



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

Date: 03/20/2024

Time: 03:00 PM

Location: 312 VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

Committee: House Legislative Management

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Keith T. Hayashi, Superintendent of Education

Title of Resolution HCR 0222 REQUESTING THE LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU TO
:
CONDUCT A STUDY TO DETERMINE THE IMPLEMENTATION AND
STANDARDS OF VARIOUS SEXUAL HEALTH EDUCATION POLICIES WITHIN
THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION.

Department's Position:

The Department of Education (Department) respectfully offers comments for the committee's consideration on HCR 222.

The Department is committed to the promotion of students' health and well-being. As a public school system, the Department follows statutory requirements and Board policies, and nationally recognized guidance is referenced to inform curriculum development and adoption. Schools provide a comprehensive sexual health education that aligns with the Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS) §321-11.1. and follows the requirements set forth in the Hawaii State Board of Education (Board) Policy 103-5 Sexual Health Education which states:

In order to help students make decisions that promote healthy behaviors, the Department of Education shall provide sexual health education to include age appropriate, medically accurate, health education that: (1) Includes education on abstinence, contraception, and methods of infection prevention to prevent unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted infection, including human immunodeficiency virus; (2) Helps students develop relationships and communication skills to form healthy relationships that are based on mutual respect and affection and are free from violence, coercion and intimidation; (3) Helps students develop skills in critical thinking, problem solving, decision making and stress management to make healthy decisions about sexuality and relationships; (4) Encourages student to communicate with their parents, guardians and/or other trusted adults about sexuality; and (5) Informs students of available community resources.

Instruction will emphasize that abstention from sexual intercourse is the surest way to prevent unintended pregnancies, sexually transmitted infections such as HIV/AIDS, and consequent emotional distress.

A description of the curriculum utilized by the school shall be made available to parents and shall be posted on the school's website prior to the start of any instruction. A student shall be excused from sexual health instruction only upon the prior written request of the student's parent or legal guardian. A student may not be subject to disciplinary action, academic penalty or other sanction if the student's parent or legal guardian makes such written request.

Substantively, the Department would like to share efforts that are currently underway to address sexual health education. The Department identified and made public a list of appropriate sexual health education instructional materials. Resources and information are available to parents, students, teachers, and the public on our Department website at <http://www.hawaiipublicschools.org/TeachingAndLearning/HealthAndNutrition/sexed/Pages/default.aspx>

Should this resolution move forward, the Department recommends the following language changes:

- Page 4, Line 16-18: "A recommended mechanism for evaluating and providing quality control of evidence-based and evidence-informed sexual health education ~~programming~~ in the future"

The Department would also defer to the Legislative Reference Bureau as to the implementation of this study.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on HCR 222.

Charlotte A. Carter-Yamauchi
Director

Shawn K. Nakama
First Assistant

Research 808-587-0666
Revisor 808-587-0670
Fax 808-587-0681



LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU
State of Hawaii
State Capitol, Room 446
415 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Written Comments

HCR222/HR202

REQUESTING THE LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU TO CONDUCT A STUDY TO DETERMINE THE IMPLEMENTATION AND STANDARDS OF VARIOUS SEXUAL HEALTH EDUCATION POLICIES WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Charlotte A. Carter-Yamauchi, Director
Legislative Reference Bureau

Presented to the House Committee on Legislative Management

Wednesday, March 20, 2024, 3:00 p.m.
Conference Room 312

Chair Nakamura and Members of the Committee:

Good afternoon, Chair Nakamura and members of the Committee, my name is Charlotte Carter-Yamauchi, and I am the Director of the Legislative Reference Bureau (Bureau). Thank you for providing the opportunity to submit written **comments** on H.C.R. No. 222/H.R. No. 202, Requesting the Legislative Reference Bureau to Conduct a Study to Determine the Implementation and Standards of Various Sexual Health Education Policies within the Department of Education.

The purpose of these measures is to request that the Bureau conduct a study to determine the Department of Education's implementation of various sexual health education policies and standards, including:

- (1) A survey of what sexual health education curriculum is currently taught in schools, including a breakdown of specific topics;
- (2) A report on whether the provided curriculum complies with Department of Education policies and statutory requirements;

- (3) Information on the types of resources schools and teachers are currently offered and resources that schools and teachers would need to be in compliance with sexual health policies and law; and
- (4) A recommended mechanism for evaluating and providing quality control of evidence-based sexual health programming in the future.

The measures also request that the Bureau submit a report of its study, including findings, recommendations, and any proposed legislation, to the Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2025.

The Bureau takes no position on these measures but submits the following comments for your consideration.

As a general matter, the Bureau notes that it lacks any of the subject matter expertise necessary to conduct the requested study. We do not presently have any staff with specific expertise in or any particular knowledge of or experience in matters relating to pedagogy, sexual health, curriculum, or educational best practices that would allow us to comment with any authority or make any definitive recommendations regarding sexual health education policies and standards.

In particular, the language on page 4, lines 16 to 18, requires the Bureau to recommend a mechanism to evaluate and provide quality control of evidence-based sexual health programming in the future. Consequently, the Bureau would have to contract the services of educational accreditation experts to meet the measure's objectives of ascertaining curriculum compliance and recommending an evaluation and quality control mechanism. However, the Bureau's budget does not contain any moneys to contract such services. Accordingly, the Bureau would require additional funding sufficient to cover the contracted study services which cannot be appropriated under a concurrent resolution/resolution. We further note that as we are required to adhere to the State Procurement Code in contracting these services, the present timeframe proposed in the measure is insufficient. It is highly improbable that the Bureau will be able to scope such an undertaking, craft a Request for Proposals, select a contractor, and receive and approve the contractor's work product and deliver it to the Legislature within the brief timeframe provided in the measure.

If the scope of the report is narrowed to exclude the issues of whether the provided curriculum complies with Department of Education policies and statutory requirements and a recommended mechanism for evaluating and providing quality control of evidence-based sexual health programming in the future, the Bureau believes that it could complete a study of the remaining issues in the stated time period; provided that the Bureau's interim workload is not adversely impacted by too many other studies or additional responsibilities, such as conducting, writing, or finalizing other reports, drafting legislation, or both, for other state agencies, task forces, or working groups that may be requested or required under other legislative measures.

Thank you again for your consideration.

HCR-222

Submitted on: 3/18/2024 3:34:18 PM

Testimony for LMG on 3/20/2024 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cindy R Ajimine	One Impact Hawaii	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please amend to include criteria for study leaders/groups to ensure comprehensive, non-biased perspectives. Also include medical practitioners, parents and children from various socio-ethnic groups.

Would then support. Thank you.



March 19, 2024

TO: Hawai'i State House Committee on Legislative Management
FROM: AAUW of Hawai'i
Hearing Date/Time: Wednesday, March 20, 2024 3:00PM
Hearing Location: Hawai'i State Capitol, Room 329
RE: Testimony in Strong Support of HR 202/HCR 222

Dear Chair Nakamura, Vice Chair Morikawa, and Members of the Committee,

Members of AAUW of Hawai'i thank you for this opportunity to testify in strong support of HR 202/HCR 222 which requests the Legislative Reference Bureau conduct a study to determine the implementation and standard of various sexual health education policies within the Department of Education.

Only 20% of Hawai'i middle schools and 48% of high schools provided all 22 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) critical sexual health education topics. This means only 1 in 2 secondary school students are getting the information they need to live healthy lives. This study is needed to ensure that Hawai'i's students are provided with the knowledge and tools necessary to make responsible, informed, and empowered choices about their sexuality, gender, relationships, and sexual and reproductive health.

Thank you for supporting this important resolution.

Sincerely,
Younghee Overly
Public Policy Committee, AAUW of Hawaii
publicpolicy-hi@aauw.net

The American Association of University Women (AAUW) of Hawaii is an all volunteer, statewide chapter of a national organization and is made up of six branches: Hilo, Honolulu, Kaula'i, Kona, Maui, and Windward Oahu. AAUW's mission is to advance gender equity for equal opportunities in education, at workplace and for economic security, and in leadership. AAUW's vision is Equity for All.



To: Hawai'i State House Committee on Legislative Management
Hearing Date/Time: Wednesday, March 20, 2024 at 3:00 PM
Place: Hawai'i State Capitol, Rm. 312 and videoconference
Re: Testimony of Planned Parenthood Alliance Advocates – Hawai'i in strong support of HCR 222/HR202

Chair Nakamura and members of the Committees,

Planned Parenthood Alliance Advocates strongly supports HCR 222/HR202, a resolution to ensure young people get age-appropriate, medically accurate information and answers to their questions about sex and relationships.

Young people have the right to receive the information and skills they need to protect their health. While Hawai'i already requires that students receive age-appropriate and medically accurate sexual health information, schools are not implementing these policies across the board. Only 20% of Hawai'i middle schools and 48% of high schools provided all 22 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) critical sexual health education topics. **This means only 1 in 2 secondary school students are getting the information they need to live healthy lives.** What's more, over 60% of middle schools and 35% of high schools are *not* teaching about diversity in sexual orientations and gender identities. Given that 1 in 4 high school students identify as LGBTQ, the lack of representation in Hawai'i sex education programs is concerning.

We also know that in the last few years, sex education programs have been getting worse in our state, not better. The Department of Education reported there has been a significant decrease in Hawai'i schools teaching human sexuality, HIV prevention, pregnancy prevention, and STI prevention. That's why the Department of Education has worked alongside Planned Parenthood to support this resolution to study the implementation of various sexual health education policies and standards.

Nearly everyone agrees comprehensive sex ed is important: the vast majority of people in Hawai'i support sex education, including over 90% of parents who support sex education for middle and high school students. The people of Hawai'i need this resolution to make sure our young people are getting the information they need to stay healthy and thrive. Please support HCR 222/HR202 by passing it out of committee.

HCR-222

Submitted on: 3/19/2024 2:56:51 PM

Testimony for LMG on 3/20/2024 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gray Nauwelaerts	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

I'm a junior in high school and from elementary to now I haven't received any sexual education in the classroom. In fifth grade they didn't separate the girls from boys to show the puberty video. In sixth grade we didn't talk about reproductive anatomy or puberty in my one semester of health, my teacher didn't want to. In ninth grade, when students usually receive sex-ed, we didn't learn any. My friends and I all had questions about our bodies, many of the people in my grade don't know what a uterus is and much less how it functions and a lot of us don't know how or why periods happen.

I knew this information was incredibly important. I wanted to know how my body works and why. In order to learn what my schools didn't teach, I joined Teen Council. In my first year I taught students at HPU. I looked into their eyes and saw several of them were hearing what we were teaching for the first time. A few students came up to me at the end of the workshop and were surprised that I knew so much at my age. Last year, as I watched a hearing for a bill protecting abortion rights, I was shocked that so many Representatives didn't understand the difference between sexual and medical consent. Because of Teen Council, I know these things. I know a lot more than my parents. It's scary.

Sex-ed is incredibly important for everyone to know and it is mandated by law in 2015. Having the proper education can help people learn about consent and more about STIs. Something that shocks my peers is that STIs are treatable and most are curable. So many people are still confused about HIV and AIDS and I blame the lack of sex ed in schools. Sex-ed is mandated and if that was followed, the lack of knowledge wouldn't be the problem that it is right now. The DOE should examine how sex-ed is being implemented and what teachers need to properly teach sex-ed. I encourage you to support this measure for a study to be done.

HCR-222

Submitted on: 3/19/2024 3:43:13 PM

Testimony for LMG on 3/20/2024 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Grace Alvaro Caligtan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Grace Alvaro Caligtan and as a parent and a dedicated health educator of over 20 years, I am in full support of HCR 222/SCR 189, a sex ed resolution to support a study of various sexual health education policies and standards.

At its best, sex education can offer young people age-appropriate, medically accurate information and answers to their questions about sex and relationships, without being shamed or judged. It is essential to developing as a human. It has been proven to positively impact young people's lives and it can be critical to curb gender-based violence.

But when offered in unequal and uneven manner across the Hawaii school district, with administrators and teachers that are not fully trained or prepared, sex-ed can unfortunately contribute to secrecy, shaming and stigma and reinforce damaging gender norms.

A review of the Department of Education's sexual health education policies and standards is needed to ensure that Hawaii's students are provided with knowledge and tools necessary to make informed and empowered choices about sexuality, gender, and relationships, and sexual and reproductive health.

Please support this resolution.

HCR-222

Submitted on: 3/19/2024 4:03:23 PM

Testimony for LMG on 3/20/2024 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Emi Matsuura	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

Aloha committee,

I am an 11th-grade student at Punahou School writing to support the resolution to conduct a survey studying the implementation of sex education within Department of Education schools. Thank you for your time as you consider the voice of youth in your deliberations. I support this resolution because I didn't receive access to adequate sex education and I noticed that the people around me didn't have the resources to advocate for themselves.

As youth, if we don't have access to sex education we will turn to social media, which is littered with misinformation, or our family members, who also didn't receive sex education. Around my family and friends I felt like I was in a culture where misinformation drove shame, but wanting to know more about sex-ed topics wasn't encouraged. For these reasons, I joined Teen Council, a group that is part of Planned Parenthood, where we teach peer-led sex education at schools around O'ahu.

I enjoy participating in Teen Council, but when we're teaching about STIs and STDs, contraception, or other topics that scratch the surface of sex education, it becomes very apparent to me that we are trying to fill the massive gaps left by the state. I want to emphasize that it is mandatory for the state to teach sex education. It is mandatory that this crucial information, which is necessary to reduce unwanted pregnancies, lower rates of STIs, and protect us, is taught. We have a right to this education, but currently, it is not being implemented properly. Analyzing our state's application of sex education is the first step in creating a community where accurate, inclusive information is spread, where asking questions critical for our health isn't stigmatized, and where, instead of perpetuating a cycle of misinformation, we can use education to challenge shame. For these reasons, I support the resolution to study the implementation of sex education in DOE schools.

Sincerely,

Emi Matsuura

HCR-222

Submitted on: 3/19/2024 4:30:01 PM

Testimony for LMG on 3/20/2024 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Flora Elham	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

My name is Flora, and I am writing in support of the sex education resolution. Throughout my years in the HDOE education system, I have seen little to no adequate sexual and reproductive education. Among many of the current issues with the sex education curriculum in Hawai‘i, one glaring issue is the lack of consistency in sex education for each school. Additionally, much of the sex education that I have experienced has been focused on fear mongering the consequences of sex under the guise of abstinence-based learning. Not only has this been proven to be an inefficient way to solve issues related to sex, it also reinforces the massive stigma around sex-related topics that needs to be addressed.

As a member of Planned Parenthood’s Teen Council, I learn about and teach topics related to sex to schools throughout Hawai‘i. However, it should not be the sole responsibility of people like me to ensure a strong sex education curriculum in Hawai‘i’s schools. That responsibility lies within the state, educators, and families combined. **A greater foundation of sex education in Hawai‘i is imperative to incentivize teens to seek out help if they ever experience sexual issues.** There have been countless instances where the stigma towards certain sex-related topics (such as STIs) has discouraged teens to access the healthcare they need. As such, in order to protect Hawai‘i’s youth and deconstruct this sexual stigmatization, we must reform these systems and strengthen Hawai‘i’s sex education curriculum.

Thus, I humbly urge for the committee’s support in passing this resolution.

HCR-222

Submitted on: 3/19/2024 5:40:16 PM

Testimony for LMG on 3/20/2024 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Vivienne Hill	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Vivienne Hill, and I'm a Junior at the Honolulu Waldorf School.

I never received adequate sexual education. Through middle and high school, I only had around three one-off sessions that even resembled sex ed. In my experience, it was very repetitive and only covered very basic anatomy and information regarding the menstrual cycle. This is important, but I missed out on huge fundamental concepts such as consent, healthy relationships, STI treatment, and more.

This survey would be able to break down what sexual health education is currently being taught at schools, and see which are keeping with what the DOE already requires.'

As a student and a young person who is about to graduate, go out into the world, vote, and everything else, I want to go into it fully prepared. This survey is an important step to make sure that young people have all the tools they need to feel comfortable, safe, and knowledgeable when transitioning into their adult life.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Vivienne Momo Hill.

Honolulu, HI 96822

HCR-222

Submitted on: 3/19/2024 9:42:29 PM

Testimony for LMG on 3/20/2024 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cerese Thomas	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

Hello, my name is Cerese Thomas and I am here to give testimony on why I support the HCR 222 resolution. I currently attend Mililani High School and am a sophomore. This year I took part in a semester-long health course. We talked about a lot of different things and I would say it was adequate up until the last day of class. We were learning Sexual Education that day and it only lasted for around 90 minutes. I could tell that the teacher was very rushed and was seen to be a bit unorganized. On top of that sometimes they would backtrack on certain topics to hit others which could be confusing for some students. I believe that if this bill were to pass it would begin to highlight some of the current issues that are happening in Sexual Education classes and also see parts where Hawaii is doing well. This is what the students of Hawaii deserve. Thank you and I ask for your continuous support of the HCR 222 resolution.

HCR-222

Submitted on: 3/20/2024 1:38:10 PM

Testimony for LMG on 3/20/2024 3:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha,

I'm writing to you in support of HCR222. As a parent of three children in their early twenties and as an HIDOE educator for the past thirty years, I know how important it is for students to have access to quality information and to trusted adults who can help them access information and services they might need.

For the past few years, the students at my elementary school have not had the opportunity to learn age appropriate human development typically taught with parental permission in 5th grade. Yet, I know our female students are growing into young women earlier and our health nurse is dispensing feminine products to students in earlier and earlier grades.

While some might argue this is a parent's job, I am finding that parents need support as well. I also find that my elementary students are using their iPhones and iPads to access TikTok and YouTube to find answers to their questions. While they know how to use devices, they don't know how to distinguish quality, reputable and reliable information from nonsense.

My children did not receive age appropriate sexual health classes or information in elementary or middle school. My daughter said she didn't in high school either, but I know she had to take a health course freshman year. I think she learned what she needed to pass the class and then forgot about it. To evaluate what is being taught in HIDOE schools and to guarantee it is medically accurate, factual and age appropriate is necessary.

Quality sexual health education programs help young people develop an understanding of themselves, their peers and healthy relationships. I strongly support HCR222.

Thank you,
Michelle Carlson