



**STATE OF HAWAII
BOARD OF EDUCATION**

P. O. BOX 2360
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

Hearing: Wednesday, February 11, 2009

3:00 p.m., Conference Room 016

Testimony in **Strong Support of SB777**

Chair Ige, Vice-Chair Green and Members of the Committee on Health:

Thank you for allowing me to testify as a Member of the Hawaii State Board of Education (Board).

As you already know, Board Policy 2110, mandates that the Department of Education's (Department's) "abstinence-based education program shall: . . . provide youth with information on and skill development in the use of protective devices and methods for the purpose of preventing sexually transmitted diseases and pregnancy."

It is my understanding that many of the "abstinence-until-marriage" service providers are not complying with Board Policy 2110, for a diversity of reasons. Therefore, the assumption is that the Department's school level personnel are piece-mealing the rest of the medically accurate sexuality education curriculum together on their own.

This assumption manifest in several scenarios:

- 1) The teacher might directly provide their students with information on and skill development in the use of protective devices.
- 2) The teacher might call in another community based resource provider that covers a comprehensive education, including abstinence again AND protective devices.
- 3) The teacher might call in another community based resource provider that covers ONLY protective devices and then those providers are taken to task for not complying with the Board's policy.
- 4) The teacher provides little or NO information on and skill development in the use of protective devices and violates Board Policy 2110.

I wish I could report that the last scenario results in the teacher being disciplined for violating Board policy 2110, but I have not heard of any compliance enforcement on this policy being conducted. In general, the Board and the Department struggle with enforcement of Board policies. Board members have even debated whether its policies are "directive" or "suggestive." In the two years that I have served on the Board, the Board has granted more non-compliance waivers to its own policies than it has taken formal enforcement action against blatant violations of its policies.

Despite the focus on abstinence, a 2007 CDC survey reported that more than 36% of Hawai'i's high school students are currently engaging in sexual intercourse. Morality and politics aside, this activity is happening and we need to ensure this large population of students are receiving comprehensive medically accurate sex education so that they can protect themselves from diseases and unintended pregnancies.

For the above reason, I strongly support SB777.

Thank you for your consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kim Coco Iwamoto", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Kim Coco Iwamoto, Esq.
State of Hawaii Board of Education Member