure that school libraries are staffed by licensed school librarians.

Licensed school librarians are a critical part of a vibrant school community. Librarians collaborate with teachers to create meaningful, project-based learning experiences where students learn lifelong skills like critical thinking and problem solving.

Educators in Hawai‘i have already recognized the important role of school libraries and librarians. The 2020 Hawai‘i State Literacy Plan recommends that the state improve literacy resources in schools and ensure that schools have school libraries and school librarians. The newest DOE Strategic Plan stresses the importance of ensuring that “all students” have access to high-quality learning and resources.

Unfortunately, only one in four DOE schools has a library program managed by a licensed school librarian. Students on neighbor islands are much less likely to have a school librarian, with just nine of 89 neighbor island schools having one. Our state needs to stand by its commitment to providing all students with the resources and support needed for their growth and success. This resolution is an important first step. Mahalo for considering this critical issue.

**HCR-188**

Submitted on: 3/20/2024 1:59:10 PM

Testimony for EDN on 3/21/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Daphne Miyashiro	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

School librarians are more than just checking out books. Certified school librarians for the HDOE must possess both a teachers license and a Master's degree in Library Information Science. This ensures that students have access to school librarians with the knowledge to teach research strategies, readers advisory, and more.

In this day where AI is increasing exponentially, students (and adults) need to be taught to look at the information they are receiving with a critical eye that many will just accept as fact.

In 2020, the Hawaii State Literacy Plan was published. This plan was put together by a group of community, early education, K-12, and higher education members. Here is one recommendation from this plan:

Recommendation: Improve literacy resources within schools.

Sources: Joining together to create a bold vision for next-generation family engagement: Engaging families to transform education. (Level of evidence not determined)

- Ensure schools have school libraries and school librarians.
- Provide access to collections and resources that support student achievement

Please support this bill. To this day, I still use skills that I have learned from my school librarians. Hopefully, all children will be able to say the same. Mahalo.

**LATE**

**HCR-188**

Submitted on: 3/20/2024 2:00:05 PM

Testimony for EDN on 3/21/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michelle Carlson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing to you, as a Nationally Board Certified Librarian in the Hawaii Department of Education, in support of HCR188. When I left the high school language arts classroom to earn my Masters in Library and Information Science, I thought the library was a place for books. How wrong I was. The library is a space that continually adapts to meet the needs of its patrons and community. It requires constant re-evaluation where the certified librarian gathers input from the school stakeholders to determine what services and resources best meet the needs of its community. The library is a vibrant, ever-changing space.

I was fortunate to be hired by Jan Iwase in 2005 and to work at Daniel K. Inouye Elementary School, formerly, Hale Kula Elementary School. During this time, Mrs. Iwase's philosophy of project based learning and family involvement enabled me to create programs that supported our entire school community. Students, families and teachers would write to me, and to Mrs. Iwase, after they moved to a new duty station to say how much they loved our library programs and the opportunities our students had to connect with authors, community members and engage in creative learning opportunities.

What I realized is that the library is a place of ideas--some we get from books and some we get from electronics, through hands on learning and most importantly, from each other. Our library transforms with student led projects, guest artists who lead students in antarctic explorations and scientists who teach us about the complexities of soil. We hold an annual Cardboard Challenge where families use the Engineer and Design Thinking model to create a game out of cardboard and recyclable materials. This is a school wide event that children look forward to each year. My students build video games to teach others about outer space, showcase a novel they read and explore what could happen during a zombie apocololypse. Most importantly, the library is the space where students teach their peers and get ideas from their peers. This collaboration of creativity and critical thinking is exciting.

Most recently, our preschool teachers asked for more library time. I invited them to bring their students when the 2nd, 3rd and 4th graders are with me for data teams. We sing songs, the "big kids" read to the "little kids" and they collaborate to build thrones of giant legos, draw on our gallery boards, construct marble runs and more. The preschool parents tell me their kids come home raving about their "buddy" and the speech teachers come in during this time to observe and

work with their students because this unstructured collaborative play time enables them to assess their students in the most natural setting.

I invite you to come to my library and see the learning that can take place with a certified librarian and resources to support learning.

Please support HCR188,

Thank you,

Michelle Carlson