

SCR109

Date of Hearing: Wednesday, March 17, 2010

Committee: Senate Committee on Education and
Housing

Board: Education

Person Testifying: Garrett Toguchi, Chairperson, Board of Education

Title of Resolution: S.C.R. No. 109, Requesting a Study of Whether the Hawaii State
Public Library System Should Be Transferred From the Board of
Education

Purpose of
Resolution: Requests the Auditor to: (1) perform a study of whether the Hawaii
State Public Library System (HSPLS) should be transferred from
administration by the Board of Education (Board) to another
agency, particularly the Department of Accounting and General
Services (DAGS); and (2) submit the Auditor's findings and
recommendations to the Legislature no later than 20 days prior to
the convening of the Regular Session of 2011.

Board's Position: Chairperson Sakamoto, Vice Chairperson Kidani, and members of
the Senate Committee on Education and Housing, thank you for the
opportunity to testify on S.C.R. No. 109.

The Board notes that earlier this legislative session, HSPLS
submitted written testimony in opposition to H.B. No. 2178 that
would have abolished the Board and administratively placed
HSPLS under the Department of Education (DOE). In its

testimony, HSPLS stated that without a Board of Education, HSPLS would request that the library system become an attached agency under DAGS rather than placed within a division of the DOE.

At a Board Special Meeting on March 10, 2010, the Board heard comments from HSPLS that a study by the Legislative Auditor had already been conducted in 1977 in response to legislative interest and concern over the organization and management of school and public libraries. As such, the study under this concurrent resolution would duplicate earlier efforts by the Legislative Auditor.

The Board also notes that when other agencies are transferred administratively to DAGS, such as the Office of Elections and the Campaign Spending Commission, the decision to transfer is an administrative one.

Rather than a requesting a study by the Legislative Auditor as specified in the concurrent resolution, the Board believes that it is necessary and more important for HSPLS and DAGS to work together on a transition plan should there be legislation to place HSPLS as an administrative agency under DAGS.

For these reasons, the Board believes that this concurrent resolution is unnecessary.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony.



STATE OF HAWAII
HAWAII STATE PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM
OFFICE OF THE STATE LIBRARIAN
44 MERCHANT STREET
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

**Senate Committee on Education and Housing
March 17, 2010, 1:15 p.m.
State Capitol, Room 225**

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The Hawaii State Public Library System (HSPLS) strongly opposes S.C.R. No. 109 – Requesting a study of whether the HSPLS should be transferred from the Board of Education. We do not disagree with the resolution in identifying the many differences in the Department of Education and HSPLS in terms of service populations, missions, and priorities and acknowledging the many critical functions and services that the Department of Accounting and General Services (DAGS) performs for the benefit of HSPLS. However, we strongly oppose having the Legislative Auditor perform a study of whether the HSPLS should be transferred from the Board of Education to another agency such as DAGS. First, this is a duplication of a similar report already completed by the Legislative Auditor over 30 years ago. Second, when agencies such as the Campaign Spending Commission and Office of Elections were transferred from the Lieutenant Governor to DAGS, there were no studies or reports required by the Auditor to make this determination. We certainly appreciate the Committees' concerns and interest in finding the ideal placement of HSPLS in the event of an abolishment or structural change to the Board of Education and we are more than willing to continue discussions on these potential options. The Governor and her administration were

strongly in support of this proposal and should also be included in these discussions.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

3-17-10

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Senate Education Committee

Senator Sakamoto and members of the committee:

I am Marcia Linville and I am speaking in support of SCR 109. I have a M.A. In Library and Information Sciences and have been a librarian for over 30 years, working in State, City, Federal, and Special libraries. I have served on both Library Professional Associations Boards, on the Board of Hawaii Literacy, as the HGEA Steward for Unit 13 Professionals, DOE, on the Education committee of the League of Woman Voters, and as legislative liaison for both professional associations, ALA and LAH, and the Democratic Party.

SCR 109 is necessary, because since the time of the Hawaii State Library Systems incorporation into the Department of Education at the time of Statehood, and its governance by the Board of Education, the needs of the people of the state for library and information services have been overshadowed by the needs of the schools. At the time of Statehood and the formation of the present Departments, schools and libraries were seen as providing co-equal services to the people of the state.

Unfortunately, in practice, things did not work out that way. After 50 years, Schools presently receive 25% of the state's budget. Libraries receive one-half of 1%. Schools serve the needs of the K-12 population. Libraries serve the total population from birth to death. Schools have facilities standing empty, Communities have been waiting 20 years for promised libraries and have received new ones only after highly adversarial relation, requiring the Governor to step in. Schools have increased staffing and ratings, Libraries have been cut to the point where they can no longer function, and vital programs and services have been lost forever. The Boards answer to this was to ask why the libraries could not make up the difference with volunteers. The M.A. after my name should have indicated the answer to that question. This is not to say that volunteers do not serve a necessary and important function. Due to budget cuts and Board Actions Libraries could not function without them. But do you really believe a State service should depend on volunteers to survive?

While the Board and the Department do not seem to consider the libraries a necessary service, the people of Hawai'i disagree. Public donations have been outstanding. But, again, this is not the way a State service should be funded. It is my hope that passage of this resolution will provide a viable alternative. There are, and will be a number of difficulties in implementation. The mission of the libraries in providing the services of education, recreation, information and culture is sometimes seen in conflict with those of budget and accounting. Technology is expensive, necessary, but subject to failure. The incredible complications in providing present day library service to the people of the state require a highly educated and dedicated staff. At the moment, for obvious reasons, morale among the staff is low. They deeply hope that the passage of this resolution will provide an answer to some of their more critical problems. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.



Marcia Linville