

SB2889

WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY

Date: 02/05/2010

Committee: Senate Education and
Housing
Senate Water, Land, Agriculture and
Hawaiian Affairs

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Kathryn Matayoshi, Interim Superintendent of Education

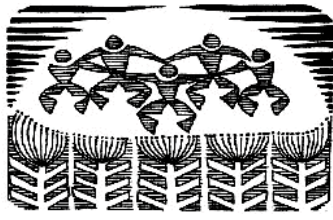
Title of Bill: SB 2889 RELATING TO EDUCATION.

Purpose of Bill: Transfers all land and facilities thereon used by the department of education to operate the Keakealani outdoor education center to the Volcano school of arts and sciences.

Department's Position: The Department of Education (DOE) does not support this bill as it transfers the land and facilities needed for an ongoing program of the DOE. There have been no plans or actions taken to close the Keakealani Outdoor Education Center.

The Keakealani Outdoor Education Center is on land that is under an Executive Order to the DOE. If the DOE were to close its program, the land would revert to the Department of Land and Natural Resources.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.



Volcano School of Arts and Sciences

Dr. David Rizor, Education Director

PO Box 845

Volcano, Hawaii 96785

(808) 985-9800

SB 2889

Testimony for EDH February 5, 2010, 1:30 PM SB2889

Testifier Position: Support

Testifier will be present: No

Organization: Volcano School of Arts & Sciences

Telephone: (808) 985-9800

Email: vsas-director@hawaii.rr.com

Submitted on February 5, 2010

SB 2889

Testimony in support

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

The largest challenge facing our charter schools is obtaining affordable facilities that are conducive to learning. The rural community of Volcano has few facilities that will accommodate a school, and as many charter schools are finding in rural areas, the available properties of a size sufficient for a school campus tend to be zoned for agricultural use.

The campus of the former Keakealani School, which was closed in the early 1970s, is located in Volcano Village. It has been used for the Keakealani Outdoor Education Center, which is on the current DOE proposed closure list. The property would provide an excellent campus site for Volcano School of Arts & Sciences due to its existing designation as a school site and the size of the property. There is strong support within the community for this facility to operate as our community school in Volcano.

With the difficult financial stresses the state is currently experiencing, the transfer of this property to Volcano School of Arts & Science is a win-win opportunity for the state, the DOE, and Volcano School. This transfer would allow DOE to scale back expenses immediately and provide Volcano School with long-term facilities stability and reduced expenses over the long term.

I strongly support this bill.

Sincerely,

David Rizor, PhD
Education Director

Testimony in Support of SB 2889

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND HOUSING

Senator Norman Sakamoto, Chair
Senator Michelle Kidani, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE ON WATER, LAND, AGRICULTURE, AND HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

Senator Clayton Hee, Chair
Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Vice Chair

Friday, February 5, 2010
Conference Room 225 1:30pm

Gene Zarro
LSB Chair, Kihei Charter School
Kihei, Hawaii, 96753
808 385 1197

Dear Chairs Sakamoto and Hee, Vice Chairs Kidani and Tokuda and members of both committees,

I strongly support the transfer of all land and facilities used by the department of education to operate the Keakealani Outdoor Education Center to the Volcano School of Arts and Sciences, a public charter school.

As a chairman of a local school board of a public charter school I know all too well the need for reliable and affordable facilities for our students.

In most cases you will find that the cost of facilities, if they can be acquired, is the second highest cost category of our school budgets only surpassed by our payroll expense.

Anything the legislature can do to alleviate not only the pressure on the budget but also the need to have additional facility resources to serve the students of Hawaii's public charter schools should be done.

Volcano School of Arts and Sciences is a great school serving a rural area of the Big Island. Outdoor sciences and community involvement are hallmarks of this schools philosophy and the acquisition of the Keakealani Outdoor Education Center will enhance and expand the learning experiences of this well established public charter school.

Sincerely

Gene Zarro
gene.zarro@gmail.com