



---

## Testimony

1 message

---

**Jack Dias** <jackrdias06@gmail.com>  
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, Jun 12, 2023 at 10:07 PM

Hawaii State Board of Education General Business Meeting  
Bruce Voss, Chairperson  
Kaimana Barcarse, Vice Chairperson  
Thursday, June 15, 2023  
1:30 p.m.

STRONG SUPPORT FOR HR147 (VII.A. Presentation on 2023 Legislative Ad Hoc Committee Chairperson summary of 2023 Legislative Session)

Thank you Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, and members of the Board:

I am Jack Dias, one of the Co-Vice Presidents of Project Soar, a youth-organized group striving to achieve gender and LGBTQ+ equality through the education system. I am testifying on behalf of myself, my group, and my community. I appreciate the opportunity to testify in support of HR147, which would urge the Hawaii Board of Education to develop and enforce non-sex-segregated dress codes in public school formal events, such as prom, graduation, or homecoming.

I support HR147 because I believe it will help move society toward a more equal and accepting future. In 2021, I was nominated to be on the Homecoming court for my school. At first, I was beyond excited until I opened the pdf with the strict sex-based dress codes. I have never fit within society, considering how I am a young, cisgender, homosexual man who prefers stereotypically feminine clothing, so when I saw the dress codes, I felt marginalized and “different” for something I can’t change. I felt I wouldn’t be able to wear something I felt comfortable in. Something that I felt beautiful in. Isn’t the whole point of formal events to show school pride? How am I supposed to have pride in a school that doesn’t let me have pride in myself? And I know for a fact that I am not the only one who feels uncomfortable with these dress codes. I know many queer people who don’t dress according to society’s norms, and I know women who just don’t want to wear a dress. Isn’t it sexist and old-fashioned to force a woman to wear a dress to a school event? So isn’t it sexist to tell a guy that he is not allowed to wear a dress?

As I said, I believe this resolution will move society toward a more equal, accepting, and safe future. Simply changing the wording of a dress code can destigmatize the LGBTQ+ community and people who do not dress “normally.” It is commonly said that children are our future, and right now the future is moving away from these negative, conservative ideas. So now is the time for schools to make changes to outdated, old-fashioned, and non-inclusive traditions by making rules and policies, like those suggested in this resolution.

Thank you for your time.

Jack Dias



---

## Testimony

1 message

---

**Kilia Lawrence Gallagher** <kilia.amaikalani@gmail.com>  
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, Jun 12, 2023 at 10:12 PM

Hawaii State Board of Education General Business Meeting  
Bruce Voss, Chairperson  
Kaimana Barcarse, Vice Chairperson  
Thursday, June 15, 2023  
1:30 p.m.

STRONG SUPPORT FOR HR147 (VII.A. Presentation on 2023 Legislative Ad Hoc Committee Chairperson summary of 2023 Legislative Session)

Thank you Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, and members of the Board:

I am Kilia Lawrence Gallagher, a member of Project Soar, a youth-organized group striving to achieve gender and LGBTQ+ equality through the education system. I am testifying on behalf of myself, my group, and my community. I appreciate the opportunity to testify in support of HR147, which would urge the Hawaii Board of Education to develop and enforce non-sex-segregated dress codes in public school formal events, such as prom, graduation, or homecoming.

I joined Project Soar towards the end of this ongoing pursuit of equality. We go through everyday life alongside people who only see what we allow them to. Our generation came into adolescence later than what general media portrays. I recognize that this was caused by others telling me how I am supposed to live. However, I no longer allow myself to be affected by the idea that because I am not who I was told to be, I am any less valid. When my peers shared about their experiences being openly queer in our society, I never experienced it to the extent that they did. While I recognize and appreciate that fact, that does not invalidate in any way the truth that no matter how lucky you are, being different in this society will inevitably cause you to be discriminated against. I am a freshman in high school, a freshman who entered middle school at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, this year was the first year we had remotely any kind of formal event. Our school dance was considered informal, attire was casual. However, attire was still gendered in emails by cisgender-heteronormative labels of "boy" or "girl". While these labels were not enforced on a student to student basis by faculty, students still felt the need to conform to certain gender roles based on their sex assigned at birth. Consequently, one of my friends, who openly identifies as nonbinary, felt the societal pressure to conform. They felt forced to wear something that they were uncomfortable in.. Because I identify as cisgender, it would be easy for me to look past this issue. But honestly, that would make me one of the worst friends to ever exist. I care about the people around me, the people whose hopes and dreams are more and more apparent as we get older and more transparent. Policy regarding these dress codes and this initiative could change students' lives. We feel the need to hide our true selves because someone, somewhere decided on these two concrete terms for how we exist. We should be able to worry about what college we get into, what career we excel at, not the clothing we are forced to wear to one formal event, one day of our high school lives.

Thank you.

Kilia Lawrence Gallagher



---

## Testimony

1 message

---

**Cooper J Endo** <cooperj.p.endo@gmail.com>  
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Jun 13, 2023 at 10:57 AM

Hawaii State Board of Education General Business Meeting  
Bruce Voss, Chairperson  
Kaimana Barcarse, Vice Chairperson  
Thursday, June 15, 2023  
1:30 p.m.

STRONG SUPPORT FOR HR147 (VII.A. Presentation on 2023 Legislative Ad Hoc Committee Chairperson summary of 2023 Legislative Session)

Thank you Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, and members of the Board:

I am Cooper J Endo, one of the Co-Vice Presidents of Project Soar, a youth-organized group striving to achieve gender and LGBTQ+ equality through the education system. Project Soar wrote resolution HR147 and with the help of Representative Amy Perruso and her team, we got this resolution passed. I am testifying on behalf of myself and Project Soar. I appreciate the opportunity to testify in support of HR147, which would urge the Hawaii Board of Education to develop and enforce non-sex-segregated dress codes in public school formal events, such as prom, graduation, or homecoming.

I support HR147 because from where I stand, dress codes segregated by sex in this day and age are just a bit ridiculous. I saw the separate dress codes for homecoming last year and was baffled. I have always been offered only two options in terms of gender and gender presentation, however, as early as I can remember, neither have ever felt right. I'm nonbinary, and constantly having the choices of "boy" or "girl", "suit" or "dress" shoved down my throat in every aspect of my life has never been easy, especially when it comes to things such as prom and graduation, events which I have been looking forward to for years.

I love looking through my parents' yearbooks and seeing their graduation pictures. I love seeing my mother in her gorgeous dress and my father in his fitted suit. I get to see the younger versions of people who I love. If I have kids in the future, and they ask to look through my old yearbooks, I don't want them to see pictures of a stranger with the same name as me. I want to look like myself. And a big part of that is dressing how I like.

A simple, easy change such as making one universal dress code could mean so much to kids like me. Just one less time to have to explain my answer to that "boy" or "girl" question would feel amazing.

Thank you for your time.

Cooper J Endo



---

## Testimony

1 message

---

**Rissa Liu** <rosierissa17@gmail.com>  
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Jun 13, 2023 at 11:42 AM

Hawaii State Board of Education General Business Meeting  
Bruce Voss, Chairperson  
Kaimana Barcarse, Vice Chairperson  
Thursday, June 15, 2023  
1:30 p.m.

STRONG SUPPORT FOR HR147 (VII.A. Presentation on 2023 Legislative Ad Hoc Committee Chairperson summary of 2023 Legislative Session)

Thank you, Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, and members of the Board:

I am Rissa Liu, the Treasurer of Project Soar, a youth-organized group striving to achieve gender and LGBTQ+ equality through the education system. I am testifying on behalf of myself, my group, and my community. I appreciate the opportunity to testify in support of HR147, which would urge the Hawaii Board of Education to develop and enforce non-sex-segregated dress codes in public school formal events, such as prom, graduation, or homecoming.

Growing up I always dreamed about going to events like prom and graduation. I always wondered what it would be like to attend these events and enjoy them with all of my friends. But how can one enjoy and have fun if they are uncomfortable with what they are wearing? Now as a high school student, I watch as some of my friends and fellow classmates struggle to feel comfortable because of the dress codes for formal events and what they are told they can and can't wear.

I support HCR145/HR147 because it will give students the opportunity to choose what they wear and allow them to feel comfortable in it. As a high school student myself, I strongly feel that HCR145/HR147 will be beneficial in moving our society toward a more equal and accepting future. This resolution will remove negativity surrounding those who do not fit with today's stereotypical gender roles and will make formal youth events safer and more comfortable for everyone.

Thank you.

Rissa Liu