



# Ho'okāko'o Corporation

**LATE TESTIMONY**

Testimony to the House Committee on Education  
Representative Roy Takumi, Chair  
Representative Della Au Belatti, Vice Chair  
**Re: SB 1174 SD2 – Relating to Charter Schools**

Monday, March 21, 2011, 2:00 p.m.  
State Capitol, Conference Room 309

Chair Takumi, Vice Chair Belatti, and Members of the Committee:

Aloha, my name is Megan McCorrison, 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 SD 2, which proposes to establish a task force to address issues on charter school governance, accountability and authority. HC, in its dual role as local school board and nonprofit, supports increased measures of accountability and performance in the public charter school system. This measure also aligns with HC's current policies and practices.

As a member of the Charter School Funding Task Force, HC supports the revisions to the Hawaii Revised Statutes recommended in Section 302B-8. HC also supports the intent to establish a charter school facilities funding task force if the purpose is to establish a needs-based facilities funding formula. HC would like further clarification on how an extension of the charter school funding task force enhances the work that was done by the previous task force in fiscal year 2010-11.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

LATE TESTIMONY



**Hawaii Charter Schools Network**

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Testimony  
House Committee on Education  
March 21, 2011  
Room 309  
2:00P

Dear Chair Takumi, Vice Chair Bellati, and Members of the Committee,

Position: **Support of SB 1174 SD2**

I am Steve Hirakami representing the Hawaii Charter Schools Network (HCSN), a non-profit organization with the mission to advance high quality public education in Hawai'i by advocating for and providing supports to public charter schools. I am also the Director of Hawaii Academy of Arts and Sciences PCS. The HCSN is in support of SB 1174 SD2.

**Needs-Based Facilities Funding Formula**

Senate Concurrent Resolution 108 was passed last year. The HCSN was an integral part of the Charter School Funding Task Force (CSFTF) that it created. It soon became apparent that the CSFTF would not have enough time to discuss all of the items that it was tasked to cover and decided to focus the CSFTF's energy on the issue of facilities funding. This bill is the result of the CSFTF's recommendations to the legislature.

Sen. Dwight Takamine also convened a working group with DOE and charter involvement entitled *Understanding Public School Funding Fiscal Year 2009-2010* to best identify fair funding to charters while using DOE funding as a comparison.

It was discovered that the major areas of inequitable support were facilities funding and in the distribution of federal funding. Recognizing the large continuing revenue shortfalls

for the state and the differences between schools that have facilities at no cost to their operating budgets and schools that spend up to 30% + of their operating budgets for lease costs, the CSFTF decided to move toward a needs-based facilities funding formula. The lack of facilities support and the cuts throughout the last years have caused major strains on our charter school budgets.

Charter schools received \$5363 per student last year per the formula. The legislature and both governors approved additional ARRA A&B and facilities funding that brought charter school per student funding to approximately \$6200 should all appropriations be released.

The HCSN has asked for feedback from the schools regarding special considerations to the needs based facilities funding formula like online/distance learning adjustments, conversion charter schools, and charters that lease State land.

I was the main contributor for researching the data and developing the needs based facilities funding formula suggestions thus far. I offer my help should you have any questions.

**Task Forces for Charter School Governance, Accountability, and Authority and Facilities Funding**

We support the reconvening/creating of the task forces, however, HCSN would like to request inclusion of a representative of HCSN as a member of both task forces. HCSN has already started meeting with Directors and Local School Board Members on these issues and could bring valuable input to the discussion.

We also support other parts of the bill such as creating an appeals process for charter revocations and denial of reauthorization.

Mahalo for hearing this bill, for passing the resolution that created the CSFTF last year, and for the House involvement in the CSFTF.

Sincerely,

Steve Hirakami  
Treasurer, HCSN