



HAWAII TECHNOLOGY ACADEMYSM

Hawaii Public Charter School #551

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LATE TESTIMONY

February 22, 2010

Honorable Donna Mercado Kim, Chair
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Re: SB2586 SD1, Relating to the Charter Schools – Support
February 22, 2010, Conference Room 211, 10:20 AM

Aloha Chair Kim, Vice Chair Tsutsui and Committee Members:

On behalf of the Hawaii Technology Academy (HTA), a public charter school which serves students in Oahu, Kauai, Hawaii Island and parts of Maui, thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony in support of this bill.

We support many of the provisions offered in this bill including the requirement for the Charter School Review Panel to determine a clear process with rigorous criteria for charter schools to be reauthorized; allowing the Charter School Administrative Office to withhold funds for its operational expenses; shoring up accountability for charter schools; repealing the cap on the number of charter schools; and the reconciliation of funding for changes in charter school enrollment.

HTA is one of Hawaii's 31 public charter schools that are part of the state public school system. Like Hawaii DOE schools, charters comply with federal and state education standards. We support efforts like this to improve Hawaii's public education system.

Most of all, we endorse changes that create equitable funding and a supportive environment for all DOE and public charter schools to better position Hawaii in competition for U.S. Department of Education's Race to the Top (RTT) initiative. States with policies in place supporting equitable funding for all public school students are at greater competitive advantage to qualify for RTT and other federal grant programs.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge members to support passage of this bill.

Sincerely,

Jeff Piontek
Hawaii Technology Academy Head of School