

SB2589

Date: 02/08/2010

Committee: Senate Education and Housing

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Kathryn Matayoshi, Interim Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: SB 2589 RELATING TO CHARTER SCHOOLS.

Purpose of Bill: Requires the department of education to make available vacant school facilities or portions of school facilities for use by charter schools. Requires the charter school review panel to review and approve or deny applications to use vacant school facilities or portions of school facilities.

Department's Position: The Department of Education supports the intent of S.B. 2589 which would require the department to make vacant school facilities available to charter schools. However, we would prefer the language of S.B. 2590 which outlines a process more similar to what is currently being followed where charter schools are considered in the process of school consolidation.

We also note that if all or a portion of a school is used by a charter school, the charter school would need to assume responsibility for the ongoing maintenance of the facility.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



SB2589
RELATING TO CHARTER SCHOOLS
Committee on Education and Housing

Date: February 8, 2010
Room: 225

Time: 1:45 p.m.

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) supports SB2589 which requires the department of education to make available vacant school facilities or portions of school facilities for use by charter schools and which requires the charter school review panel to review and approve or deny applications to use vacant school facilities or portions of school facilities. As the Department of Education closes non-charter public schools due to financial restraints, those available spaces are school-safe and ready for use by public charters. A public school plant provides safe and sound structures for students to learn in but public non-conversion charter schools have had to do without some basic facilities for years such as: a food service facility; a library; a health room; and a playground. All of these kinds of facilities are normally built into or are proximal to public schools.

Furthermore, in requiring the department to make available vacant school facilities or portions of facilities for use by public charter schools, the bill also enables charter schools to expend their much needed funds on curriculum and learning rather than on exorbitant rents and other facilities-related costs. This policy, when adopted, will ameliorate the per pupil allocation inequity between DOE funded and public charter schools. In the 2009-10 school years, the charter school per-pupil allocation is \$5,536. The mainstreamed public schools' per-pupil allocation is \$11,060.

Since 2005, OHA has assisted Hawaiian focused charter schools as they also struggled with rent, permits, and locating sites conducive to learning. Through innovation, collaboration and the application of Hawaiian cultural values, these charter schools have made significant gains

in learning and achievement (Kanaŷiaupuni et. al, 2005). This bill will greatly enable the charter schools ability to make further advancements in student achievement by redirecting rent to student learning and by making available school-ready facilities, previously unavailable, for the studentŷs benefit.



HAWAII TECHNOLOGY ACADEMYSM

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February 8, 2010

Honorable Norman Sakamoto, Chair
Senate Committee on Education and Housing

**Re: SB2590, Relating to Education - Support
SB2589, Relating to Charter Schools - Support**
EDH Committee – February 8, 2010, Conference Room 225, 1:45 PM

Aloha Chair Sakamoto, Vice Chair Kidani 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 these bills.

We support both SB2590, which requires the Department of Education (DOE) to consider making public school facilities available to charter schools when such facilities are closed, and SB2589, which requires the DOE to make such facilities available and establishes a process for the DOE and Charter School Review Panel to review, approve or deny applications for such facilities.

We view SB2590 as providing the authorizing language for public charter schools to have first access to public school facility closures, and SB2589 as the implementing language to carry out this program, which provides a benefit the public charter school system and to the DOE and to the state, which has to maintain public facilities.

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 the passage of these bills.

Sincerely,

Jeff Piontek
Hawaii Technology Academy Head of School



ASSOCIATION OF HAWAIIAN CIVIC CLUBS

P.O. Box 1135 Honolulu, Hawaii 96807

TESTIMONY OF LEIMOMI KHAN, PRESIDENT
ASSOCIATION OF HAWAIIAN CIVIC CLUBS
IN SUPPORT OF

SB 2589 – RELATING TO CHARTER SCHOOLS

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND HOUSING

February 8, 2010, 1:45 p.m., Conference Room 225

Aloha, Chair Sakamoto, Vice-Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee:

The Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs (AHCC) firmly supports SB 2589, which would require the Department of Education to make available vacant school facilities or portions of school facilities for use by charter schools. This bill and SB 2590 are wonderful initiatives that put to good use the facilities of the closing public schools, promotes valued education, and assists with the challenges facing charter schools in this time of an economic downturn.

We are particularly supportive of the Na Lei Na‘auao, a consortium of Hawaiian-focused public charter schools located on four islands and serving over 1000 Hawaiian students. They are providing quality education by creative culturally-driven models of education and by controlling their educational processes at the community level.

Allowing use of closing public schools for Charter Schools would help to provide enhanced educational facilities. A good move by the legislature, we firmly support passage of SB 2589.

About the AHCC

The Association is a growing national confederation of fifty-eight Hawaiian Civic Clubs, located throughout the State of Hawai‘i and in the States of Alaska, California, Colorado, Illinois, Nevada, Utah, Virginia, Washington State, Tennessee, and Texas. It initiates and works to support actions that enhance the civic, economic, educational, health and social welfare of our communities, and in particular, the culture and welfare of the Native Hawaiian community.

sakamoto2 - Erin

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Saturday, February 06, 2010 4:52 PM
To: EDH Testimony
Cc: director@whea.net
Subject: Testimony for SB2589 on 2/8/2010 1:45:00 PM

Testimony for EDH 2/8/2010 1:45:00 PM SB2589

Conference room: 225
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Curtis Muraoka
Organization: Individual
Address: 73-4460 Queen Kaahumanu Hwy #105 Kailua Kona, Hawaii
Phone: 808-987-2522
E-mail: director@whea.net
Submitted on: 2/6/2010

Comments:

Dear Chair Sakamoto, Vice Chair Kidani, and Esteemed Senators Chun-Oakland, Galuteria, Tsutsui and Hemmings of the Senate EDH Committee,

The Hawaii Charter Schools Network expresses enthusiasm for the increased equity across public education embedded in the intentions of both SB2589 and SB2590.

We reserve our strongest support for SB2589 which provides ready access for much needed classroom space via vacant capacity already built into our system of public schools.

As you are aware, public charter schools have consistently paid for facilities costs out of their per pupil allocations—basically forcing them to use instructional dollars to pay the costs of the classroom itself.

The Obama Administration supports public charter schools, but also believes that the larger mission for policy leaders is “to continue to find ways to reward excellence.” As an example, less than one mile away from you is Voyager, an excellent public charter school that would greatly benefit from the passage of SB2589.

Quite simply, SB2589 is a good bill promoting equity in resource allocation in support of children.

Sincerely,

Curtis Muraoka, Vice President
Hawaii Charter Schools Network

The Unified Voice of Hawaii's 31 Public Charter Schools