

SCR21



HAWAII TECHNOLOGY ACADEMYSM

Hawaii Public Charter School #551

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March 16, 2009

Honorable Norman Sakamoto, Chair
Honorable Michelle Kidani, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Education and Housing

**Re: SCR 21, Recognizing September as Education and Appreciation Awareness
Month in Hawaii - SUPPORT**

EDH Hearing - Conference Room 225, Monday, March 16, 2009, 1:15 p.m.

Aloha Chair Sakamoto, Vice Chair Kidani and members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Hawaii Technology Academy, one of 31 of Hawaii's charter schools that are part of the state's public school system, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SCR 21, Recognizing September as Education and Appreciation Awareness Month in Hawaii.

All schools whether a traditional public school, a private school, a home school, or a public charter school like the Hawaii Technology Academy, play a vital role in shaping the minds of Hawaii's children.

Our public charter school features a combination of online learning facilitated by a parent or other responsible adult with monthly face-to-face interaction with a state-certified teacher and activities. We utilize a combination of both online curriculum and offline materials, including textbooks, CDs, videos, and hands-on manipulatives, to complement interactive online elements to address different learning styles and maximize the learning experience for all students. We believe that this approach helps to build on the previous grades' teaching and to weave an ever-richer tapestry of knowledge to meet each individual child's needs. This approach also inspires and cements the importance of the 'Ohana to the educational outcomes expected of the children. The tradition of involving the 'Ohana in the child's education is important and leads to the improved education of all who are involved.

Since the first public charter schools were established in 2003, we have seen a rapid growth and strong demand for the individualized education a public charter school can provide. Public charter schools continue to struggle to establish funding parity with traditional public schools.

Having September designated as the month to recognize and to appreciate the state of education in Hawaii would be helpful to draw attention to the varied needs that exist in our school systems.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge members of your committee to support the passage of SCR 21.

Sincerely,

Jeff Piontek
Head of School
Hawaii Technology Academy