

**SB 1217**

**EDT**

**Date:** 02/04/2011

**Committee:** Senate Economic  
Development and Technology  
Senate Education

**Department:** Education

**Person Testifying:** Kathryn S. Matayoshi, Superintendent of Education

**Title of Bill:** SB 1217 Relating to Education

**Purpose of Bill:** Establishes a pilot project that expands the e-school program offered by the Hawaii virtual learning network and the DOE to Lanai high and elementary school. Appropriates funds.

**Department's Position:** The Department of Education (Department) supports SB 1217 as long as its implementation does not impact or replace the priorities set forth in the Executive Biennium Budget for Fiscal Years 2011-2013. In January 2009, geographically isolated schools including Lanai, Hana, Molokai, Kohala, and Kau were offered early registration for courses offered by the E-School program. During the 2009-10 and 2010-11 school years, Lanai has enrolled at least 25% of their high school students in E-School courses including Algebra, Ethnic Studies, General Art, Hawaiian, Spanish, and U.S. History. The Department also recommends that online learning opportunities and online professional learning communities be offered to teachers of Lanai High and Elementary School. Funding appropriation should include costs related to professional development such as travel, instructional resources, and coaching and mentoring assistance from experienced online teachers. Costs related to student learning such as instructional materials and access to online educational resources including hardware and software should also be included.

**Testimony before the  
House Committees on**

**Economic Development and Technology  
and  
Education**

**S.B. 1217 -- Relating to Education**

**Friday, February 4, 2011  
1:15 pm, Conference Room 016**

**By Robbie Alm  
Executive Vice-President  
Hawaiian Electric Company, Inc.**

Chairs Fukunaga and Tokuda, Vice Chairs Wakai and Kidani, and Members of the Committee,

This testimony is being submitted on behalf of Hawaiian Electric Company and its subsidiary utility, Maui Electric Company.

We support S.B. 1217, which establishes a virtual learning network and e-school pilot project for Lanai High and Elementary School. During community meetings on the proposed wind farm project and in discussions during the community's visioning process residents raised concerns about the quality of education and educational opportunities available on Lanai. One of the issues that has been raised by educators that this bill will address is the availability of courses required for graduation, most of which must be taught by teachers that are qualified in accordance with federal guidelines. According to educators from small, rural schools the present Weighted Student Formula method of allocating funds does not provide sufficient funding to support the staffing of these "Highly Qualified" teachers. The creation of an enhanced distance learning pilot project for Lanai will enable the Department of Education to address this concern by offering the requisite courses online and it could also provide other virtual learning opportunities for students.

This bill is among several bills that have been introduced this legislative session which address some concerns and desires raised by residents during community discussions on the wind farm project. If the wind farm is built on Lanai and the power sent

to Oahu, it seems only fair to provide the island with the resources necessary to meet critical community needs. We strongly urge the committees to pass this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.