



February 6, 2012
2:05 p.m.
Conference Room 309

TESTIMONY TO
THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

RE: HB 2127 – RELATING TO THE ISSUANCE OF SPECIAL PURPOSE
REVENUE BONDS FOR HAWAII PREPARATORY ACADEMY.

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

My name is Robert Witt, executive director of the Hawaii Association of Independent Schools (HAIS), which represents 99 private and independent schools in Hawaii and educates over 33,000 students statewide.

HAIS is in strong support of this measure, introduced by one of our member schools, Hawaii Preparatory Academy. HB 2127 extends the lapse date of the special purpose revenue bonds that were authorized to assist Hawaii Preparatory Academy in 2007.

The legislature deemed, and voters reinforced, that the issuance of special purpose revenue bonds to private schools is in the public interest. Private schools in Hawaii serve everyday families from all walks of life. Many of our students are the beneficiaries of robust financial aid programs that defray the cost of tuition and more importantly, broaden our reach. For the last decade, private schools have judiciously utilized special purpose revenue bonds as a financing tool to leverage capital funds for campus development and improvement projects. Special purpose revenue bonds do not divert funds from the public school system and this arrangement has generated many millions of dollars in construction on campuses large and small across the state.

Thank you for the opportunity to **strongly support HB 2127** and the good work and mission of Hawaii Preparatory Academy.



February 6, 2012, 2:05 p.m.
Room 309, State Capitol

TESTIMONY OFFERED TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

**Re: HB2127 – Relating to the Issuance of Special Purpose Revenue Bonds
for Hawaii Preparatory Academy**

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

I thank each member of the Committee, as well as your accommodating and helpful staff members, in receiving this testimony in support of HB2127, which relates to the Issuance of Special Purpose Revenue Bonds for Hawaii Preparatory Academy.

My name is Lindsay Barnes, and it is my honor to serve as Headmaster of Hawaii Preparatory Academy, which we affectionately call "HPA." We are a full-service school on the Big Island. Our school operates on two campuses: one serving students from Kindergarten through Grade 8 and another (located two miles away) comprised of Grades 9 through 12. We offer a boarding option that begins in Grade 6 and extends through Grade 12. At present, we board 174 students. We also offer a five-day boarding option for families on the Big Island. We are a coeducational school, serving boys and girls from all walks of life. Our total student population generally ranges from 585 to 610 young people in a given year. While a large majority (78%) of our students hail from the Hawaii, we may well be one of the most diverse independent schools in the world with students from 17 states and territories and 18 countries.

As a member of the South Kohala business community, HPA employs 131 men and women full-time. This makes us one of the largest employers on the Big Island, and we are happy to be contributing to our economy by providing good jobs to good people during these recessionary times. We also assist our families with truly significant amounts of financial aid. In fact, current financial aid exceeds \$3 million and benefits 35% of our parents by making it possible for their children – children we cherish – to attend our school.

The bill before you will permit HPA to continue its march forward in service to our children. Many of our school buildings date from the late - 1960's and early 1970's. While they have served HPA for many years, the time has come to consider infrastructure upgrades. Having access to funds produced by special purpose revenue bonds will help to make needed improvements possible without, in any way, diverting funds from our public school brethren. In addition, having access to revenue from the issuance of these bonds will enable us to be a catalyst for even more jobs on the Big Island.

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From new and renovated dormitories, to the construction of more modern classrooms, to projects helping HPA stand tall as a leader in environmental awareness and sustainability practices education, to the phased consolidation of our two separate campuses, I can assure you without any question that funds derived from the issuance of the special purpose bonds for which we seek authorization will do a world of good for our school and for the young people it is our privilege – but also our immense responsibility – to educate and to nurture.

Thank you for granting this opportunity to offer comment. And thank you also for being who you are and doing what you do for the people of our state.

Respectfully yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lindsay R. Barnes, Jr.", written in a cursive style.

Lindsay R. Barnes, Jr.
Headmaster

February 6, 2012

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

Re: HB 2127 - Relating to the Issuance of Special Purpose Revenue Bonds for Hawaii Preparatory Academy - Support
Conference Room 309, 2:05 PM

Aloha Chair Takumi, Vice Chair Belatti and Committee Members:

I am writing this letter in support of Hawaii Preparatory Academy's bond authorization extension and in support of HPA in general, as an amazing school, a place of excellence and quality, and as a place of value to the community. I am an alumni of HPA myself, have had numerous family members attend HPA and am currently the parent of a second grader, with twins to be enrolling as Kindergarteners next year. HPA is a "way of life for me," and I cannot imagine, nor would I want to imagine, my children going to any other school; it has far exceeded my highest expectations and hopes for a school.

As a parent I feel confident sending my children to HPA knowing that they will receive the highest quality of education. I love HPA on so many levels. As a parent I have a peace of mind knowing that while they are in school, they are in good hands and are being taught at the highest level and are learning critical social and moral values, empowering them to be the best they can be. HPA is devoted to providing its students with the highest academic standards. The teachers at HPA are amazing people, all dedicated to the children and their jobs, and focused on giving their best to the children. I have been so impressed with the resources available to the students at HPA: things such as Hawaiiana, Music, Art, Drama, Social Skills, their own Library, an incredible Athletic program and beautiful, well-kept facilities. What a blessing it is to be able to expose my children to such things!

HPA is also dedicated to giving back and sharing with the community, offering their resources to the public, such things as their swimming pool for open swim times during the weekdays and on Sundays, opening up their track for community walkers and joggers and allowing the public to use their auditorium for various plays and community movies and services, along with a variety of other service outreaches.

I am so truly blessed to be a part of this school community and have such a sense of pride and joy knowing that my children will grow up in this school and will be given the opportunity to learn, grow and flourish because of their experience at HPA.

Please help HPA in their efforts and support them in their desires to continue to make this school a better place for its students and our community, and to further develop and maintain its high level of quality, excellence and standards for us all.

Thank You So Much!
From a Proud Parent and Grateful Member of the HPA Community,
Respectfully, Nina H. Puckett
(808)557-3114

February 6, 2012

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

**Re: HB 2127 - Relating to the Issuance of Special Purpose Revenue Bonds for
Hawaii Preparatory Academy – Support**
Conference Room 309, 2:05 PM

Aloha Chair Takumi, Vice Chair Belatti and Committee Members:

I am writing this letter in support of Hawaii Preparatory Academy, where my son was a student for 13 years. HPA provides students with a variety of experiences and challenges coupled with an great faculty to prepare them for the future; and also offers many unique opportunities that give students a strong sense of themselves and their communities.

In addition to a challenging curriculum that helps to prepare students for college or life in general, HPA provides a steady choice of options throughout lower school and high school that enables students to explore their diversified talents and interests in such activities as golf, fishing, scuba, exploring the coastline and horseback riding.

The relatively small student body and small community enables students to make strong and lasting relationships with each other and establish close connections with the faculty. I am very proud to be an HPA parent and to say that I often recommend the school to friends and coworkers at the Canada-France-Hawaii Telescope Corp.

HPA now seeks to improve its campus and develop the next generation of Hawaii's leaders. Through the Special Purpose Revenue Bond, HPA will be able to further its' mission and goals.

Sincerely,

DeeDee Warren
66-1715 W. Ko Uka Place
Kamuela, HI 96743
808-640-2619
warren@cfht.hawaii.edu

February 6, 2012

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

**Re: HB 2127 - Relating to the Issuance of Special Purpose Revenue Bonds for
Hawaii Preparatory Academy – Support**
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Aloha Chair Takumi, Vice Chair Belatti and Committee Members:

I am writing this letter in support of Hawaii Preparatory Academy, a school where I have been involved as a teacher, a dormitory supervisor, a parent of 4 graduates, a Parents' Association Executive Board Member, a contributor of time and finances, an on-going participant in the Horsemanship program and now as a grandparent of 2 students.

I have given a good deal of my life and my income to this school because I saw it as the single most important catalyst contributing to a full and meaningful life. Persons who come in contact with the school's quality programs and inner core of respect for each individual visualize clearly a precious gift worth sharing.

The variety of students that come to this school, with religious and ethnic diversity, a myriad of languages and personalities, skills, arts, sports(just children, really) find themselves later as adult leaders and healthy parents. That is really all we want for our families, communities, state, nation. The individual ways they express themselves in their daily work, in giving back, is the beauty of this school and its programs...academic, emotional, physical.

Thank you for your recognition of these young people and those of the upcoming generations by this Special Purpose Revenue Bond. Thank you for recognizing the decades of Consistent Work provided by so many caring adults and mentors who continue, year after changing year, to offer quality classes and instruction. Thank you for your part in pursuing this goal with us.

Sincere Aloha,

Sandra Ednie
P.O.Box 1318
Kamuela, HI 96743

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

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Aloha Chair Takumi, Vice Chair Belatti and Committee Members:

As a community-based center for research and education, The Kohala Center would like to express its gratitude to the Hawaii Preparatory Academy for graciously opening its campus and sharing its resources with the wider community. In particular, I would like to mention that HPA's Energy Lab has become an important community learning center for public and private sector leaders, island residents, and public school teachers and students in fields related to renewable energy technologies and building design. Furthermore, given our interest in sustainable living, the staff and the board of The Kohala Center appreciate HPA's leadership role in conferences and educational programs about sustainability that involve public, public charter, and independent schools. HPA has been extremely generous in making its resources available to a larger island public and to the benefit of our island future. For this, we would like to express our great appreciation.

Mahalo nui loa.

Sincerely yours,

Matthews M. Hamabata, Ph.D.
Executive Director
The Kohala Center
Kamuela, Hawaii

February 6, 2012

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Honorable Della Au Belatti, Vice Chair
House Committee on Education

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Aloha Chair Takumi, Vice Chair Belatti and Committee Members:

As an active 25+-year member of the Waimea community including being an officer of the all-volunteer Waimea Community Association, I am writing to express support for renewal of a \$50M bond extended to Hawai'i Preparatory Academy by the State of Hawai'i, with the express approval of the Hawai'i State Legislature.

HPA not only possesses the land base and other assets to more than repay this indebtedness, but is an active, contributing member of the Waimea/North Hawai'i community and, in fact, one of the larger employers.

I am especially appreciative of HPA's active participation in the Waimea Education Hui -- an informal consortium of educators from the public, public charter, private and homeschool communities and related organizations to share education-related opportunities, professional development and life-long learning strategies. Further, I am grateful for HPA's active interest in and support of sustainable energy programs and willingness to share these programs and strategies with the community.

I also am grateful for the access our community enjoys to HPA facilities including Gates Performing Arts Center for various community events and programs, as well as the open door to community friends for most of the performances staged by students and faculty. And finally, I appreciate the service learning programs initiated by HPA faculty, staff and students that serve this community in a variety of beneficial ways.

Please feel free to contact me if you have questions concerning this.

Mahalo and a hui hou -

Patti Cook (808-937-2833)
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Kamuela, HI 96743