

SB384

Date: 02/09/2009

Committee: Senate Education and
Housing/Senate Transportation;
International; and Intergovernmental Affairs

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Patricia Hamamoto, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: SB 0384 RELATING TO EDUCATION.

Purpose of Bill: Requires the department of education to ensure that all traffic safety measures are in place and operational prior to the opening of a newly constructed public or charter school. Requires the same of private schools.

Department's Position: The Department of Education **does not support** S.B. 384 as it relates to public schools. While we concur with its intent, we do not feel the bill is necessary because we are already required to meet county and state traffic safety regulations. During the design phase of a project, it is standard practice for the Department of Education to coordinate with the State Department of Transportation and County transportation departments to ensure that their requirements are addressed. We believe that meeting these state and county traffic requirements adequately addresses school traffic safety at the time of a new school's opening.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



February 9, 2009
1:15 p.m.
Conference Room 225

TESTIMONY TO
THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON EDUCATION & HOUSING
AND TRANSPORTATION, INTERNATIONAL & INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

RE: SB 384 – Relating to Education

Dear Chairs Sakamoto and English, Vice Chairs Kidani and Gabbard, and Members of the Committees:

My name is Robert Witt, and I am executive director of the Hawaii Association of Independent Schools (HAIS), which represents 97 private and independent schools across our state. The Association would like to offer comments on Senate Bill 384 – Relating to Education, which would require all public, charter and private schools to ensure that all traffic safety measures are in place and operational prior to the opening of a newly constructed school.

While we agree that it is important for all schools to be in compliance with traffic safety regulations, for the sake of both their students and the members of their surrounding community, it is our understanding that the Department of Transportation already oversees these matters.

We have reservations about burdening our schools with an additional level of monitoring that will be both time-consuming and costly. In the event that a new school requires additional supervision during the process of implementing necessary traffic safety measures, HAIS would be happy to respond and collaborate with the Department of Transportation and the appropriate county transportation services and police departments; however, we would prefer to make this determination on a case-by-case basis, rather than legislating an increase in involvement of all new schools in the oversight of traffic safety regulation compliance.

We appreciate having the opportunity to testify on this measure and hope to engage in further discussion on this issue with the Committees throughout the session.