

Senate Concurrent Resolution
SCR 115 SD1
Testimony

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Chairman Roy Takumi and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of Senate Concurrent Resolution 115, providing for a three (3) year pilot program in which one elementary, one middle and one high school will have the opportunity to operate free of Department of Education rules and policies to demonstrate whether or not such freedom provides improved teaching and learning opportunities.

It is increasingly understood by the local, state and national education community that the greatest differentiator in student learning is the quality of teachers and administrators. Recently, the Gates Foundation has also expressed its research-based beliefs that improvement of human capital in public education is fundamental to improved student learning.

The Waianae Complex has invested the past eighteen (18) months on a pilot program to dramatically improve the quality of teachers and administrators – it is called the Waianae Human Resource Management Model and embraces innovation in how teachers and administrators are recruited, selected, inducted, mentored, and developed over a career. The initiative already operates with the support of the Superintendent and the State Board and with some variances and exceptions to Department policies and procedures. Most recently, Kamaile Elementary/Intermediate has aligned its public charter initiatives with Waianae High School to form a seamless, K-12 system of human resource management that will place high quality educators and administrators in our schools.

We believe that quality teaching and quality leadership already exists which will enable our children to learn at a far greater level and with far greater success. It is our earnest belief that the biggest impediment to student success lies, not with the ideas of teaching and learning, but with the quality of the practitioners and with their ability and accountability to deliver the level of powerful teaching and learning that our children need and deserve.

We applaud this legislative resolution and strongly encourage the State Superintendent to adopt the Waianae Model as a pilot under the resolution. We also ask that the resolution be amended to include exceptions from Department policies and procedures and the existing collective bargaining agreements with HSTA and HGEA. Exceptions to only the Department procedures will not provide the complete latitude needed to experiment and demonstrate the impact of a system that is fundamentally designed around quality teachers and quality administrators and their accountability for their contributions to the success of students. We do not ask that the unions be excluded from the process. Quite the contrary, we invite and encourage their partnership in shaping and implementing innovative initiatives and strategies as temporary exceptions to the bargaining agreement. We also invite the full partnership of the Department, the State Board, and the Unions in assessing the outcomes of the project and the implications for future change in the Hawaii public education system.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of this innovate and courageous legislation on behalf of all Hawaii children!

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