

Date: 03/21/2011

Committee: House Education

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Kathryn S. Matayoshi, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: SB 1174,SD2 (SSCR700) RELATING TO CHARTER SCHOOLS

Purpose of Bill: Requires charter school budget requests for needs-based facilities funding to include a detailed explanation as to the formula used and the funding request breakdown by school. Allows charter schools to appeal charter revocations and denied reauthorizations to BOE. Requires charter schools and their local school boards to develop internal policies and procedures on ethics. Requires the Charter School Review Panel to conduct a multi-year evaluation of each charter school every six years. Establishes separate task forces to (1) determine a needs-based facilities funding formula for charter schools and (2) address issues on charter school governance, accountability, and authority. Effective 7/1/2050. (SD2).

Department's Position: The Department supports this measure, which: 1) authorizes the Charter School Administrative Office Executive Director to submit a budget request for needs-based facilities funding accompanied by a detailed explanation of the formula used to calculate the request; 2) authorizes the Board of Education to hear appeals to Charter School Review Panel decisions on reauthorizations and revocations of charters; 3) directs charter schools and their local school boards to develop internal policies and procedures consistent with ethical standards of conduct; 4) extends the period of mandatory evaluations of each charter school after the first evaluation from five to six years; and, 5) establishes a task force on charter school governance, accountability, and authority.

One suggestion is that the Committee may want to clarify what would constitute "facilities funding," as this could be interpreted to include costs such as utilities, salaries and supplies for regular maintenance, depreciation, and rental/lease of buildings and grounds.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



SB1174 SD2
RELATING TO CHARTER SCHOOLS
House Committee on Education

March 21, 2011

2:00 p.m.

Room 309

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) **SUPPORTS** SB1174 SD2, which establishes two separate task forces to (1) determine a needs-based facilities funding formula for charter schools; and (2) address issues on charter school governance, accountability, and authority. The bill would also require charter school budget requests for needs-based facilities funding to include a detailed explanation as to the formula used and the funding request breakdown by school.

While OHA is disappointed that a charter school facilities funding formula could not be codified at this time, we support the continuation of the task force and commend the group for their hard work in bringing the charter school community together to achieve funding parity with the Department of Education's regular schools. Additionally, OHA appreciates the need to create a task force to examine governance and accountability issues for charter schools.

Therefore, OHA urges the Committee to PASS SB1174 SD2. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to present this testimony.



KAMEHAMEHA SCHOOLS

Testimony to the House Committee on Education
Hearing Date: Monday, March 21, 2011
2:00 p.m. – Conference Room 309

Kalei Kailihiwa
Director, Ho‘olako Like
Kamehameha Schools

Good afternoon Chair Takumi, Vice Chair Belatti and members of the House Committee on Education. My name is Kalei Kailihiwa Director of Ho‘olako Like of Kamehameha Schools. Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of SB 1174 SD2 which requires charter school budget requests for needs-based facilities funding to include a detailed explanation as to the formula used and the funding request breakdown by school; allows charter schools to appeal charter revocations and denied reauthorizations to the Board of Education; requires charter schools and their local schools boards to develop internal policies and procedures on ethics; requires the Charter School Review Panel to conduct a multi-year evaluation of each charter school every six years; establishes separate task forces to (1) determine a needs-based facilities funding formula for charter schools and (2) address issues on charter school governance, accountability, and authority (effective 7/1/2050).

Kamehameha Schools supports promoting the achievement and success of Hawaii public school students and, as such, has been a collaborator with the Hawaii public charter schools for over eight years. As part of our Education Strategic plan, KS hopes to significantly impact more Hawaiian children ages 0-8 and grades 4-16+, and their families/ caregivers over the next five years, in collaboration with others whenever possible.

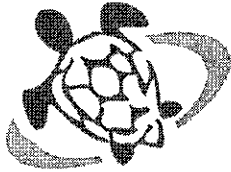
Currently, Kamehameha Schools works with 13 nonprofit tax-exempt organizations, including ‘Aha Punana Leo, OHA, KALO and Ho‘okako‘o Corporation, to assist a total of 14 start-up and 3 conversion charters with special projects, professional development, and technical assistance.

Kamehameha Schools believes that these efforts provide more positive educational choices and ultimately enhances academic achievement and greater school engagement for Hawaiian students. Through these collaborations, Kamehameha Schools currently assists more than 3,800 students in eleven communities on 4 major islands, within the public education system.

In summary, supporting and replicating the successful strategies found in Hawaiian-focused charter schools is a good way to invest in education that has potential benefits for the entire public school system.

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Hawaii Public Charter School #551

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March 21, 2011

Honorable Roy M. Takumi, Chair
Honorable Della Au Belatti, Vice Chair
House Committee on Education

Re: SB 1174, SD2, Relating to Charter Schools – Support with comments
Conference Room 309, 2:00 PM

Aloha Chair Takumi, Vice Chair Belatti and Committee Members:

On behalf of the Hawaii Technology Academy (HTA), a public charter school with learning centers in Waipahu and Princeville serving students on Oahu, Kauai, Hawaii Island and parts of Maui, thank you for the opportunity to testify.

HTA supports governance and ethical reforms, and the establishment of needs-based funding for charter-school facilities. However, instead of a convening a new taskforce for needs-based facilities funding, HTA respectfully requests consideration of the funding formula in HB 159, HD1 -- representing the Charter School Funding Task Force's collaborative efforts.

1. HTA Supports Needs-Based Facilities Funding

HTA supports efforts to establish needs-based facilities funding for charter schools.

However, instead of a convening a new taskforce for needs-based facilities funding, HTA respectfully requests consideration of the funding formula in HB 159, HD1 -- representing the Charter School Funding Task Force's collaborative efforts.

2. HTA Supports Governance and Ethical Reforms

HTA supports all efforts to create high-quality, high-performing charter schools in Hawaii.

In particular, this measure improves the governance of charter schools by providing for the periodic reauthorization of charter schools, and establishes a process to appeal the denial of reauthorization. A similar appellate process is also created for the denial or revocation of a school's charter.

HTA further supports the adoption of ethical standards for charter schools, and the establishment of a taskforce on charter school governance, accountability, and authority.

Undoubtedly, the foregoing governance and ethics measures will positively impact Hawaii's charter schools.

3. HTA Supports a Taskforce to address charter school governance, accountability, and authority. However, HTA does not support the continuance of a facilities funding task force.

As previously mentioned, HTA strongly supports the establishment of needs-based funding for charter-school facilities. This benefits charter schools by creating a source of facilities funding that is independent from per-pupil funds.

Rather than convening a new task force, however, HTA respectfully requests that the committee consider the needs-based facilities funding formula which is currently proposed in HB 159, HD1.

In removing facilities costs from per-pupil funds, that formula would result in more available monies for other educational needs, and alleviate the more than 30 percent in budget cuts for charter schools since the recession began in 2007.

Most importantly, the needs-based facilities funding formula in HB 159, HD1, is the product of the collaborative efforts by the Charter School Funding Task Force (established by SCR 108). That task force looked at detailed information on existing funding sources for charter schools, evaluated the Department of Budget and Finance's calculation for DOE and charter school per-pupil allocations, reviewed discrepancies between these allocations, and examined whether a portion of the debt service, repair and maintenance, and capital improvement expenses should be paid by charter schools.

Given the existing recommendations for a needs-based facilities funding formula, a new taskforce as proposed in SB 1174, SD2, may no longer be necessary.

We humbly request that the committee pass a needs-based funding bill for charter schools this session.

Sincerely,

Jeff Piontek
Head of School
Hawaii Technology Academy