
From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 24, 2011 2:48 PM
To: WAM Testimony
Cc: steve_hirakami@notes.k12.hi.us
Subject: Testimony for SB1174 on 2/25/2011 9:00:00 AM
Attachments: 2-24-2011Testimony SB1174.doc

Categories: Green Category

Testimony for WAM 2/25/2011 9:00:00 AM SB1174

Conference room: 211
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Steve Hirakami
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Phone:
E-mail: steve_hirakami@notes.k12.hi.us
Submitted on: 2/24/2011

Comments:

Testimony
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
February 25, 2011 Room 211
9:00 AM
Strongly Support

Dear Chair Ige and committee,

I am in strong support of a mechanism that funds facilities needs for charter school students. I think that whatever funds are provided to EDN 600 identified as facilities funds can be fairly distributed among the charter schools by the CSAO and CSRP. The formula used could be derived with information coming from the DOE on the average space needed per student for primary and secondary students. This square footage would be multiplied by a price per square foot dollar amount that DAGS could assign. Special consideration would be made for all distance learning students based upon a percentage of the square footage needs of a traditional “bricks and mortar” school student. Deductions would be made from the formula for facilities already provided by the State. This formula could be proportionally applied to any amount of funding, in the scenario that facilities funding would take incremental steps to reach full funding.

One caveat: in computing a “needs based formula” you cannot fund equitably if you only “reimburse” schools for facilities costs. Charter schools have had to “make do” with all kinds of creative structures due to the fact that we have had no facilities support except for SY 2007-08 when we received \$674 per student for facilities. So if a school could only afford to buy a large circus tent to house classes, it would not mean that its facilities needs are to reimburse the school for that structure. “Needs based” means: the amount of space and/or money that it takes to adequately and safely provide educational space for children. The charters could use that facilities money to upgrade, rent new appropriate learning spaces, or construct proper facilities.

Article X of the State Constitution states: The State shall provide for the establishment, support and control of a statewide system of public schools free from sectarian control, a state university, public libraries and such other educational institutions as may be deemed desirable, **including physical facilities therefor**. It is a very important part of educating any child that the right environment be provided. Let’s make a difference in over nine thousand public education children’s lives.

Sincerely,

Steve Hiramami, Director

Hawaii Academy of Arts & Science PCS

Treasurer,

Hawaii Charter Schools Network



Ho'okāko'o Corporation

Transforming Public Education
in Hawai'i's High-Need Communities for the 21st Century

Testimony to the Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Senator David Y. Ige, Chair

Senator Michelle Kidani, Vice Chair

Re: SB 1174 SD1 – Relating to Charter Schools

Friday, February 25, 2011, at 9:00 a.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 211

Chair Ige, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee:

Aloha, my name is Megan McCorriston, executive director of Ho'okāko'o Corporation (HC), a 501(c)(3) charter support organization that serves as the local school board for three public conversion charter schools — Waimea Middle School on Hawai'i Island, Kualapu'u Elementary School on Moloka'i, and Kamaile Academy in Wai'anae — which educate nearly 1,600 students, or roughly 19 percent of the total public charter school student population in Hawai'i.

Ho'okāko'o Corporation is in support of Senate Bill 1174, Senate Draft 1, which addresses the critical issue of facilities funding for public charter schools by having the Charter School Administrative Office (CSAO) prepare a budget request for facilities funding based upon charter schools' individual facilities, repair, and maintenance needs.

HC is in strong favor of developing a needs-based facilities funding formula for public charter schools; however, we also recognize that further deliberation on this topic is necessary before such a formula can be finalized. In the meantime, while discussions continue, HC supports the solution outlined in SB 1174 SD1, which would give the CSAO the ability to make a needs-based facilities funding request and to distribute these funds to the public charter schools.

Regarding the re-establishment of the Charter School Funding Task Force, as a member of the Task Force HC fully supports its findings and recommendations, but does not see a need for its extension; instead, HC believes that the public charter school community and its stakeholders should be responsible for working together to develop a needs-based facilities funding formula.

HC would like to thank the Committee for its continued support of Hawai'i's public charter schools and its efforts to address the pressing facilities needs that they are currently facing through such mechanisms as the Charter School Funding Task Force and the proposals made by SB 1174 SD1. If passed, this bill would not only provide public charter schools with much-needed facilities funds which are separate from their per-pupil allocation, but would also leave their operating funds — which are greatly needed to support teaching and learning — intact.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this measure.